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Editorial

It certainly looks as though *Vates* has become something like an annual journal, and that seems to me to be just about right. If each subsequent issue can have the same wonderful range of contributions as this issue then I’m happy to wait a year between numbers.

As always I offer my deep gratitude to all the contributors who have generously given their time and the fruits of their labours to support this journal.

There are two places to discover *Vates*. On Facebook you can connect with other readers and writers:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/vates

And if you want to check out, read or download back issues of *Vates* you can visit the wordpress site here:

https://vatesblog.wordpress.com/

Mark Walker, Editor
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Carmina Latina

1 Haiku & 2 Tanka

Florian Waldner

*Florian writes:* I have translated three old German poems of mine (one haiku, two tankas) into Latin. It’s always fascinating for me to see how things work out in different languages, especially with such strict forms like haiku or tanka where every syllable counts. But I have not handled the English translations quite so strictly, otherwise I might have ended up with totally different English poems as well!

**Cum fele vivans**

*Catillum fumans*

*Sollicitat me - inane!*

*Pellicula affuit.*

**Living with a cat**

The steaming plate attracts me – empty!
Plushy was here.

* * *

**De Venere Marteque**

*Cum concenimus*

*Venus nobis alluxit.*

*O me felicem!*
Sed tecum Mars imigrat

Certatio velorum.

Venus and Mars

The moment we met
Venus gleamed for us
Oh happy me!

But Mars moved in with you
Quarrel about curtains

* * *

Satis est

Somno opprimor

Lectulo dulcissimo

demum incido

Sed tres horae satis sunt

Canis vicini latrat

Enough!

Sleep overhelms me
Oh sweetest bed!
I fall onto you.

But three hours are enough
The neighbour's dog barks.

* * *
David Money

David writes: Before I am accused of commenting on foreign affairs of which I am ignorant, let me make that point myself. I have had no contact with Ms Erra, at the time of writing (July/August 2018); I have not yet visited her town or nation; I do not speak any Catalan (or indeed Castilian), so any contact would have to be in English or Latin (or maybe my attempts at Italian or French). I am aware that other political views are possible, and I do not endorse Ms Erra’s party.

My sole information for this epigram comes from a special report in a generally respected British newspaper, The Economist. (Though it looks like a magazine, it calls itself a newspaper, and does not confine itself to the dismal science.) I may sometimes disagree with its stance on domestic British matters, but am happy to accept it (unless better informed from other sources) as a reasonably unbiased guide to events on the Iberian peninsula, and other parts of the world. See: ‘The strain in Spain’, Economist special report, 28 July 2018, p. 5. Anna Erra is currently mayor of Vic, a Catalan town to the north of Barcelona.

Technical note on metre

Lines 5-6 are in legal elegiacs, a metrical innovation. The hexameter lacks a strong main caesura; there is only a weak caesura in the third foot. The pentameter is topsy-turvy: the hemistichs are reversed, so that the first half of the line contains two dactyls, and the second half contains two spondees.

This is an attempt at a higher, or ‘court’ verse form (perhaps used for the crimes of Elagabalus): aulæ supremæ ciuitatis elegi. Compare an earlier attempt to vary the elegiac, by making it limp (like a scazon: so, ending the pentameter with a trochee rather than an iamb): scazontes-eglos denique mitto Romam [towards / your hand limp-elegies I send Romewards]: Money, ‘A Metrical Experiment’, in Dirk Sacré, ed., “Carmina nunc quoque Romanis resonantia chordis”: Flores Latini ex horto poesis hodiernae selecti (Kortrijk: KULAK, 2001), pp. 42-43. That was in Latinitas maculata (Makem Latin), the dialect of the Black Cats’ country south of the River Tyne, North-East England. I think, though, that this latest innovation, the legal elegiac, is a bolder and more useful variation, and I would like to see it widely adopted in modern Latin verse.
Erra, regis Vicum uicino freta favore;

talis erit felix esse minister erae.

libertas gentis ueniat cum pace: rebelles

quamquam hostis socios forte uocare petat.

obstat iniquae legis inenodabilis error,

iudiciumque bonis infensum uotis.

macte: nouas det res priscae Victoria plebi;

o domina, haud erras: semper et Erra regat.

Metre: Elegiac Couplets (lines 5-6, Legal Elegiacs: see note above)

Translation: Ms Erra, you govern your neighbourhood, confident in your neighbours’ support. Anyone would be fortunate to serve such a governor. May the freedom of your people come peacefully, even though an opponent may perhaps call your allies ‘rebels’. The inexplicable confusion of ill-judged law stands in the way, along with a judgement that is at odds with good will. Go on! May the Olympic goddess (Nike) allow an ancient people to enjoy new circumstances. Madam, you are not in error; and may Ms Erra always govern.

*   *   *
David Money

David writes: In the interests of balance, I offer this poem alongside ‘No Error’. It attempts to render in Latin verse, as clearly as I can, the essence of the Spanish government’s position, as far as I understand it; the European Union also supports this position. If others can put it more clearly, or in better verse, I invite them to do so.

An important literary model is Robert Graves, ‘The Persian Version’ – and as Graves was a friend of Spain (certainly, of the Balearic Islands), I hope its appropriateness will be appreciated. I would have liked to imitate, also, Graves’ wonderful poem on the Caves of Artá: but perhaps that would need to be done in English. For both poems, see: K. Amis, ed., The New Oxford Book of Light Verse (Oxford: OUP, 1978), pp. 231-32; for ‘The Persian Version’ only, R. Graves, Poems Selected by himself (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p. 147.

As the poem addresses matters of law, it is worth stressing that the subject known as jurisprudence – that is, asking not what the law actually is at present, but how we should determine what it ought to be – was considered part of philosophy, when I was a student in the 1980s, and therefore as a wholly relevant and important part of the study of Literae Humaniores.

Perhaps it is summed up, though, by that great philosopher W. S. Gilbert: ‘The law is the true embodiment / of everything that’s excellent.’ And when we read in a lesser Victorian, ‘If the law supposes that . . . the law is a ass [sic] – a idiot’ – we must remember that the words are spoken by a disreputable character. Nor is Shakespeare likely to be speaking in his own voice at 2 Henry VI, 4. 2. [78] (Using the text of Wells and Taylor, Oxford 1998: The First Part of the Contention, p. 79). Finally, the classical reader is invited to recall Horace, Epistles 1. 1. 24-25.

On a more political level, and since the Spanish government has been, in past decades, such a friend of Germany, I offer this suggestion from a German author, ‘for the government to dissolve the people and elect another’ (Brecht, ‘The Solution’, 1953: cited in E. Knowles, ed., Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, 7th edn. (2009), p. 156).
lex est lex: legis domini sumus undique recti;
nos lex rectores nuntiat esse probos.
nam Scoti uarie meriti suffragia quondam
(dissimiles nobis) pura tulere sua.
diversus populus: gens non coniuncta Britannis,
Angliacam linguam uix potuere loqui.
Principis et Caroli maerore recentia bella
implent Scotorum corda; uirosque mouent.

ergo decernunt recte pro plebe futurum,
eligere et possunt Scotica tuta fide.
dissimile est nobis: habet unam Hispania linguam,
perpetua et tellus pace per aeua manet.
sunt contra legem nostrae suffragia genti;
una est, una fuit, gens erit una tonans.
gens infra legem est: nam lex servire popello
spernit; sub domina lege minora colant.
imperium vastum Bruxellis uiribus amplis
consentit: rixae denique finis erit.
Metre: Elegiac Couplets

Translation: The law is the law. We are the rightful masters of the law, in all respects. The law declares us to be worthy rulers. As for the Scots (who are quite unlike us), they did once – quite rightly – give their votes freely on both sides of a referendum. They are a separate people; their nation was not joined to the Britons, and they were scarcely able to speak the English language. The recent wars of Prince Charles (as recent as 1745!) fill the hearts of the Scots with sadness, and rouse up their manhood. Therefore they are rightly able to decide the future on behalf of the common people; and they can make choices on Scottish matters safely, in good faith.

It is a very different matter for us: Spain has a single language; the land enjoys continuous peace that has lasted for centuries. Free votes (referendums) are against the law for our people. Our race is united; it always was united; and it will always be a thundering great people.

The people are beneath the law: for the law disdains to serve the vulgar populace. The little people ought to devote themselves to lesser concerns, under their master, the law.

From Brussels, the European Union – with its ample powers – agrees with us. So at last that will be the end of the dispute.

* * *
Miles writes: I was inspired to write these poems whilst studying Catullus at the university of Iowa. These poems, in my opinion, reflect the negative aspects of Catullus’ relationship with Lesbia, though through new words. The first poem reflects the sentiments throughout the Catullan body of work, equating love to a disease. The second and third poems reflect the loss and pain associated with a failing love, and demonstrate a feeling of being unmanned, as in Catullus 63.

*Certe amorem do. Superare pestem*

*Non volo: Quam mi, mihi tu dedisti*

*Plus amo quam tete oculis meis, et*

*Non superare*

Metre: Sapphics

Translation: Certainly, I give love (to you). To conquer (this) pestilence I do not wish: Which to me, to me you gave. I love you more than my own eyes, and I do not (wish) to conquer (this pestilence).

* * *

*Solus vah sum ego. Dis visum est me nunc ita mi esse:

Dicent, “fas est te, stulte, tenere nihil.”*

Metre: Elegiac couplet

Translation: Oh, I am lonely. It seemed (right) to the gods that I be thus now, from my perspective. They say, “It is right that you, fool, have nothing.”

* * *
Do tibi magnum donum quod sit dulce; catenatus. Do mi nil sed cordolum, Rosa, nunc.

Quid ni? Fas est me venari nunc mihi tam lupidam spurcam quod sum nil ego, non ego vir.

Canus sum, canus flet sic qui, mentula defutaet deservit. Nil mihi das, lupa, tu.

Metre: Elegiac Couplets

Translation: I, chained, give to you a great gift which is sweet. I give myself nothing but heartache now, Rose. Why not? It is right to me that I hunt now a flirt. So impure, because I am nothing, not a man. I am an grey man, a grey man who cries thus, a dick who serves a fucked-out girl. You, whore, give me nothing.

*   *   *

11
Invisibilis Ars

Jelle Christiaans

Jelle writes: Based on the true story of a San Franciscan teen, whose actions stumped everybody.

*museo posuit studens novam artem*

*cuius significantias profundas*

*multi alteque diuque cogitabant*

*vos, o innocui atque ineptientes*

*vere, o fatui, putastis istas*

*nugas discipuli iocantis artem?*

*sciatis modo inane perspicullum!*

**Metre**: Phalaecian hendecasyllables

**Translation**: Invisible art

In a museum, a student exhibited new art
whose profound meaning
many pondered deeply and for a long time

You, o innocent and senseless
Did you really, o fools, believe that those trifles of a jesting student, were art?
May you know, that it was merely a pair of inane glasses!

* * *
**GENVS FVRENS: Ad Lycobaten Jenniges**

**Brad Walton**

*Brad writes:* I wrote this rant for a friend, after he sent me some photographs of a medieval church which had been renovated in a style somewhere between modernist and brutalist.

Delirant homines cuncti

semper, ubique.

semper, ubique furunt homines

aut magis aut minus.

quod paritur sanum, lympphant,

et vitiant proba.

formosissima deformant.

turpia quaerunt.

tranquilla spoliant requie

seque suosque.

commoda, honesta negant, renuunt

ipsa lucrosa,

ut se decipiant somnis

blanditiisque.
nec curant quantos faciant
quotque dolores,
falsa sui dum sit salva et
sospes imago.
quis numerare potest furias?
quis describere?
ne quaeras penitus sanum
credulus orbem:
nil melius sperare potes
quam generari
tempore quo minus exundat
saeva phrenesis,
quando leaena gravis dapibus
sanguinolentis
somniculosa feros condit
nonnihil ungues;
argutamve leves simii
garrulitatem
All human beings are always and everywhere mad. Always and everywhere human beings are crazy (more or less). What is created sane, they drive insane, and they mar what is excellent. They make the most beautiful things ugly, and seek after the repulsive. They rob themselves and their loved ones of untroubled peace. The refuse both the expedient and honorable, even profit they turn down, to deceive themselves with flattering illusions. They don’t care how much and how great the misery they create, so long as their own false self-image is safely preserved. Who can count the lunacies? Who can describe them? Do not naively seek a completely sane world. You cannot hope for anything better than to be begotten in a time when unhinged insanity is less widespread: when the lioness, gorged on her blood-soaked feast, sleepily draws in her claws a little, or the capricious monkeys relax their shrill chatter and the follies in which life is spent.
Jelle writes: Only after more than two millennia has the Roman poet Catull (84-53BC) managed to elicit a response from Lesbia, a girl whom he greatly admires and to whom he’s written numerous poems that she’d always left unanswered – until now.

Prave, perfide! Tu, Catulle turpis!
Tene nunc etiam me amare censes,
foedo ardere asino; calere caeno;
verbis futileibus tuis moveri?
Numne inepta mihi placere reris
ioca sordida, quae voces poesin?
Numne quod facias in angiportis
noctis concubio pudore nullo
furtim vel quotiens eas Suburas
vel quot scorta lupasque ibi salaci
soleas stabulo irrumare nuptas
me nescire putas? Proterva facta!
Heroem simulas, pium poetam!
Ecce vir sapiens! Qui alit capitis
suas delicias, bovique centum
dein mille oscula dat paludem olenti!
Ecce amatus homo! Quo in urbe nemo
mortuo lacrimas dolens profundet!
O tam castus ut ebriositate
in lucem madeat nec e taberna
possit mane suam domum invenire!
(Nonne te meritoriae puellae
potuere tuae adiuvare mattum?)
I illuc, unde negas redire quemquam
et is passer, amare quem videris,
tecum una pereat, poeta taetere!

**Metre:** Phalaecian hendecasyllables

**Translation:** Lesbia to Catullus

Crooked, treacherous! You, wicked Catullus!
Do you still think that I love you,
that I’m burning for an abominable donkey, for a bastard,
that I’m moved by your futile words?
You don’t think that I like those foolish
dirty jokes you call poetry?
You don’t think that I don’t know what you do in alleys,
in the dead of the night with no shame
secretly or how many times you go to Suburra
or how many prostitutes or married whores you’re accustomed
to irrumating in a dirty brothel? Shameless actions!
You pretend to be a hero, a pious poet!
Look at the wise man! He feeds his sweetheart
with fodder and gives his bull, who smells like marsh,
a hundred then a thousand kisses!
Look at the beloved man! When he dies, nobody
in the city will mourningly shed any tears!
O so chaste, that he’s drunk until daylight
from dipsomania and can’t find his own home
from the tavern in the morning!
(Couldn’t your harlots help out drunk you?)
Go thither, whence you deny that anyone returns
and may that sparrow, that you seem to love,
perish with you, foul poet!

*   *   *

18
Ad Orbem Novum

Marco Cristini

Marco writes: I wrote this poem while flying for the first time to the USA (that is, _ad orbem novum_). Once I finished reading a few (actually, quite boring) academic articles which I had brought with me, I realized that the plane was still over Greenland (alias _ultima Thule_) and that I had to endure the flight for another six hours in order to reach my destination, Kalamazoo. So I composed a short Virgilian cento, describing the arrival of a few tired Italian travelers to the American shores. All words but one, which is not very difficult to spot, are taken from the _Aeneid._

Oceani finem iuxta solemque cadentem,
planities ignota iacet tutique receptus,
terra procul uastis colitur Mauortia campis,
hinc populum late regem belloque superbum,
imperium oceano, famam qui terminet astris,
fortuna omnipotens et ineluctabile fatum
progenuit, pedibus celerem et pernicibus alis.
huc feror; haec fessos tuto placidissima portu
accipit. Hic, pelagi tot tempestatibus actis,
aequatae spirant aurae; datur hora quieti.
incerti quo fata ferant, ubi sitere detur,
summissi petimus terram et uox furtur ad auris.
“ecce tibi Americae tellus; hanc arripe uelis”.

consurgunt nautae et magno clamore morantur,

“uentum ad supremum est. terris agitare uel undis fluctibus oppressos Troas caelique ruina haud pater ille uelit, summí regnator Olympi”.

ut primum placatí animi et trepida ora quierunt, Americam petere et terras temptare repostas imperat et laetus fluuio succedit opaco ipsé gubernator, puppi sic fatur ab alta:

“híc labor extremus; longarum haec metu uiarum!”.

Translation:

Near Ocean’s bound and the setting sun lies a hidden plain and a safe shelter; there lies the war-god’s far land of widespread plains.

From it a people, kings of broad realms and proud in war, who shall limit his empire with ocean, his glory with the stars, almighty fortune and inevitable fate brought forth, swift of foot and fleet of wing.

Hither I sail and a most peaceful land our weary band in a safe haven receives. Here, after so many ocean-storms, the breezes breathe steadily, the hour is given to rest.

Uncertain whither the fates lead, where it is granted us to settle, prostrate, we make for the shore and a voice comes to our ears: “Behold! Before thee is the land of America! Make sail and seize it!”. Up spring the sailors and they linger clamoring loudly: “The end is reached. To chase over land or wave the Trojans, overwhelmed by the sea and by the falling heavens,
the mighty sire, sovereign of high Olympus, would not suffer”.
Soon as minds were calmed and restless tongues were hushed, to make for America and explore lands remote
the helmsman in person orders and joyfully enters the shady river, while speaking thus from the high stern:
“This was the last trial, this the goal of our long voyaging!”

[Trans. by H. Rushton Fairclough (Loeb, London – New York 1916-1918), with slight modifications]

Commentary:

1: Aen. 4.480 | 2: Aen. 11.527; ignota: the author had never visited the USA before | 3: Aen. 3.13; Mauortia: possible allusion to the army of the United States | 4: Aen. 1.21; populum late regem: Latin equivalent of ‘superpower’ | 5: Aen. 1.287; imperium oceano: singularis pro plurali, it means the Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean; famam … astris: likely allusion to the Apollo Program and to the first Moon Landing | 6: Aen. 8.334; ineluctabile fatum: a reference to the concept of “Manifest Destiny” | 7: Aen. 4.180; pedibus celerem: Americans Justin Gatlin and Tori Bowie were the reigning 100 metres world champions in May, 2018, since they both won the gold medal at the 2017 World Championships in Athletics (London, August 2017); pernicibus alis: it is uncertain whether the verse alludes to the United States Air Force or to American Airlines | 8: Aen. 3.78 | 9: Aen. 3.708; tot tempestatibus actis: there was much turbulence during the flight; actis: I prefer actis instead of actus, following Serv. | 10: Aen. 5.844 | 11: Aen. 3.7; incerti … detur: because of a storm, it was unclear whether the plane would be allowed to land in Kalamazoo or not | 12: Aen. 3.93 | 13: Aen. 3.477; on Virgil and the USA, see B.H. LÉVY, L’Empire et les cinq rois, Paris 2018, pp. 62-66, and also the US dime (ten-cent coin) | 14: Aen. 5.207; nautes: the passengers | 15: Aen. 12.803 | 16: Aen. 1.129; fluctibus: the waves (of the sky), air currents; Troas: there were many Italians on the plane, who are called Trojans because they are descendants of the ancient Romans, in turn descendants of the Trojans; caelique ruina: as in v. 9, it alludes to turbulence during the flight | 17: Aen. 7.558: a learned metaphor for the weather | 18: Aen. 11.300 | 19: Aen. 3.364 | 20: Aen. 7.36; fluui opaco: the river Kalamazoo, which flows near the Battle Creek International Airport, was murky due to the storms of the previous days | 21: Aen. 5.12 – Aen. 8.115; gubernator: the airline pilot | 22: Aen. 3.714; the verse expresses a clear sense of relief, which is understandable after a tumultuous nine-hour flight.

* * *
Michael writes: This represents the first of my output in latin verse and upon reviewing my later works, still seems to be my best. The poem is a short piece, sapphic in metre though elegiac in theme, a lament as much it is a petition to and for a lost love of mine, written, as it suggests, during a rather sweltering summer. This may be as much a poem as it is a sunstroke.

Aestuose nunc ut apes nitenti
lilio flagrant, mihi cor calore
fervet aestatis, etiamsi abesset
Caelina cara.

Non abes semper nec ades puella,
Exitu deflens reliquae cicadae;
Clausa tam frigescis; ut evanescat
Flamma oculorum.

Sole te occultas breviorque nobis
Iam dies fit. Caelina cara, licet
Feverishly now, while the bees are subject to the blooming lily, my heart is aflame with the summer's heat as though my heavenly beloved were away. Neither always afar nor near my girl, weeping the last cicada's departure, locked away you grow so cold the flame of your eyes diminishes. You hide yourself from the sun while already our day grows shorter. Heavenly beloved, let this burning heart warm yours now cool, before the winter winds blow.
Michiel writes: As some medieval manuscripts document, cats sometimes deemed it necessary to stain books with their inky paws or even worse by urinating on them. My poem is about a medieval scribe who befriended a cat only to discover the disastrous effects of his feline friendship. Accordingly, I used post-classical metre (cf. ‘Estuans intrinsecus’ by the Archpoet), orthography (nichil, michi) and grammar (last line).

Nuper amicitiam falsa feles finxit,
mentem meam blandula malo modo vinxit
sed atratis pedibus librum meum tinxit
et nefanda quadrupes super librum minxit.

Inquinavit furcifer illud ornamentum:
partim pulchris paginis deest atramentum,
partim nichil superest nisi purgamentum;
sic reliquit animal doli documentum.

Liber meus optimus omnium librorum
sordidus et minctus est: mixtio liquorum;
non iam michi cordi sit caritas cattorum:
infelicitatis fons, copia malorum.

Ubivis micturiens iste cattus catus
fateatur scelera erga magistratus,
neque neget proditor crimen obstinatus
statim a Pontifice sit exorcizatus!

**Metre:** Goliardic stanza (Vagantenstrophe); rhythmic trochaic

**Translation:** The Scribe and the Cat

Recently a fraudulent cat pretended to be my friend
and in a charming manner captivated my mind
but with inked paws he stained my manuscript
and the horrible quadruped urinated on the book.

The villain polluted that ornament:
partly, on some beautiful pages there is no ink left
partly, there is nothing left but rubbish
thus, the animal left an example of his trickery.

My best book of all books,
is sordid and urinated on: a mixture of liquids;
may the love for cats no longer be in my heart:
the source of unhappiness, a lot of misery.

That shrewd cat that wants to urinate everywhere
should confess his crimes before the magistrates
and lest the obstinate traitor deny the crime
he should immediately be exorcized by the Pope!

* * *

25
Visit Grand Haven

David Money

David writes: Grand Haven is the county seat of Ottawa county, Michigan, USA; population about 10,000; charmingly located on the shore of Lake Michigan, at the mouth of the Grand River – and thus ‘the best four-season destination in Michigan’.

I have not visited Grand Haven, and cannot vouch personally for the accuracy of these claims. I have seen a few other places in Michigan: indeed, I have even been to Hell, and back.

Though a distinct and desirable destination, as far as visitors are concerned, in formal administrative terms (as noted by Wikipedia) Grand Haven forms a part of the Grand Rapids Metropolitan Area (a substantial area, with a population of about a million). Hence the mention of the ‘City of the rapid river’ in the first line of the poem.

My warm thanks to Karana L., Customer Service Coordinator, of visitgrandhaven.com; sort-of thanks also to ‘Vivek’, not of visitgrandhaven.com, for assistance with inspiration.

grandis adest portus; rapidi est pars fluminis Urbis:

qui uacat, ante alias oppida nostra legat.

adsidua arguta uirtute Karana laborat

ut prope nos tibi sit splendida quaeque dies.

gaudet, cum gelida glaciem niue bruma reponit;

aestate; auctumno; uere Karana uiget.

quae mora? uix dubito quin (si sapientia ducat)

haec loca te placeat uisere amoena: ueni!
Metre: Elegiac Couplets

Translation:

The Haven is indeed Grand; it is part of the Urban area of the rapid river. Anyone taking a vacation ought to choose our town ahead of other cities. The busy Karana works with graceful skill to ensure that each day you spend with us is a great one. She rejoices, when winter brings back ice with chilly snow; in summer, fall, and spring Karana thrives. Why the delay? I can hardly doubt that (if good sense is your guide) it would please you to visit these pleasant locations: come on!

* * *
Two poem from Alice Through the Looking Glass

Christopher M. Brunelle

Chris writes: Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass are famous enough to have been translated into nearly 200 different languages, often repeatedly; Polish alone boasts nine different translations, Japanese twenty-nine. Why, then, is there only one in Latin? Clive Carruthers’ renditions of Alicia in terra mirabili (1964) and Aliciae per speculum transitus (quaeque ibi invenit) (1966) are lively, witty, and faithful, but his Latin poems, which tend to use the same rhythmic schemes as the English originals, require from the reader a certain suspension of accessional disbelief.

So here’s one of Carroll’s poems (“In winter, when the fields are white”, from Through the Looking Glass) in two different Latin meters. I wrote the first while driving through New York on Interstate 90, the second through Maine on Interstate 95. Whether there’s a connection between the metre and the scenery, I can’t say.

1: In hendecasyllables.

Hiems sub nive candidat per arva;
Tunc carmen lepidum hoc tibi revolvo.
Vere frons viret arbores per omnes;
Tunc sententia nostra se resolvat.
Multi solis et est caloris aestas;
Tunc forsan pateat Camena cordi.
Autumno rutilat comata silva;
Tunc sermo est calamo tibi notandus.
Quoddam piscibus ipse nuntium do,
“Hoc est quod cupio,” dicente lingua.
Reddunt pisciculi aestuántis undae
“O princeps homínium, nequimus haec, cum—”
Rescribo caput assērens ad unum:
Fungi commonitís magís placere.
Cui pisces hilári loquuntur ore,
“Di boni, stomachare praeter aequum!”
Narratum semel his idem renarro;
Hostíli monitum fugant ab aure.
Olla iam captur recens capaxque,
Digna qua facinus mihi patretur.
Saltat et penitus tremit meum cor;
Olla aquis mihi publicis repletur.
Venit nescióquis refertque verba,
“Squameum tenet agmen omne Morpheus.”
Cui contra tenebris loquor remotis,
“Ipse consurgant facias necesse est.”
Vox est maxima clarioque fide;
Adsto proximus obstrepoque in aurem.
Corde sed rigidus vir est et ore;
“Obstrepas licet aequiore voce.”
Ore et est rigidus vir atque corde;
“Ut surgant operam” inquit “ipse dem, si—”
Cochlea mihi bacchica recepta
Ut surgant abeo iuvatque nemo.
Porta quae reserata iam videtur
Compello, quatio; peto, retundo;
Portae quae mihi clausa iam videtur
Convertatur ut ansa nitor, atqui—

2: In Gollardics.
Arva nitent hieme;    fit hoc melos ibi.
Vere viret Silva; tunc    for quid velit sibi.
Aestas dies prorogat; tunc mens tibi clara.
Autumnalis marcat frons; tunc tabellas ara.

Verba misi piscibus;    voluntatem scripsi.
Aequoris pisciculi    responderunt ipsi,
Quorum haec sententia: “hoc nequimus, quia—”
“Servientes” ego tunc “facietis pia.”

Albis illi dentibus “Stomacharis plane!”
Monui iam monitos; nil effeci sane.
Lebes manu raptus est ad agendum suetus
Corque dum praetrepidat antlia repletus.

Tunc mi dixit aliquis “Dormiunt iam pisces.”
Ego dixi “Cuique dic ‘Statim expergisces.’”’
Voce clara; maxima proximus clamavi;
Cui “Ne clames!” rettulit more, vultu gravi.

Vultu, more gravi post: “Per me fiat, nisi—”
Me correpta cochlea suscitatum misi.
Reserata porta iam est a me quassata;
Clausae tamen vertere ansam conor, at, a!—

* * *
Lydia Ariminensis

Lydia writes: Mare Adriaticum ab alto conspectum, undarum scintillae, vespere quies et spiritus recreans hos versus tulerunt. The Adriatic Sea seen from 'high, the glitter of the waves, the quiet and the life-giving breath of the evening offered by the breeze inspired these verses.

Aura secunda fluens recreat sub vespere corda
scandit post aestum limina caerulea

in curvis lassisque humeris errat vaga collis
sensim submissis et sopori placido

et requieti dum passim longe mare fulget
undifluum leviter fluctibus undisonum

Decipiunt homines solacia somnia curis...

Metre: Elegiac Couplets

Translation: Evening Breeze

The pleasant breeze which toward evening blows restores the soul
It ascends the lofty heights of heaven after the day's oppressive heat
and wanders upon the weary, sloping backs of the hills
which are slowly quieted with peaceful sleep and rest
while here and there the sea far off sparkles,
peacefully rippling and gently resounding.

Comforting dreams deceive men of all their cares...

*     *     *
An Octo-poem: for Satoshi

David Money

David writes: This poem is dedicated to Professor Satoshi Ogihara, of Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan. He is a specialist in Greek philosophy; also a generous host, and the occasion for the poem was a dinner in an octopus restaurant. The final couplet refers to the happy accident that he and his wife first met each other when they were residents of the same apartment block, and needed to complain about a noisy neighbour who was irritating them both.

An interesting poetic challenge was incorporating his first name (a normal one in Japanese) into a Latin poem. If we split the name up, it can become three normal Latin words, ‘sat’ [enough], ‘os’ [mouth], and ‘hi’ [those men, plural of ‘hic’]. (That is not how the Japanese syllables work: sa-to-shi ... but that seems a small matter, with two such different tongues.) Those three Latin words, of course, are fairly meaningless as a phrase, if taken on their own; the challenge was therefore to incorporate them into a sentence, in which they can make sense, and be appropriate to the person who is being celebrated. I hope I have managed that, though the result may perhaps seem rather forced: ‘hi’ agreeing with ‘discipuli’, ‘suave’ with ‘os’, and ‘sat’ adverbial – ‘a sufficiently delightful mouth / voice / eloquence’.

Ogihara-sensei, arigato gozai mashita – tomodachi yori.

octipedum causa coctorum uersibus octo
tam rapide coctis te celebrare decet.
namque iuuentutis tu dogmata prisca Platonis
  audes Eoae uoce docere tua:
  ad quam rem dignam semper te suave SAT OS HI
discipuli adfirment exhibuisse boni.
uicino ad faustum strepitu coniunctus amorem

cum dulci exemplar coniuge sortis habes.

Metre: Octo-podes: that is, eight lines, in elegiac couplets

Translation: Because of some cooked octopus, it is right for me to praise you in eight verses, cooked up pretty damn quick.

For you are daring enough to teach, in your own style, the ancient doctrines of Plato to the youth of the East.

And in that worthy cause, those good pupils of yours might declare that you have always shown a sufficiently delightful kind of eloquence.

Being joined with your sweet spouse in fortunate love, thanks to a neighbouring din, you possess a Platonic Form of good luck.

*   *   *

35
Jelle writes: The Japanese have a hard time distinguishing between the letters R and L, often mixing them up – which they are commonly mocked for. This is because the Japanese language itself doesn’t make a distinction between the two, instead employing the so-called ‘Japanese R’, which is a mixture between an R and an L sound. This regularly poses a problem when learning languages that do distinguish between the two, such as English, or when reading Latin poetry...

*Succurre, Musa! Nunc enim meae mentí*

*tristes maestitias injiciunt pectora perdita,*

*quae a solis ortu maximum trahunt nomen*

*Te, Musa; auxilium ferre peto! Namque videntur is*

*L Rque in unum nescientibus mixta*

*(Quaeso, credite mi! Vera loquor! Credere quod cano)*

*nolite falsum!) Tam arduum et grave et durum*

*amplexum choriambum insolitum pyrrhichios breves*

*a choliambo, qui moratur in fine;*

*discretu Japonis immeritis terribilem crucem hanc*

*Qualis tumultus, quale inordinatum esset;*

*si versus legerent magnificos claraque carmina?*
Discurrerentne ut urbe Troici urente

quamquam essent Danaum promoniti ligneum

equum dolum?

Heu dicerentne desinas ineptire

Maecenas ? (miseros non dubitans percuteret

statim!)

Quam horrenda vita, sorte Sisyphi peior!

Oro te, ut venias auxilio, Musa, orientibus

Mora sine ulla versibus frui possint,

concentus animis injiciant laetitias lyrae

Metre: Choliamb (limping iambs) combined with the Great or Second Asclepiadean (at whose core lie choriamb)

Translation:

Run to help, Muse, for the lost souls, who take their greatest name from the rise of the sun, fill my mind with sad gloominess!

I ask you, Muse, to bring help, because to them the L and R seem to have been mixed into one, without them knowing! (Please, trust me! I speak the truth! Do not believe that the things I sing are false!) So arduous and grave and difficult it is to distinguish a strange choriamb, embracing the short pyrrhics, from a choliamb, that is delayed in the end, for the Japanese, who don’t deserve this terrible torture!

What panic, what chaos would there be, if they read magnificent verses or renowned poems?

Would they run around like Trojans while their city is burning, although they were warned that the wooden horse of the
Greeks was a ruse?

Alas, would they say *stop being foolish, Maecenas*? (He would kill the miserable without hesitating in an instant!) Such a horrendous life, even worse than Sisyphus’ fate!
I beg you, Muse, that you bring help to the Orientals!
May they enjoy verses without any delay, may the singing of the lyre fill their souls with happiness!

* * *
**Press the Olive**

**David Money, and others**

*David writes:* This is going to be a long note to a short poem: but I hope worth the reading.

This poem was composed at Fontanasalsa, near Trapani, Sicily – which is an active olive farm with its own factory, so does indeed ‘press the olive’ – during the ‘Inter Versiculos’ verse-composition workshop held there in July 2018.

It was a collaborative effort, produced ex tempore as a demonstration of writing in this metre, at the end of a lecture of mine on lyric metres. As it happened, the time available only allowed us to produce one line. If readers think it might be extended, they are welcome to add further lines of their own: and it might be both fun and instructive to compare how different writers approach the topic. But in fact, it occurred to me that it could stand by itself as a complete, publishable poem – and I rather like it as such.

Our method, for these demonstration poems, was to seek inspiration from the ‘inspiration hat’ – literally picking from a hat at random one of the ideas which participants had previously supplied on scraps of paper. So our topic was to be ‘press the olive’ (just those words), and we then had to find a way to turn it into poetry (that also scanned in our chosen metre). It may well be that the author of the original idea had some other thoughts in mind: but we had to make our own interpretation, based on whatever the words might mean to us.

In terms of composition, words for ‘press’ (imperative), ‘olive’, and the vocative ‘peace’ came fairly quickly, and were slotted into their natural places in the line. What next? Well, ‘teste’ (ablative), ‘with [x] as witness’ seemed to fit one awkward gap. Then we needed something – some person, probably – to agree with ‘teste’: so a proper name, also in the ablative, which could go in the (rather easier to fill) place at the start of our line. And one of our brilliant team of bards suggested the ideal name (ablative, but indeclinable, as a non-Roman form).

One-line poems are unusual in Neo-Latin literature: but they can be found. Two nice examples occur to me (and readers may well know of others). One is in John Gilmore’s collection, *Musae Anglicanae* (Coventry: Derek Walcott Press, 2007), a short and lively selection, with John’s own verse translations, from eighteenth-century Latin poets, both famous and obscure. Richard Lyne’s single pentameter,
'Brevitas', runs as follows: ‘Si placeat brevitas, hoc breve carmen habe’ [if brevity pleases, take this brief poem] (Gilmore p. 46; his spellings, from the MS in his own collection). And I also like Beza's epitaph on a very fat man: ‘Amplissimus vir hic iacet’ [here lies a very ample man]; iambic dimeter. See Kirk M. Summers, A View from the Palatine: the Juvenilia of Théodore de Bèze (Tempe, AZ: ACMRS, 2001), pp. 118-19.

Since the composition was indeed collaborative, I would like to follow the practice of our colleagues in the ‘hard’ sciences – in their journals like Nature and New Scientist and Sheboygan Bulletin of Biochemical Informatics, which may all perhaps aspire to be the Vates of their own fields – and give credit to multiple authors. So, with the indulgence of our own esteemed editor, here goes:

Lead author: David Money (bard-in-chief: does little work, but still takes credit)
Co-authors: Professor Paul Gwynne (American University at Rome): a true Briton; Billy Finch: American teacher; Nigel Coulton: Yorkshireman; Irene Diva: Muse, goddess of peace; singer of Sicilian songs

It has always been an ambition of mine to publish a poem with as many authors as words; and I think – assuming that we take the name of our favourite gentleman with a stylish haircut to be a single unit (as it might be, if Latinised) – we have now achieved that goal.

Kim Jong-Untreme testet, pac, olivum.

Metre: hendecasyllable

Translation: O Peace, with Kim Jong-Un as witness, press the olive.

* * *
*Ad Dulcecor Suum*

**David Bruce Taylor**

*David writes:* Throughout what is now quite a long life (born 1938) I have never experienced a requited love affair. This poem is a record of the nearest I ever got.

Meum esto dulcecor

Et per uitam consta;

Viam paradisiacum

Mihi semper monstra.

Ex angore affectuum

Solve me dolentem

Te ut semper meus sis

O rantem et precantem.

Diu et o quam fortiter

Valde diligebam

Longos per dies mihi

C elandum putabam;
* Ex hoc autem tempore *

* Confiteendum esse *

* Omnis coram homine *

* Ratut sum ncessese.*

_Metre:_ accentual (trochaic); acrostic

_Translation:_

Be my sweetheart
And be constant through life;
The path to paradise,
Ever show it to me.

From the agony of desire
Release me grieving,
That you may ever be mine
Praying and beseeching.

Long and O how intensely
Strong was my desire,
For many, many days
I thought I ought to conceal;
But from now on
To make it known
Before all men
I have decided is necessary.

* * *
Nicholas writes: Every year, Oxford’s Classics Faculty sets some prize passages for translation into Latin verse and prose. The Herrick given as one of this year’s verse options was an interesting challenge: Herrick draws on the language of love elegy and romantic love, but the love-object of his poem is fraternal. I’ve attempted to reflect this complexity - luckily Latin is well stocked with multivalent terms.

*Ad fratrem moribundum, G. Herrick*

*noli tam subito, mi care, relinquere vitam*

*sed maneas: dícam, care, valère tibi.*

*sunt socii tecum ventus, mutabilis aestus:*

*sicut abire die sic tibi nocte licet.*

*Ne mare tam raptim sic nos divellat amantes*

*sed primum amplexus sit gemitusque satis.*

*excruciatur amans quisquis diversus amanti est, cuiusque perit, nempe, fidelis amans.*

*quid? duo nos posthac diversi semper eamus nec lacrimis ortisque nec ore gravi?*
qui cognovit idem verum unum solus amavit:
non placide carum saepe relinquit amor.
promissis votis nunc digrediamur, amice,
at sine te numquam servus amantis ero.
nam quoque captivum mortis te semper amabo;
non alius tanget pectora pura mea.
hic immo innocuum simulacrum nocte
   dieque
   perpetuoque manens et vigil acer ero.
sic gladio custos urnam sine fine tuebor
   ut maneat semper tuta favilla sacra.

Original:

To his dying brother, Master William Herrick

Life of my life, take not so soon thy flight,
But stay the time till we have bade good-night.
Thou hast both wind and tide with thee; thy way
As soon dispatch’d is by the night as day.
Let us not then so rudely henceforth go
Till we have wept, kiss’d, sigh’d, shook hands, or so.
There’s pain in parting, and a kind of hell
When once true lovers take their last farewell.
What? shall we two our endless leaves take here
Without a sad look, or a solemn tear?
He knows not love that hath not this truth proved,
Love is most loth to leave the thing beloved.
Pay we our vows and go; yet when we part,
Then, even then, I will bequeath my heart
Into thy loving hands; for I'll keep none
To warm my breast, when thou, my pulse, art gone,
No, here I'll last, and walk, a harmless shade,
About this urn, wherein thy dust is laid,
To guard it so, as nothing here shall be
Heavy, to hurt those sacred seeds of thee.

Robert Herrick

* * *
Although among the most frustrating pursuits of translating The Wonderful Wizard of Oz, ultimately, the Clown’s Song in the Dainty China Country chapter, has proved one of the most satisfying elements. I’m no poet, don’t I know it! While I love reading Latin verse, I can’t unwind it and plumb its depths much. This failure to dissect poetry is much the same for me in my own language and the few others I know.

Baum’s original Clown’s Song is this:

WWO, p232:

“My lady fair, Why do you stare At poor old Mr. Joker?”

CW / MMiO in 1987:

“O domina venusta, Quid oculos figis intenta In tam veterem Balatronem Ioculator?”

You’re quite as stiff And prim as if You’d eaten up a poker!”

Tommaso Mari of Universität Bamberg via Oxford had a free go at improvement:

“Dic mi, quare tueare, illum, bella, qui iocavit? o frigida et rigida”

“Dic mi, quare tueare, illum a quo es sugillata? o frigida o rigida”
ultimately, i liked david ring’s (teleos preparatory academy) broader view of translating poetry:

“i came up with two possible versions of the clown’s song. just fyi: in my opinion, artistic translation of english verse into latin verse or vice versa can’t possibly be literal. we have to think outside the box and try to re-produce the overall meaning and perhaps replace some punnery with some other punnery. i put these two up on a latin writer’s workshop facebook group, where my friend stephen (much better at latin verse composition) liked the second version better (his “immediate reaction”). the second version contains a hat tip to a famous epicurean poem of horace (rectius vives) in a manner that replaces the joker/poker pun with a similar pun that keeps the imagery. i have the clown also quote verbatim a line from the stoic philosopher seneca (“no one has attained perfect virtue”). i kind of like the way this one turned out because, just as the devil can quote scripture, the clown quotes a stoic *against* the rigid lady then follows it with a hat tip to epicureanism -- all nestled in a pun on the primary meaning of rectus -a -um (straight, upright, as one would look if one swallowed a stick or poker) and the moral meaning, as in “rectius vives”. also, what truer stereotype could there be than that clowns and circus folk are listless, epicurean vagabonds? these, i think, would be like hidden easter eggs for latinists. here’s what i posted for help:

“avete, sodales! anyone interested in taking a look at this? i’m trying to translate the clown’s song from the wizard of oz into latin. i don’t believe artistic translation (such as english verse to latin verse) can ever be literal enough to retain exact puns -- that seems entirely quixotic. here are two attempts to re-create the poem and at least substitute different wordplay. the second version has a hat tip to horace and seneca (i kind of like giving horace’s epicureanism to a clown ;) i don’t know why but i don’t like the original rhyme-scheme when i hear it in latin. i’d rather do aabbcc but i might not get away with that.

“dic mi, quare tueare, illum a quo es sugiillata?
 o frigida
 o rigida
 a quo es, bella, amylata?”

“bella, quare tueare miserum loculatorum?
 o frigida or es frigida et rigida num edisti harpagonem?”

or

quasi ederis harpagonem?
David’s first two:

“O domina venusta, inimica mihi et iniusta, quare scurram sic odisti? Videris mihi nimis rigida, illepida, tepida -- immo, frigida.

Vitam duram tu degistil!”

While most of us found the second more satisfying, none of us could fathom a sceptre up the old wazoo!

Resulting in David coming back with these:


Num risum sic odisti? OR Severiorem te gessisti! OR Quam severam te gessisti! OR Naso adunco te suspendo!

And further refined to these:

“O domina venusta, inimica mihi et iniusta, quare scurram sic odisti? Videris mihi nimis rigida, illepida, tepida -- immo, frigida. Quid gelatum comedisti?”

David: The idiom "aliquem naso (adunco) suspendere" is also found in Horace (and elsewhere) and once specifically referred to a jester; it roughly equals “to lampoon someone, ridicule, mock” but literally to "hang someone/something from one’s up-turned or curved nose”. Here are two uses from Horace: Balatro suspendens omnia naso (Sermones 2.8.64) = The jester making fun of everything AND naso suspendis adunco (Sermones 1.6.5) = you ridicule.

I very much like the idea of tepid for prim and the inclusion of frigid, all brought down to eating ice cream in the penultimate version.

However, the classical references make that last version a lot of fun, sort of an Easter egg for Latinists who may read our book!
The jury’s still out and I’m going to let David decide. You’ll just have to buy the book! However, your opinions are very welcome! Just don’t get me started about Lignator Stanneus (Stagneus/Ferreus/Metallicus/Lamineus)—or I’ll be forced to pour a bucket of water over you!


CJ Hinke
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*  *  *
It’s said of the great British Greek scholar Richard Porson (1759-1808) that:

For all modern Greek and Latin poetry he had the profoundest contempt. When Herbert published the Musae Etonenses, Porson said, after looking over one of the volumes, 'Here is trash, fit only to be put behind the fire.'

There’s more to this than meets the eye. Porson had not been invited to contribute. For a very good reason: he was no good at it. This was the only weakness in him conceded by his hero-worshipping former student Thomas Kidd, whose otherwise hagiographical Imperfect Outline of the Life of R. P. admits: 'When he entered Eton, R. P. was wholly ignorant of quantity; and after he had toiled up the arduous path to literary eminence, he was often twitted by his quondam school-fellows with those violations of quantity which are common in first attempts at Latin verse. Our Greek professor always felt sore upon this point. One of his best friends and greatest admirers has preserved a copy of verses which, indeed, evince the rapid progress of his mind, but would not do honour to his memory'—these verses are tactfully not quoted.

This animadversion was more strongly put in the following school report on him:

‘He was inaccurate in his prosody - a fatal defect at Eton - and his Latin verses, almost the only road to distinction there, were never remarkable.’

One assumes there are other paths to glory at modern Eton. True, Boris - a fine classicist - could have trod this road, but Cameron..?

If any Vates reader happens to be in the British Library, they might test these criticisms by gaining access to unpublished school verses by Porson (reference no: add.ms. 39755 f. 8) translating Mercutio’s speech from Romeo and Juliet 1. 4. Porson does, however, show his elegiac mettle in later years with this squib on Dr Johnson’s biographers Boswell, Hawkins, and Thrale:

\[
\text{Lexiphanem fatis functum, qua femina, qua vir} \\
\text{Certant insignia dedecorare modis:} \\
\text{Hls quantum in Scotos fuerit testator amores}
\]
Enarrat, fatuos vendidit ille sales.
Fabellas, Eques, ede tuas, seu musica mavis
Si famae Heroes vis superesse nihil.

In contemporary Beloe’s translation:

At Johnson’s death both sexes join
His character to undermine,
Proclaim his courtesy to Scots,
And print his stupid anecdotes,
’Tis now thy turn, musician knight:
Publish, and damn his fame outright.

Perhaps a bit odd that Porson dubs Johnson ‘Lexiphanes’, a derogatory nickname fixed on him in 1767 by Irishman Archibald Campbell, taken from the eponymous dialogue by Lucian ridiculing excessive use of archaic and sesquipedalian words, an author disdained by Porson on account of his late Greek style, another oddity in that Lucian was remarkably good at reproducing the ‘pure’ Atticism of Plato and company. It may have been chosen by him to mirror the comic objurgations aimed at his biographers.

It seems strange that so mighty a classicist as Porson should have been at the level of Tom Brown when it came to schoolboy versification - Vates contributors worrying over their quantities may take heart.

Perhaps A. E. Housman supplies the answer. Praising Bentley for his eminence in both Greek and Latin, Housman confessed that he “could not attain to excellence in both languages.” Porson’s vast range of scholarly publications virtually eschew Latin; Housman, of course, went the other way.

John Pickford (Notes & Queries, 5th series, May 1885, p. 417) provides this titbit about the Cantabrigiensian way of honouring their distinguished departed:

‘Compositions, as was usual in those days, in English, Greek and Latin were pinned to the pall as the corpse was borne into the chapel for interment. This custom was observed when the celebrated Richard Porson was buried in 1808 in the chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, though the verses were in Greek only.’

This ensured Porson would be sore for all eternity. Should Vates bards make similar funeral arrangements? They might first wish to compare the obsequies of Cambridgeshire John Underwood, a lover of the classics, who was buried - the whole hilarious report, too long to
quote, may be seen online in the Gentleman’s Magazine 3, May 1733, p. 269 - after having a Horace Ode performed, ‘ with Bentley’s Horace under his arse.’

* * *

Tolle, Lege

Barry Baldwin

“Take and Read,” as God ordered Augustine. Being well short of divine, I humbly suggest to any Vates readers who might have missed it that they go to the Gentleman’s Magazine 221 (1867), 187-202, and read a survey-article, ‘ Modern Latin Poetry’; it’s available online.

The essay goes under the authorial name ‘Sylvanus Urban’. This was the self-conferred pseudonym for Edward Cave - retained by his successors - founding editor-publisher (1731) of the GM, always hospitable to Greek and Latin verses from such future luminaries as Samuel Johnson to persons as obscure then as now.

A similar service is provided by T. E. Kebbel’s ‘ Recent Latin Poetry’, MacMillan’s Magazine 31 (1875), 253-58, also available online; I dare say there are others electronically lurking. To track them all down, go to the Electronic Data Base of the GM’s Poetry (1731-1800) created and maintained by Emily Lorraine de Montluzin. A fair number of these individuals were not included in Leicester Brander’s still-invaluable Musae Anglicanae: A History of Anglo-Latin Poetry 1500-1925 (1940; repr. 1966) or his Supplement in The Library 22.2 (June 1967).

Apart from bringing together big names such as Addison and Buchanan with poetasters as obscure in their own day as in ours, this survey provides a generous dollop of versifiers’ themes - e.g. barometers, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, games of bowls, the Gin Act, puppet-shows - showing that these efforts convey social history along with classical pastiche, a point not always appreciated.

Another big name here is that of William Ewart Gladstone. I doubt any modern ranking British politician could have claimed a place - except, of course, Boris. Bracketed with Gladstone is Lord Lyttleton, whose version of Godiva is disparaged for the line Sic ait et vestem sumpsit sibi nuda pudorem as a rendering of ‘Thus she rode on, clothed ever with chastity,’ billed by our critic as the best line in the original.
Singled out from the lower reaches is old Etonian Mr Raleigh Trevelyan ‘whose scholarly verses (sc. Prolusiones, 1865) do no discredit to Eton.’ Rightly vile-ended, though, is the donor of a prize for best Latin poem on the Death of Nelson for demanding a minimum of 300 lines - Memo to our editor ...

George Buchanan (thought supreme in the field by Johnson) dominates ‘those many obscure versifiers whom no one would think of disinterring’ - how many Vates bards would he have exhumed? This is characteristic of our critic’s style. His preface kicks off in jocular manner: ‘Mercy on us! an article on modern Latin Poetry! Perhaps for some few abnormal beings, Latin Verse, as such, has attractions...We are not insensible to the excellence of many of the compositions in the Musae Etonenses' - a radical difference of opinion from that of Porson!

He continues: 'This is Nugis addere pondus to give us an article, which must be a heavy one, upon modern Latin poetry, of all abominations in the world!' To enhance this weighty jest, the article is postluded by a pious verse from a certain E. Walford under the rubric Nugae Latinae. An ubiquitous one, five times in this GM issue alone, widely deployed elsewhere. One example that leads to weightier matters is the volume of verses by Edward Connolly of Merton College, Oxford. Connolly is Google-resistant, and not judged worthy of inclusion in the Dictionary of British Classicists. He drew a favourable notice from the Classical Review (1908) for his skill in various metres. More interesting, though, was Connolly’s admission in his prefatory memoir that writing Latin verses was his solace in times of trouble. Johnson was a comparable case, whiling away insomniac nights by rendering nearly 100 epigrams from the Greek Anthology into Latin elegiacs. Perhaps it had been equal comfort for the Reverend Edward Bickersteth to Latinise Johnson’s Ode to Summer, GM 224, 1868?

The extreme example of Connolly’s philosophy must be that of Anthony Chevenix-Trench, future Headmaster of Eton, an outstanding classic at Shrewsbury, a school outstanding for its volume of verses, Sabrinae Corolla, and Headmaster Benjamin Kennedy of Latin Primer fame. Chevenix-Trench was captured by the Japanese, to whom he lost an eye whilst toiling on the Burma Railroad, despite which ocular agony and a kidney collapse, he kept on with his Latin verses, being especially devoted to translating Housman’s Shropshire Lad, which is why his biography by Mark Peel (1996) is entitled Land of Lost Content. As soon as his verses managed to get back to Shrewsbury, they were published in the school magazine, The Salopian. For full details and examples of his compositions, see this
biography, also Peter Parker’s *Housman Country* (2016), 354-55, plus *The Salopian*, June 1946, 231.

Robin Brook-Smith of Shrewsbury School very kindly e-mailed me a copy of this last, along with the information that *The Salopian* will soon be archived on-line. It contains eulogistic versions of three Housman poems, signed as P.-o.-W., dated Siam, July 1943, along with the editorial comment “Not often can Latin verses have been composed in such untoward circumstances.”

This comports a more warming gloss on Horace’s *dulce et decorum est* than that of Wilfred Owen...

* * *

**Frankly Speaking**

**Barry Baldwin**

Frank Richards, the best-known of the many pseudonyms employed by Charles Hamilton, is of course immortalized through his finest creation, Billy Bunter; cf. Mary Cadogan’s biography, *Frank Richards: The Chap Behind The Chums* (1988), plus his own autobiography (1952 - same year as the BBC televised version began. A recent proposal to revive it was rejected on grounds of ‘Fattism’). There must be some *Vates* readers who share my memories of fighting over them in the school library.

Less well remembered is his devotion to the Classics, evinced at an early age through teaching himself the Greek alphabet, also via the many classical allusions scattered throughout his countless school stories. Most notable here is the Greyfriars Latin Verse Competition, chief theme of *Billy Bunter’s Benefit*.

One of Richards’ classical accomplishments was a Latin version of the unofficial Australian anthem ‘Waltzing Matilda’. Full details in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, available online via subscription. Related websites give texts of similar efforts by others.

Richards performed the same Latinising services for ‘Won’t You Come Home, Bill Bailey?’ and (a reflection on his own gambling addictions) ‘The Man Who Broke The Bank At Monte Carlo,’ plus a rendition in the Latin newspaper *Acta Diurna* (1958) of Sir Joseph Porter’s song in *HMS Pinafore*. In this same venue, he published the first instalment of a Latin story (unfinished) *Bunter Stultitia*, and a complete one, *Ultio*
Bunter (Bunter’s Revenge) in the Times Educational Supplement (June 30, 1961) - text in Cadogan (p. 232), also online extracts: the piece was reprinted as a separate pamphlet.

Various newspaper websites in the last two years have proclaimed what they call the world’s first Latin crossword puzzles. In fact, many decades earlier, Richards had produced one for the comic Modern Boy. As Cadogan (p. 17) tells it, a certain A. D. Newman (Google-resistant; cf. Cadogan, p. 243 n. 12 for his own account) answered Richards’ advertisement in the East Kent Times for a tutor willing ‘to read Latin verse with a backward pupil.’ They met 1951-1960, reading the whole of Horace, plus much Lucretius. The fruit of this comes in the shape of this riff on Horace, Odes 4. 9. 25-28:

Vixere pingues ante Bunterium multi,
Sed omnes illacrimabiles urgentur (sic)–
Longa nocte, carent quia me Ricardo

(As printed by Cadogan, who translates thus:
Many fat men have lived before Bunter
But all have been unlamented, harried
And unknown in the long night, because
They lack me, a Frank Richards.)

Bunterium stands in for Horace’s Agamemnona, Ricardo does duty for vate sacro, after urgentur the missing word is ignotique.

As with eighteenth-century Anglo-Latin poets, Horace was Richards’ favourite Roman bard. Elsewhere (in a 1941 letter), he wrote ‘I would rather read Horace than write Bunter.’ He was the most-thumbed author in Richards’ private collection of classical texts (a paste-in-index was included. Cadogan (p.170) deserves the last word: ‘Had any publisher commissioned him to produce a new translation of Horace, it might have been goodbye to Greyfriars.’
Contributors

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Barry Baldwin was born a true ‘Lincolnshire Yellowbelly’, but emigrated first to Australia, thence to Canada, where he is Emeritus Professor of Classics (University of Calgary) and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He has published 12 books and c.1000 articles/reviews apropos Greek, Roman and Byzantine history and literature, Neo-Latin Poetry, Samuel Johnson, Modern English Literature, and the more arcane field of Albanian history, language and literature. Has also published c.70 short stories, mainly mysteries, and freelances on a farrago of subjects for various magazines. He remains a far-off fan of Lincoln City and Nottingham Forest.

Chris Brunelle teaches at St. Olaf College. A specialist in Latin poetry, he recently published Ovid, Ars Amatoria: Commentary on Book 3 (Oxford University Press), which won the Ladislaus J. Bolchazy Pedagogy Book Award for 2016. He has written articles on Ovid (including a chapter in Gendered Dynamics in Latin Love Poetry) and on teaching, along with a number of book reviews, and is joint author of Latin Laughs, a video and workbook on Plautus' Poenulus. Most recently he published The Church Year in Limericks (MorningStar 2017).

M. Leonard Chalut is an aspiring academic and present armchair classicist. While I have a number of years of Greek and Latin behind me, verse composition in either language is a new venture for me.

Jelle Christiaans is a Dutch grammar school student in Nijmegen. He is a member of both Vox Vivax, a group of Latin enthusiasts at his school and the Circulus Latinus Noviomagensis (see Michiel Sauter and Anja Oomis).

Marco Cristini holds a Master of Modern Philology from the Catholic University of Brescia. He loves reading Latin poetry and prose since high school. In 2013 he fell under the charming spell of Latinitas perennis and began to write Latin poems and short stories. His main research interests, however, lie in Late Antiquity (as his poems show...), especially in the Ostrogothic Kingdom. He wrote a novel about queen Amalasuntha and Cassiodorus (I Cavalieri del Crepuscolo, The Twilight's Knights, available on Amazon in ebook format). In July 2015 he published a collection of twenty short stories
titled *Rerum Uchronicarum Fragmenta* (in ebook format, available by Meligrana Editore and on Amazon).

**CJ Hinke** is the co-translator of *The Wizard of Oz* in Latin. He writes the *Latin for everyone* blog [https://latin4everyone.wordpress.com/](https://latin4everyone.wordpress.com/)

**David Money** teaches Neo-Latin literature at the University of Cambridge, for the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages, and is a fellow of the *Academia Latinitati Fovendae*; he has published widely on Neo-Latin topics, especially on British verse of the 16th to 18th centuries. As well as trying to be active as a Latin poet, he is interested in encouraging others to develop their talents in this direction.

**Michiel Sauter** teaches German, Dutch, Greek and Latin in Nijmegen, the Netherlands

**Nicholas Stone** is reading Classics at Christ Church, Oxford.

**David Bruce Taylor** was born 1938. At three years of age (in wartime Britain) he found himself immured in a Catholic convent, where he spent most of the next seven years. There was an awful lot of Latin around in those days and a lot of it stuck. He took a first degree (though not first class!) in theology at Oxford in 1962, but declined ordination. For much of his adult life he was a cathedral singer (Winchester and Christ Church, Oxford). His publications are mostly in theology, though he has recently published two articles in *Melissa*, which that journal chose to classify as philosophy.

**Florian Waldner** is a Classics student living in Austria. During his studies at university the Latin language was presented as a dead one most of the time (except for those Finnish radio news). But he has been inspired by this journal to try his hand at Latin poetry.

**Brad Walton** lives in Toronto. He did a BA in Classics and graduate work in Theology, which seems to have been a dreadful mistake. His study of Jonathan Edwards (*Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections, and the Puritan Analysis of True Piety, Spiritual Sensation and Heart Religion*) was published in 2002. More recently an attempt at Menippean satire, *Peripedemi Periegesis*, was serialized in *Melissa*. His play, “The Dialogues of Leopold and Loeb” is being produced in Toronto in 2016. His day-job is in the University of Toronto Library. In his spare time he plays theorbo for the Toronto Continuo Collective, directed by Lucas Harris.

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An eclectic selection of new Latin poetry drawn largely from the pages of *Vates: The Journal of New Latin Poetry*, the free online publication that provides a forum for contemporary exponents of this venerable art form. Here you will encounter classical quantitative verse, medieval rhyming lyrics, Haiku and other verse forms both ancient and modern.

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