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# The Quantitative Reading of Latin Verse

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SCOTT, FORESMAN AND  
COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,  
378 - 388 WABASH AVE-  
NUE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



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THE  
QUANTITATIVE READING  
OF  
LATIN VERSE



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THE  
QUANTITATIVE READING  
OF  
LATIN VERSE

BY

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## PREFACE.

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THIS little book has been written in the belief that there exist to-day an urgent need and a demand for some more specific and more satisfactory information to guide the teachers and pupils of secondary schools in their study of Latin verse. It is the author's hope that this need will be found to have been met, in part at least, by the contents of the following pages. For an aroused interest in this subject and for the general theory herein presented, he is indebted to Professor William Gardner Hale of the University of Chicago. Several years' practical application of this theory, while teaching classes in the Indiana University, has served to strengthen the author's belief in its correctness and its absolute feasibility.

It is not intended that this shall be a manual on prosody. The aim has been to omit everything not essential to the *preparation* for reading poetry. Much, therefore, has been left to be added by the teacher, who will, of course, make use of such helps as are needed for that purpose. The book will have fulfilled its mission if it shall have pointed out the road to be traveled.

Professor Hale very kindly looked over the manuscript for the following pages and offered many valuable suggestions.

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## THE QUANTITATIVE READING OF LATIN VERSE.

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IT is said by those who have given much time to the study of Latin poetry and the laws of Latin versification, that the Roman poet attached not less importance to the form in which his thoughts were cast than to the thoughts themselves, that he believed it to be just as necessary for the dress to be beautiful and appropriate as for the language it clothed to be polished and select. It is known, too, that great care in the choice of vocabulary was made necessary by the limitations imposed by the demands of the verse-rhythm, which absolutely precluded the use of all words that would not harmonize *quantitatively* with the metrical structure of the verse, and that, as a result of this dependence of the language on the form and the consequent difficulty of selection, higher finish and greater accuracy were attained.

In view of these facts, it is evident that a thorough understanding and genuine appreciation of the work of the Roman poets can never be the possession of those who choose to ignore the importance of the form-side.

It is worth while to seek to have this intimate knowledge of the poet's work; the time and labor one must give to such a study are profitably employed.

Great pleasure is experienced in the study of art, and much benefit is derived from it. It is thought to be highly profitable to acquaint one's self with even the most minute details of the works of the master sculptors and painters and architects. Such knowledge is considered an important part of a broad and finished education. It should not be called a waste of

valuable time and energy to apply one's self, with equal zeal and care, to the study of these other, certainly not less noble, creations of art. What, in truth, are they? Masterpieces from one of the greatest literatures the world has known, embodiments of the thoughts of some of the ablest and best representatives of a people whose influence has scarcely been surpassed by that of any other race.

Preparation for the true interpretation of a Latin poem involves some labor, just as does the preparation for any work worth doing well. Some, not caring to take this trouble, choose to treat poetry as prose, and thus not only fail to arrive at any just appreciation of the poet's work as a whole (for this is like standing before some beautiful building and selecting for inspection the various parts of which it is composed, with never a glance at the entire structure which reveals the builder's design and the harmony of material and form) but also get, for their pains, poorer results than if they had given the same time to a piece of real prose. For not only does the vocabulary of poetry, as we have already seen, differ much from that of prose, but it also has a word-order peculiarly its own. Some who follow the plan of studying poetry as prose have their pupils read it aloud (or, to be more exact, *pronounce* it) as if it were prose, but with utter disregard of the quantity of syllables, a factor which can not be overlooked even in the correct reading of Latin prose. Imagine the effect of *pronouncing*, in this way, some finished English poem of delicate rhythm! And English poetry does not depend upon quantity, for its rhythm, but upon *stress-accent*. Others do better who omit the oral reading and make merely a silent interpretation of the author's thought, rather than be guilty of so manifest a violation of the spirit of Latin poetry.

Will it suffice, then, to seek to apprehend, so far as possible, the beauties of the form and the adaptation of form to language, as one makes this silent search for the meaning of the words, and wholly dispense with the oral reading, if, as asserted, it is folly to *pronounce* merely, and the reading as poetry is attended

with more or less difficulty? With just as much reason one may hope to understand a song, by reading the words without knowing the melody, or, to make the resemblance more nearly exact, without a knowledge of melody. Is it, therefore, not possible for one to arrive at a thorough understanding of a Latin poem without reading it orally and as poetry? Silent interpretation is, perhaps, just as effective and affords the reader as great pleasure as oral reading, provided that the music of the verse is as vividly present. It seems that there can be no question, though, that the music must first be heard actually, in so far as the voice can reproduce it, before it can be real to the silent reader. Careful practice in oral reading, continued for some time by one who has previously acquainted himself with the essential facts of Latin versification, is, therefore, indispensable to perfect silent reading, and must precede it.

What, then, does one need to know before he is ready to read Latin poetry intelligently? First of all, he must know how to pronounce Latin words correctly. No one can do this who is not acquainted with the sounds of the letters, the quantities of syllables and the word-accent. The requirements thus far seem severe, perhaps. They are not, in fact. If the teacher has been properly trained and has conscientiously performed his duty, pupils will come to the study of Latin poetry with the greater part of the necessary preparation already made. For they will have been taught, from the very first day of their work in prose Latin, to pronounce Latin words correctly. Prose texts with all long vowel-quantities marked are now available and should be used. For those who, in their previous study, have paid no attention to the quantities of vowels and syllables, the task is not so easy. But they can afford to make up for this neglect, even at so late a date in their study. Belated learning of quantities, therefore, is to be strongly recommended in such cases. Indeed, it seems that one ought not approach the study of Latin poetry at all, if he is not willing to perform this necessary preliminary labor. Nothing could be more simple than the law governing the placing of the Latin accent, and it requires no great labor to become acquainted with the sounds of the letters.

Besides the correct pronunciation of Latin words, one needs to know the more important facts of Latin versification. At first, one need not know, in fact, should not burden his memory with, the details of prosody. These should be learned one at a time, as they come up in actual reading. Many of them are met but seldom. The knowledge of the essential facts pertaining to Latin verse-structure in general should be supplemented by an acquaintance with the features which are peculiar to the kind of verse to be taken up first, and the learner is then ready to begin reading.

It would be desirable if, at this point, we could turn at once to the consideration of some particular kind of Latin verse and make clear, by means of an illustration, just what any one starting out to read Latin poetry is to do. But there are certain things that ought to be said, certain erroneous views respecting the reading of Latin poetry that need to be referred to and, if possible, shown to be wrong, before we can feel sure that the learner will be in position to distinguish the true method, when it is set before him, from the false one, still much in vogue. To introduce this discussion, let us take up first *Latin word-accent*.

It is not certainly known whether the Latin word-accent was one of *pitch*, that is, a *musical* accent, or one of stress. The probabilities, however, strongly favor the belief that it was a stress-accent, and the other view has been almost entirely given up by scholars. It is, therefore, assumed in this discussion that it was a stress-accent. When the syllables of the words in a language are pronounced, some at a higher, some at a lower, note that language is said to have pitch-accent, or musical-accent; when they are uttered, some with greater, others with less energy, the language is said to have stress-accent. The English language, though decidedly one of stress-accent, nevertheless makes much use of musical-accent. One can easily note that, in pronouncing such a word as *unconstitutional*, as an isolated word, successive syllables are not uttered in the same tone, but that the range is from highest on the syllable *-tu* to lowest on the syllable *-tion*. Perhaps there has been no language in which

both accents have not been present. But we speak, of course, of that one which is predominant, when we speak of *the* accent. The ancient Greek language had the musical-accent. Care should, therefore, be taken to avoid confusing Greek and Latin word-accent. With the additional statement that the stress-accent of Latin words was not so strong as that of English words, we can leave this topic.

We have now arrived at the point where we can state definitely what is involved in the correct reading of Latin poetry. One reads Latin poetry correctly when he gives to each word its ordinary pronunciation (which, be sure to remember, includes the proper placing of the word-accent and the preservation of the quantities of all syllables) and, with due regard for natural pauses, utters the successive words of the verse connectedly in such wise that the rhythm of the verse will be everywhere distinctly maintained as an undertone.

The method generally employed differs from the one here proposed in one important particular. This leads to a consideration of this older, long-used method of reading Latin poetry, believed by the author to be faulty. This subject is introduced here, even at the risk of confusing the reader, only because it is hoped that, by making clear the difference, the error of taking up or continuing to cling to the old plan may be avoided.

Briefly stated, then, it is the common practice, in reading Latin verse metrically, to make the natural word-accent subordinate to the *verse-beat* (which the Romans called *ictus*). It is unfortunate that any special mention of *ictus* has to be made in this book, for we do not need to pay particular attention to a verse-beat, do not need to make a conscious effort, at least, to place the verse-beat, in reading Latin poetry. But here again it seems best to risk causing some confusion in order to obviate far greater confusion. The reader must know, then, that the verse-beat, the *ictus* (Latin for *blow, beat*), is thought by some of those who champion the older theory to be, in fact, the pitch-accent (utterance at a higher note) which belongs to a certain part of every verse-foot, but, in practice, to be best represented

by a strong stress-accent, for the reason that we, who speak English, can not reproduce this pitch-accent, it being almost entirely foreign to our language.

Now the ictus belongs usually, though not always, to a long syllable of the verse-foot. In practice, therefore, it would be doubly difficult for us to keep in mind to give this same syllable pitch-accent and its proper time (quantity), too, for both are almost strangers to our language, the latter practically unknown to it. So it is thought best, in their opinion, to place a strong stress-accent on every syllable that has the ictus and have this stress serve as a substitute for the Latin musical or pitch-accent and long quantity. Some who advocate the old theory believe that the Latin ictus is really a voice stress but make the mistake of having this stress-accent the only one for the verse-foot. From one of our standard Latin Grammars (Allen & Greenough's, p. 406), the following, given under the caption, *The Musical Accent*, is quoted: "That part of the measure which receives the *stress of voice* (the musical-accent) is called the Thesis. The stress of voice laid upon the Thesis is called the ictus (beat)." The implied meaning is that no other syllable in a verse measure except the ictus syllable receives a stress-accent. Placing the stress on that syllable alone, though, necessitates the violent change of the natural word-accent from one to several times in almost every verse of Latin poetry. A recent view, quite at variance with these already given, is presented in two lately published Latin Grammars. Bennett's Latin Grammar (p. 243, foot-note) makes this statement: "Ictus was not accent—neither stress-accent nor musical-accent,—but was simply the quantitative prominence inherent in a long syllable." Mooney's Latin Grammar (p. 231) says: "Ictus is the prominence given the long syllable in every foot." But clearly this can not be correct, for some verse-feet have more than one long syllable, and some have not even one. The ictus must therefore fall on a syllable short in quantity in some verse-feet.

Those who feel moved to take exceptions to all this hold to



the belief that the ictus is neither pitch-accent, nor strong stress nor quantitative prominence. In their opinion, it is a stress, but a stress not so strong as that of the normal word-accent, and therefore not destructive of but subordinate to the word-accent. It is the pulse-beat of the verse, which is rather a swell than a staccato accent.

The fact has been noted that ictus usually belongs to a long syllable. It is easy to see how, in reading, the proper giving of ictus, which is a gradual increase in volume and intensity of sound rather than staccato stress, is greatly favored by this quantity length.

The statement was made that, in reading Latin verse metrically, it is the common practice to make the natural word-accent subordinate to the verse-beat (ictus). This subordination is strong enough (so the advocates of the theory claim) to cause the word-accent to be thrown out of its usual place whenever it conflicts with the metrical ictus, that is, whenever the word-accent naturally falls on some other syllable in the verse-measure than the one having the ictus. The stress-accent in every such case of conflict has to be transferred, they think, to the syllable having the ictus, or, if one choose to put it so, all other stress-accents must disappear before the one on the ictus-syllable. The result is that, in almost every verse of Latin poetry, one or more (oftener more) words have their stress-accent placed on a syllable which does not normally have it. This seems unnatural and unwarranted. In truth, no parallel to such a practice can be found in any known language. Such license is allowed in poetry occasionally. We see it in our own, sometimes. But nowhere can one find support for such radical changes as are demanded by this older method. Now the explanation is that the practice rests entirely on the untenable hypothesis that Latin accent was one of musical-pitch and not one of stress, and that the best method of representing this pitch-accent is to stress the ictus-syllable heavily, thereby not merely obscuring the natural stress-accent in many words, but entirely removing it.\* In

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\*See Professor Hale's discussion of "Did verse-ictus destroy word-accent in Latin poetry?" (Ginn & Co.)

what, then, does the *music* of Latin verse consist? On what does it depend? Does it depend on the word-accent? Certainly not, for the word-accent for poetry is precisely the same as that for prose. Is it due to the vocabulary, to the character of the words so carefully chosen by the poet? Unquestionably this is an important factor in it, but not the all-important one. Shall we say it is quantity? We are near the truth. The rhythm that results from giving to every syllable in a Latin verse its exact time (quantity) as we read, and from placing properly the regularly recurring ictus-stress constitutes the chief element of the music. The placing of the ictus-stress requires, however, no conscious effort after the reader is once familiar with the metrical structure of the verse to be read. So soon as one comes to feel the rhythm, the ictus will place itself. Now some claim that this verse-rhythm is greatly marred if one pronounces each word precisely as it is correctly pronounced when standing in a prose sentence, for the reason that the word-accent, in almost every verse of Latin poetry, as before stated, is thus made to conflict, in one or more verse-measures, with the ictus. From this opinion the author strongly dissents, and holds that, on the contrary, *additional* charm is given the verse by virtue of this very conflict, that serves to break the monotony which would otherwise result. This monotony must have been scrupulously avoided by the poets themselves, for we find very few verses in all Latin poetry in which the word-accent falls, in every verse-measure, on the syllable that has the ictus. Three such verses, written in the same meter as that of the Aeneid of Vergil, are here given:

*Hor. Epist. I, 9, 4—*

Dignum | mente do|moque le|gentis ho|nesta Ne|ronis.

*Hor. Epist. I, 14, 30—*

Multa | mole do|cendus a|prico | parcere | prāto.

*Ennius—*

Sparsis | hastis | longis | campus | splendet et | horret.

Each of these verses has six feet. The vertical line has been used to separate these feet so that the reader can distinguish them at a glance. A dot is placed beneath each syllable having the ictus (which, in this kind of verse, is always the first in the verse-foot). The syllable having the word-accent is given in heavy type.\* Now read these verses and imagine the effect of page after page read in the same monotonous, sing-song fashion. It is precisely this effect that *is* produced by forcing the word-accent to fall, in every measure, on the syllable having the ictus. To make this clear, let us take verses 8 to 11 inclusive from the first book of the Aeneid :

**M**usa mi|hi cau|sas memo|ra quo | nū|mine | lae|so,

**Q**uidve do|lens re|gina de|um tot | vol|vere | cas|us

Insig|nem pie|tate vi|rum tot ad|ire la|bores

Impule|rit. Tan|tae|ne ani|mis cae|lestibus | irae?

Read first without paying any attention to the heavy type, and give stress-accent to the syllables under which the dots are placed, that is, to those syllables only which have the ictus. What is the result? We get a good idea of what the sing-song style is, a taste of what it would be, if continued through many verses, and we have, besides, the satisfaction of knowing that in four verses of poetry, we have had the audacity to do what no Roman would have dared to do,—place the word-accent *nine times* on syllables that should not have had it. Look at the verses again, this time noting what syllables are in heavy type (for they have the normal word-accent). The reader will see, at a glance, that, in the first verse, the words *mihi*, *causas* and *memora* all happen to have final syllables which have ictus, and that the natural word-accent falls, in all three, on the first syllable. How ridiculous, then, to stress heavily these final syllables and give no stress at all to the syllables having the word-accent naturally!

\* The dot and the heavy type will be employed throughout the remainder of the book in this way.

We can now turn from this negative side of the subject to the positive side. But before taking up extracts from Latin poems representing different meters, with a view to explaining what the author thinks one should do in reading verse quantitatively, it will be necessary to define certain terms with which the learner may not be familiar. A few of these terms, such as verse-foot, quantity, were unavoidably used in the preceding pages.\*

#### QUANTITY.

Let us first speak of quantity. Quantity is the time required for utterance. We speak of the quantity of a Latin consonant, quantity of a vowel, quantity of a syllable. Certain Latin vowels require twice as much time as some others, certain syllables require twice the time needed by certain others. We speak, therefore, of long quantity and short quantity. Latin verse demands that there shall be such a choice and arrangement of words as will result in a fixed succession of long and short syllables.† To indicate long and short quantity, we employ the marks - and ∪ respectively.‡

#### VERSE-FOOT.

A verse-foot (called also verse-measure) is the verse's unit of measure. This unit repeated a number of times makes up the verse. For instance, the unit in every verse of poetry written in the meter in which Vergil's Aeneid is written is made up of one long syllable followed by two short ones. Such a unit (*i. e.* foot) is indicated thus: - ∪ ∪. For the verse-unit the poet may (and often does) substitute an equivalent.

The scheme for the whole of the first verse of the Aeneid is:

- ∪ ∪ | - ∪ ∪ | - - | - - | - ∪ ∪ | - -

Observe that two long syllables, instead of one long and two short ones, are found in the third, fourth and sixth feet of this

\*It will be found advantageous for the beginner in Latin poetry to go back and re-read the first part of the book in the light of the information gotten from the pages following.

†Our language knows practically nothing about long and short syllables, long and short vowels.

‡Consonant quantity and vowel quantity are treated further on.

verse. In all verse written in this meter the first syllable of every foot has the ictus.

For a second illustration, let us take the first verse of Horace's second Epode :

Bea|tus il|le qui | procul | nego|tiis.

In verse of this kind the unit consists of one short syllable followed by one long one, and is indicated thus:  $\cup -$ . The scheme of the whole verse is :

$\cup - | \cup - | \cup - | \cup - | \cup - | \cup -$

Here the last syllable in every verse-measure has the ictus, but not strong stress-accent, unless it happens that the regular word-accent falls on that syllable. A glance at the verse above shows that the word-accent does fall on the last syllable in three of the six measures. But in the third and last measures there is no word-accent on any syllable. There are many other kinds of verse-feet employed by Roman poets. Some of these are considered on a later page.

#### SCANSION.

Scansion is the name given to the process of dividing a verse into verse-feet. We scan a verse of poetry when we pronounce the syllables it contains in such a way as to indicate the verse-feet, thus :

Arma vi—rumque ca—no Tro—iae qui—primus ab—oris.

Very little of this scanning need be done by the beginner. For one to continue it long would not only be sheer waste of time, but a positive detriment. The practice destroys one's power to see and appreciate the rhythm, for it leads him to form the habit of looking always for the verse-units as separate groups, and this results in the utter confusion, if not virtual destruction, of the individual words. Do not scan, but read.

#### LAW OF LATIN ACCENT.

The law governing the placing of the stress-accent in Latin

words is so simple that it needs only to be stated to be understood. It is this: The stress-accent falls on the syllable next the last if it (*i. e.* the syllable next the last) has long quantity, otherwise on the syllable next to the left. That is all there is of it. A few illustrations will make this doubly clear. The word *amabilis* has the stress-accent on the syllable *-ma-*, because the syllable *-bi-* is short. The verb-form *amabamus* has the accent on the syllable *-ba-*, because that syllable is long. Of course, in the case of words of two syllables, there is no question—the accent falls always on the initial syllable. A few apparent exceptions to this law are found in those words that have lost a former final syllable. We stress the final syllable of *istic, istuc, illic, illuc*. These words once ended in *e* and were accented on the syllable next the last. The *e* was dropped, the accent remained as before.

#### CAESURA.

Caesura (Latin for *a cutting*) is the name given a natural pause made in the course of the verse. Many verses have two, many only one. It is not necessary, however, that a verse have even one. The beauty and finish of a poem is much affected, and the skill of the poet shown, by the number and the placing of these pauses. A poem soon grows dull and monotonous in which the pauses are regularly put in the same places in successive verses.

The following passage is quoted from the *Aeneid* for the purpose of pointing out the instances of caesura. The position of each caesura is indicated by parallel vertical lines:

*Aen.* I, vv. 223–253—

Et iam finis erat, || cum Iuppiter aethere summo  
 Despiciens mare velivolum || terrasque iacentis  
 220 Litoraue et latos populos, || sic vertice caeli  
 Constitit, || et Libyae defixit lumina regnis.  
 Atque illum talis iactantem pectore curas  
 Tristior et lacrimis oculos suffusa nitentis  
 Adloquitur Venus: || ‘O qui res hominumque deumque

- 230 Aeternis regis imperiis, || et fulmine terres,  
 Quid meus Aeneas || in te committere tantum,  
 Quid Troës potuere, || quibus, tot funera passis,  
 Cunctus ob Italiam || terrarum clauditur orbis?  
 Certe hinc Romanos olim, || volventibus annis,
- 235 Hinc fore ductores, || revocato a sanguine Teucris,  
 Qui mare, qui terras || omni ditione tenerent,  
 Pollicitus: || quae te, genitor, || sententia vertit?  
 Hoc equidem occasum Troiae || tristisque ruinas  
 Solabar, || fatis contraria fata rependens ;
- 240 Nunc eadem fortuna viros || tot casibus actos  
 Insequitur. || Quem das finem, || rex magne, laborum?  
 Antenor potuit, || mediis elapsus Achivis,  
 Illyricos penetrare sinus, || atque intima tutus  
 Regna Liburnorum, et || fontem superare Timavi,
- 245 Unde per ora novem || vasto cum murmure montis  
 It mare proruptum et || pelago premit arva sonanti.  
 Hic tamen ille urbem Patavi || sedesque locavit  
 Teucrorum, et || genti nomen dedit, || armaque fixit  
 Troïa ; || nunc placida compostus pace quiescit :
- 250 Nos, tua progenies, || caeli quibus adnuis arcem,  
 Navibus (infandum !) amissis, || unius ob iram  
 Prodimur atque Italis longe disiungimur oris.  
 Hic pietatis honos? || Sic nos in scepra reponis?'

It will be seen, on examination of this passage, that the caesura occurs after the first long syllable in the third foot of verses 1, 9, 11, 13, 14, 20, 22, 23, 24, 28 and 31 ; after the first long syllable in the fourth foot in verses 2, 3, 8, 12, 16, 18, 19, 21, 25 and 29 ; at the end of the first verse-foot in verses 4 and 27 ; at the end of the second verse-foot in verse 7 ; at the end of the fourth verse-foot in verse 26 ; after the first long syllable in the second foot in verses 15, 17 and 19. The two caesuras most frequent in dactylic hexameter verse are those after the first long syllable in the third and fourth verse-feet.

## VOWEL-QUANTITY DISTINGUISHED FROM SYLLABLE-QUANTITY.

It is of vital importance that the learner understand the difference between syllable-length and vowel-length. Every syllable containing a long vowel is long, but a syllable may be long without having a long vowel. Many syllables containing short vowels are long. How can one know when a syllable containing a short vowel is long? The rule to be followed is simple: A syllable containing a short vowel followed by a consonant which is *obstructed in pronunciation* by a following consonant is long in quantity.\*

The explanation is this: An obstructed consonant requires the time of a short vowel—that is its quantity. The short vowel and obstructed consonant together require the time of a long vowel. One of these two consonants may be the initial letter of a following word, but both may not be in the following word. In the first word of *Ille re|git dic|tis ani|mos* (part of *Aen. I, 153*), it will be seen that the syllable *Il-* is long, even though the vowel is short, because the first *l* is obstructed. The syllable *-git* is long because the short vowel *i* is followed by the consonant *t* obstructed by *d*, initial consonant of the following word. A syllable containing a long vowel followed by an obstructed consonant is doubly long, but, in reading poetry, is compressed a little. Let us illustrate.

*Aen. I, 53—*

Luctan|tes ven|tos tem|pesta|tesque so|noras.

The first syllable of the first word, *luc-*, is doubly long. The vowel is long by nature and it is also followed by an obstructed consonant. The same is true of *-tes*, *-tos* and *-tes* in the first, second and third words. The syllables *-ta-* and *-no-* in the third and fourth words are long because the *vowels* in the two syllables are naturally long. Additional examples of syllables long in quantity, even though their vowels are short, are *-tan-*, *ven-*, *tem-*, *-pes-*.

\*The expression, "consonant obstructed in pronunciation," is Mr. Hale's. See his entire discussion, "Syllabification in Roman Speech."



There is one kind of consonant combination in which the first consonant is not obstructed by the following one, viz.: mute followed by liquid, as *tr*, *pl*, *pr*, *cl*, *br*, etc. In every such case, the syllable containing the mute may be either long or short, as the poet pleases.\*

In *Aen.* II, 663, Vergil treats the first syllable of *patris* as a short syllable and the first syllable of *patrem* as long, dividing first *pa-tris*, then *pat-rem*.

Natum ante | ora pa|tris, pat|rem qui ob|truncat ad | aras.

This is not due to mere whim. The explanation is that the sounds of mute and liquid glide together so readily that they are ordinarily given in the time of one consonant. Yet it is possible, if it suits the poet's convenience, to pronounce the mute with the preceding vowel as if it were obstructed.

#### VOWELS LONG BY NATURE.

We call those vowels long by nature (sometimes we say by authority of the poets) which we find used in poetry in positions where only long vowels can stand. In the verse quoted just above (*Aen.* II, 663) the *o* of *ora* and the *a* of *aras* are instances of such vowels. The best Latin Dictionaries have these naturally long vowels all marked by means of a horizontal mark placed just over them, thus: *āla*, *īra*, *mātūrus*, *sacerdōs*. Vowels not marked are short.

#### OBSTRUCTED CONSONANTS.

When a consonant is obstructed in pronunciation by another consonant, it must be given the time of a short vowel. Unless every such consonant is given its proper time, the rhythm of the verse can not be maintained. Do not pronounce *cella* as if *cela* but *cel-la*, only there must not be a break between the two syllables. Pronounce *propter* as *prop-ter*, not as if *pt* were but a single consonant. If a word ending in a consonant is followed by one beginning with a consonant (as in *occurrit tellus*,

\* For many instances of this varying quantity before mutes and liquids in the works of Vergil, see Johnston's "The Metrical Licenses of Vergil," §§ 17-19.

Aen. V, 9), the final consonant, because obstructed, must have the time of a short vowel. Of course, in reading, one should not make a complete break between syllables, even in such a word as *propter*, where there is a change made in the position of the vocal organs in passing from *p* to *t*. In words like *cella*, *occurrit*, *tellus*, and between words in such groups as *occurrit tellus*, where the same sound is repeated, a break would be even more unnatural and more difficult to make. The vocal organs are merely held in the same position and a new voice-impulse serves to mark the beginning of the next syllable. Perhaps a better graphical representation than *cel-la*, etc., would be *cel̄ la*, *oc̄ cur rit̄ tel̄ lus*. This is quite important, and yet likely to be disregarded, because it is entirely alien to our language. Consonants that are not obstructed do not take appreciable additional time. So *l* in *alia* has practically no quantity. The contact of tongue and palate in passing from *a* to *i* is but momentary. But *l* in *alter* has quantity that must be taken into account.

#### SLURRING.

Whenever a word, in a verse of poetry, ends in a vowel, a diphthong, or *m* preceded by a vowel and this word is followed by one beginning with a vowel, a diphthong or *h*, the final and initial syllables are slurred, blended together, pronounced as one syllable and in the time of one syllable. The quantity of the new syllable will be the same as that of the initial syllable of the second word. Let us take some verses of the Aeneid for illustration: [Quotations have thus far been almost exclusively from the Aeneid. The explanation is this: The Aeneid is the poem usually taken up first in our schools, and, besides, the meter, in which it is written, is one of the simplest and most easily understood. In this instance, a passage from any other poem would have served as well.]

Aen. II, 1—

Conticuere omnes, intenticue ora tenebant.

Aen. II, 12—

Quamquam animus meminisse horret, luctuque refugit.

In each verse here given, all the letters covered by the horizontal line are to be run together, in reading, into one syllable. The quantity of the new syllable *reom-* will be long because *om-* is long; *queo-* will be long because *o-* is long; *quama-* will be short because *a-* is short; *sehor-* will be long because *hor-* is long. What is actually pronounced for *quam+a* and *se+hor* may be more accurately represented by *qua* and *seor*. The explanation is that the *h*-sound drops out entirely (as it always has a tendency to do when between vowels) and the *m*-sound practically disappears when followed by a vowel, diphthong or *h* plus vowel or diphthong.\*

Perhaps the most important thing to remember in this connection is this, that the new syllable resulting from the slurring is to be so pronounced that the quality (not the quantity) of the vowel of the final syllable shall be preserved. For instance, in the verses just quoted, pronounce *re+om* as *reom*, not as *rom*, *que+o* as *queo*, not as *quo*, *se+hor* as *seor*, not *sor*. Some slurs are very difficult to make. Take, for example, these:

*Aen.* III, 296—

Coniugio                                              
 Aeacidæ Pyrrhi sceptrisque potitum.

*Aen.* III, 225—

At subitæ horrifico lapsu de montibus adsunt.

*Aen.* I, 322—

Vidistis si                                              
 quam hic errantem forte sororum.

When more than two occur in the same verse, the reading is difficult. Very unusual is such a verse as this:

*Catullus*, 22, 4—

Puto esse ego illi milia aut decem aut plura.

The judicious use of slurring, made by a poet of taste and skill, adds much to the beauty of a Latin poem.

#### HIATUS.

Hiatus (Latin for *cleft*, *opening*) violates the law for slurring. An instance of this is seen between *Samo* and *hic* in

\* For the facts concerning the weak force of *m*, consult some authoritative treatment of the sounds of the Latin letters. The most satisfactory is that published in the Report of the Committee of Ten, p. 6.

*Aen.* I, 16—

Posthabi|ta colu|sisse Sa|mo ; hic | illius | arma.

The final syllable of *Samo* and the monosyllable *hic* do not slur. The reasons can be learned from the grammars.\*

#### RULES OF QUANTITY.

Only those rules of quantity thought indispensable to the beginner are given here. Others will have to be gotten from the grammars. But it is a great mistake to attempt to learn these rules faster than they are needed in actual reading of poetry. All exceptions are omitted. By far the best plan is for the teacher to supply additional information to pupils respecting the rules for quantity and the exceptions, taking care always to avoid crowding this upon them too rapidly. One new rule at a time is enough. Do not refer beginners to the mass of details in the grammars for their information. This serves only to confuse them.

A vowel is regularly short before another vowel or *h*.

Every diphthong is long.

Before *ns* and *nf*, a vowel is always long.

Before *nd* and *nt*, a vowel is regularly short.

Final *-as*, *-es*, *-os*, *-is*, in plural cases are long.

Final *-us* of the 4th decl. is short in the nom. sg., long in the other cases in which it is found.

Final *a* 1st decl. abl., and final *e* 5th decl. abl. are long.

Final *e* of most adverbs made from adjectives of the 2nd decl. is long.

Final *i* is long. In *mihi*, *ubi*, *ibi*, *sibi* and *tibi*, it is long or short, as the poet pleases.

Final *o* of the dat. and abl. sg. is long.

A syllable whose vowel is followed by a consonant, obstructed in pronunciation by a following consonant, is long.

All particles attached to the ends of words are short, as, *-que*, *-ve*, *-ne*.

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\*All the instances of hiatus found in Vergil's poems are given in Johnston's "The Metrical Licenses of Vergil," §§ 23-27.

We are now ready to make application of what has thus far been said and to say what remains to be told to make the exposition complete. For the reasons already given on p. 16, the verse in which the Aeneid is written will be considered first.

The verse in which Vergil wrote is called Dactylic Hexameter. The word hexameter represents the two Greek words meaning *six* and *measure*. A hexameter verse contains six measures (or feet). A dactyl is a measure having a long syllable followed by two short ones. It is indicated thus: - ∪ ∪.

In Dactylic Hexameter verse, each measure is regularly a dactyl or its equivalent. A spondee (two long syllables, - -) is an equivalent and may be used in any measure. In fact, however, it is very rarely used in the fifth. That is regularly a dactyl.\* A trochee (a long and a short, - ∪) is very often used in the last foot, never in any other. It is not really an equivalent, but is treated as one. The last foot is never a dactyl, but either spondee or trochee.

Let us select for our purpose Aen. I, 1 to 8 :

Arma vi|rumque ca|no, Tro|iae qui | pri|mus ab|oris  
 Itali|am fa|to profu|gus La|viniaque | venit  
 Li|tora | multum il|le et ter|ris iac|tatus et | alto  
 Vi supe|rum sae|vae memo|rem Iu|nonis ob|iram ;  
 Multa quo|que et bel|lo pas|sus, dum | conderet | urbem,  
 In|ferretque de|os Lati|o genus | unde La|tinum  
 Alba|nique pa|tres, at|que altae | moenia | Romae.

The reader will note that, in this kind of verse, the normal word-accent in the last two measures of every verse, regularly falls on the first syllable of the measure, the syllable which has the ictus. An examination of the first third of successive verses will show that there, also, the two often coincide. In the

\* Johnston's "The Metrical Licenses of Vergil," §§ 21, 22, gives thirty-two instances of spondee in the fifth foot in the poems of Vergil.

middle of the verse there is more often conflict. The effect of this return to a smooth rhythm toward the close of each verse, after the roughness caused by the conflict in the middle of the verse, is exceedingly agreeable, and may be likened to the pleasurable sensation produced by the return to harmony, in instrumental or vocal music, after an intentional discord.

Since the verse-unit here is a dactyl, the first syllable in each measure has the ictus.

To read these verses (and all others written in this meter) correctly, we must give to each the time represented by the scheme :

\_ 0 0 - 0 0 - 0 0 - 0 0 - 0 0 - 2

Try, now, to read the verses quoted, placing a stress-accent on every syllable given in heavy type (for they have the word-accent), and, at the same time, preserving to each syllable its exact time. At first, it is not easy to do. For those who have not naturally a good sense of time, as that term is used in speaking of time in music, the task is a difficult one. One can help himself much, and teachers can help pupils materially, at first, by keeping time by a downward and upward movement of the hand as in keeping time in music. The downward movement should represent (in this kind of verse) the time of the first half of each measure, the upward movement the time of the second half. This plan of beating time would be very easy to execute if we could place a strong stress of voice on the first syllable in each measure so that the downward beat of the hand and the word-accent would coincide. But the fact is that the normal word-accent often falls on a syllable that constitutes only half of the last part of the measure, as, for instance, on *ca-* of *cano*, in the first verse, and *pro-* of *profugus*, in the second. At first, one will have to give his entire attention to the words, as he tries to read, and will find it impossible to regard the thought, too. Practice, though, will soon enable him to carry both along together. As soon as this proficiency has been acquired, there should no longer be a complete stop at the end of every verse, as before. The reader should pass with

only a very slight pause from verse close to verse beginning, if the thought runs on. The placing of the ictus, the verse's pulse-beat, which in Dactylic Hexameter belongs to the long syllable constituting the first half of every verse-foot, will require no special, no conscious effort on the part of the reader. Remember that the ictus-stress is not so strong as Latin word-accent, which is less strong than the stress-accent of English words.

Partly for the reason that in some secondary schools the Odes of Horace are read and partly because it seems appropriate to show here how the method of reading Latin poetry herein set forth is precisely as applicable and satisfactory when followed with verse written in other meters, verses from two of the Odes are here given and commented on. Two of the meters most employed by Horace in his Odes are the Sapphic and the Alcaic. One stanza from a poem written in the Sapphic meter is given first. The first three verses have the same metrical scheme, the fourth is different. For each of the first three, it is :

$$\bar{\text{r}} \cup \mid \bar{\text{r}} - \mid \bar{\text{r}} \cup \cup \mid \bar{\text{r}} \cup \mid \bar{\text{r}} \cup$$

For the fourth, it is :

$$\bar{\text{r}} \cup \cup \mid \bar{\text{r}} \cup$$

*Hor. Odes I, 22, vv. 1 to 5—*

**I**nte|ger vi|tae scele|risque | p̄|urus

**N**on e|get **M**au|ris iacu|lis ne|que arcu

**N**ec ve|nena|tis gravi|da sa|gittis,

**F**usce pha|retra.

[As a rule, the monosyllabic particles have not stress-accent, *non* and *nec* here are emphatic.]

In verse of this kind, the syllable having the ictus is the first in each measure. Here, precisely as in the Dactylic Hexameter, the rhythm is produced by giving to every syllable its due time. Note how frequently, in the first three verses, the word-accent

fails to coincide with the ictus. Stress all the syllables in heavy type, for they have the word-accent, and note that the swing of the verse, when the poetry is read quantitatively, places the ictus where it belongs.

Let us now take one stanza written in the Alcaic meter. In an Alcaic stanza of four verses, three different meters are employed. The first two verses have the same. It is:

$$\underline{\cdot} : \bar{\cdot} \cup | \bar{\cdot} - | \bar{\cdot} \cup \cup | \bar{\cdot} \cup | \bar{\cdot}$$

The scheme for the third is:

$$\underline{\cdot} : \bar{\cdot} \cup | \bar{\cdot} \underline{\cdot} | \bar{\cdot} \cup | \bar{\cdot} \cup$$

The scheme for the fourth is:

$$\bar{\cdot} \cup \cup | \bar{\cdot} \cup \cup | \bar{\cdot} \cup | \bar{\cdot} \cup$$

*Hor. Odes II, 3, vv. 1 to 5—*

**A**equam me**m**ento | **r**e**bu**s in | **a**rd**u**is

**S**ervare | **m**entem | **n**on **s**ecus | in **b**o**n**is

**A**b in**s**o**l**enti | tem**p**er**a**tam

**L**aetitia mori**t**ure **D**elli.

The entirely new feature in the verse here is the extra syllable which precedes each of the first three verses, indicated in the schemes by the three dots placed after. Each of these verses is to be regarded as beginning, so far as metrical structure is concerned, with the second syllable. That is why the dot is placed beneath the second syllable, although it is the first syllable in every measure that has the ictus. Note that the last measure in the first and second verses is not complete. Word-accent and ictus conflict here about as often as they fall together. The reading of this kind of verse brings out the rhythm as indicated by the schemes given. The points to be observed are precisely the same as for the two kinds of verse already discussed. And, in short, for Latin verse of every kind, one may follow satisfactorily the directions implied in the statement given on page 9, in which the author states what he believes to be involved in



the correct reading of Latin poetry. For fear that the reader may erroneously imagine that, in every Latin poem, the syllable having ictus is the first in every measure (since it has happened that such is the case in three kinds of verse shown in the illustrations given), he is referred to the scheme of the first verse of Horace's second Epode, p. 17. It is there made clear that, in verse of that kind, the last syllable in each measure has the ictus.

In conclusion, it should be said that no written directions for reading Latin poetry quantitatively can help the learner so readily and so much as the actual reading by one who has already, by practice, acquired some skill in it. The teacher ought, therefore, to show his pupils how it is to be done.

#### BOOKS OF REFERENCE.

Every high-school library should possess the following books, which all pupils should be encouraged to use :

“The Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin”—William Gardner Hale (School Review, June, 1898).

“Syllabification in Roman Speech”—William Gardner Hale (Ginn & Co.).

“The Metrical Licenses of Vergil”—H. W. Johnston (Scott, Foresman & Co.).

“Report of the Committee of Ten,” (for the sounds of the letters)—(American Book Co.).

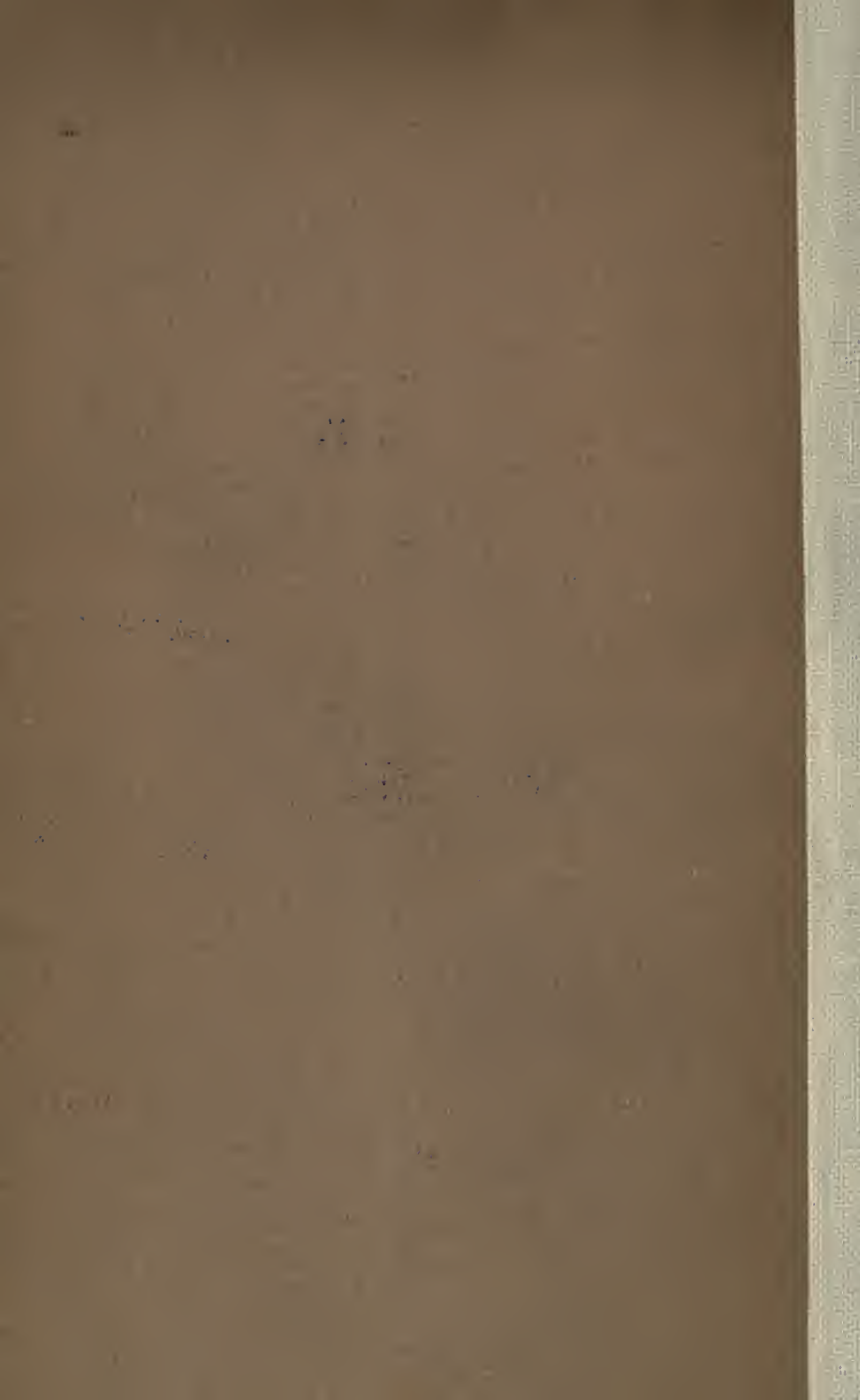
Every pupil should have a copy of Lewis' “Elementary Latin Dictionary” (Harper & Bros.). It is the most trustworthy authority on quantities of vowels.











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