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## The Second Virgilian Priapean, ll. 6–9:

Norman W. DeWitt

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THE SECOND VIRGILIAN  
PRIAPEAN, ll. 6-9:

I propose the following reading:

'mihi corolla picta vere ponitur,  
mihi rubens arista sole fervido,  
mihi virente dulcis uva pampino,  
mihi coacta duro oliva frigore.'

The first three lines are sound. For the fourth, Vollmer adopted the text of Muretus:

'mihique glauca duro oliva frigore.'

But *que* is a sheer conjecture, and the real cure is rather to be found in the manuscripts themselves. At the end of the line in *R* is found *coacta*, while *H* and *A* give *cocta*, and *B* has *cocta frigo*. Thus some scribe seems to have replaced *coacta* 'wrinkled,' describing the ripe olive berry, by *glauca*, a stock epithet of the olive leaf, the true reading being added in the margin. Being a dull fellow he desired a specification of colour corresponding to *picta*, *rubens*, and *virente* above, and he failed to see that *coacta* connoted *blackness*.

Virgil was amusing himself by parodying himself and by characterising the four seasons in a symmetry of four lines. This trick of versification, an extension of his frequent anaphora, is the same that he is said to have used in the famous quatrain:

'Sic vos non vobis nificatis aves,  
sic vos non vobis vellera fertis oves,  
sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes,  
sic vos non vobis fertis aratra boves.'

We see it again in lines like 58-59 of the Fourth *Eclogue*:

'Pan etiam Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,  
Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice victum.'

In his youth he sowed with the whole sack. At a later time he confined himself mainly to vague paraphrases and fleeting verbal reminiscences of familiar verses. Yet the allusiveness of his mature style had its antecedent in mere parody, as in *Catalepton* X., and in the extended anaphoras above.

NORMAN W. DEWITT.

## POLAR BEARS AT ROME.

Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecl.* VII. 65-6:

aequoreos ego cum certantibus ursis  
spectavi vitulos.

Has it ever been suggested that these were probably polar bears (*Ursus maritimus*)?

Bears, always plentiful in the spectacles, are not referred to elsewhere in connexion with seals or water, though water exhibits usually got special mention—*e.g.*, the crocodiles and hippopotami of Scaurus and Augustus. Nor do I know any bear that would enter water to hunt the seal except the polar bear, of which it is the usual prey.

The *negotiator ursorum*, or fur-trader, who got such a treasure to Rome would be asked how to show it to the best advantage. What better suggestion could he give than to provide a tank, stock it with seals, which were cheap and plentiful, and turn the bears amongst them—assuring to the spectators a fine exhibition of natation with the certainty of a good noisy fight at the finish? That Calpurnius does not draw special attention to the rarity of the bears in no way vitiates the argument; the whole show was a marvel to him and all the wonders equally wonderful.

We have no evidence of the exhibition of animals from the distant North in the time of Nero, but they become increasingly common from Gordian I. onwards; therefore these lines from *Eclogue* VII. may help to fix Calpurnius' date.

GEORGE JENNISON.

Zoological Gardens,  
Manchester.

## REVIEWS

## DAS HOMERPROBLEM IN DER GEGENWART.

*Das Homerproblem in der Gegenwart.*

Prinzipien und Methoden der Homererklärung. Von ENGELBERT DRERUP, Professor an der Universität Würzburg. Pp. xvi+510. (Being Vol. I. of *Homerische Poetik* in three vols.). Druck und Versand: C. J. Becker, Universitäts-Druckerei in Würzburg.

DIESES BUCH,' I regret to say, 'ist ein Kriegsbuch,' and the *Krieg* in

question is not an ordinary war, but a Jihad against 'rationalists' and 'Analytiker,' who either blasphemously deny the unity of the Homeric Poems, or, with more subtle impiety, try to trace their sources and divine any parts of the process by which the Poems have been formed. I regret this, because the spirit of a Jihad, though enlivening to the casual reader, does not make