13. I.e. provided the minimum sum of 400,000 sesterces needed to qualify for the Equestrian Order.

14. The allusion is to the eternally productive orchard of Alcinous, the King of Phaeacia who figures in Homer's *Odyssey*; Bk VII, lines 114–21 describe it.

15. The 'Embankment' was originally a defensive earthwork constructed by Servius Tullius to protect the eastern side of Rome: it stretched from the Esquiline Hill to the Colline Gate, and later became a favourite spot for citizens to take a constitutional, being both high and breezy, and very like the modern promenade. Not only performing animals, but also fortune-tellers were often found there: see below, Satire VI 588.

16. A certain type of professional buffoon – the 'fall-man', the eternal he-who-gets-kicked – always had his head shaved: this applies equally to the *stupidus* of the mimes and the idiot clown (*morio*) who performed at private parties. Professor Highet (as so often) has the perfect modern parallel: 'A clown act called "The Three Stooges", which used to appear in short film farces during the 1940s, had a perfect *stupidus* in it, a burly man with a head clipped or shaven smooth, who was always being slapped on it by his quicker and cleverer fellow stooges.'

SATIRE VI

During Saturn's reign I believe that Chastity still
Lingered on earth, and was seen for a while, when draughty
Caves were the only homes men had, hearthfire and household
Gods, family and cattle all shut in darkness together.
Wives were different then – a far cry from Cynthia,
Or the girl who wept, red-eyed, for that sparrow's death.[1]
Bred to the woods and mountains, they made their beds from
Dry leaves and straw, from the pelts of savage beasts
Caught prowling the neighbourhood. *Their* breasts gave suck
To big strong babies; often, indeed, they were shaggier
Than their acorn-belching husbands. In those days, when the
world
Was young, and the sky bright-new still, men lived differently:
Offspring of oaks or rocks,[2] clay-moulded, parentless.
Some few traces, perhaps, of Chastity's ancient presence
Survived under Jove – but only while Jove remained
A beardless stripling, long before Greeks had learnt
To swear by the other man's head, or capital; when no one
Feared thieves in the cabbage-patch and orchard, when
kitchen-gardens
Were still unwalled. Thereafter, by slow degrees,
Justice withdrew to heaven, and Chastity went with her,
Two sisters together, beating a common retreat.
To bounce your neighbour's bed, my friend, to outrage
Matrimonial sanctity is now an ancient and long-
Established tradition. All other crimes came later,
With the Age of Iron; but our first adulterers
Appeared in the Silver Era. And here you are in *this*
Day and age, man, getting yourself engaged,
Fixing up marriage-covenant, dowry, betrothal-party;
Any time now some high-class barber will start
Coiffeuring you for the wedding, before you know it the ring

Will be on her finger. Postumus, are you *really*
Taking a wife? You used to be sane enough – what
Fury's got into you, what snake has stung you up?
Why endure such bitch-tyranny when rope's available
By the fathom, when all those dizzying top-floor windows
Are open for you, when there are bridges handy
To jump from? Supposing none of these exits catches
Your fancy, isn't it better to sleep with a pretty boy?
Boys don't quarrel all night, or nag you for little presents
While they're on the job, or complain that you don't come
Up to their expectations, or demand more gasping passion.
But no: you staunchly uphold the Family Encouragement Act,[3]
A sweet little heir's your aim, though it means foregoing
All those pickings – fat pigeons, bearded mullet, the bait
Of the legacy-hunter's market. Really, if *you* take a wife, I'll
Credit anything, friend. You were once the randiest
Hot-rod-about-town, you hid in more bedroom cupboards
Than a comedy juvenile lead. Can this be the man now
Sticking his silly neck out for the matrimonial halter?
And as for your insistence on a wife with old-fashioned
Moral virtues – man, you need your blood-pressure checked, you're
Crazy, you're aiming over the moon. Find a chaste
And modest bride, and well may you sacrifice
Your gilded heifer to Juno, well may you go down flat
And kiss the stones before the Tarpeian altar!
Few indeed are the girls with a ritual qualification
For the feast of the Corn-Goddess – nine whole days' abstinence! –
Or whose fathers wouldn't prefer, if they could, to avoid
Such tainted filial kisses.[4] Hang wreaths on your doorposts,
Strew your threshold with ivy! Tell me, will Hiberina
Think one man enough? You'd find it much less trouble
To make her agree to being blinded in one eye.

But *you* maintain that a girl who's lived a secluded
Life on her father's estate, way out in the country,
Can keep a good reputation. Just put her down
In the sleepiest outback town you can think of – and if she behaves
As she did back home, then I'll believe in that country
Estate of yours. But don't tell me nothing ever
Came off in caves, or up mountains – are Jove and Mars *that* senile?
Look around the arcades, try to pick out a woman
Who's worthy of your devotion. Check every tier of seats
At all the theatres in town: will they yield one single
Candidate you could love without a qualm? When pansy
Bathyllus[5] dances Leda, all *fouettés* and *entrechats*,
Just watch the women. One can't control her bladder,
Another suddenly moans in drawn-out ecstasy
As though she was coming. Your country girl's all rapt
Attention, she's learning fast.
But when the theatrical
Season is over, the stage-props all packed away,
The playhouses closed and empty, in those summer
Dogdays when only the lawcourts go droning on,
Some women relieve their boredom by taking in
Low-down vaudeville farces – and their performers.
Look at that fellow who scored such a hit in the late-night
Show as Actaeon's mother, camping it up like mad –
Poor Aelia's crazy about him. These are the women
Who'll pay out fancy prices for the chance to defibulate
A counter-tenor, to ruin a concert performer's voice.
One has a kink for ham actors. Are you surprised? What else
Do you expect them to do? Go ape on a good book?
Marry a wife, and she'll make some flute-player
Or guitarist a father, not you. So when you erect
Long stands in the narrow streets, and hang your front-door
With outsize laurel wreaths, it's all to welcome an infant

Whose face, in that tortoiseshell cradle, under its canopy,
Recalls some armoured thug, some idol of the arena.
When that senator's wife, Eppia, eloped with her fancy swordsman
To the land of the Nile, the Alexandrian stews,
Egypt itself cried out at Rome's monstrous morals.
Husband, family, sister, all were jettisoned, not
One single thought for her country; shamelessly she forsook
Her tearful children, as well as – this will really surprise you –
The public games, and her favourite matinée star.
Luxury-reared, cradled by Daddy in swansdown,
Brought up to frills and flounces, Eppia nevertheless
Made as light of the sea as she did of her reputation –
Not that our pampered ladies set any great store by *that*.
Boldly she faced this long and arduous voyage,
The chop and toss of Tuscan waters, the loud
Ionian swell. When a woman endures danger and hardship
In a good cause, her conscience clear, then chill
Terror ices her heart, her knees turn to water,
She can scarcely stand upright; but wicked audacity
Breeds its own fortitude. To go aboard ship is torture
Under a husband's orders: then the smell of the bilges
Is sickening, then the sky wheels dizzily around.
But a wife who's off with her lover suffers no qualms. The one
Pukes on her husband, the other sits down to a hearty
Meal with the crew, takes a turn round the quarter-deck,
Helps to haul on the sheets, and enjoys it.
What was the youthful
Charm that so fired our senator's wife? What hooked her?
What did Eppia see in him to make her put up
With being labelled 'The Gladiatress'? Her poppet, her Sergius
Was no chicken, forty at least, with a dud arm that held promise
Of early retirement. Besides, his face looked a proper mess –

Helmet-scarred, a great wen on his nose, an unpleasant
Discharge from one constantly weeping eye.[6] What of it?
He was a gladiator. That name makes all the breed
Seem handsomer than Adonis; this was what she preferred
To her children and her country, her sister, her husband: steel
Is what they all crave for. Yet this same Sergius,
Once pensioned off, would soon have bored her as much as her husband.
Do such private scandals move you? Are you shocked by Eppia's deeds?
Then look at the God's rivals, hear what Claudius
Had to put up with. The minute she heard him snoring,
His wife – that whore-empress – who dared to prefer the mattress
Of a stews to her couch in the Palace, called for her hooded
Night-cloak and hastened forth, alone or with a single
Maid to attend her. Then, her black hair hidden
Under an ash-blonde wig, she would make straight for her brothel,
With its odour of stale, warm bedclothes, its empty reserved cell.[7]
Here she would strip off, showing her gilded nipples and
The belly that once housed a prince of the blood.[8] Her door-sign
Bore a false name, Lycisca, 'The Wolf-girl'. A more than willing
Partner, she took on all comers, for cash, without a break.
Too soon, for her, the brothel-keeper dismissed
His girls. She stayed till the end, always the last to go,
Then trailed away sadly, still with a burning hard on,
Retiring exhausted, yet still far from satisfied, cheeks
Begrimed with lamp-smoke, filthy, carrying home
To her imperial couch the stink of the whorehouse.
What point in mentioning spells, or aphrodisiac potions,
Or that lethal brew served up | to stepsons? Sexual compulsion

Drives women to worse crimes: lust is their strongest motive.*
'Censennia's husband swears she's the perfect wife: why so?'
Because she brought him three million. In exchange he calls her chaste.
The shafts that waste him, the fires that burn him up
Have nothing to do with desire. That torch was lit
By cash; it was her dowry that fired those arrows,
And purchased her freedom. She can make come-hitherish signs
Or write billets-doux in front of her husband; your wealthy
Woman who marries a miser has widow's privileges.
'Then why does Sertorius burn with passion for Bibula?'
When you get to the root of it, what he loves isn't his wife
But merely her face. When the first few wrinkles appear,
When her skin goes dry and slack, when her teeth begin
To blacken, when her eyes turn lustreless, then: 'Pack
Your bags!' his steward will tell her. 'Be off with you! You've become
A nasty bore, always blowing your nose. Be off,
And double quick: there's another wife due to arrive,
Without that eternal sniffle.' But now she's riding high,
She's the new princess, wheedling ranches and vineyards,
Prize sheep, herdsmen and all from her husband. Yet that's nothing:
She demands all his slave-boys, his field-gangs: if a neighbour
Owns any item they don't, it has to be purchased.
In wintertime, when the arcades are crammed with
Canvas market-stalls, and the mural of Trader
Jason is blocked from view, armed sailors and all,[9]
She goes on a shopping spree: huge crystal vases, outsize
Myrrh-jars of finest agate, and, lastly, a famous
Diamond ring, once worn by Queen Berenice –

* Reading *summum* for the contradictory *minimum* of the MSS. I owe this interpretation to Courtney (see Bibliography) pp. 39–40.

Which adds to its price. (She had it from her brother,
That barbarous prince Agrippa, as a token
Of their incestuous love, in the land where kings
Observe the Sabbath barefoot, where – by long-established
Tradition – pigs are suffered to attain a ripe old age.)[10]
'Not one woman, out of so many, who meets your requirements?'
Assume one with beauty and charm, fertile, wealthy, her hall
A museum of old ancestral portraits, grant her
Virginity more stunning than all those dishevelled Sabine
Maidens who stopped the fighting could raise between them,[11]
Make her a *rara avis*, a black swan or the like – still
Who could stomach such wifely perfection? I'd far far sooner
Marry a penniless tart[12] than take on that virtuous
Paragon Cornelia, Mother of Statesmen, so haughty,
So condescending a prig, her dowry weighted down
With famous triumphs. As far as I'm concerned
You can take your battle-honours – Hannibal, Syphax,
The whole Carthaginian myth – and get lost with them, madam.[13]
'Apollo, be merciful; Artemis, lay by your shafts,'
Amphion prayed. 'The children are not to blame –
Strike down their mother!' But Apollo, unheeding,
Drew back the bowstring. So Niobe lost, at one stroke,
Her quiverful and her husband – all through the fatuous pride
That made her boast she was nobler in her offspring
Than Leto – and more prolific than the white Alban sow.[14]
What beauty, what decorum are worth having thrown in your face
Day in day out? What pleasure remains in such rare
And lofty perfection, when pride of spirit has turned it
From honey to bitter aloes? What man is so besotted
That for half the day, or more, the wife he lauds to the skies
Doesn't give him cold shivers? Often it's trivial faults
That offend a husband most. What could be more repulsive

Than the way no modern girl will believe her looks
Are worth a damn till she's tarted up *à la grecque*?
Our provincial dollies ape Athenian fashion, it's smart
To chatter away in Greek – though what should make them
blush
Is their slipshod Latin. All their emotions – fear,
Anger, happiness, anxiety, every inmost
Secret thought – find expression in Greek, they even
Make love Greek-style. It might be all right for schoolgirls
To behave this way; but when you're well over eighty,
And go round in public using such phrases as *Zoé*
Kai Psyché – 'My life, my soul!' – real bedroom language,
It's most unbecoming. Such naughty, caressing endearments
Have fingers, they'd start a twitch in any man's groin.
But don't go preening yourself, dear: even if your voice
Were softer and more seductive than any matinée idol's,
Your age is still scored on your face.
So, man, if you're not
going to love
Your lawfully wedded spouse, why marry at all? Why waste
Good money on a reception, or those cakes handed out at the
end
To your well-gorged guests, when the party's breaking up?
Why lose a salver of mint-new golden guineas –
Victory issues, too[15] – on the first-night bridal offering?
But if your mind is set, with uxorious obsession,
On one woman and one only, then bow your neck to the yoke
In voluntary servitude.
No woman spares any lover;
She may be on fire herself, but that doesn't lessen
Her gold-digging itch, her sadistic urges. So
The better you are as a man, the more desirable
Your husbandly virtues, the less you get out of your wife.
Want to give someone a present? Buy or sell property? *She*
Has the veto on all such transactions; she even controls

Your friendships: lifelong companions, visitors since boyhood,
May find the door slammed in their faces. Pimps and ring-
masters,
The toughs of the arena – these, when they make their wills,
Have a free hand. But you are compelled to include
Two or three of her lovers amongst your legatees.
'Crucify that slave!'
'But what is the slave's offence
To merit such punishment? Who has brought charges against
him?
Where are the witnesses? You must hear his defence: no
Delay can be too long when a man's life is at stake.'
'So a slave's a *man* now, is he, you crackpot? All right, perhaps
He didn't do anything. This is still my wish, my command:
Warrant enough that I will it.'
So she imposes
Such whims on her husband. But soon enough she moves on
To another kingdom, switching establishments
Till her bridal veil's worn out; then, finally, back she comes
To the bed she scorned and abandoned, leaving behind her
A freshly garlanded house, the bridal hangings
Not yet removed, the boughs still green on the threshold.
Score up another husband: that makes eight
In under five years: it ought to go on her tombstone.
While your mother-in-law still lives, domestic harmony
Is out of the question. She eggs her daughter on
To run through your capital and enjoy it. She gives advice
On the subtlest, least obvious way to answer billets-doux
From would-be seducers. It's she who hoodwinks or fixes
Your servants, she who takes to her bed when she's well,[16]
Who lies tossing and turning under the sheets till the doctor
Makes his visit. Meanwhile, all hot impatience,
Hidden behind the scenes, her daughter's lover
Keeps mum, and pulls his wire. Do you really believe
Any mother will pass on a loftier set of morals

Than she learnt herself? Besides, it's profitable
For an old whore to bring up her daughter to the trade.
There's scarcely one court hearing in which the litigation
Wasn't set off by a woman. Defendant or plaintiff, if
She's not one she's the other, ready to deal with a brief
Single-handed, and full of advice to Counsel –
How to open his case, or present individual points.
And what about female athletes, with their purple
Track-suits, and wrestling in mud? Not to mention our lady-fencers –
We've all seen *them*, stabbing the stump with a foil,
Shield well advanced, going through the proper motions:
Just the right training needed to blow a matronly horn
At the Floral Festival[17] – unless they have higher ambitions,
And the goal of all their practice is the real arena.
But then, what modesty can be looked for in some
Helmeted hoyden, a renegade from her sex,
Who thrives on masculine violence – yet would not prefer
To *be* a man, since the pleasure is so much less?
What a fine sight for some husband – *it might be you* – his wife's
Equipment put up at auction, baldric, armlet, plumes
And one odd shinguard! Or if the other style
Of fighting takes her fancy, imagine your delight when
The dear girl sells off her greaves! (And yet these same women
Have such delicate skins that even sheer silk chafes them;
They sweat in the finest chiffon.) Hark how she snorts
At each practice thrust, bowed down by the weight of her helmet;
See the big coarse puttees wrapped round her ample hams –
Then wait for the laugh, when she lays her weapons aside
And squats on the potty! Tell me, you noble ladies,
Scions of our great statesmen – Lepidus, blind Metellus,
Fabius the Guzzler[18] – what gladiator's woman
Ever rigged herself out like this, or sweated at fencing-drill?
The bed that contains a wife is always hot with quarrels

And mutual bickering: sleep's the last thing you get there.
This is her battleground, her station for husband-baiting:
In bed she's worse than a tigress robbed of its young,
Bitching away, to stifle her own bad conscience,
About his boy-friends, or weeping over some way-out
Fictitious mistress. She keeps a copious flow
Of tears at the ready, awaiting her command,
For any situation: and you, poor worm, are agog,
Thinking this means she loves you, and kiss her tears away –
But if you raided her desk-drawers, the compromising letters,
The assignations you'd find that your green-eyed whorish
Wife has amassed! Suppose, though, you catch her in bed with
A slave, or some businessman? *Quick, quick, Quintilian,*
Find me a pat excuse, she prays.[19] *I'm stuck*, says the Maestro,
You can get yourself out of this one.
And she does. 'We agreed long ago
To go our separate ways – you were at liberty
To do as you pleased, and I | could have my fun on the side.
It cuts no ice with me if you bawl the house down –
I'm only human too.'
For sheer effrontery, nothing
Can beat a woman caught in the act; her very
Guilt adds fresh fire to her fury and indignation.
What was it (you well may ask) that bred such monsters, how
Do they come about? In the old days poverty
Kept Latin women chaste: hard work, too little sleep,
These were the things that saved their humble homes from corruption –
Hands horny from carding fleeces, Hannibal at the gates,
Their menfolk standing to arms. Now we are suffering
The evils of too-long peace. Luxury, deadlier
Than any armed invader, lies like an incubus
Upon us still, avenging the world we brought to heel.

Since Roman poverty perished, no visitation
Of crime or lust has been spared us. Sybaris, Rhodes,
Miletus, shameless Tarentum, drunk and garlanded[20] – all
Come pouring in upon our Seven Hills. But filthy
Lucre it was that first brought these loose foreign
Morals amongst us, enervating wealth that
Destroyed us, over the years, through shameless self-indulgence.
  What conscience has Venus drunk? Our inebriated beauties
Can't tell head from tail at those midnight oyster suppers
When the best wine's laced with perfume, and tossed down neat
From a foaming conch-shell, while the dizzy ceiling
Spins round, and the tables dance, and each light shows double.
Why, you may ask yourself, does the notorious Maura
Sniff at the air in that knowing, derisive way
As she and her dear friend Tullia pass by the ancient altar
Of Chastity? and what is Tullia whispering to her?
Here, at night, they stagger out of their litters
And relieve themselves, pissing in long hard bursts
All over the Goddess's statue. Then, while the Moon
Looks down on their motions, they take turns to ride each other,
And finally go home. So you, next morning,
On your way to some great house, will splash through your wife's piddle.
  Notorious, too, are the ritual mysteries
Of the Good Goddess,[21] when flute-music stirs the loins,
And frenzied women, devotees of Priapus,
Sweep along in procession, howling, tossing their hair,
Wine-flown, horn-crazy, burning with the desire
To get themselves laid. Hark at the way they whinny
In mounting lust, see that copious flow, the pure
And vintage wine of passion, that splashes their thighs!
Off goes Saufeia's wreath, she challenges the call-girls
To a contest of bumps and grinds, emerges victorious,
But herself is eclipsed in turn – an admiring loser –

By the liquid movements of Medullina's buttocks:[22]
So the ladies, with a display | of talent to match their birth,
Win all the prizes. No make-belief here, no pretence,
Each act is performed in earnest, and guaranteed
To warm the age-chilled balls of a Nestor or a Priam.
Delay breeds itching impatience, boosts the pure female
Urge, and from every side of the grotto a clamorous
Cry goes up, 'It's time! Let in the men!' Supposing
One lover's asleep, another is told to get dressed
And hustle along. If they draw a blank with their boy-friends
They rope in the slaves. If enough slaves cannot be found
The water-carrier's hired. If they can't track him down, either,
And men are in short supply, they're ready and willing
To cock their dish for a donkey. Would that our ancient ritual
(At least in its public aspect) was uncontaminated
By such malpractices! But every Moor and Hindu
Knows the identity of that 'lady'-harpist
Who brought a tool as long as both anti-Catonian
Pamphlets by Caesar into the sanctuary where
All images of the other sex must be veiled, where even
A buckmouse, ball-conscious, beats an embarrassed retreat.[23]
  Once, no man would have dared to make light of divine power,
Or sneer at the earthenware bowls, black pots, and brittle platters
Of Vatican clay that sufficed King Numa. But nowadays
What altar does not attract its Clodius in drag?[24]
  In every house where there's a practising Master
Of Obscene Arts installed – that occupational
Twitch in his right hand hints at unlimited prospects –
You'll find a disgusting crowd, camp if not actually queer.
They let these creatures defile their meals, admit them
To the sacred family board. Glasses that should be broken
When La Courgette's drunk from them, or The Bearded Cowrie,
Are washed up with the rest. The *lanista*[25] runs

A cleaner, more decent establishment than yours:
He quarters the fag targeteers and the armoured heavies
Well away from each other; net-throwers aren't required
To mess with convicted felons, nor are shoulder-guards
And the light-armed fighter's trident found in the same cell.
Even the lowest riff-raff of the arena
Observe this rule; even in prison they chain them
With separate gangs. But the creatures your wife allows
To share your cup! A dyed-blonde washed-up whore
On the graveyard beat would gag at drinking from it,
Whatever the vintage. Yet these are the advisers
On whose say-so their mistress will marry – or suddenly
Decide to beat a retreat; with whom she relieves
Her flagging spirits, the boredom of daily existence;
Under whose expert guidance she learns to shimmy
Her hips and pelvis. What other tricks she acquires
Only the teacher knows – and he's far from reliable
In every case. He may line his eyes with kohl,
And wear a yellow robe and a hairnet – but adultery
Is the end in view. That affected voice, the way
He poses, one arm akimbo, and scratches his bottom, shouldn't
Lull your suspicions. He'll be a champion performer
When he gets into bed, dropping the role of Thais
For that of the potent Triphallus.

Hey there, *you*,
Who do you think you're fooling? Keep this masquerade
For those who believe it. I'll wager that you're one hundred
Per cent a man. It's a bet. So will you confess,
Or must the torturer rack the truth from your maids?
I know the advice my old friends would give – 'Lock her up
And bar the doors.' But who is to keep guard
Over the guards themselves? They get paid in common coin
To forget their mistress's randy little adventures;
Both sides have something to hide. Any sensible wife,
Planning ahead, will first turn the heat on them.

High and low alike, all women nowadays
Share the same lusts. The peasant trudging barefoot
Over black cobbles is no whit superior to
The lady who rides on the necks of tall Syrian porters.
Ogulnia's mad on the Games. To see them she'll hire
Dresses, attendants, a carriage, a baby-sitter,
Cushions, lady companions, and a cute little blonde
To carry her messages. Yet whatever remains
Of the family plate, down to the very last salver,
She'll hand out as a present to some plausible athlete.
Many such women lack substance – yet poverty gives them
No sense of restraint, they don't observe the limits
Their resources impose. Men on the other hand
Sometimes at least show providence, plan for the future
In a practical way, learn by the ant's example
To fear cold and hunger. But an extravagant woman
Never knows when she's overdrawn. None of them reckon
The cost of their pleasures, as though, when the strong-box
was empty,
More money would grow there, the pile replenish itself.
There are girls who adore unmanly eunuchs – so smooth,
So beardless to kiss, and no worry about abortions!
But the biggest thrill is one who was fully-grown,
A lusty black-quilled male, before the surgeons
Went to work on his groin. Let the testicles ripen
And drop, fill out till they hang like two-pound weights;
Then what the surgeon chops will hurt nobody's trade but the
barber's.
(Slave-dealers' boys are different: pathetically weak,
Ashamed of their empty bag, their lost little chickpeas.)
Look at that specimen – you could spot him a mile off,
Everyone knows him – displaying his well-endowed person
At the baths: Priapus might well be jealous. And yet
He's a eunuch. His mistress arranged it. So, let them sleep
together –

Yet I wouldn't bet on a handsome, passionate youth
With his first beard sprouting to better *that* performance.
If your wife has musical tastes, she'll make the professional
Singers come when she wants. She's forever handling
Their instruments, her bejewelled fingers sparkle
Over the lute, she practises scales with a vibrant
Quill once employed by some famous virtuoso –
It's her mascot, her solace, she lavishes kisses on it,
The darling object.
A certain patrician lady,
Whose lutanist protégé was due to compete in
The Capitoline Festival,[26] made enquiry of Janus
And Vesta, offering wine and cakes, to find out
If her Pollio could aspire to the oakwreath prize
For the best performance. What more could she have done
If her husband was sick, or the doctors shaking their heads
Over her little son? She stood there at the altar,
Thinking it no disgrace to veil her face on behalf of
This cheapjack twangler. She made the proper responses
In traditional form, and blanched as the lamb was opened.
Tell me now, I beg you, most ancient of deities,
Old Father Janus, do such requests get answered? There must
Be time and to spare in heaven. From what I can see
You Gods have nothing on hand to keep you occupied.
One woman's mad on comedians, another's pushing some
tragic
Ham of her choice: the diviner will soon get varicose veins.
Yet a musical wife's not so bad as some presumptuous
Flat-chested busybody who rushes around the town
Gate-crashing all-male greetings, talking back straight-faced
To a uniformed general – *and* in her husband's presence.
She knows all the news of the world, what's cooking in Thrace
Or China, just what the stepmother did with her stepson
Behind closed doors, who's fallen in love, which gallant
Is all the rage. She'll tell you who got the widow

Pregnant, and in which month; she knows each woman's
Pillow-endearments, and all the positions she favours.
She's the first to spot any comet presaging trouble
For some eastern prince, in Armenia, maybe, or Parthia.[27]
She's on to the latest gossip and rumours as soon as
They reach the city-gates, or invents her own, informing
Everyone she meets that Niphates[28] has overflowed
And is inundating whole countries – towns are cut off,
She says, and the land is sinking: flood and disaster!
Yet even this is not so insufferable
As her habit, when woken up,[29] of grabbing some poor-class
Neighbour and belting into him with a whip. If her precious
Sleep is broken by barking, 'Fetch me the cudgels,'
She roars, 'and be quick about it!' The dog gets a thrashing,
But its master gets one first. She's no joke to cross,
And her face is a grisly fright. Not till the evening
Does she visit the baths: only then are her oil-jars and
The rest of her clobber transferred there. First she works out
With the weights and dumb-bells. Then, when her arms are
aching,
The masseur takes over, craftily slipping one hand
Along her thigh, and tickling her up till she comes.
Lastly she makes for the sweat-room. She loves to sit there
Amid all that hubbub, perspiring. Meanwhile at home
Her unfortunate guests are nearly dead with hunger.
At last she appears, all flushed, with a three-gallon thirst,
Enough to empty the brimming jar at her feet
Without assistance. She knocks back two straight pints
On an empty stomach, to sharpen her appetite: then
Throws it all up again, souses the floor with vomit
That flows in rivers across the terrazzo. She drinks
And spews by turns, like some big snake that's tumbled
Into a wine-vat, till her gilded jordan brims
Right over with sour and vinous slops. Quite sickened,
Eyes shut, her husband somehow holds down his bile.

Worse still is the well-read menace, who's hardly settled for dinner
Before she starts praising Virgil, making a moral case
For Dido (death justifies all), comparing, evaluating
Rival poets, Virgil and Homer suspended
In opposite scales, weighed up one against the other.
Critics surrender, academics are routed, all
Fall silent, not a word from lawyer or auctioneer –
Or even another woman. Such a rattle of talk,
You'd think all the pots and bells were being clashed together
When the moon's in eclipse. No need now for trumpets or brass:
One woman can act, single-handed, as lunar midwife.[30]
But wisdom imposes limits, even on virtue, and if
She's so determined to prove herself eloquent, learned,
She should hoist up her skirts and gird them above the knee,
Offer a pig to Silvanus (female worshippers banned) and
Scrub off in the penny baths.[31] So avoid a dinner-partner
With an argumentative style, who hurls well-rounded
Syllogisms like slingshots, who has all history pat:
Choose someone rather who doesn't | understand *all* she reads.
I hate these authority-citers, the sort who are always thumbing
Some standard grammatical treatise, whose every utterance
Observes all the laws of syntax, who with antiquarian zeal
Quote poets I've never heard of. Such matters are men's concern.[32]
If she wants to correct someone's language, she can always
Start with her unlettered girl-friends. A husband should be allowed
His solecisms in peace.
There's nothing a woman
Baulks at, no action that gives her a twinge of conscience
Once she's put on her emerald choker, weighted down her ear-lobes
With vast pearl pendants. What's more insufferable

Than your well-heeled female? But earlier in the process
She presents a sight as funny as it's appalling,
Her features lost under a damp bread face-pack,
Or greasy with vanishing-cream that clings to her husband's
Lips when the poor man kisses her – though it's all
Wiped off for her lover. She takes no trouble about
The way she looks at home: those imported Indian
Scents and lotions she buys with a lover in mind.
First one layer, then the next: at last the contours emerge
Till she's almost recognizable. Now she freshens
Her complexion with asses' milk. (If her husband's posted
To the godforsaken North, a herd of she-asses
Will travel with them.) But all these medicaments
And various treatments – not least the damp bread-poultice –
Make you wonder what's underneath, a face or an ulcer.
It's revealing to study the details of such a woman's
Daily routine, to see how she occupies her time.
If her husband, the night before, has slept with his back to her, then
The wool-maid's had it, cosmeticians are stripped and flogged,
The litter-bearer's accused of coming late. One victim
Has rods broken over his back, another bears bloody stripes
From the whip, a third is lashed with a cat-o'-nine-tails:
Some women pay their floggers an annual salary.
While the punishment's carried out she'll be fixing her face,
Gossiping with her friends, giving expert consideration
To the width of the hem on some gold-embroidered robe –
Crack! Crack! – or skimming through the daily gazette;
Till at last, when the flogger's exhausted, she snaps 'Get out!'
And for one day at least the judicial hearing is over.
Her household's governed with all the savagery
Of a Sicilian court. If she's made some assignation
That she wants to look her best for, and is in a tearing hurry
Because she's late, and her lover's waiting for her
In the public gardens, or by the shrine (bordello

Might be a more accurate term) 'of Isis – why then, the slave-girl
Arranging her coiffure will have her own hair torn out,
Poor creature, and the tunic ripped from her shoulders and breasts.
'Why isn't this curl in place?' the lady screams, and her rawhide
Lash inflicts chastisement for the offending ringlet.
But what was poor Psecas's crime? How could you blame an attendant
For the shape of your own nose? Another maid
Combs out the hair on her left side, twists it round the curlers;
The consultative committee is reinforced by
An elderly lady's-maid inherited from Mama,
And now promoted from hairpins to the wool department. She
Takes the floor first, to be followed by her inferiors
In age and skill, as though some issue of reputation
Or life itself were at stake, so obsessionally they strive
In beauty's service. See the tall edifice
Rise up on her head in serried tiers and storeys!
See her heroic stature – at least, that is, from in front:
Her back view's less impressive, you'd think it belonged
To a different person. The effect is ultra-absurd
If she's lacking in inches, the sort who without stilettos
Resembles some sawn-off pygmy, who's forced to stand
On tiptoe for a kiss.
Meantime she completely
Ignores her husband, gives not a moment's thought
To all she costs him. She's less a wife than a neighbour –
Except when it comes to loathing his friends and slaves,
Or running up bills . . .[33]
. . . And now in comes a procession,
Devotees of the frenzied Bellona, and Cybele, Mother of Gods,[34]

Led by a giant eunuch, the idol of his lesser
Companions in obscenity. Long ago, with a sherd,
He sliced off his genitals: now neither the howling rabble
Nor the kettledrums can outshriek him. His plebeian cheeks
Are framed in a Phrygian mitre. With awesome utterance
He bids her beware of September and its siroccos –
Unless, that is, she lays out a hundred eggs
For purificatory rites, and makes him a present
Of some old clothes, russet-coloured, so that any calamity,
However sudden or frightful, may pass into the garments –
A package-deal expiation, valid for twelve whole months.
In winter she'll break the ice, descend into the river,
And thrice, before noon, let the eddies of Tiber close
Over her timorous head;[35] then crawl out, naked, trembling,
And shuffle on bleeding knees, by way of penance,
Across the Field of Mars. Indeed, if white Io so orders,
She'll make a pilgrimage to the ends of Egypt,
Fetch water from tropic Meroë for the aspersion
Of Isis's temple, that stands | beside those ancient sheep-pens
The public polling-booths.[36] She believes that she's summoned
By the voice of the Lady herself – just the sort of rare
Mind and spirit, no doubt, that a god *would* choose to talk to
In the small hours! That's why high praise and special honours
Go to her dogheaded colleague, Anubis, who runs through the streets
With a shaven-pated crew dressed in linen robes, and mocks
The people's grief for Osiris. He it is who intercedes
For wives who fail to abstain from sex on the prescribed
And ritual days, exacting huge penalties
When the marriage-bed is polluted, or when the silver
Serpent appears to nod. His tears and professional
Mutterings – after Osiris has been bribed with a fat goose
And some sacrificial cake – will guarantee absolution.
No sooner has *he* pushed off than a palsied Jewess,
Parking her haybox outside, comes round soliciting alms

In a breathy whisper. She knows, and can interpret,
The Laws of Jerusalem: a high-priestess-under-the-trees,
A faithful mediator of Heaven on earth. She too
Fills her palm, but more sparingly: Jews will sell you
Whatever dreams you like for a few small coppers.
  Then there are fortune-tellers, Armenians, Syrians,
Who'll pry out the steaming lungs of a pigeon, predict
A young lover for the lady, or a good fat inheritance
From some childless millionaire. They'll probe a chicken's
Bosom, unravel the guts of a puppy: sometimes
They even slaughter a child. The seer can always
Turn informer on his client.
                Chaldaean astrologers
Will inspire more confidence: their every pronouncement
Is a straight tip, clients believe, from the oracular fountain
Of Ammon.[37] (Now that Delphi has fallen silent
The human race is condemned to murky unknowing
Of what the future may bring.) The most successful
Have been exiled on several occasions – like you-know-who
With his venal friendship and rigged predictions, who settled
The hash of that great citizen dreaded by Otho . . .[38]
                . . . Nothing
Boosts your diviner's credit so much as a lengthy spell
In the glasshouse, with fetters jangling from either wrist:
No one believes in his powers unless he's dodged execution
By a hair's breadth, and contrived to get himself deported
To some Cycladic island like Seriphos, and to escape
After lengthy privations. Your wife, your Tanaquil,[39]
Is for ever consulting such folk. Why does her jaundice-ridden
Mother take so long dying? When will she see off
Her sister or her uncles? (She made all enquiries
About *you* some while back.) Will her present lover
Survive her? (What greater boon could she ask of the Gods?)
Yet she at least cannot tell what Saturn's gloomy
Conjunction portends, or under which constellation

Venus is most propitious; which months bring loss, which gain.
When you meet such a woman, clutching her well-thumbed
Almanacs like a string of amber worry-beads,
Keep very clear of her. *She* isn't shopping around
For expert advice; she's an expert herself, the sort
Who won't accompany her husband on an overseas posting –
Or even back home again – if the almanac forbids it.
When she wants to go out of town, a mile even, or less,
She computes a propitious time for her tables. If she rubs
One corner of her eye, and it itches, she must never
Put ointment on it without first consulting her horoscope; if
She is ill in bed, she will only take nourishment
At such times as Petosiris, the Egyptian, may recommend.[40]
  Women of lower rank and fortune learn their futures
Down at the racecourse, from phrenologist or palmist,
With much smacking of lips against evil influences.[41]
Rich ladies send out to hire their own tame Phrygian
Prophet, they skim off the cream of the star-gazers, or
Pick one of those wise old parties who neutralize thunderbolts:
The Circus and the Embankment preside over more
Plebeian destinies. Here, by the dolphin-columns
And the public stands, old whores in their off-shoulder
Dresses and thin gold neck-chains come for advice –
Should they ditch the tavern-keeper? marry the rag-and-bone
    man?
Yet these at least endure the dangers of childbirth, all
Those nursing chores which poverty lays upon them:
How often do gilded beds witness a lying-in
When we've so many sure-fire drugs for inducing sterility
Or killing an embryo child? Our skilled abortionists
Know all the answers. So cheer up, my poor friend,
And give her the dose yourself. Things might be worse – just
    suppose
She chose to stay pregnant, to swell her belly with frolicsome
Infants: you might become some piccaninny's Papa,

And find yourself making your will on behalf of a son and heir
Whose off-black face was better not seen by daylight.
I say nothing of spurious children, changelings picked up
Beside some filthy cistern, and passed off as nobly-born –
False hopes, deluded prayers! – our future priesthood,
Our bluest patrician blood. Fortune by night
Is shameless, smiles on these naked babes, enfolds them
One and all in her bosom: then, for a private joke,
Deals them out to great families, loves and lavishes
Her care upon them, makes them her special favourites.
Here comes a peddler of magic spells and Thessalian[43]
Philtres. With these any wife can so befuddle
Her husband's wits that he'll let her slipper his backside.
If you get mental blackouts, gross amnesia
About yesterday's doing, plain softening of the brain,
This is your trouble. Yet even these tricks can be endured
Provided you aren't driven raving mad by the kind
Of knock-out mixture Caesonia once brewed up
For her husband, Nero's uncle.[43] When an Empress sets fashions
What woman won't follow suit? Established certainties
Went up in flames then, mere anarchy ruled the world:
Had it been Juno herself who drove her husband crazy
The shock could have been no greater. Why, Agrippina's
Mushroom turned out less lethal: *that* only settled the hash
Of one old dotard, saw off his tremulous headpiece
And beslobbered, drooling chops to some nether heaven.[44]
But
Caesonia's potion brought fire and sword and the rack,
Mowed down Senate and burghers in one mangled, bloody heap:
Such was the cost of one philtre, a single poisoner.
Wives loathe a concubine's offspring. Let no man cavil
Or call such hatred abnormal: to murder your step-son
Is an old-established tradition, perfectly right and proper.
But wards with rich portions should have a well-developed

Sense of self-preservation. Trust none of the dishes at dinner:
Those pies are steaming-black with the poison Mummy put there.
Whatever she offers you, make sure another person
Tries it out first: let your shrinking tutor sample
Each cup you're poured. Do you think this is melodrama?
Am I making the whole thing up, careless of precedents, mouthing
Long-winded bombast in the old Sophoclean manner
That's quite out of place here under Italian skies?
How I wish that it *was* all nonsense! But listen to Pontia's[45]
Too-willing confession: 'I did it, I admit I gave aconite
To my children. Yes, they were poisoned, that's obvious –
But *I* was the one who killed them.'
'What, you viper,
Two at one meal? The brutality of it! *Two*
You did away with?'
'Indeed; and if there'd been seven
I'd have polished *them* off, too.'
Whatever the tragic poets
Tell us about Medea and Procne[46] may well have happened:
I won't dispute that. Such women were monsters of daring
In their own day – but not from the lust for cash.
We find it less freakish when wrath provides the incentive
For a woman's crimes, when whitehot passion whirls her
Headlong, like some boulder that's carried away by a landslide,
What *I* can't stand is the calculating woman
Who plans her crimes in cold blood. Our wives sit and watch
Alcestis[47] undertaking to die in her husband's stead:
If they had a similar chance, *they'd* gladly sacrifice
Their husband's life for their lapdogs'. Take a morning stroll,
You'll meet Danaids galore; an Eriphyle
Or Clytemnestra turns up in every street.[48] The only
Difference is this: whereas Clytemnestra used
A clumsy great double-axe, nowadays an ounce of toad's lung

Is just as effective. But cold steel may have a comeback
If our modern Agamemnons take a hint from old Mithridates,
And sample the pharmacopeia till they're proof against every
drug.[49]

Notes to Satire VI

1. 'Cynthia' was the pseudonym which Propertius used to describe his mistress Hostia in the poems he wrote about her; the girl who wept for her sparrow was 'Lesbia', the mistress of Catullus, whose real name was Clodia, and who was the sister of Publius Clodius, referred to below in lines 335–45. The point, of course, is that both these women were neurotic, sophisticated creatures with the loosest of sexual habits. Hostia was chronically unfaithful. Cicero accuses Clodia of incest with her brother; one of her later lovers described her as a 'two-bit Clytemnestra'.

2. I accept Scholte's emendation *rupe et robore* in line 12.

3. In A.D. 9 Augustus passed a law, the *Lex Papia Poppaea*, which gave special privileges to those with three or more children, and restricted the rights of bachelors, spinsters or childless couples to inherit property.

4. The 'feast of the Corn-Goddess' (Ceres) took place in August, and somewhat resembled a Harvest Festival: it included a ceremonial procession of white-clad women bearing first-fruits. One condition of participation in this ceremony was nine days' previous abstention from sexual intercourse. The scholiast, with typical blunt accuracy, explains the point about fathers fearing their daughters' 'tainted kisses': *quia et irrumantur mulieres, dicit.*

5. Bathyllus seems to have been a *pantomimus*, or ballet-dancer, under Domitian. The most famous Bathyllus, however, who was, broadly speaking, the Diaghilev of the Imperial ballet, lived much earlier, under Augustus, and was a favourite of Maecenas: it was customary to repeat the names of 'stars' in successive generations, and we shall find the same thing happening with Paris the actor. It is hard to realize the influence which the Roman ballet exerted on Roman citizens. It was not only immensely popular, but formed a centre for violent factions like those of the various racing-colours (there were two rival schools of ballet), and was sometimes the cause of riots and bloodshed.

6. At line 107 I accept Nisbet's ingenious emendation *sulcus* (for

sicut): the only way so far suggested of making this passage into tolerable Latin.

7. Lines 113–24 are a textual nightmare. The general sense is clear: the Latin is in many places quite hopeless. I do not agree with attempts by various editors to solve the problem on a basis of wholesale linear transposition (for the latest attempt see Courtney, p. 39) and have kept the text in the line-order given by the MSS. Again, it seems clear that several lines must have fallen out: possibly after 117, certainly after 118. To avoid the first loss we must take *meretrix augusta* in apposition to *uxor*, which is awkward, but just possible. To make 119 follow on 118 we have to get rid of *linquebat*, which, despite editorial claims, cannot be anything but a transitive verb. I have sometimes wondered whether *linquebat* was not a corruption of *iam properat*; but it seems more sensible to assume a lacuna after 118, perhaps of one line only, something such as *iussit, et amplexus subito cubitusque seniles* . . . etc.

8. The 'prince of the blood' was Britannicus, Messalina's son by Claudius. The boy's stepmother, Agrippina, persuaded Claudius to adopt her own son Lucius Domitius (Nero), who thus succeeded to the throne after Claudius's death by poisoning in 54. Britannicus himself was also murdered a year later, presumably as a potential rival to Nero. See below, lines 615–26.

9. During the Saturnalia (17–19 December) a fair and market were held in the Campus Martius, and the canvas stalls erected for this purpose made it impossible to see the frescoes in the Portico of Agrippa. One of the more famous of these frescoes depicted Jason and the Argonauts. Once again J. belittles a mythological theme, here by reducing the voyage of the Argonauts to a mere trading venture.

10. Berenice and Agrippa II are perhaps best known for St Paul's appearance before them at Caesarea in A.D. 62. Berenice, after two marriages, the second to her uncle, lived for many years with Agrippa, her brother, incestuously accordingly to general belief. The emperor Titus fell in love with her during his Jewish campaign (67–70), and had her as his mistress in 75, when she visited Rome. It is quite possible that she sold some famous ring during this visit.

11. Sabine women had a high reputation for chastity. Their role as peacemakers is described by Livy (1.13, p. 32). After their 'rape' Sabine troops under Mettius Curtius invaded Rome, and came very

close to capturing the Palatine Hill. As the battle raged in the valley between the Palatine and the Capitol, the women (for whatever motive) decided to intervene. 'With loosened hair and rent garments they braved the flying spears and thrust their way in a body between the embattled armies', etc. The whole passage makes me wonder whether scholars do not seriously under-estimate Livy's deadpan sense of humour.

12. Reading *Venustina*, which I take to be a piece of contemporary *argot* for a prostitute.

13. Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, was the second daughter of Scipio Africanus, who conquered the Numidian prince Syphax in 203 and defeated Hannibal at the Battle of Zama in 202. She had twelve children (though only three survived to adult life, and of these three the two boys, Gaius and Tiberius, both suffered political assassination) – a fact which suggests that the next few lines, describing the fate of Niobe, may have something of a back-kick at Cornelia herself.

14. Niobe was the daughter of Tantalus and wife of Amphion. She, like Cornelia, had twelve children, six boys and six girls; she angered Leto by boasting that she was at least the equal of Leto, who had borne two children only, Apollo and Artemis. (Ovid tells us that she also disparaged Leto's ancestral connexions.) The two thereupon killed all Niobe's offspring; Amphion hanged himself; and Niobe, after one tearful meal, was turned to stone. The 'white Alban sow' may be found in the *Aeneid*, together with its farrow of thirty young: it marked the future site of Alba Longa (*Aeneid* 3.390 ff., pp. 86–7).

15. The coins were *aurei* (almost the exact equivalent of our guinea); the 'victory issues' were for Trajan's conquests in Germany (A.D. 97) and Dacia (A.D. 102/3). This detail provides a *terminus post quem* for the composition-date of Satire VI. We have no other reference to such a marriage-custom, but we know from Martial that successful gladiators in the arena were so rewarded: J. may simply be making a not uncommon joke, the transference of battle-imagery to the bedroom.

16. The scholiast points out, very sensibly, that the mother-in-law fakes illness in order to give her daughter a good excuse for frequent visits: the adulterous meetings take place in the mother-in-law's

house. The passage would not require a note were it not for the fact that modern scholars seem unanimous in agreeing that it is *the daughter* who feigns illness: a Kaufman and Hart notion hardly (one would have thought) conducive to peaceful infidelity.

17. The Floralia, or Festival of Flowers, took place between 28 April and 3 May. Games were held and farces performed: as Duff delicately puts it, 'custom sanctioned unusual freedoms on the part of the actresses'. Prostitutes played a large part in the proceedings, and some of the ritual – clearly of the old ithyphallic fertility-cult variety – was described as 'most improper'. Trumpets were blown at the beginning of all public shows.

18. For Metellus see n. 17 to Satire III. The Aemilii Lepidi were a most distinguished Roman family who produced numbers of statesmen (including the Triumvir). The Fabii were one of the most ancient patrician *gentes*, tracing their ancestry back to Hercules and the Arcadian Evander: Fabius the Guzzler, so named because of his youthful gourmandizing, was Q. Fabius Maximus Gurges, consul in 292 and 276 B.C.

19. Quintilian – M. Fabius Quintilianus (A.D. *c.* 35–*c.* 100?) was a Spanish rhetorician, educated in Rome, and appointed Professor of Latin Rhetoric by Vespasian. He is best known from his surviving work, the *Institutio Oratoria*, composed after his retirement in A.D. 90. The 'pat excuse' is the *color*, a frequent technical term among the rhetoricians for any approach that would present an action in the most favourable possible light.

20. There is a highly obscure allusion here. In 281 B.C. the Romans sent an embassy to Tarentum to complain of various outrages the Tarentines had been guilty of; the ambassador was insulted by a drunk in the theatre, who befouled his robe. 'It will,' said the ambassador, 'take much blood to clean'; and since the Tarentines called in King Pyrrhus to help them, it did.

21. The Bona Dea, or 'Good Goddess', was said to be either the daughter or wife of the Roman deity Faunus. Her worship, which appears to have been a mystic and orgiastic fertility cult, was strictly reserved for women. Men were not even supposed to know her real name. Her sanctuary – alluded to here – was a grotto on the Aventine. Her festival was celebrated annually in the house of the consul or praetor, since the offerings made then were on behalf of

the Roman people as a whole. During the ceremony no male could enter the building, and all male images had to be covered. It began with a sacrifice, and included dancing and the drinking of wine (which was referred to throughout as 'honey'). It generally took place at night.

22 'Saufeia' and 'Medullina' are names carefully chosen as representative of ancient Roman families. The latter was a family name of the Gens Furia; Claudius's first fiancée was called Livia Medullina Camilla.

23. It is hard to tell throughout this passage how far J. is giving a slanted and prejudiced account of a genuine – if by his day somewhat debased – ceremony, and how far what he says is mere malicious invention. But these details seem genuine enough: we may also note that women were required to prepare for the occasion by a period of sexual abstinence, which gives more point to J.'s climax.

24. Publius Clodius profaned the ceremony of the Bona Dea in December 62 B.C., when it was being held in Caesar's house. Caesar's wife Pompeia (to complicate matters) was Clodius's current mistress. This triggered off a sizable political crisis; it also adds to J.'s image of the 'two anti-Catonian pamphlets'. Clodius was brought to trial, but got off by bribing the jurors.

The following 34 lines, the so-called 'O[xford] Passage', were first discovered in a unique Bodleian MS in 1899, and have been much discussed since. (See introduction, pp. 58 ff.). They are inserted after line 365, where they seem singularly out of place. For many years I have thought that the logical point for their introduction was after line 345: recently Mr J. G. Griffith published an article, in *Hermes* 91 (1963), 104–14, saying precisely the same thing, and I have accordingly taken the liberty of transferring them in my translation.

25. The *lanista* was the director and trainer of a gladiatorial school. There is no precise equivalent in English without a cumbersome periphrasis.

26. A.D. 86 Domitian restored the great temple on the Capitol. To celebrate this he founded 'a festival of music, horsemanship and gymnastics, to be held every five years, and awarded far more prizes than is customary nowadays. The festival included Latin and Greek public-speaking contests, competitions for choral singing to the lyre

and for lyre-playing alone, besides the usual solo singing to lyre accompaniment . . .' (Suetonius, *Domitian* 4, p. 298). The prizes were oakleaf wreaths, and the competition lasted without interruption until the fifth century A.D.

27. Trajan invaded Armenia in 113 and Parthia, probably, in 116. In December 115 there was a great earthquake at Antioch. Highet (pp. 12–13) concludes from this that the Sixth Satire was composed and published at some time fairly soon after 116, and that these are the events which J. makes his gossip allude to.

28. The whole point is that Niphates was a mountain, not a river: in fact, the highest range in the Taurus, rising to over 10,000 feet. The lady, with typical feminine inaccuracy, fails to get her geography right. (On the other hand both Lucan and Silius Italicus make the same mistake, so perhaps J.'s pleasant effect here is unintentional.)

29. At line 415 I accept Duff's brilliant emendation *experrecta*, based on the scholium to line 417, which suggests that the true reading was ousted by a gloss, *exorta*, which was then changed, for metrical reasons, to *exortata*.

30. Eclipses of the moon were supposed to be caused by witchcraft: the witch's incantations, perhaps reinforced by the magic bird-wheel, or *iynx*, would torture and diminish the moon unless such a din was created that the spells were inaudible. The moon's waxing was not only connected in the popular mind with menstruation, but also regarded in itself as a kind of pregnancy. The beating on pots and pans also acted as an apotropaic against evil spirits. Witches were supposed to be able to 'call down' the moon, and obtain a curious magical foam from it.

31. Both these activities symbolize masculine status. Silvanus, a vague and numinous deity of all wild land beyond the tillage, was exclusively worshipped by men. The 'penny baths' were where men went; it is not certain whether women merely paid more, or used a different section of the building as well.

32. At lines 454–5 I read, and punctuate, as follows: . . . *antiquaria versus:/ haec curanda viris. opicae*, etc. Housman is responsible for the full stop after *viris*; *haec* (in my opinion an almost certain emendation for *nec*) was picked up by Postgate from one of Ruperti's MSS.

33. I strongly suspect that line 511 has been cobbled together, and

covers a considerable omission. The break in the sense is violent; we pass, with no real or logical transition, from the portrait of the sadistic mistress to that of a superstitious lady, rather akin to the *Superstitious Man* of Theophrastus; what is more, we appear to come in on it in the middle, where she is being visited by a series of quacks and diviners such as turn up in Aristophanes' Cloud-Cuckooland.

34. Bellona was originally a native Roman war-goddess; but by Imperial times her worship had been syncretized with that of the Cappadocian mother-goddess Ma. Cybele, the great mother-goddess of Anatolia, whose main shrine was at Pessinus in Phrygia, was also known as the Idaean or Dindymenian Mother; her cult was officially brought to Rome in 205/4 B.C. (see n. 17 to Satire III), together with that of her young consort Attis. The great spring festival, from 15–28 March, was probably developed after Claudius's day, and it seems to be this which is alluded to here.

35. The scholiast points out that this descent into the river took place after intercourse with a man.

36. The site of the Isaeum in the Campus Martius has been identified. So, more strikingly still, has the great temple of Isis on the Ethiopian island of Meroë, far up the Nile: it is clear, then, that what J. says here is no rhetorical exaggeration. For evidence of Greek and Roman pilgrimages to Meroë see Highet, pp. 242–3.

37. Ammon was originally the god of Thebes in Egypt. His fame in Hellenistic and Roman times was almost entirely bound up with his oracle in the oasis at Siwah, in Cyrene, which came to rival the oracles of Delphi or Dodona – especially after it was consulted by Alexander, who may have gone there with the object of being deified.

38. Lines 558–9 are omitted by several of the best MSS and not commented on by the scholiast; they are certainly J.'s, but seem out of place here, where the sense would run more smoothly if the text read '. . . on several occasions. Nothing,' etc. The astrologer in question was called either Ptolemaeus or Seleucus; the 'great citizen' whom Otho feared was the future brief-lived Emperor Galba. It seems that Ptolemaeus switched allegiance from one to the other with considerable dexterity – as anyone of his calling must have needed to do, not once but several times, in the 'Year of the Four Emperors' (A.D. 69).

39. The wife is given the sobriquet 'Tanaquil' (an Etruscan name) after the wife of Tarquinius Priscus, whose skill in magic and fortune-telling enabled her to learn the future destiny of Servius Tullius. She was also (and this point will not have been lost on J.) 'an aristocratic young woman who was not of a sort to put up with humbler circumstances in her married life than those she had been previously accustomed to' (Livy 1.34, p. 56).

40. Petosiris was joint author, with Nechepso, of an astrological treatise composed about 150 B.C. or a little later. The two names may be a double pseudonym for one author. The treatise is supposed to have first given the signs of the zodiac their astrological significance.

41. The *poppysma* was a sound made with the lips to avert the evil eye or similar maleficent influences: it may still be heard today in the '*po-po-po-po*' of a Greek peasant woman when she is told bad news. Perhaps the implication here is that the fortunes given were, on the whole, far from flattering.

42. Thessalian women had a notorious reputation throughout antiquity for skill in magical arts of every sort: authors from Euripides to Lucian mention their uncanny powers.

43. Nero's uncle was the emperor Caligula. 'He was well aware,' Suetonius tells us (*Caligula* 50, p. 174) 'that he had mental trouble . . . Caesonia [his wife] is reputed to have given him an aphrodisiac which drove him mad.'

44. Claudius was poisoned with a dish of mushrooms prepared by his wife Agrippina, though the details of his death are confused, and Suetonius (*Claudius* 44, pp. 206–7) lists several variant accounts. For his physical peculiarities see *Claudius* 30 (p. 200), and Seneca, *Apocolocyntosis* 5.

45. Pontia's case was something of a *cause célèbre* during Nero's reign. According to the scholiast she was Petronius's daughter, and poisoned her children after her father had lost his life as a result of the 'Conspiracy of Piso'; on conviction she committed suicide by opening her veins after a sumptuous banquet – which was exactly what Petronius himself had done. Father-fixation, the Freudian might say, could scarcely go further.

46. Medea and Procne were both familiar instances from mythology of mothers who killed their children – but both, as J. emphasizes, acted out of passion.

47. Alcestis is familiar to us from Euripides' play of that name; she was the wife of Admetus of Pherae in Thessaly, and volunteered to die on his behalf, an offer which he willingly accepted. Later Heracles found Admetus grieving for his dead wife, and successfully forced either Hades or the incarnation of Death, Thanatos, to give Alcestis back.

48. The daughters of Danaus killed their husbands; so did Eriphyle; so did Clytemnestra. This is the only reason J. has for bracketing their names together in this context.

49. The anecdote by which Mithridates VI, King of Pontus (*c.* 120–63 B.C.) is best known – his diet of prophylactics, which made him immune to poison – has been immortalized in a poem by A. E. Housman.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

At line 246 I now interpret *femineum ceroma* as 'female mud-wrestling': see Reinmuth (Additional Bibliography). At line 477 I accept Durry's interpretation of *cosmetae* (Additional Bibliography), and translate accordingly.

SATIRE VII

All hopes for the arts today, all inducement to study, depend
Upon Caesar[1] alone. Who else spares a glance for the wretched
Muses in these hard times, when established poets lease
An out-of-town bath-concession or a city bakery
To make their living, when hungry historians are quitting
Helicon's vales and springs for the auction-rooms? No comedown,
They feel, no disgrace; if you can't turn an honest penny
In the shady grove of the Muses, you might as well
Accept the title – and income – of an auctioneer, join in
The saleroom battles, flog lots under the hammer
To a crowd of bidders – winejars, three-legged stools,
Bookcases, cupboards, remaindered plays by nonentities
On stale mythological themes. A better career, surely,
Than the perjuror's, telling a judge you saw what you didn't. Leave that
To our get-rich-quick crowd, the Asiatic burghers –
Galled ankles, revealed by low slippers, blow the gaff on *their* origins.[2]
But henceforth none who shape eloquent utterance
To tuneful measures, none who have bitten Apollo's
Laurel will be compelled to labour in fields that
Demean their craft. So at it, young men: your Imperial
Leader is urging you on, surveying your ranks for talent
That merits his support.
But if you had thoughts of obtaining
Patronage for your art from some other benefactor,
And it's in this hope that you continue to scribble
On your nice buff parchment, you might as well give up –
Order a bundle of firewood, make a burnt sacrifice
Of your works to Vulcan; or else just lock them away
And let the bookworms riddle them full of holes.

Break your pen, poor wretch, destroy all those battle-pieces
That kept you awake so late, the high-flown compositions
Hammered out in that cramped garret, the dreams of a laureate's
wreath
On your gaunt and sculptured brow! Yet this is the best
You could ever hope for: our skinflint millionaires
May flatter artistic talent, may load it with compliments
(Like children admiring a peacock) – but nothing further.
So the prime of life slips by, the years when you might
Have been a sailor, soldier, farmer, until the spirit
Grows weary, until old age creeps up on your penniless
Gift of the gab and you hate yourself and your art.
Your private patron, for whom you forsook the book-lined
haunts
Of Apollo and the Muses,[3] knows every dodge to avoid
Shelling out on you. Why, he's a poet himself, remember,
And in a thousand years – *he* thinks – there's been no one
But Homer to touch him. If the sweet itch for renown
Stirs *you* to give a recital, he'll fix you up with some peeling
Dump of a hall in the suburbs, its doors all barred
And bolted like the gates of a city under siege.
He'll lend you a claque of freedmen and other hangers-on
To sit at the end of each row, distribute the applause;
But none of these noble patrons will underwrite your outlay
On hiring seats and benches, the upper tiers and the framework
Of beams that supports them, the cushioned front-row chairs
That have to be returned, double-quick, when the performance
is over.
Yet still we keep at it, ploughing a dusty furrow,
Turning up barren sand. You can't get out, you're hooked
By writer's itch; the craving for bookish renown
Becomes a sick obsession. But the outstanding poet,
Whose inspiration is rare and unique, who makes
Nothing from common stock, strikes no debased
Poetic currency, minted with platitudes – though

I can't think of one just now, still I'm sure they exist –
Such a paragon's life is bound to be free from anxieties,
Unclouded by bitterness; he's a woodland-lover,
And just the right sort to drink at the Muses' fountain.
How can grim poverty grasp the enchanted wand
Of inspiration, how find that singing grotto
If you're forced to scrape and pinch to meet the body's
Unending demands for cash? When Horace cried '*Rejoice!*'[4]
His stomach was comfortably full. What room for true genius
Save in the heart that's devoted uniquely to poetry
And untroubled by other concerns, that's sustained by Apollo,
By Dionysus? It calls for a lofty temperament, not
Some petty mind scared stiff at the cost of a blanket,
To have visions of horses and chariots, of divine godhead,
To limn the Fury that once confounded Rutulian
Turnus.[5] If Virgil had not possessed at least one servant,
And a fairly comfortable lodging, how flat that scene
Would have fallen – no spark of life in the snakes entwined
Round the Fury's head, voiceless her deep and sounding
Trumpet. Can we expect a modern playwright to match
The ancient tragedians when, in order to finish his *Atreus*,
He must hock his coat, and the dishes?
Numitor can't spare a
penny
For a friend in need, though his mistress never goes short,
And he scraped up enough (remember?) to purchase that tame
lion –
Not to mention the meat it scoffed. Of course it comes cheaper
To feed a lion than a poet: poets have bigger bellies.
Fame may satisfy Lucan,[6] lying at rest now
In his park with its statuary; but for epic poets
Less well endowed, poor starvelings, glory alone,
However great, must remain eternally insufficient.
The City is all agog when Statius[7] agrees
To fix a recital-date. He's a sell-out, no one

Can resist that mellifluous voice, that ever-popular
Theban epic of his: the audience sits there spellbound
By such fabulous charm. Yet despite the cheers and the
stamping
Statius will starve, unless he can sell a libretto
To Paris,[8] Director-in-Chief of Imperial Opera and Ballet,
Paris, the carpet-knight maker, the jobber of high commands.
What nobles cannot bestow, you must truck for to an actor.
Why bother to haunt the spacious ante-rooms
Of the great? Colonels and Governors, the ballet appoints
Every man jack of them. Yet you need not begrudge the living
A poet makes from the stage. Today the age
Of the private patron is over; Maecenas and Co.
Have no successors. Genius got its reward
In those days; many a poet found it worthwhile to sweat
At his desk, on the waggon, right through the December
vacation.[9]
What about writers of history? Do all their labours
Bring them a bigger return, or merely consume
More midnight oil? With unrestricted licence
They pile up their thousand pages – and an enormous
Stationery bill: the vast extent of the theme,
Plus their professional conscience, makes this inevitable.
But what will the harvest yield, what fruit will all your
grubbing
Bring you? Does any historian pull down a newsreader's
wage?
'Oh, they're an idle lot, though, too fond of their shady
deck-chairs.'
How about barristers, then? How much do you think *they*
extract
From all their work in court, all those bulging bundles of briefs?
They *talk* big enough – especially when there's a creditor
Listening, or, worse still, some dun with a weighty
Ledger comes nudging them in the ribs, and makes trouble

About a bad debt. Then they huff and puff like a bellows,
Pump out tremendous lies, spray spittle all over
themselves –
Yet if you look at their incomes (real, not declared),
You'll find that a hundred lawyers scarcely make more than
one
Successful jockey. The magistrates take their places,
And up you stand, a whey-faced poor man's Ajax,
To defend some case of contested | citizenship before
A clodhopping jury. Go on then, burst your lungs, talk till
you drop,
Collect a green palm-wreath on your garret staircase[10] –
But what's the pay-off? One dried-up hock-end of ham
And a jar of pickled fish, or some mouldy onions –
African ration standard – or five quart bottles
Of the cheapest local wine. Four cases, let's say,
Bring you one gold piece between them – but by prior
agreement
The solicitors take their cut. It's a different matter
With a blue-blooded advocate: *he* gets the maximum fee
Though we did a better job. Just look at that bronze group
He's got in his forecourt, that four-horse chariot
From some ancestor's triumph, and himself on a warlike
Charger, bow drawn, eye squinting along the arrow,
Stiffly upright, a dummy dreaming of battles.
This is the way they go bankrupt, this is what will happen
To that show-off Tongilius, who's such a bore at the baths
With his mob of muddy retainers and his outsize oilflask
Of rhinoceros-horn, who has eight stout Thracian slaves
Humping the poles of his litter through the Forum, to go
shopping
For slaves or silver, glassware or country houses.
That pirated gown of his, with the Tyrian purple weave,
Backs up his credit. Such display has its uses:
A purple robe attracts clients. It pays these gentry to live

Above their means, to advertise, sell themselves high –
But spendthrift Rome sets no limits to their extravagance.
Trust in our eloquence, can we? Why, Cicero himself
Wouldn't get tuppence these days without an enormous ring
To flash in court. When a litigant's picking a lawyer,
His first consideration will be, *Have you got eight slaves,*
A dozen freeborn retainers, a litter in attendance,
An escort of citizens? That was why one advocate
Hired a sardonyx ring to wear while pleading his cases –
And why he made more than his colleagues. Forensic skill
Seldom goes with shabby linen. How often, I ask you,
Does a down-at-heels barrister get the chance to produce
Some weeping mother in court? Who'll listen to *him*, however
Persuasive he was? If you really suppose your tongue
Can earn you a workable living, you'd better emigrate
To Gaul or Africa – lawyers are flourishing there.
Or do you teach declamation? You must possess iron nerves
To sit through a whole large class's attack on 'The Tyrant'.
Each boy
Stands up in turn, and delivers by rote what he's just
Learnt at his desk; all gabble off the same
Stale old couplets and catchphrases – bubble-and-squeak
Rehashed without end, sheer death for the poor master.
What type of case is involved, what's the best approach
And the clinching argument, what counter-shots will be fired
By the opposition party – these are things that everyone
Is desperate to learn, but won't pay for. 'What, *pay* you?' they
exclaim,
'But what have you taught me?'
'Of course, it's the teacher's
fault
If some bumpkin pupil isn't thrilled to the marrow
Week after week, while dinning | his awful Hannibal speech
Into my wretched head, whatever the set theme
Up for discussion – should Hannibal march on Rome

From Cannae? And after that | torrential thunderstorm, should he
Play safe, and withdraw his rain-sodden, dripping troops?
What wouldn't I give – just name your figure, I'll pay it,
Cash on the nail – for any boy's father to hear him
As often as I do!'
That's the stock complaint of our teachers
When they put aside classroom speeches such as 'The Rapist',
Or 'A Case of Poison', or 'The Wicked Ungrateful Husband',
Or the one about pounded drugs that can cure chronic
blindness[11] –
And sue in the real-life courts for recovery of their fees.
So, if he takes my advice, the teacher who's emerged
From some academic retreat to do battle in the arena –
His peppercorn fees are the highest he can command
In this profession – will forthwith retire from the Bar
To some other walk of life. When you learn how much
Well-known musicians or singers are paid for giving lessons
To top people's sons, you'll cut down your *Manual of Public*
Speaking
To voice-production alone. For his private baths, a magnate
Will lay out thousands, and more, for a covered cloister to
drive round
When it's wet – you couldn't expect him to wait till the
weather clears,
Or let his pair get muddy. Better to ride
Where those polished hooves will keep | their lustre un-
diminished.
Elsewhere he plans a banqueting-hall, with lofty
Numidian columns, so placed that it gets the best
Of the winter sunshine; and, whatever his mansion
May have set him back, he must still have a first-class chef
And a major-domo. With such expenses, a tenner
Is more than enough for Quintilian. There's nothing comes
lower
Than a son on the list when Daddy is paying out cash.
'Then
how

Did Quintilian get all those vast estates?' Ignore
The exceptions.[12] Luck makes you handsome and brave, luck
brings
Brains and breeding, a splendid pedigree, plus
The senatorial crescent to sew on your black shoestraps.
Luck makes a first-class speaker or javelin-thrower, luck
Means that you still sing well when you've caught a streaming
cold.
It makes all the difference under just what conjunction
Of planets you utter your first thin squalls when you're
Still red from your mother's womb. If Fortune so pleases,
You may rise from teacher to consul; let her frown, and presto!
The consul's a teacher once more.[13] Look at self-made men
Such as Bassus and Cicero:[14] what brought *them* to the top
But the stars in their courses, the miraculous occult powers
Of Fate, who gives kingdoms to slaves, who lets captives
triumph – although
Such lucky ones are as rare as the proverbial white raven.
Professorial chairs too often prove barren comfort,
Bring banishment or death. Cases abound: the wretch
Who hanged himself, or that other | penniless exile to whom
Athens dared give nothing but the cup of cold hemlock.[15]
Gods, grant the earth lie easy and light on our fathers' shades,
With crocus bloom: may their ashes enjoy eternal springtime,
Who held that the teacher stood in a parent's place,
And must be revered as such! Achilles, approaching manhood,
Still feared the rod, was still having singing-lessons
In his native mountains, would never have dared to laugh
At the music-master's tail.[16] But pupils nowadays
Will sometimes beat up their instructor – it happened to Rufus,
That professor they nicknamed 'Cicero of the Rhône'.
What schoolmaster, even the most successful, commands
A proper return for his labours? Yet even this little,
However trifling – and any professor makes more –
Is further whittled away when the pupil's unfeeling

Attendant, and the cashier, have each taken their cut.
Better give in, then: bargain, be beaten down
For a lower fee, like a hawker peddling blankets
And winter rugs – so long | as you get *some* recompense
For presiding, before it's light, in a hell-hole any blacksmith
Or wool-carder would refuse to train apprentices in;
So long as you get *some* return for enduring the stink
Of all those guttering lanterns – one to each pupil,
So that every Virgil and Horace is grimed with lampblack
From cover to cover. Yet, nine times out of ten,
You need a court order to get even this small pittance.
In return, what's more, such parents demand quite impossible
Standards from any master: his grammar must be above cavil,
History, literature, he must have all the authorities
Pat at his fingertips. They'll waylay him *en route*
For the public baths, and expect him to answer their questions
Straight off the cuff – who was Anchises' nurse, what
Was the name of Anchemolus' stepmother, and where
Did she come from? How old was Acestes when he died?
How many jars of Sicilian wine did the Trojans
Get from him as a present?[17] They demand that the teacher
Shall mould these tender minds, like an artist who shapes
A face out of wax, with his thumb. He must, they insist,
Be a father to all his pupils, must stop them getting up to
Indecent tricks with each other (though it's no sinecure
To keep check over all those darting eyes – and fingers).
'See to it,' you're told, 'and when the school year's ended,
You'll get as much as a jockey makes from a single race.'

Notes to Satire VII

1. There has been much argument as to the identity of this Emperor, whom J. does not address by name. It is now generally, and plausibly, agreed that it must have been Hadrian. The occasion could have been either his accession in A.D. 118 (each new ruler, it was hoped, would prove a generous patron of the arts), or, as Highet suggests, his subsequent refoundation of the Athenaeum as a literary centre. The latter event will have taken place before 121, when Hadrian left Rome for a lengthy tour of the provinces. Highet also points out that Satire VII 'contains [J.'s] first dedication to any individual, and his first complimentary reference to any emperor.'

2. The *gallica* was some kind of Gaulish shoe or slipper which left the ankle bare, thus revealing the tell-tale scars left, on one of them (*altera*), by the slave-dealer's shackles. With all modern editors I omit line 15 ('Although Cappadocian burghers and Bithynians do such things . . .'), since it is clearly out of place here: it may have formed part of an alternative version of the passage, later discarded.

3. There seems to be an allusion here to the libraries which Augustus and his wife Livia established, respectively, in the temples of Apollo and the Muses on the Palatine.

4. The allusion is to Horace's *Odes*, 2.19.5, where he describes the excited cries of the Bacchanals. Horace, having a generous patron, could write poetry under ideal conditions: certainly he never went hungry.

5. See Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.445–46 (p. 189): for this episode the Fury Allecto appeared in a dream to Turnus, and when he mocked her prophecies she 'exploded into blazing anger. And even as he spoke the young prince found his limbs suddenly possessed by a trembling, and his eyes became fixed in a stare; so countless were the snakes which uttered the Fury's hiss, and so horrifying was the apparition which stood revealed . . .' etc.

6. The poet Lucan (Marcus Annaeus Lucanus) was born in Cordoba, in Spain, on 3 November A.D. 39, but spent most of his short life in Rome. His uncle was Seneca, the philosopher: the family had considerable wealth, which is the point of the reference

here. At first an intimate of Nero's, Lucan latterly passed out of Imperial favour: it may have been the veto on his literary activities which led him, in 65, to join the ill-fated Conspiracy of Piso, as a result of which he, his father, and both his uncles were forced to commit suicide. He left his epic poem *Pharsalia* (Penguin Classics translation by Robert Graves) unfinished at the time of his death.

7. Publius Papinius Statius (A.D. 45–96) was a Neapolitan who settled in Rome, and seems to have been on reasonably friendly terms with Domitian. His 'ever-popular Theban epic', the *Thebaid*, took twelve years to compose, and during this period Statius – like modern writers – gave occasional public recitals of 'work in progress'. He does not appear to have ever been quite so hard up as J. would have us believe.

8. The Paris referred to here was a well-known *pantomimus*, or ballet-dancer, of Domitian's reign, executed in A.D. 83 for a suspected liaison with Domitian's wife, the empress Domitia. 'Paris' was probably a stage-name, since it belonged to another *pantomimus* under Nero (this one too was executed, in 67), and recurs again in the following century (cf. n. 5 to Satire VI, p. 153). Military tribunes automatically became equestrians, or 'knights', after six months' service; the practice of appointing *honorary* tribunes, who were elevated without in fact holding a command, began with Claudius (see Suetonius, *Claudius* 25, p. 196, and Pliny, *Letters* 4.4). Martial obtained equestrian status in this manner, perhaps from Titus (3.95.9).

9. The 'December vacation' was the Saturnalia (17–19 December), a riotous carnival during which slaves had temporary licence to act as they pleased, and governed by a kind of 'Lord of Misrule', the *Saturnalicius princeps*.

10. As both Martial and Lucian tell us, a lawyer who won a case was entitled to advertise the fact by hanging up palm-branches outside his door.

11. The Roman passion for rhetoric is perhaps, more than any other characteristic, calculated to bewilder a modern reader. Public speaking was not only a practical skill, but also an art practised for its own sake in the schools, and often kept up afterwards. Many satirists, from Petronius to Juvenal, mock the unreality of the set themes traditionally employed. As Duff remarks, one of the stock exercises was to make attacks on tyrants or panegyrics on

tyrannicides: 'It might be supposed that the imperial government would not approve of this practice as a regular part of education; but the tyrant of the schools was too fantastic and unreal a creation to be taken seriously.'

12. For Quintilian see n. 19 to Satire VI. His official salary as Professor of Rhetoric under Vespasian was 100,000 sesterces *per annum*, and this was further augmented by a large and lucrative practice at the Bar.

13. J. has an actual case in mind: an ex-praetor and senator, Valerius Licinianus, who was also an excellent rhetorician, but found himself sent into exile after an alleged liaison with a Vestal Virgin. He accepted a Chair of Rhetoric in Sicily under Trajan, and, so Pliny tells us in his *Letters*, began his inaugural lecture with the words: 'What sport you make with men, Fortune: you turn senators into professors, and professors into senators!' The second translation applied, in a sense, to Quintilian, since he received consular honours through the good offices of Domitian's brother-in-law.

14. P. Ventidius [Bassus] was the stock example of the upstart who triumphed over both low birth and adverse circumstances. As a child he was captured at Asculum and exhibited in the triumph of Cn. Pompeius Strabo. He is contemptuously referred to as a 'muleteer', but may have been an army contractor. In 43 B.C. he attained the consulship (see below, Satire VIII 148, for another 'muleteer consul'), and in 38 himself celebrated a triumph over the Parthians. He died shortly afterwards.

15. Thrasimachus (or possibly Lysimachus) was, says the scholiast, an Athenian rhetorician who died by hanging. Secundus Carrinas was exiled by Caligula, according to Dio Cassius, for 'making derogatory remarks about tyrants in the gymnasium': so the practice did have its risks, after all. But Knoche thinks, and I am inclined to agree with him, that something has fallen out of the text after 205, and that the man to whom Athens gave nothing but a cup of cold hemlock must, surely, be Socrates.

16. Another of J.'s debunking side-swipes at mythological figures: Achilles' music-master was Chiron, the Centaur, half-man and half-horse.

17. 'What Songs the *Syrens* sang,' wrote Sir Thomas Browne,

'or what name *Achilles* assumed when he hid himself among women, though puzzling questions are not beyond all conjecture.' Another surprising thing about educated Romans is the habit, which they seem to have inherited from Greek Alexandria, of intense fascination with such *recherché* scraps of knowledge. The questions Browne lists are those which Tiberius asked his savants: see Suetonius, *Tiberius* 70 (p. 144); but the point about J.'s list seems to be that none of the answers are known. For Anchemolus and his stepmother see Virgil, *Aeneid* 10.388–9; for Acestes, *Aeneid* 1.195 5.73 ff.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

Griffith (Additional Bibliography) offers what is clearly the correct explanation of *stlattaria* at line 134: the gown is obtained by means of 'piratical' extortion, through bargaining with a desperate prospective client before accepting his case. This practice was well known in Rome, and frowned on by respectable jurists: see, e.g., Quintilian 12.7.11. I have also gratefully borrowed Griffith's ingenious reinterpretation of lines 126–8, presenting Aemilius as a horse-archer shutting one eye to aim his bow (*hastile*), as well as his neat gloss on *artem scindes Theodori* at line 177. For an alternative, but to me less convincing, interpretation of 126ff. see J. F. Killeen and Martyn in Additional Bibliography.