1R I was preparing to sing of weapons and violent wars,
2R in heavy numbers, with the subject matter suited to the verse measure.
3R The even lines were as long as the odd ones, but Cupid laughed,
4R they said, and he stole away one foot.[6]

5R "O cruel boy, who gave you the right over poetry?
6R We poets belong to the Pierides,[7] we are not your folk.
7R What if Venus should seize away the arms of Minerva with the golden hair,
8R if Minerva with the golden hair should fan alight the kindled torch of love?

9R Who would approve of Ceres[8] reigning on the woodland ridges,
10R and of land tilled under the law of the Maid with the quiver[9]?
11R Who would provide Phoebus with his beautiful hair with a sharp-pointed spear,
12R while Mars stirs the Aonian lyre?[10]

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[6] I.e., the even lines, which were hexameters (with six feet) became pentameters (with five feet).

[7] Muses

[8] Ceres was the Roman goddess of the harvest.

[9] By '*Virgo*' ('Virgin') Ovid means Diana, the Roman goddess of the hunt.

[10] Lines 7R–12R show some paradoxical situations that would occur if the gods didn't stay with their own business.

12R Aonian] Mount Parnassus, where the Muses live, is located in Aonia.