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On Two Passages in Vergil

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Atossa was on the stage about the business of the dead Darius, and the Chorus,' etc. The proper name Ἀτossa has been corrupted into ἤκουσα, and the verb παρῆν has in consequence been dropped. The reading ἡνίκ' ἀπηγγέλθη, which appears in some inferior MSS. of Aristophanes, is, as Dindorf says, a mere metrical expletive taken from the scholiast's note: ἐν τοῖς φερομένοις Αἰσχύλου Πέρσαις οὕτε Δαρείου θάνατος ἀπαγ-

γέλλεται οὕτε ὁ χορὸς τὰς χεῖρας συγκρούσας λέγει ἰανοῖ. It is quite true, as here stated, that there is no 'narrative of the death of Darius' in the *Persae*, which is sufficient to condemn both ἤκουσα and ἀπηγγέλθη. But it is not equally true that 'the Chorus nowhere exclaim ἰανοῖ.' This remark shows that the scholiast's copy of Aeschylus was already corrupt.

AUSTIN SMYTH.

ON TWO PASSAGES IN VERGIL.

- (i.) Multum adeo, rastris glebas qui frangit inertes
Vimineasque trahit crates iuvat arua, nec illum
Flaua Ceres alto nequiquam spectat Olympo.

Georgics I. 94-96.

THE last words are generally translated 'nor does golden Ceres look down on him in vain from lofty Olympus,' and the double negatives *nec . . . nequiquam* are said to mean 'with a blessing.' The notion is that Ceres looks down from heaven on all husbandmen, and in the case of the especially industrious her look becomes charged with a beneficent potency. This is surely strained, and lays too strong an emphasis upon *nequiquam*. There is another way of interpreting the words which seems to give a better and richer sense, one moreover which is more in accordance with the spirit of the *Georgics*. I would understand the negatives here precisely as they are to be understood in v. 82, *nec nulla interea est inaratae gratia terrae*, which does not mean, 'and meanwhile there is a certain amount of gratitude from the untilled soil,' as the context shows (Vergil is recommending the alternation of crops), but (literally), 'and it is not the case [as it would be if you let the land lie fallow] that there is no gratitude felt by the untilled soil.' Just as *nec* in v. 82 is not to be joined to *nulla* but to the whole sentence, so in vv. 95, 96 I would take *nec*, not with *nequiquam* alone, but with the whole sentence, translating literally, 'and it is not the case [as it would be if he neglected to harrow the ground] that Ceres looks uselessly down upon him from lofty Olympus.' That is, if the farmer is industrious, Ceres comes down from heaven to walk with him in his fields and to bless his

crops. If he is careless, the goddess stays far from him and looks apathetically down from remote (*alto*) Olympus.

In support of this explanation it may be pointed out (i.) that thus *alto* is full of meaning (a meaning emphasised by the juxtaposition of *nequiquam*), whereas on the customary explanation it is quite otiose and so out of keeping with the perfect delicacy of diction which is a leading feature of the *Georgics*; (ii.) that the conception of Ceres involved in it is more in harmony with the spirit of the poem (cp. v. 347: *Cerem clamore uocent in tecta*), and indeed of all poetry which, like this, glorifies the inherent majesty and beauty of the country. Keats' *Ode to Autumn* and the close of Theocritus' seventh *Idyll* afford beautiful and instructive parallels.

- (ii.) Sunt geminae Somni portae, quarum altera fertur

Cornea, qua ueris facilis datur exitus umbris;
Altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto,
Sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia Manes.
His ubi tum natum Anchises unaque Sibyllam
Prosequitur dictis, portaque emittit eburna,
Ille uiam secat ad naues sociosque reuisit.

Aeneid VI. 894-899.

The question has often been asked: 'Why should Anchises send Aeneas through the ivory gate, by which false dreams rise to upper air, instead of through the gate of horn? Does this not seem to discredit the visions which have been granted to Aeneas just before?' May not the explanation be this, that the intention is to free him from the jurisdiction of the infernal powers? By descending into Hades Aeneas has become for a time their subject. If their power

over him is not in some way annulled, it might be thought, he will be ever after under their sway, a ghost walking upper earth. Cf. Eur. *Alc.* 1144-6:

οὐπὼ θέμις σοι τῆσδε προσφωνημάτων
κλύειν, πρὶν ἂν θεοῖσι τοῖσι νερτέροις
ἀφαγνίσηται καὶ τρίτον μόλῃ φάος.

If this theory of the passage is correct, a parallel to it may be found in our own literature. The prologue of Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* is spoken by the ghost of Andrea, whose situation exactly resembles that of Polydorus in the *Hecuba*. He says (vv. 81-83):

Forthwith, Revenge, she [Proserpine] rounded thee
in th' eare,
And bad thee lead me through the gate of Horn,¹
Where dreames have passage in the silent night.

¹ It should be said that this is not as a matter of fact the reading of the earliest edition, which

At the close of his speech he goes back again to the regions of death. Though he comes back for a time to earth, *he remains a ghost*, and so is sent through the gate of horn. Aeneas has been (as it were) a ghost, but by returning to earth he is to resume his former life, and therefore is dismissed through the gate of falsehood, whereby his allegiance to the powers of death is annulled.

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gives 'Hor,' apparently a misprint 'corrected' (naturally enough) to 'Horror' in later editions. 'Horn' is the correction of Hawkins and later editors, including Professor Boas, from whose critical note I take these particulars as to the variants (but not as to the reason for the mistakes in the early texts).

THREE NOTES ON PROPERTIUS.

I. I. xx. 11-16.

A VERY slight emendation will relieve this passage of the chief difficulty which has troubled editors and readers:

Nympharum semper cupidus defende rapinas
(non minor Ausoniis est amor Adryasin);
ne tibi sint duri montes et frigida saxa,
Galle, nec expertos semper adire lacus:
15. quae miser ignotis error perpessus in oris
Herculis indomito fleverat Ascanio.

Quae is usually taken to refer to *duri montes et frigida saxa* and *nec expertos adire lacus*; Hercules is credited with the 'tearful complaint'; and to Propertius is imputed the monstrous affectation of making, not Hercules even, but *error Herculis* utter the tearful complaint. Most people will admit that the softness of *flere* is more appropriate to Hylas than Hercules; and that *error Herculis* is but weakly defended by Homeric court-formulae like βίη, ἴς, ἱερὸν μένος—the equivalents of our 'His Majesty'—or (the parallel adduced by Rothstein) *flagrans amor Herculis Heben sensit . . . gaudia prima* in Prop. I. xiii. 23.

The change of a single letter will turn the application to Hylas and abolish the extravagance of the phrase.

Read *erro* for *error*. Hylas is Hercules'

truant; in v. 42 *errorem tardat* he lets the beguiling reflexions in the water prolong his truant.

That *erro* would be corrupted into *error* was almost a certainty; the word is uncommon, and in one at least of the few places where it occurs in Augustan poetry (*Dirae* 70), sure enough, it was so corrupted by the scribes, and restored by Bembo:

nec nostris servire sinas erronebus agros.

It only remains to read *quas* for *quae*:

*quas miser ignotis erro perpessus in oris
Herculis indomito fleverat Ascanio.*

It is on the *cupidus rapinas* of the Nymphs that the emphasis enhanced by the long protasis *hunc tu sive . . . sive . . . sive . . . sive* falls. Everywhere, always, by all means, beware of a rape by Nymphs! Such was the rape which Hercules' truant suffered. And it is a trick of Propertius, particularly in this book, for a highly emphasised demonstrative to use *qui* and not *hic*, e.g.:

quae mihi dum placata aderit (xiv. 23),

and

quae tibi sit felix (xiii. 35),

or

*quarum nulla tua fuerit mihi, Cynthia, forma
gratior* (xix. 15).