but alert as dogs guarding a flock or a fold, dogs which have heard in the forest the sound of some wild beast.’ These dogs did not run away.

xi.414: ‘As when dogs surround a wild boar and he rushes from the thicket whetting his white teeth, and there is a grinding roar from those teeth, but the dogs stand and await him, even if he is terrible.’ There seems little of the ‘cur’ in this description. These few examples, selected from many, suffice to show how highly the poet of the Iliad valued the fidelity and the bravery of the dog.

There is one scene in the Iliad which reveals an astounding reverence and affection for that animal, and that is in the preparation of the pyre for Patroclus, xxiii.166 ff. Here it is told how under the guidance of Achilles a pile of wood one hundred feet square was erected, sheep in great numbers were slain, cattle were added, then four fine horses were put on the pyre, and finally uppermost and in the place of greatest distinction two dogs, table companions of Achilles, tenderly slain by the hero himself, were offered in honor of Patroclus.

It is a striking proof of the poet’s affection for dogs that in spite of the scarcities of war, he should put nine dogs at the table of the aristocratic Achilles, xxiii.173.

The fact that Achilles had these nine dogs and that two dogs should be given the place of supreme honor on the pyre of Patroclus combine to demolish utterly the theory that the poet of the Iliad despised the breed of dogs. Their repeated bravery in the face of boars and lions and their fidelity in guarding the fold show that he did not regard them as ‘curs’.

It strikes me that the genius who felt that he honored Achilles by putting nine dogs at his table and who gave two dogs the highest place of honor on the pyre of Patroclus was just the one fitted to tell the story of Argos, the dog dying from joy at the return of his master.

However probable disintegrating theories seem when alone and untested, they all ‘fade into air, into thin air’ before the careful reading of Homer.

The feeling for the dog shown in the Odyssey is so similar to that of the Iliad, although not copied, that it is most likely that we have in it an independent creation of the same genius, and we have another cogent proof of the unity of Homer.

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Editor’s Note.—This paper was already set up in type when word of Professor Scott’s death last October reached us. Thus his final contribution is in his favorite field of Homeric scholarship.

The Protagonist in Oedipus Rex

How shall Sophocles make one who has killed his father and married his mother a true tragic character? First, he does not put those crimes on the stage, where they would revolt the spectators. The murder and marriage and the exposure of the infant to death are recited after many years, and to give the recital tragic force the very agents tell the story in fascinating unconsciousness.

A greater problem is the creation of a chief character who can be guilty of fratricide and of what may be styled moral matricide, and yet keep pity from degenerating into disgust and prevent the fear awakened by sympathy with the hero from becoming repulsive horror. Pity is akin to love, and Oedipus is given a heart. He loves his reputed parents and goes into perpetual exile to avoid the very crimes which he commits. He loves Thebes and all its people, and will sacrifice even one of his own home, if need be. He is a loving husband and father. Had he been callous or indifferent, the spectators would abhor him, but, ah, the pity of it!, he dooms himself to eternal blindness, unworthy even to look at father and mother.

Oedipus must not be a mere sentimentalist. He has an impulsive temperament. He makes courageous and instantaneous resolves. He sacrifices what he thinks is his home and country; he slays those who were blocking his way. They were not garbed as king and retinue, but were deemed bandits or aggressors. He faced death in solving the riddle of the Sphinx. Some have thought that being told he would marry his mother, he should not have married Jocasta, but it might be argued that he did so to make sure
he would not marry his supposed mother in Corinth.

Throughout the play Oedipus displays the same intense devotion to duty. The Greek *pas*, 'all', is continually on his lips. 'Tell *all*,' 'I examine all statements,' 'I curse *all*,' 'I killed *all*,' these phrases are indicative of Oedipus, and a search of other plays of Sophocles shows that *pas* is not a Sophoclean but an Oedipodean trait. When finally he knows the whole truth, he catalogues all his crimes as before he catalogued all possible criminals. His devotion to truth will brook no opposition. Spectators breathlessly watch him rushing towards a precipice, wondering what the truth will do to this human question-mark. In his doom he still looks at truth full in the face and attains to the summit of truth, Christian humility of soul.

Students in the calm of retirement may wonder why the solver of enigmas failed to see the truth at once and read the riddle of his life. The swift action of the drama prevents too subtle analysis in spectators. The success of Oedipus has made him too quick in his theories. The truth for him was too close in reality and too remote from a loving heart to be seen at once. In his own person he was Sohrab and Rustum, Hamlet and his uncle, a Sherlock Holmes searching to discover himself. If religious oracles were disregarded, it was blinded love which prompted the disregard, and the retribution was complete, but the pity of spectators for the doom and the fear awakened by the penalty, though keen, would not be depressing. Every heart would follow Oedipus and accompany his exile with profound sympathy.

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**TRAGIC IRONY IN OEDIPUS REX**

It was Thirlwall, the English bishop and scholar, who coined the phrase, 'tragic irony'. Ruskin's 'pathetic fallacy' is a notorious misnomer, and tragic irony may be misleading unless clearly understood. Campbell, the Sophoclean editor, objected to the phrase and suggested another term which has not found favor.

Tragic irony has none of the accomplishments of ordinary irony. By the tone of the voice, by intentional exaggeration, by explicit contradiction, ordinary irony shows that the words uttered are to be taken in a directly opposite sense. Ironical statements are sometimes to the dismay of an author taken literally. It was a student of Holy Cross, Worcester, an ardent Irishman, who years ago wrote a panegyric of England and in a postscript declared: 'This is irony'.

Tragic irony has, indeed, two senses, but it has not the sarcastic accompaniments of ordinary irony. The play of Oedipus, the King, has perhaps more tragic irony than any other drama because of the double character of the protagonist. He is a son who has killed his father and married his own mother, and he is unaware of this hidden relation. The spectators, however, are fully aware of the situation. Their suspense becomes acute when Oedipus utters words which he applies in his sense but which apply equally well to the true reality. When Oedipus hears from Creon that the Sphinx prevented investigation of the murder of Laius, he cries: 'I myself shall again from the beginning reveal what is hidden'. The scholiast says, 'The hearer knows that in Oedipus all shall be revealed,' and when, a few lines later, Oedipus, beginning already to suspect a plot, cries, 'The killer of Laius would wish with the same hand to attack me', the scholiast calls it a 'thriller'. There is the acme of the tragic. Sohrab and Rustum, unknown father and unknown son, went forth in triumph to slay what neither would in reality desire to slay, and Oedipus lifts his own hand unwittingly against himself.

This mental suicide, arising from the double personality of Oedipus, is naturally more vivid and affecting in the earlier scenes. The royal proclamation after the entrance of the chorus has thrilling instances. Oedipus in his generous and universal impulsiveness states that there would have been common ties of common children, had not the offspring of Laius met with bad fortune. He means the closest ties, but the words may signify the tie of wife-mother. It is the same universal kindliness which makes him say, 'I am fighting as if for my own father and I shall go to all extremes'. He then invokes a curse on himself when he includes his own house-