REMARKS ON AESCH. *AGAM.* 1172, IN EMENDATION
OF MR. BURY'S READING (p. 175).

IN the last number of the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (p. 175) Mr. John B. Bury advocates the emended reading of the corrupt verse 1172 of the *Agamemnon*,

ἐγὼ δὲ θερμὸν οὖς τάχ' ἐν πέδῳ βαλῶ.

He does not exactly explain this (in my opinion it is inexplicable), but he says θερμῶ in 1278 seems to prove that θερμὸν is right in 1172. But θερμῶ refers to shedding the warm life-blood, while θερμὸν οὖς, if I understand Mr. Bury aright, means an inspired or prophetic ear—'an ear that used to listen to the utterances of the victims.' Between the literal and the figurative senses there is no resemblance at all.

Nevertheless, Mr. Bury is right in the comparison, provided an emendation be admitted, which appears to me to be at once necessary to grammar and logic, and to account most satisfactorily for the reading of the MS. ἐγὼ δὲ θερμόνους, &c.

In v. 1136 and 1146, *seqq.*, Cassandra laments her own fate; in 1156 she traces it to the marriage of Helen and Paris; in 1167 she bewails the fall of her city and her father. She passes from topic to topic, and does not revert to herself. What she ought here to say is this—

'Alas for the utter destruction of my city; alas for the vainly-offered sacrifices of my poor father! They did not prevent the city from falling, nor himself from shedding his life-blood on the ground.'

I propose to read, with especial regard to μὲν and δέ,—

ἄκος δ' οὐδὲν ἐπήρκεσαν
τὸ μὴ πόλιν μὲν ὥσπερ οὖν ἔχει παθεῖν,
αὐτὸν δὲ θερμούς σταγόνας ἐν πέδῳ βαλεῖν.

It is to be observed that blood falling on the plain, so as to be absorbed by Mother Earth, was thought to bring retribution

as its fruit. So *Choeph.* 47, τί γὰρ λύτρον πεσόντος αἵματος πέδῳ; *ibid.* 400, νόμος μὲν φονίας σταγόνας χυμένης ἐς πέδον ἄλλο προσαιτεῖν αἶμα, and *Eumen.* 478, ἰὸς ἐκ φρονημάτων πέδῳ πεσών.

The reading *θερμὸν οὖς*, &c. gives this sense, if sense it can be called; but Cassandra must have been very mad indeed to talk in such an illogical strain—

‘My father’s sacrifices availed nought in preventing the city, on its part (μὲν), from falling, and I shall soon throw my inspired ear on the ground.’

The corruption arose in this way, I believe. There were variant readings, *θερμούς σταγόνας ἐν πέδῳ*, and *θερμὸν σταγόνα πρὸς πέδῳ*, or *πρὸς πέδον*. The singular (*σταγὼν*) had occurred just before, v. 1122. The superscribed termination of the

ὄν

adjective, *θερμούς*, resulted in *θερμόνους*. This, from a comparison of *ζωπυρουμένης φρενὸς* in 1034, and *οἶον τὸ πῦρ* in 1256, was assumed to be a compound in the nominative. Thus ἐγὼ was introduced, to the rejection of αὐτὸν, and βαλεῖν was altered to βαλῶ, while *σταγόνας* was clipped down to τάχα.

Thus it appears that an emendation which at first sight seems rather violent, and a mere guess, is really based on very sound reasoning. For my own part, I think the poet could not well have written anything else. The death of Priam at the family altar was an incident of the *Troica* as followed by the Tragics. In *Hec.* 21, Euripides closely associates the two events—

ἐπεὶ δὲ Τροία θ’ Ἐκτορός τ’ ἀπόλλυται
 ψυχῇ, πατρώα θ’ ἐστία κατεσκάφη,
 αὐτὸς δὲ βωμῷ πρὸς θεοδμήτῳ πίτνει, &c.

And what is really very interesting, he commences the verse with αὐτὸς δὲ, an exact counterpart of αὐτὸν δὲ in my proposed correction.

This correction had occurred to me independently; but Dr. Donaldson had before said (*New Cratylus*, § 309), ‘We entertain no doubt that the line (*Agam.* 1172) exhibits merely a confusion of the true reading, ἐγὼ δὲ θερμὰς σταγόνας ἐν πέδῳ βαλῶ.’

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