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NOTES ON LUCAN VIII.

IN recent years important contributions to the interpretation of the eighth book of Lucan have been made by Professor Postgate (*C.Q.*, vol. I., pp. 75-79, 216-222), and by Mr. J. D. Duff (*Journ. of Phil.*, vol. XXXII., pp. 125-135). The following notes make a further attempt to solve some of the many problems presented by the book.

Vv. 5 sqq. [Pompey is fleeing to the coast after the battle of Pharsalia.]

Pauet ille fragorem
motorum uentis nemorum, comitumque suorum
qui post terga redit trepidum laterique timentem
exanimat.

The clause *qui post terga redit* has caused a great deal of misgiving. Mr. Heitland (*C.R.* XI., p. 206 sq.) suggests with some diffidence that the reference may be to 'a scout in advance.' 'Every time the scout comes back to report any news from the front,' he says, 'Pompey is startled by the thought "here it is at last; our flight is cut off."' But surely 'anyone who comes back the way he went' (so Mr. Heitland explains *post terga redit*) is a strange way of expressing 'anyone who returns after being sent on in advance as a scout.' And with this explanation what is the force of *lateri timentem*?

The passage, however, becomes quite clear if we give to *comitum* the familiar technical meaning of the word. We often find *comites* applied to the retinue of chosen friends which accompanied a governor to his province, a general to the field, or a prince of the blood on his travels. In the case of a general they were a sort of half-official staff, in close personal attendance on him. Pompey's *comites*, then, whose proper place is by their leader, have been scattered in the battle and in the subsequent flight, and the survivors now try to 'return' to him. As each one comes up from behind, Pompey starts, and momentarily fears a cowardly stab in the side (*lateri timentem*). This interpretation seems to remove all difficulty about the meaning of *redit*.

Vv. 102 sqq. [Apostrophe of the dead Iulia by Cornelia.]

Ubicumque iaces, ciuilibus armis
nostros ulta toros, ades huc atque exige poenas,
Iulia crudelis.

Strange difficulties have been felt about the meaning of *ubicumque iaces*. Francken explains it as 'sub inferis, siue in stygiis tenebris,'—an unnecessarily

far-fetched idea, which is not really supported by III. 12 (wrongly cited as II. 12 in his note). Oudendorp, following Beroaldus, takes *ubicumque iaces* with the previous words (*clades nunc denique lustra, Magne, tuas*), but this is impossible. Haskins' note is a curious one; *iaces*, he asserts, 'is equivalent to *uersaris*, for there was no doubt about the place of her burial.' Of course there was no doubt, and Cornelia's words do not imply that there was. All that they say is, 'No matter where' (or 'how far away') 'thou liest buried, come hither, and complete thy vengeance.'

Vv. 306-10.

Pompey is considering what alliances he might contract in order to repair his shattered fortunes. He decides that neither Juba nor Ptolemy is to be trusted; help must, therefore, be sought from the Parthians:

Quare agite, Eoum, comites, properemus in orbem (289).

After showing how formidable is the might of Parthia, he is seized with doubts and fears, and in vv. 306 sqq. exclaims:

O utinam non tanta mihi fiducia saeuis
esset in Arsacidis! fatis nimis aemula nostris
fata mouent Medos, multumque in gente deorum est.
effundam populos alia tellure reuolsos,
excitosque suis inmittam sedibus ortus.
quod si nos Eoa fides et barbara fallent
foedera, uolgati supra commercia mundi
naufragium Fortuna ferat.

310

Dr. Postgate¹ has truly said that lines 309 sq., which assert Pompey's resolve to 'let loose the forces of the East' upon his enemies, are quite unintelligible as they stand, for in the lines immediately preceding and following we have an expression of grave misgiving as to the result of committing his destinies into the hands of such a people as the Parthians. The remedy suggested by Dr. Postgate is to place 309 sq. after 288. (Would they not come in more appropriately after 289, quoted above?) But there is a simpler cure. If we put a mark of interrogation after *ortus*, the sentence becomes quite natural and forcible. Lucan's fondness for rhetorical questions without particles to introduce them is apt to cause confusion, as Dr. Postgate has indicated (*C.Q.* I., p. 75, where he corrects the punctuation of VIII. 85, reading *illud amasti* ?); cf. I. 299 sqq., III. 137 sq., IV. 215-219, VI. 153-156, 326 sq., IX. 1073-1076; also VIII. 793-796, quoted below.

Dr. Postgate finds *tanta* (v. 306) meaningless, and would read *tota*. But is it not conceivable that on thinking of the dangers of a Parthian alliance Pompey might exclaim, 'I could wish that my confidence in their might were not so great as to make me prefer their alliance (for they are dangerous as well as powerful, and might make themselves our masters) ?'

¹ *C. Q.* vol. I., p. 78.

Vv. 701-708.

Hac Fortuna fide Magni tam prospera fata
 pertulit, hac illum summo de culmine rerum
 morte petit, cladesque omnes exegit in uno
 saeua die, quibus immunes tot praestitit annos,
 Pompeiusque fuit, qui numquam mixta uideret 705
 laeta malis, felix nullo turbante deorum,
 et nullo parcente miser; semel impulit illum
 dilata Fortuna manu.

No commentator seems to have taken the trouble to understand these lines, though Lucan has been at considerable pains to make his meaning clear. The great stumbling-blocks in the path of his readers seem to be *pertulit* (702) and *morte petit* (703). The latter difficulty has been caused partly by taking *hac* with *morte*. Certainly *hac morte petit* in this context would be intolerably weak; but surely we must supply with *hac* the word *fide* from the previous line: *hac fide . . . pertulit, hac (fide) . . . morte petit* is what Lucan says. *De culmine rerum petit* is a 'pregnant' construction, perfectly intelligible: 'assailed him so as to hurl him down from the pinnacle of his prosperity.' Such an expression is far from impossible in a language which can say *praefecti Capuam creari coepti* (Liv. IX. 20. 5). Thus conjectural emendation is needless; and indeed most of the suggestions made (e.g. *rapit, rotat, premit*) are not only unnecessary but open to objection in themselves, as being in the present tense, when it is rather a perfect that is wanted (*petit* here = *petiit*; cf. 85, 321, 422, etc.). Again, the use of *morte petit* has caused some misgiving. If it can be said of a man *petit excidiis urbem miserosque penates* (Verg. Georg. II. 505), surely *petit morte Pompeium* can be said of Fortuna. The expression is *feliciter audax*—which cannot be said for Burman's *monte premit*! Moreover, *morte* must be kept for a reason which will shortly appear.

The sense of the passage is as follows. 'This, then, was the kind of *fides* shown by Fortune to Pompey! She was simply holding her hand (*dilata manu*, 708) in order to strike him down when he was at the height of his prosperity (*culmine rerum*). Though it was hard for her to wait, she endured all his long triumphant career (*tam prospera fata pertulit*, 701 sq.); she suffered him to have unalloyed success (*numquam mixta uideret laeta malis*, 705 sq.), until the great day should come when at one fell stroke (*semel*, 707) she should hurl him down—not by a mere disaster to his cause, but by death itself (*morte*, 703). Thus she claimed in one day all the debt of calamities from which she had exempted Pompey before (703 sq.)¹ in order to make his fall the greater and the more sudden.

This summary will probably explain the meaning of the admirable *pertulit*, which has given rise to much talk and some useless 'emendation.' The

¹ Cf. v. 21 sq.; sed poenas longi Fortuna a similar but less extreme point of view.
 fauoris | exigit a misero. In II. 727 sq., we find

specious *perculit*, which has found favour in some quarters, would rob the passage of a most effective word. The last sentence, with its emphatic *semel* and *dilata*, gathers up the whole meaning of the lines in brief, trenchant language. It will now, perhaps, be clear that *morte* must be retained; when Fortune did at last strike, the blow brought not merely disaster, but death.

The lines may be roughly translated thus: 'Such, then, was Fortune's loyalty, whereby she endured all the glorious career of Magnus, and then assailed him and flung him down from the summit of prosperity, even by death, claiming, cruel one, in a single day all the calamities from which she suffered so many years to be exempt; and thus Pompey was one who never saw success mingled with ills, but as in his days of weal no god troubled him, so in his day of woe none spared him; for with one blow of a hand withheld till then did Fortune hurl him down.'

The passage would be almost equally effective if treated as a series of rhetorical questions. The general sense would not be changed, but the indictment of Fortuna would be less direct. In the latter part of this book, however, Lucan is bitterly cynical and defiant, even to the extent of impiety, and he even represents Pompey as harbouring similar feelings. This fact does not seem to have been sufficiently realized; hence great perplexity has arisen with regard to the two passages which will be considered next.

Vv. 663-667.

At Magni cum terga sonent et pectora ferro,
permansisse decus sacrae uenerabile formae
iratumque deis faciem, nil ultima mortis
ex habitu uoltuque uiri mutasse fatentur
qui lacerum uidere caput.

For *iratumque* Bentley suggests *certantemque* ('vying with'), Madvig *aequatamque*. Dr. Postgate¹ prefers *mirandamque*, as being palaeographically more probable. The objection brought against the MSS. reading is that it is inconsistent with the tranquil, majestic demeanour of Pompey as indicated by his last thoughts (622-635). But these last thoughts, so far from being inconsistent with *iratum deis faciem*, actually confirm the reading. Pompey is calm, but it is the calm of defiance. In 629 sqq. we read:

spargant lacerentque licebit,
sum tamen, o superi, felix, nullique potestas
hoc auferre deo.

Surely if ever words were full of defiance, these are. The scornful *o superi*, to which we shall shortly find a parallel in v. 861, and the emphatic *deo* have the same implication: 'They may dismember and mangle me, yet ye gods (who thought to bring me to the lowest depths of adversity), I am still blessed, and there is not a god that can take this glory from me.' The words of Cornelia, which follow, accuse the gods in plain terms: v. 642 sq., 'sed quisquis in

¹ C. Q. vol. I., p. 219.

istud | *a superis* inmisit caput. . . .’ Such sentiments are common enough in life and in literature, and Lucan’s Pompey certainly does not seem less natural or less heroic for harbouring them in his heart and showing them in his countenance. Virgil less explicitly and more delicately says of the slain Turnus :

uitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.

Lucan himself is often *iratus deis*, as in the famous
 uictrix causa deis placuit, sed uicta Catoni,
 and in many other passages.¹

Vv. 858-861.

Nil ista nocebunt

famae busta tuae : templis auroque sepultus
 uilior umbra fores ; nunc es pro numine summo
 hoc tumulo, Fortuna, iacens.

This is the text as given by Hosius, and modern scholars, when they have not resorted to conjectural emendation, have naturally thought it best to follow so competent an authority. But it has been felt that the sudden change from an apostrophe of Pompey to one of Fortune is clumsy ; it is not however without parallel in Lucan (I. 121-124, unless we emend 123, is a violent instance ; cf. IV. 799 sqq., VIII. 548 sq.). More important is the fact that it is difficult to get a satisfactory or even an intelligible meaning out of the sentence *nunc . . . iacens*. Mr. J. D. Duff ingeniously attempts to make these words apply to Pompey by supposing that ‘ Lucan may have thrust in here the vocative *Fortuna* in the sense of “ Fie ! for shame ! Fortune.”’ This interpretation is, as its author virtually admits, a refuge of the desperate, for it is not easy to believe that even Lucan could have used the words *es . . .*, *Fortuna*, in the sense of ‘ Fie ! Fortune ! thou (Pompey) art . . . ;’ they could hardly mean anything but ‘ Thou, O Fortune, art.’ But I believe that Mr. Duff has given us more than half the truth ; for the remainder we must resort to the *apparatus criticus*.

All the best MSS. read, not *es*, but *est*. The reason why scholars have rejected this reading seems to be that they have construed *Fortuna* as the subject of *est*. I feel sure, however, that *est* is the correct reading, and that *Fortuna* is vocative, not nominative. The clue to the meaning of the passage seems to be given in the cynical lines 713 sq., where we are told that Fortune allowed Pompey a hasty burial on the seashore that he might not be without a tomb, or rather to prevent him from having a better one (‘ ne iaceat nullo uel ne meliore sepulchro ’). A little later this gibe is directly addressed to Fortune (793 sqq.) :

Placet hoc, Fortuna, sepulchrum
 dicere Pompei, quo condi maluit illum
 quam terra caruisse socer ?

¹ Of Lucan’s invocations of the gods Francken ut h. l. habent apud L. aliquid acerbi.’ (on IV. 192) says, ‘ Saepe inuocationes deorum

(*socer* at the end of the sentence='even Caesar.') Lucan now (860 sq.) delivers his final thrust. 'Ah, Fortune!' he says, 'that mean burial which was all that you would concede to Pompey has not overwhelmed him in nameless obscurity, as you wished; it has exalted him to the rank of a god.' I venture to think that Lucan's sudden savage turning upon Fortune after apostrophizing Pompey is more effective than awkward. It is in the same spirit as Pompey's unexpected *o superi* (630), which has already been mentioned, and it is thoroughly in keeping with the attitude toward Fortune which permeates the second half of the book and appears occasionally elsewhere.

The last three passages dealt with have been grouped together because of the connexion in their thought. We may now go back and consider another passage where the reading of the MSS. requires some defence.

Vv. 717-720. [The soldier Cordus recovers Pompey's body from the water.]

Ille per umbras
ausus ferre gradum uictum pietate timorem
compulit ut mediis quaesitum corpus in undis
duceret ad terram, traheretque in litora Magnum.

Here, as elsewhere, Dr. Postgate has pointed out a real difficulty.¹ He objects to the 'sheer and unredeemed tautology' of the last clause. According to his view, '*traheret*=*duceret*, *in litora*=*ad terram*, and *Magnum*=*quaesitum corpus*.' He therefore conjectures *reducem* for *traheret*; the introduction of this adjective, bearing the characteristic 'emphasis which Lucan throws on to single words,' would, he holds, redeem the passage from the charge of meaningless repetition.

As Dr. Postgate's words imply, tautology in Latin poetry gives no ground for suspicion unless it is 'sheer and unredeemed.' A second clause may repeat all or most of the contents of the previous clause, provided that it adds something to make the meaning clearer or fuller. No one says that Virgil could not have written

sedibus hunc refer ante suis, et conde sepulchro (*Aen.* VI. 152),
even if (as is probable) *sedibus* refers to the *sepulchrum*. Nor does anyone impugn *Aen.* IX. 337 sq.,

felix, si protinus illum
aequasset nocti ludum in lucemque tulisset.

But such instances are scarcely sufficient to justify so useless a tautology as is supposed to be found in the passage under consideration.

It may well be questioned, however, if we have here simply 'vain repetition'; indeed the traditional text seems to furnish that very 'emphasis on a single word' which the emendation mentioned above is designed to obtain. Surely *Magnum* is no mere reiteration of *quaesitum corpus*. Cordus was con-

¹C. Q. I., p. 219.

strained 'to draw the body to land, yea, to drag to the shore him that was called The Great.' *Hic situs est Magnus* (793) was the epitaph which he inscribed on Pompey's tomb; *Magnus* has here the same pathetic force. Again in v. 796 *Magnus* is more than a synonym of *Pompeius*:

Cur obicis Magno tumulum, manesque uagantis
includis?

At the end of Book II. the poet thus concludes an apostrophe of Pompey:

Non quia te superi patrio priuare sepulchro
maluerint, Phariae busto damnantur harenae:
parcitur Hesperiae; procul hoc et in orbe remoto
abscondat Fortuna nefas, Romanaque tellus
immaculata sui seruetur sanguine Magni.

It was certainly not the exigencies of metre that made Lucan speak of *Magnus* here, and not of *Pompeius*.

One other point may be mentioned. As the words *traheret in litora Magnum* in v. 720 are, save for the preposition and the number of the verb, identical with those used in v. 570 (*traherent ad litora Magnum*), Dr. Postgate supposes that the repetition in v. 720 is due to a scribe's reminiscence of the earlier passage. If the above defence of the ordinary reading carries conviction, it will seem more natural to attribute the reminiscence to the poet himself. It is, of course, unconscious, or 'sub-conscious.' Lucan was no more aware of repeating himself in v. 720 than was Virgil of introducing into one of his most solemn passages a reminiscence of the *Coma Berenices* (*Aen.* VI. 460; cf. Catullus, LXVI. 39). Other notable instances of unconscious repetition may be found at I. 82 and 93, *nec gentibus ullis*, IV. 264, *tunc inopes undae*, 292, *iamque inopes undae*, and perhaps VIII. 625, *fluxerunt prospera uitae*, 631, *mutantur prospera uita*. Similar occurrences are not uncommon in prose; there is a peculiarly clumsy case in Liv. IX. 23. 8 sq. Repetitions of single words can perhaps hardly be used to support instances of repeated phrases, but when we find our author writing (IV. 426 sq.).

quod nec uela ferat, nec apertas uerberet undas.
tunc freta seruantur, dum se decliuius undis . . .,

and a little later (448-50),

At Pompeianus fraudes innectere ponto
antiqua parat arte Cilix, passusque uacare
summa freti medio suspendit uincula ponto,¹

we shall be, perhaps, less inclined than ever to say that any repetition is impossible in Lucan.

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¹ In II. 143 sq., where *nocentes* appears at the end of each line, the repetition is intentional.