possibilities. For one, accident, the movement of waves, may have played a part: perhaps the sea was rough at the time – or even if calm, it would have been roiled by the manoeuvring of dozens and dozens of ships and the flailing of thousands of oars – and the prow of the Macedonian galley rose up on one wave at the very moment when the prow of Dinocrates' sank down on another. Or it may have been the result of movement of the personnel on deck, which would have a marked effect on the trim of such slender light ships as war galleys. The marines on the *oktêrês* may have run aft to confront a threat at the stern, thereby causing the vessel to rise at the bows, and Dinocrates, seizing the opportunity, launched his attack, at the same time sending the marines on his own ship all the way forward to depress the bows. Unfortunately he struck so hard that his ram struck in the enemy's hull and he could not break loose.

Thus the passage is to be translated:

In an attack on an oktêrês, Dinocrates' galley received a blow above the waterline, since the opposing vessel had its bows elevated, but struck the enemy ship below [the waterline?]; at first he was unable to break free despite repeated attempts to back water, etc.

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- ⁶ In Graevius xii.671-2.
- ⁷ For the shifting of men fore and aft to raise or depress bow or stern, see Dio Cassius 12 (Zonaras 8.16.4), a description of a Roman attack on Hippo in 247 B.C.: the Roman fleet, trapped in the harbour when the locals stretched chains across the mouth, 'escaped thanks to skill and luck. The vessels quickly headed directly toward the chains, and when their rams were just about to get caught on these, those on deck shifted their position to the stern; the bows, lightened in this way, cleared the chains. Then, when they rushed back to the prow, the sterns of the vessels were elevated.'

PLAUTUS, *PSEUDOLUS* 189: GRAIN-MOUNTAINS AND CATTLE-FODDER

Ballio. principio, Hedylium, tecum ago, quae amica es frumentariis, quibu' cunctis montes maxumi frumenti acerui sunt domi: 189 fac sis delatum huc mihi frumentum.

(W. M. Lindsay's OCT)

In the most recent edition of this play (Bristol Classical Press, 1987) M. M. Willcock places an obelus before *montes* with the comment '*montes* and *acerui* get in each other's way'. But in view of its metaphorical use elsewhere in Plautus (e.g. Aul. 701, Mil. 1065, Mos. 352), prima facie suspicion does not fall on montes.

At Cas. 126 post autem ruri nisi tu aceruom ederis/aut quasi lumbricus terram etc., aceruom is open to objection because it lacks further definition: 'a heap' of what? Hence, among other suggestions, Lambinus' aut eruom, 'either vetch'. Here acerui is objectionable because it is superfluous. After the hyperbolic metaphor montes its prosaic literalness does not make stylistic sense. It has all the air of an intrusive gloss. Acidalius thought it was, and so did Leo. But if it is, what it has displaced is beyond recovery, and a past participle passive is as good an unfounded guess as any: hence Ritschl's sunt structi, Bergk's aggesti sunt and Bothe's aceruati.

Scribes are, however, capable of more subtle errors than merely supposing that marginal or suprascript variants, intended as explanations, are in fact corrections. A transcriber, forced by *frumenti* to extract from *montes* its literal meaning *acerui*, could write what was in his mind, if his mind's eye saw what he was thinking, i.e. if the

word(s) in his exemplar bore a significant resemblance to it by e.g. containing a selection of the same letters. Hence Schoell suggested *atque erui*, a facile conjecture giving inappropriate sense: corn-merchants do not accumulate mountains of cattle-fodder. I propose:

quibu' cunctis montes maxumi frumenti accreuerunt domi.

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PROPERTIUS' 'PATERNAL ASHES'

At 3.9.37–8, Propertius says that he will not bewail (sc. in epic verse) the destruction of Thebes by the Epigonoi or the earlier assault on the city by the Seven:

non flebo in cineres arcem sedisse paternos Cadmi, nec septem proelia clade pari. 37

That nec...pari in 38 refers to the Seven, with Lipsius' septem for the manuscripts' semper, J. D. Morgan demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt in his discussion of the couplet in CQ 36 (1986), 186–8. But Morgan's chief concern in that discussion was with paternos at the end of 37, and it is his treatment of that adjective which prompts this note.

Following Postgate (CR 15 [1901], 408 n. 1), against Housman (CR 9 [1895], 352 = Classical Papers i [1972], p. 372), who had felt that 'this was poetical, to say that the falling fortress blent her ashes with those of her former defenders', Morgan argued that paternos lacks an obvious referent, and that the ashes in question ought to be those of the Cadmeia itself, just as, for example, the fires mentioned by Vergil at Aen. 2.624 and 9.445 ('considere in ignis' bis) are those of Troy itself ablaze. And so, after properly brief consideration of Heinsius' paternam, Unger's arces... paternas, and Postgate's repentes, he emended paternos to perustam: '... the buildings of the Cadmeia are set afire, and after the flames have consumed the supporting timbers, they collapse into fiery ashes. Propertius could not have chosen a more appropriate word than perustam to indicate the total destruction of the Cadmeia by the Epigoni'.²

I know that Morgan will understand if I object that his *perustam* adds excessive heat to the line, and that his explanation for the corruption of *perustam* into *paternos*, in at least three distinct steps, is not convincing. There may be an easier way to get rid of *paternos*. Read:

non flebo in cineres arcem sedisse parentis

We now have a reference to Cadmus the 'father' or 'founder' of Thebes; one may compare the identical use of *parens* at 4.10.17, 'urbis virtutisque parens' (of Romulus), for which Camps (*ad loc.*) cites Liv. 1.16.3 ('parentem...urbis Romae salvere...Romulum iubent') and Cic. *Att.* 9.10.13 ('me quem nonnulli conservatorem istius urbis, quem parentem esse dixerunt'). The enjambement in

¹ He noted that arcem...paternam and arces...paternas could refer only to Cadmus' birthplace, Tyre, and that Postgate erred in assuming that the line refers to the 'sudden' destruction of the Theban palace, and the death of Semele, at the birth of Dionysus, since the context requires a reference to a war worthy of epic poetry.

² Morgan also thought highly of *tepentes*, suggested to him by a CQ referee, and rightly so, for it is an attractive conjecture.