The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

Homerica. (III.)

T. L. Agar

The Classical Review / Volume 12 / Issue 09 / December 1898, pp 431 - 433

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X0003359X, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X0003359X

How to cite this article:

T. L. Agar (1898). Homerica. (III.). The Classical Review, 12, pp 431-433 doi:10.1017/S0009840X0003359X

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

incapable of undertaking it? Its magnitude and its necessity are well shown by Mr. J. H. Hessels in No. 1 of his *Memoranda on Mediaeval Latin*, just published by the Philological Society, which includes two excellent specimens of word-lists from the *Lex Salica* at the beginning, and from Bracton at the end, of mediaeval Latinity.

Prof. Moritz Cantor, of Heidelberg, the great authority on mathematics in antiquity, attains next year his seventy-first birthday. His many pupils throughout the world intend to celebrate the occasion by presenting him with a literary *Festgabe*, a volume of original monographs on subjects con-

nected with his favourite studies. The editor in charge of the volume is Prof. M. Kurtze of Thorn. We are glad to learn that it will include English and American contributions.

The difficulties which classical education in France is at present contending with are strikingly shown in a recent book by M. Alfred Fouillée, member of the Institute, *Les Études classiques et la Démocratie*. This work, to which we hope again to refer, is not without instruction to all who have educational responsibilities on this side of the Channel.

HOMERICA. (III.)

Z 506.

ὥς δ' ὅτε τις στατὸς ἵππος, ἀκοστήσας ἐπὶ φάτῃ,
δεσμὸν ἀπορρήξας θείῃ πεδίῳ κροαίων,
εἰωθὼς λούεσθαι ἐνρρείῳ ποταμίῳ,
κνιδίων· ὑψοῦ δὲ κάρη ἔχει, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαῖται
ῥάμοις αἰσσοῦνται· ὁ δ' ἀγλατῇφι πεποιθὼς
ῥίμφα ἔγούνα φέρει μετὰ τ' ἦθεα καὶ νομὸν
ἵππων·

ὥς υἱὸς Πριάμοιο Πάρις κατὰ Περγάμου ἄκρης
τεύχεσι παμφαίνων ὥς τ' ἡλέκτωρ ἐβεβήκει
καρχαλῶν, ταχέες δὲ πόδες φέρον.

'As when a stalled horse, high-fed at the crib, breaks his tether and runs neighing o'er the plain—'twas his wont to bathe in the clear-flowing river—exulting joyously: he bears his head high, and his mane floats about his shoulders; confident in his beauty his legs carry him swiftly to his old haunts, the horses' pasture-ground.'

This splendid simile, so wonderfully applicable in more than one point to the handsome Trojan prince, clad in his shining armour and laughing aloud in the pride of his heart, as he hastens with swift steps to join his brother and his comrades in the battle-field, is yet in some respects not quite satisfactory. Poetically it is a masterpiece

worthy of the greatest of poets. No one even of those who feel most its deficiencies can fail to recognise in it at least the disjecta membra poetæ. Still the defects are none the less real, and the high poetical merit of the whole need not interfere with their recognition. They are faults of arrangement and construction, culminating in a violent disregard of grammar, which we vainly cover under the learned term, anacoluthon. For the sake of those who are tender of a great poet's fame let us say that the merits are Homer's, while the demerits are due to the interference of the permanent committee of poetasters, who having charge of his productions thought themselves competent to make small changes, improvements, as they supposed, in their great master's work. This verdict I will now proceed to attempt to justify so far as possible.

Let us consider the six lines of the simile as it stands. In the first clause we have ἵππος serving as a peg, whereon to hang no less than four participles (ἀκοστήσας, ἀπορρήξας, εἰωθὼς, κνιδίων). This is a liberal allowance even for a beast of burden, and rather too liberal to be genuine, if we may trust the general usage of Homer. The moment our suspicions are turned in this

direction they inevitably fall upon *εἰωθὼς λούεσθαι ἐνρρεῖος ποταμοῖο*. The strangeness and abruptness of this line here is shown without, I am sure, any exaggeration in the version given above, in which it stands as a parenthetical clause. Moreover the bearing of it on the whole sentence is not altogether clear. It is made clear enough in Virgil's version, *Aen.* xi. 492 :—

Qualis ubi abruptis fugit praesepia vinclis
Tandem liber equus, campoque potitus
aperto,
Aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit
equearum,
Aut adsuetus aquae perfundi flumine noto
Emicat arrectisque fremit cervicibus alte
Luxurians, luduntque jubae per colla per
armos.

Homer therefore merely saying that the horse was accustomed to bathe in the river implies that the runaway was bent on doing so now. I submit that this method of informing by implication instead of direct statement, though it may be Virgilian, is entirely alien to the Greek epic, especially when the desired sense, always supposing this was the intended meaning, could have been expressed with the utmost facility by the use of another participle instead of *εἰωθὼς* thus :—

ἰέμενος λούεσθαι ἐνρρεῖος ποταμοῖο.

Still even so it would be exceedingly strange to find Homer dealing with the motives of his runaway horse, which Virgil disposes in two consecutive lines, in two widely detached phrases—the third line of the simile and the concluding words of the sixth line, *μετά τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων*. This objection alone is surely very damaging, if not fatal, to the credit of l. 508 as commonly understood. Furthermore it must not be forgotten that the two motives are necessarily, as Virgil has seen, incompatible with one another and therefore alternative. But how does this appear in Homer? There is not a trace of it. For these reasons then I think we may fairly conclude that this line, though I do not for a moment question its genuineness, is hardly entitled to retain a position in which it is neither Homeric nor logical.

Now let us turn to l. 511 with the extraordinary nominativus pendens in front of it :—

*ὁ δ' ἀγλατῆφι πεποιθὼς,
ρίμφα ἐ γούνα φέρει μετά τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων*.

The instances that can be adduced of anacoluthon are wholly insufficient to justify this flagrant incongruity. I find B 353, E 135, α 275 are referred to, not a very convincing assortment, when they come to be examined. Briefly, B 353 is regarded by many as an interpolation, which is probable enough, E 135 is a question of punctuation, and in α 275 there is traditional authority for *μήτηρ*. It would be easy to collect from later writers a formidable list of these grammatical audacities. To go no further, they are rife in Thucydides and Aeschylus, e.g. *Thuc.* ii. 53, 5; iii. 36, 1; iv. 108, 4; *Aesch. Eum.* 95, 100, 477; *Choeph.* 520; *Supp.* 446. But enough of them. They are all beside the mark here; for it will readily be granted that Homer is not one of the 'grammar-defiers,' who either accidentally, or deliberately for the sake of effect, indulge in, what Clough calls :—

'Forced constructions strange and plusquam-Thucydidean.'

Zenodotus ventured to read *ρίμφ' ἐὺ γούνα φέρει*, *sua genua fert*, thus making the horse carry the legs instead of the legs the horse. So unnatural and violent is the anacoluthon—and the only justification for an anacoluthon at all is its naturalness—that Bentley accepted even this rash expedient. But we cannot thus reverse an established usage, attested only three lines further on by *πόδες φέρον*, even though *pedem tetuli* (*Ter. Andr.* 808) is good enough Latin.

At two points then reasonable objection can be taken to the passage as it stands. The anacoluthon has long been a stumbling-block: the difficulty of l. 511 has not, I believe, previously been remarked. Both these defects may be remedied by a very simple method. I suggest that the original sequence of the lines was this :—

*ὥς δ' ὅτε τις στατὸς ἵππος, ἀκοστήσας ἐπὶ
φάττην,
δεσμὸν ἀπορρήξας θείῃ πεδίῳ κροαίων.
ρίμφα ἐ γούνα φέρει μετά τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων
κυδιῶνθ'. ὕψου δὲ κάρη ἔχει, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαίται
ὤμοις ἀίσσονται. ὁ δ' ἀγλατῆφι πέποιθεν
εἰωθὼς λούεσθαι ἐνρρεῖος ποταμοῖο*.

Now if this be the real arrangement of the clauses, how comes it that the sequence of

these lines was ever disturbed? Possibly and probably, as I will show, from the misunderstanding of ἀγλαΐῃ πεποιθεν (πεποιθώς). The meaning was supposed to be, he trusts in his beauty for the attainment of some ulterior object, and the line specifying this object, ῥίμφα ἐ γούνα φέρει κτλ., of course had to be brought into immediate sequence. But ἀγλαΐῃ πεποιθε does not necessarily mean more than 'he has full assurance of, he is certain of, his handsomeness,' in other words, 'he knows he has a shining coat.' Just as in B 588:—

ἐν δ' αὐτὸς κίε ἥσι προθυμίῃσι πεποιθώς,
ὁτρύνων πολέμονδε·

the meaning is not 'trusting to his zeal for success' but 'with conscious zeal,' 'filled with zeal,' or simply 'zealous.' The emphasis is clearly upon the noun and not upon the verb. So it is also, although not perhaps to the same unqualified extent, in our passage. A rendering of the lines with the suggested changes would be to this effect, 'As when a stalled horse, high-fed at the crib, breaks his tether and runs neighing over the plain exultingly: he carries his head high, and his mane floats over his shoulders, for he is in the glory of his beauty (A horse dealer would say 'he is in the pink of condition') being wont to bathe in the clear flowing stream.'

It is perhaps worth noting that λούεσθαι is a late form, which has probably ousted λέσασθαι from a mistaken notion that the present tense is required after εἰωθώς. The main change in the reconstruction is that ll. 508 and 511 are transposed. Two minor changes necessarily accompany the trans-

position. The first of these κυδιώνθ' for κυδιών is very slight and is little likely to be objected to. The second πέποιθεν for πεποιθώς is more considerable, but can hardly be regarded as improbable. πεποιθώς appears in l. 505.

There is an obvious improvement in point of construction in the opening lines down indeed to ἀίσσονται, an improvement so obvious, that no more need be said about it: but the last clause presents εἰωθώς λούεσθαι κτλ. in a light so entirely different from that in which it is usually regarded that some defence is necessary. The meaning I take to be this: the horse is proudly conscious of his good condition, that his coat is sleek and glossy. Now εἰωθώς κτλ. gives the reason why the horse's coat has this healthy sheen. He has bathed regularly in the clear stream. The bathing may have taken place before he became στατός, stalled; but it does not seem to me in any wise improbable that the bathing would be continued afterwards. In either case the bathing accounts for the healthy condition, the ἀγλαΐη, of the horse, and does not allusively give the reason either for his breaking away or for the direction he takes when he is free. All that is amply accounted for by

ῥίμφα ἐ γούνα φέρει μετὰ τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων,

though I must strongly demur to the Virgilian idea that ἵππων is necessarily or even probably feminine. Both the runaway horse and the hurrying prince simply desire to rejoin their comrades in the field.

T. L. AGAR.

THE FRAGMENT OF MENANDER'S Γεωργός.

THE following remarks and suggestions were sent privately to Mr. Grenfell in April last. As many of them have since been made by foreign scholars (Weil in *Revue des Études Grecques*, van Leeuwen in *Mnemosyne*) I wish to record them very briefly.

14. Something like ἐξηλθον ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας οὐδὲν φράσας σιγῇ, λιπὼν δὲ τὸν γάμον· τὴν φιλάτιν οὐκ ἂν ποτ' (or <ὡς> οὐκ ἂν) ἀδικήσαιμ' ἂν· οὐ γὰρ εὔσεβες. Cf. διαφνυεῖν με τὸν γάμον in 21. 24. ἐν τοῖσδ' ἐγὼ νῦν εἰμι. 29. Put a stop after ὦν. What follows is very obscure. In 31 should we read κατὰ

τύχην προσέρχεται? 34. καλὸν γ' ἂν εἴη νῆ Δι' is ironical and goes with what precedes. 35. No need for οὐδένας: ἀγρός is usually the land of one owner. 40. The first πάντα is perhaps a mistake: εἰσένεγχε' ὁμῶς (! the word is poetical, chiefly epic, not found in comedy or prose) ὅσα φέρομεν <δὴ> ταῦτα πάντ' εἰς τοὺς γάμους? 59. ἂν (not ἀπ) ορθώσας: but I doubt the word. At any rate ἀνορθώσεν would be better, or οἶον ἂν... ἀνορθώσαι. Cf. ἀνέστησ' in 62. 63. οὔτοσί(!) cannot refer to the distant Cleaenetus. 65. σχολὴν τρίβων? 67. The question is out