"Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom, was the daughter of Jupiter... Athens was her chosen seat, her own city, awarded to her as the prize of a contest with Neptune, who also aspired to it. The tale ran that in the reign of Cecrops, the first king of Athens, the two deities contended for the possession of the city. The gods decreed that it should be awarded to that one who produced the gift most useful to mortals. Neptune gave the horse, Minerva produced the olive. The gods gave judgement that the olive was the more useful of the two, and awarded the city to the goddess; and it was named after her, Athens, her name in Greek being Athene." — "The Age of Fable," by Thomas Bulfinch.

In Modern Athens.

CENE: The courtyard of the Boston Public Library. An arcade of white pillars stretches across the front of the scene, behind which is a sunlit square of green, with the basin of an unfinished fountain in its center.

Time: A hot summer afternoon, when the air is drowsy with the distant rumble of the city.

Discovered: A typical Boston man, with features of the "Gibson" type, and clothes of the newest cut. He sits leaning against a pillar and smoking lazily. He yawns once or twice, and slowly takes a newspaper from his pocket and unfolds it. Suddenly he gives a quick start, as though he had just remembered something.

Typical Bostonian — "Oh, yes! I remember, I put an advertisement in the paper yesterday." (He holds up the paper and begins to read aloud)

"Wanted, good capable girl to do general housework — no, that's not it — wanted, man to — no — here it is — wanted, an occupant for the fountain of Boston Public Library. Large salary, good situation, hot and cold water. Only descendants of first families need apply. Now that sounds well, I am sure. The last clause will, I think, prevent the repetition of any such trouble as that about the dancing girl who was here a few years ago. I hope to get some one of aristocratic appearance this time.

Enter Neptune, a tall, white-haired old man, dressed in a robe of Tyrian purple, and carrying his trident in one hand, while with the other he beckons to a company of Tritons, nymphs and dolphins, who dance across the stage, singing:

SONG.

Tritons with horns of shell,  
Weaving of sound the spell  
That guides the sailors well  
Over the sea.

Agile young nymphs sublime,  
Swaying in perfect rhyme,  
To the waves beating time,  
We come to thee.

Look well upon our dance,  
Let it thy sense entrance,  
Mortals have rare a chance  
Such sights to see.

Look where fair Thetis goes,  
Treading with silver toes,  
Blithest of all of those  
That throng the sea.  

Next in the mystic whirl,  
Galatea's draperies curl  
Round her young limbs of pearl,  
All symmetry.

Leucothea joins the throng,  
Palaemon, on a dolphin borne,  
Laughs, while the Siren's song  
Tells of the sea.

Nereus, with solemn grace,  
Moves with more stately pace,  
And all the Neread race  
Dance with the sea.

As in and out we twine,  
Softly our green eyes shine,  
Bright locks that drip with brine,  
Shake we in glee.

Then with faint music slow,  
Melting like passing snow,  
Back to sea we go—  
Back to the sea.

They dance slowly down the arcade, and the song fades away in the distance.

Typical Bostonian (somewhat amazed) — "A very pretty dance — very pretty indeed. Not up to our modern ballet." (Turning to Neptune) "Mr. Neptune, I believe?"

Neptune (bowing) — "The same, sir, at your service, Mr. Boston."

Typical Bostonian (extending his hand) — "How do you do? I have heard so much about you that I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Mr. Neptune. Have you come to see the new Abbey pictures in the Library, or are you going to present Harvard with a collection of shells?"