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Euripides, Herc. Fur. 1157 sqq.

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laurel before she delivered her prophecies in the name of the deity.¹ By chewing the sacred plant of her god she was probably believed to fill herself with his sacred spirit. Perhaps in like manner the candidate for the priesthood at Nemi chewed oak-leaves in order to nerve his arm for the fatal stroke.

¹ Lucian, *Bis Accusatus*, 1; J. Tzetzes, *Scholia on Lycophron*, 6.

It may have been with oak-leaves in his mouth, as well as with sword in hand, that he advanced upon his adversary. Can it be that in the face of the older man the artist has purposely shewn us a grinning empty mouth as if to indicate that the sacred oak and with it the god had passed from him to another?

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EURIPIDES, *HERC. FUR.* 1157 sqq.

οἰμοι, τί δράσω ; ποῖ κακῶν ἐρημίαν
εὕρω πτερωτὸς ἢ κατὰ χθονὸς μολῶν ;
φέρ', † ἀντι . . . κρατὶ περιβάλλω σκότος.
αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ τοῖς δεδραμένοις κακοῖς,
καὶ τῷδε προστρέπαιον αἵμα προσβαλὼν
οὐδὲν κακῶσαι τοὺς ἀναιτίους θέλω.

HERACLES, having slain his wife and children in a fit of frenzy, is contemplating self-destruction, when he sees Theseus approaching. He gives utterance to a vain wish that he could avoid his friend ἢ πτεροῖς ἢ ὑπὸ χθονός, and then realises that he must meet him. But first he will wrap his mantle around his head, that his gaze may not contaminate the innocent with the pollution of bloodshed. In line 1159 the MSS. are mutilated. H. Stephens conjectured φέρ' ἐν πέπλοις, which has been adopted by many editors, e.g. Dindorf. Hartung suggested ἀνοσίφ τι, Paley ἀντιτείνων. Gray and Hutchinson, and Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, in their editions of the play, print the line

with the lacuna, Wilamowitz being inclined to Wecklein's φέρ' ἀλλὰ πέπλων κρατί, while justly admitting that the mention of the mantle is not necessary, owing to the gesture which must have accompanied the delivery of the line. I would read φέρ' ἀντιῶν τι κρατὶ περιβάλλω σκότος. Heracles sees that he cannot escape meeting Theseus, and so he says 'Come, as I meet him, let me wrap my head in darkness.' The corruption was due to the similarity of the successive syllables. This reading is supported by *Orest.* 459, where Orestes says Τυνδάρεως ὁδε στείχει πρὸς ἡμᾶς, οὐδ' μάλιστ' αἰδώς μ' ἔχει εἰς ὄμματ' ἐλθεῖν τοῖσιν ἐξεργασμένοις . . . τίνα σκότον λάβω προσώπῳ, ποῖον ἐπίπροσθεν νέφος θῶμαι; Euripides uses σκότος both as masculine and neuter in this play, in lines 563, 1216. I find that Murray, in the new Oxford text, proposes φεύ φεύ· τίν' ἀμφὶ κρατί.

GEORGE W. MOONEY.

VIRGIL'S MESSIANIC ECLOGUE.¹

Most of the problems raised by the fourth Eclogue are probably insoluble. But one of the most difficult of them has, I fancy, in the volume under review, been resolved once and for all by Mr. Warde Fowler. I refer to the interpretation of the last two lines of the poem. Of the manner in which Mr. Warde Fowler

interprets these lines I will say no more than that I think it true and fine: for by saying no more I may hope to persuade those who have not read his essay to go and do so at once. With regard to the rest of Mr. Warde Fowler's paper, I cannot help regretting that ten pages (which might have been as good as pp. 71-81) should have been devoted to an apparently serious, and certainly courteous, consideration of the fatuities of Reinach.

¹ Virgil's Messianic Eclogue: Three Studies: by J. B. Mayor, W. Warde Fowler, R. S. Conway: London, J. Murray, 1907: pp. 146 + viii: 2s. 6d.