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Martial's Use of Physical Defects in His Epigrams

Caroline Warner Stott

College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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MARTIAL'S USE OF PHYSICAL DEFECTS IN HIS EPIGRAMS

by

Caroline Warner Stott
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS

of

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

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This study is designed to assemble, classify and discuss all references to human physical defects used as objects of satire by the epigrammatist Martial, and to reach certain conclusions regarding his treatment of these defects. In pursuance of this investigation I have reviewed the entire body of Martial's works and have prepared a complete alphabetical catalogue of defects satirised by Martial, which is appended to this study. The epigrams have been analysed and classified in order to show their use in vivifying a character, producing a definite mood, or creating a desired effect. Since the epigram as used by Martial is a form of satiric expression, I hope that this study may also shed light upon the use of physical defects as an element in general satiric composition. To this end, cross references will be given to other writers of satire when similarities occur. All references are found in the Loeb Classical Library edition.

I acknowledge with appreciation the aid of Dr. A. Pelzer Wagener of the College of William and Mary.
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INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

From the earliest period of European literary tradition, writers have employed grotesque satire as a means of highlighting character portrayal and making description more concrete. Homer employed this device in the memorable passage of the \textit{Iliad} in which Thersites appears as an exaggerated caricature of the common man.

\phi \lambda \kappa \sigma \varsigma \eta \nu, \chi \omega \lambda \kappa \sigma \delta \iota \varepsilon \tau \rho \omicron \theta \alpha \beta \omega \\
\mu \omicron \tau \omicron \iota, \iota \tau \iota \theta \omicron \sigma \sigma \theta \omicron \omega \chi \omicron \kappa \omicron \tau \omicron \zeta. \alpha \upbeta \alpha \omicron \rho \theta \omicron \beta \gamma
\\
\phi \omicron \zeta \omicron \sigma \varsigma \eta \nu \kappa \epsilon \beta \alpha \lambda \gamma \nu, \psi \delta \nu \iota \iota \iota \pi \varepsilon \pi \varepsilon \gamma \nu \rho \omicron \theta \xi \zeta \lambda \chi \gamma \eta.

Much of the effect of ancient comedy depended upon the burlesquing of characters through their physical appearances. In the plays of Plautus alone there appear red-headed, big-balled men among others. \footnote{Cf. Plautus, \textit{The Comedy of Asses}, 1. 400-1.}

In English literature, human nature remaining ever the same, there are comparable and striking similarities in burlesque description. Geoffrey Chaucer, at the beginning of the twelfth century, immortalized the miller of the \textit{Canterbury Tales} with the lines,

\begin{quote}
He was short-sholdred brood, a thicke knarre,...
Up-on the cop right of his nose he hade \\
A werte, and ther-on stood a tuft of heres, \\
Reed as the bristles of a soses eses; \\
His nose-thirles blake were and wyde. \\
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys. \\
11. 551-57
\end{quote}
Quite similar to passages in the epigrams of Martial in spirit and choice of word is the unsavory portrait of Maude Ruggy, penned by John Skelton in the fifteenth century.

Maude Ruggy thyther skypped;
She was ugly hypped,
And ugly thirsty lypped,
Lyke an onion syded,
Lyke tan ladder hyded...
Myth that her hed shaked,
And her handes quaked;
Ones hed wold have ake
To se her naked;
She dranke so of the dregges
The dropsy was in her legges;
Her face glystryng lyke glas;
All foggy fat she was;...
Such a bedfellow
Wold make one ecast his crow. 1

Skelton's disgust is greatly akin to Martial's attacks upon women of his own society.

It is burlesque of this type with which a study of the literary use of physical defects is necessarily affiliated. The satirist aims at exposing deformities in the strongest possible light, whether to produce a scourging diatribe or a good-humored lampoon. The satiric reaction is thus overlaid with the comic, while low burlesque fixes the jest immovably in the mind of the reader. Macabre humor may lead to repulsive portraiture which spares no physical detail and distorts the body and its functions.

Caricature, whether pictorial or verbal, appeals to the multitude and finds a ready response. People enjoy seeing others in the pillory. Thus Martial was popular because he gave the people what they wanted. In a study of this element in Roman satire, the student is drawn most forcibly to Martial, for his epigrams abound in countless references to physical defects while his mood shifts from bitter to mocking to jocular. At times his writing becomes nauseatingly coarse, but on the whole its effect is colored by the serio-comic mood typical of the Greek comedy.

It is the charge of obscenity which is the greatest threat to Martial's fame. Of his more than 1500 epigrams approximately one-fifth are characterized by distinctly low vulgarity. A considerable number of the epigrams in which physical defects are used fall into this group. Most reputable translators take refuge in the Italian of the Graglio editions when faced with the rendering of a particularly revolting bit of Martial's pornography. Hard and coarse though the poet more than occasionally is, he lived in a hard, licentious age, and should not, any more than English writers for the Elizabethan stage, be unspARINGLY condemned for license in a form of poetry traditionally licentious. He pleads that his life has none of the wantonness of his verse.

Through all his indecency Martial remains innocuously funny.

His poems are overflowing with descriptions of multifarious physical peculiarities, mutilations, deformities resulting from illnesses, and natural or inborn defects which he holds up for ridicule. A man’s most offensive fault may be, in Martial’s eyes, the fact that his nose is disfigured with a wart, even though his life may be stainless. Those defenseless individuals who appear on his pages because of no fault except their idiosyncrasies are treated more gently than the ranks of the debauched at whom he lashes out in venomous tirades.

On the subject of women he is unusually severe, and revolting descriptions of sirens-about-town soil his pages. He scorns their sham, pretense, and vanity and tears every shred of pride from them in his blind disgust, sparing no detail lest the

1. Martial, Epigrams, XI, xv

2. On this point Martial is in agreement with Juvenal, whose three satires on women, Nos. II, VI, and IX, are the most brutal of his works.
reader escape without mental or even physical horror. At times he seems to take each defect or blemish as a personal affront. Some of the epigrams are aimed at the pursuit of fashion which produces such conditions. Martial's wit treats the same subject in a number of amusing ways, sardonically, sympathetically, or whimsically. Martial records innumerable variations and shadings of spirit.

To one who reads the entire corpus of epigrams it will be evident that Martial was much more of a poet than the cynical, coarse-grained, brutal wit just described. In general, he was an observer rather than a reformer, a realist rather than an idealist. He looked at life in a spirit of cynical humor and usually described for his reader's amusement rather than with any moral interest. Yet few of his jests are directed at the type of person with whom we could care to associate. Those whom he ridiculed generally deserved it fully, and this may account for the epigrammatist's comparative lack of amiability in dealing with them. He was no less a poet because the ridiculous and coarse furnished endless material for him, or because he was more the clever recorder than the deep thinker.

The epigrams cannot be called satire in the exact Roman sense, for its form was not that of the pure "satura" which consisted in its origin of a medley of prose and verse dealing with any phase of life, without the connotation of sarcasm or bitter venom such as satire has today. It was with Lucilius that satire as we know it originated, for he lashed the town and scourged vice, setting a precedent for Juvenal and numerous English disciples such as Johnson, Swift, Pope, and Dryden.
In Martial's hands the epigram is used for a truly satiric purpose and yet reflects so much of contemporary life that it is recognized as a form closely related to Roman satire in its essential character. Satire, which Worcester has named the Proteus of literature,¹ may be identified mainly by its intent and spirit. Its spirit may range from the gentlest ridicule to irony, invective, coarseness, parody, or burlesque according to the individual temperament of the writer. As a branch of literature satire takes human nature as its province and turns its attention to mankind. Exact details, small facts, and minute observations are recorded. To this definition, Martial's epigrams conform.

In his writing, amusement, irony, and even attack are provoked by mere peculiarities as well as by vice. He deals incisively with countless types of human wickedness. The fact that he painted life as he saw it without attempting to preach or moralize makes his pictures of life the more reliable, and although the colors are sometimes lurid or black, the basic truth of his presentation is unquestionable. The age of the Flavians, especially Domitian, in which he lived and worked, was one of low private morals, personal impurity, and bestial passion.²

Marcus Valerius Martialis was born at Bilbilis, in Spain. The year of his birth is variously fixed, but probably was between

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the years A.D. 38 to 41. He came to Rome in the last days of Nero's reign and lived a life of comparative poverty as a client of Gaius Calpurnius Piso, leader of a conspiracy against Nero in 65. His residence in Rome coincided with the reign of Domitian, one of the most corrupt periods in Roman history, when men were fearful for their very lives under an emperor suspicious of all and ever ready to listen to reports of plots against his life, which informers, the notorious delatores, might bring to him. Society was brilliantly luxurious and pagan, but its gaiety was desperate. Martial, as a needy client dependent on a rich patron, had many injustices to bear and many trying demands on his time. He forced himself to court Domitian's favor in order to secure the necessities of life, and thus received many compensations from appearing to be a loving and loyal subject on the one hand and an amusing and subservient associate on the other. In his old age he returned to Spain embittered and disgusted with the depravity of fashionable Roman society.

Pliny the Younger, his contemporary, said of him: "Erat homo ingeniosus, acutus, acer, et qui plurimum in scribendo et salis haberet et fellis nec sordoris minus. Prosecurus eram viatico secedentem: dederas hoc amicitiae, dederas etiam versiculos quos de me comosuit... Meritones sum, qui hase de me scripsit, et tune dimisi amicissime et nunc ut amicissimum defunctum esse doles? Dedit enim mihi quantum maximum potuit, daturus amplius, si potuisset." 1

Martial is the father of the epigram as we know it. The
variety and perfection of his writing have greatly influenced all
subsequent generations of epigrammatists, who have utilized in
their verse legacies of content and form.
CHAPTER I

NATURAL DEFECTS
MARTIAL'S USE OF PHYSICAL DEFECTS

IN HIS EPIGRAMS

CHAPTER I

NATURAL DEFECTS

Of the list of physical defects in the epigrams, the
chief category in respect to number and frequency of occurrence
is the group of natural or inborn defects among which are in­
cluded those arising in the normal processes of life, such as
old age. These will be considered under two headings, defects
of women and defects of men.

Defects of Women

As has already been stated, Martial treats the dis­
agreeable characteristics and sins of women with particular
sarcasm. Their sins are made clear by the resultant physical
defects. He shows his disgust for the immoral and unprincipled
woman in numerous epigrams. Such is No. xxxix of Book VI, in
which he scourges an adulteress whom he calls Marulla, who has
borne various children, each distinguishable by some outstanding
characteristic as the son of a different lover. By such features
as flat nostrils, blubber lips,¹ bleat eyes, pallid faces,

¹. Cf. Petronius, Chap. 102, 15: labra tumore
tacterrino implere.
pointed heads, long ears,\textsuperscript{1} red hair, and dark skin. Martial
distastefully pictures the defects of the children rather than
of the mother herself.

\begin{quote}
\emph{at ille sina nare, turgidis labris}
ipse et imago Pannechi palaestritae...
quartus cincta fronte, candido vultu
ex consubris natus est tibi Lygdo...
huma vero acuto capite et suribus longis,
quae sic movuntur ut solent asellorum,
quae moriones filium negat Cyrtas?
duae sorores, illa nigra et haec rufa,
Croti chorulae vilique sunt Carpi.
\end{quote}

In a bitter denunciation comparable with Juvenal's sixth
satire, Martial lashes out at the prostitute Vetustilla, who,
he claims, has lived through three hundred consulships. He
heaps up insults, criticizing every part of her body and offering
outrageous similes. She has three teeth, the breast of a grass-
hopper, the leg and complexion of an ant; her forehead is more
wrinkled than a woman's stole, and her bosom limp as spiders'
webs; her cheeks, voice, vision, odor, and figure are reviled.\textsuperscript{2}

\begin{quote}
\emph{Cum tibi trecenti consules, Vetustilla,
et tres capilli quattuorque sint dentes,
peccus cicadae, crurus colorque formicae;}
\emph{rugosieran cum geras stola frontem,
et araneearum cassisbus pares mammas;}
\emph{cum comparata rictibus tuis ora}
\emph{Miliarus habeat crocodilus angusta,}
\emph{meliusque ranae garanti Ravennatis}
et \emph{Adriamus dulcis eulex cantet,}
\emph{videsque quantum noctua vident mane,}
\end{quote}

\underline{1. Cf. Persius, I, 121: suribus asini}

\underline{2. Martial's picture of the old worn-out courtesan contrasts
forcefully with that of the young beauties in the comedy
with their carefully arranged hair, made-up faces and
lovely dresses and trinkets. Cf. Plautus, Merc., 13;
Host. 159-162. Cf. also Saunders, Catherine, \textit{Costumes
in Roman Comedy}, pp. 72-6.}
et ilud oleas quod viri capellars,
et anatis habeas orthopygium macrae,
senemque Cynium vincet osseus cunning;

Saufesia, who refuses to bathe with him, is suspected of having some monstrous balmish, such as a wrinkled bosom or furrows in her stomach. She is foolish to leave herself open to suspicion unless there is some reason.

aut tibi pannosae dependant pectore mammæ
aut sulcos uteri prodero media times
aut infinito lacerum patet inguam hiatus...

III, lxxii

In III, iii, a woman's unsightly body has offended him and he requests her to bathe in her shift, and conceal her "non formosae corpore."

Chione's name meant snow but only partly did it suit her, for she was cold but nigra. Martial, in a pun, says:

Frigida es, et nigra es;
non es et es Chione.

III, xxxiv

Lycoris, who heard that the sun at Tibur would whiten teeth, went there and returned black as a crow. Martial is not at all tolerant of the vanities of women.

Dum Tiburtinis albessere solibus audit
antiqui dentis fusca Lycoris ebur,
venit in Herculeos colles. quid Tiburis alti
aura valeti pervo tempore nigra redit.

VII, xiii

Martial's next victim is a full breasted lady 1 who has to buy three tickets to the baths in order to be admitted.

Novit loturas Dasius numerare: poposcit
mammosam Spatalen pro tribus: illa dedit.

II, iii

In XIV, cxlix, Martial says that he shrinks from big-breasted women and prefers a young girl. Any signs of old age seem to have been revolting to him.

Memorias metuo;...

Martial prefers a well-rounded girl, but dislikes the extremes of thinness and fat.

Habere amicas nolgo, Flaccus, subtilis,
cuius laeartos amili sei cinquant,
quae clune nudat radat et genu punget,
cui serra lumbis, suspis eminet culto,
se idem amicas nolgo mille librarum.
carnarius sum, pinguiarius non sum.

His vivid description of a skinny-haunched mistress seems to be aimed at one of his numerous female enemies.

Plotia has outlived Pyrrha, Nestor, Niobe, Laertes, Priss, and Thyestes, and Martial with disgust calls her an old crone and tells of her final resting place in the tomb by the side of bald Melanthion.

hoc tandem sita prurit in sepulchro
valvo Plotia cum Melanthione.

It is his disgust at lewd women that calls forth this extreme pornography in Martial.

In VII, lxxv, Martial informs an old and ugly woman that if she wishes to have lovers she must pay for them.

cum sis deformis ausaque,
res perridentula est: vis dare nec dare vis.
Fabulla chooses her friends from the ranks of the old and ugly in order to make herself seem more fair by comparison.

Omuls aut vetulas habes amicas
aut turpis vetulusque foediores...
sie, formosa, Fabulla, sic puella es.

Lesbia's clinging garments reveal her enormous posterior. Martial advises that she cure this defect by neither rising nor sitting down.

De cathedra quotiens surgis (iam saepe notavi),
pedicant miserae, Lesbia, te tunicae...
sic constringuntur magni Symplegade culi
et nimias intrant Cyaneasque natis.

Lesbia, nec surgas conseo nec sedes.

Polla, who tries to conceal her wrinkles by plastering her face with bean meal, is held up to ridicule.

Lamento rugas uteri quod condere temptas,
Polla, tibi ventres, non mihi labra linis.

The epigrams just cited show how Martial chooses to vent his disgust at the immoral woman by presenting the disgusting defects resulting from her moral rottenness. In a more humorous vein Martial composes a verse to accompany a gift of bean meal, in which he claims that it will conceal a wrinkled belly in the baths.

Gratum sumus erit seisco nec inutile ventri,
si clara Stephani balnea luce petes.

   Juvenal, IX, 9: rugae
   Juvenal, X, 193
   Lucilius, XII, 460
   Lucilius, XIX, 500
   Petronius, Chap. 24, I
He mocks at Aelia who has lost her teeth in a fit of coughing. This is one of his famous "comic valentines."

Si memini, fuerant tibi quattuor, Aelia, dentes:
expulit una duos tussis et una duos...
nili istic quos agat tertia tussis habet.
I, xx

Again Martial in a cruel epigram reviles an ugly woman who has only three teeth.

et tres sunt tibi, Maximina, dentes,
sed plane picisique buxisque.
II, xli

He advises her never to smile but to weep copiously to conceal her hideous mouth.

He speaks with scorn of the bald and carroty Philasnis and refuses to kiss her.

Our non basio te, Philasni? calva es.
our non basio te, Philasni? rufa es.
II, xxxii

Such too is the red pate of Vecerra's wife, bald except for seven hairs, who with her husband's hulking sister and gray-haired mother is carrying off the few furnishings left by the landlord who has dispossessed the family from their unpaid-for lodgings in XII, xxxii.

In still another "comic valentine" Martial declares that if Ligeia has as many years as hairs, then she is only three years old.

Toto vertice quot gerit capillos
annos si tot habet Ligeia, trima est.
XII, vii
Martial directs many barbs at the vain make-up of women trying to cover up defects. Thus in XII, xxiii, he ridicules a bald and toothless woman who has tried to supply substitutes for her deficiencies. She has lost an eye, and Martial jokingly reminds her that this cannot be bought.

Dentibus atque comis (nec te pudet) uteris emptis quid facies oculo, Laelia? non emitur.

So also he digs at the nigros dentes and niveos dentea of two women.

"The teeth of Thais look like jet; Laecania's are white. The cause, you ask? The pallid set Go out at night."

V, xliii

Store bought teeth belonging to an old woman are an object of disgust to Martial in XIV, lvi.

emptos non soleo polire dentes.

A bald woman is the subject of Epigram xii of Book VI, in which Martial exposes the fact that Fabulla's hair is purchased.

Iurat capillos esse, quos emit, suos Fabulla: numquid ergo, Paule, peierat?

- Defects of Men -

Certain of the defects attributed to women are repeated for the men, whom he introduces in the epigrams. Of these, baldness

occurs most frequently.¹ Martial looks upon it as a humorous feature in men, though disgusting in women.

In I, lxxii, to a plagiarist, Martial claims that one who steals poetry and wishes it believed that it is his own is no better than a woman who claims false teeth are real, and says that by this reasoning when he is bald he will be well thatched.

Martial advises Marinus, who struggles to cover his bald dome with the few straggling hairs which remain on his temples, to give up the battle and let the barber complete what old age has begun.

Raros colligis hine et hine capillos
et latum nitidae, Marine, calvas
campum temporibus tegis comatis;
sed moti reducto iubente vento
reduntque sibi caputque nudum
cirris grandibus hine et indes cingunt...
calvo turpis est nihil comatus.

I, lxxii

1. Thus in the Cena Trimalchionis Petronius emphasises the comic aspects of Trimalchio at the moment of introducing him (27,1) and shortly afterward ridicules his bald head rising out of the folds of a scarlet cloak.

Cf. also Apuleius, VIII, 24: calvum
Juvenal, I, 199: caput levus
Lucilius, XXX, 1123: calvum
Lucilius, Unassigned Fragment 1272
Persius, I, 56
Petronius, 15, 4
Varro, Frag. 186, (glaber)
V, xlix, is a satire on the unusual arrangement of Labienus' hair, which was totally lacking on the crown of his head, but was so abundant on the sides that when seen from the rear he gave the impression of three men in a row. Romans seem to have been quite sensitive to the defect of baldness.

Vidisssem modo forte cum sedentem
do te, Labiane, tres putavi.
sclavae me numerus tuae fasellit.
sunt illinc tibi, sunt et hinc capilli
quales vel puerum deere possunt:
mundam in medio caput nec ullus
in longa pilus area notatur.

In Epigram lvii of Book VI, Martial taunts Phoebus: "You attempt to conceal your baldness by painting hair on your smooth dome. The only barber you require is a sponge."

Mentiris fictos unguento, Phoebe, capillos
et tegitur pictis sordida calva comis.
tonsorem capiti non est adhibere necessis:
rader te melius spongea, Phoebe, potest.

In No. lxxiv of Book VI, he calls to our attention a resourceful gentleman who had neither hair nor teeth, but fraudulently pretends to have both.

Medio recumbit imus ille qui lecto,
calvam trilem semitactus unguento,
foditque tonsis ora laxa lentiscis,
mentitur, Asulfanei: non habet dentes.

In No. xlv of Book XII, Martial records a jest at the expense of Phoebus, a bald man who covers his head with a kid-skin wig and is therefore told by a wit that his head is well shod.

1. Cf. Juvenal, X, 200 ("gingiva inermi")
Haedina tibi pelle contegenti
mudae temore verticeaque calvae
festive tibi, Phoebe, dixit ille
qui dixit caput esse calceatum.

Martial taunts the man who uses hair eradicator on his bald
pate and accuses him of being afraid of a barber.

Psilothro faciem levas it dropace calvam.
mumquid tonsorem, Gargiliane, times?

In satirizing the disgusting habit of the thieving Hermogenes,
who steals every bit of linen in sight, he tells how even the bald
headed priests of Isis flee when he comes to worship. Here the
epithet is purely descriptive in contrast with the satiric touch
in the epigrams previously cited.

Linigeri fugiunt calvi, sistataque turba,
inter adorantes cum stetit Hermogenes.

An old man assists in his own interment when he spits
out his teeth and covers them with a mound of earth. He had only
three teeth to begin with.

Effeminacy of men is one of Martial's particular aversions.

In a clever play on words, he turns the force of his wit on Sabellus,
whom he detests as a pretty fellow, (bellus), used here in a
derogatory sense.

Sedina tibi pelle contegenti
mudae temore verticeaque calvae
festive tibi, Phoebe, dixit ille
qui dixit caput esse calceatum.

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Odi te quia bellus es, Sabelle.
res est putida, bellus et Sabellus.
bellum denique malo quam Sabellus.
tabescas utinem, Sabelle, bellus!

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Martial taunts the man who uses hair eradicator on his bald
pate and accuses him of being afraid of a barber.

Psilothro faciem levas it dropace calvam.
mumquid tonsorem, Gargiliane, times?

In satirizing the disgusting habit of the thieving Hermogenes,
who steals every bit of linen in sight, he tells how even the bald
headed priests of Isis flee when he comes to worship. Here the
epithet is purely descriptive in contrast with the satiric touch
in the epigrams previously cited.

Linigeri fugiunt calvi, sistataque turba,
inter adorantes cum stetit Hermogenes.

An old man assists in his own interment when he spits
out his teeth and covers them with a mound of earth. He had only
three teeth to begin with.

Effeminacy of men is one of Martial's particular aversions.

In a clever play on words, he turns the force of his wit on Sabellus,
whom he detests as a pretty fellow, (bellus), used here in a
derogatory sense.

Odi te quia bellus es, Sabelle.
res est putida, bellus et Sabellus.
bellum denique malo quam Sabellus.
tabescas utinem, Sabelle, bellus!
He looks down his nose at the womanish man in basing his
suspicion on the fact that when in the baths Maternus cannot take
his eyes off the other men.

\[ \text{suspicio virum mollem.} \]

Martial resents being called brother by a Greek fop whom
he names Charmenion and threatens retaliation for his ladylike
attentions.

\[ \text{levis dropae tu cotidiano,} \]
\[ \text{hirsutis ego cruribus gennisque;} \]
\[ \text{os blasesum tibi debilisque lingua est,} \]
\[ \text{nobilissim fortius loquetur:} \]
\[ \text{X, lxv} \]

Charmenion's lisping tongue was probably a fashionable
affectation.

The "bellus homo" and his affectations attract Martial's
attention once more in III, lxiii. For the benefit of Cotilus who
probably thought that the epithet applied to physical appearance
alone, he defines such a one.

\[ \text{Bellus homo est, flexos qui degerit ordine crines,} \]
\[ \text{balsama qui semper, cinnema semper olet;} \ldots \]

Again in No. ix of Book I, he defines the effeminate per-
sonality, saying, in effect, that to call a "bellus homo" a man
of worth is a contradiction in terms.

\[ \text{sed qui bellus homo est, Cotta, pusillus homo est.} \]

Blindness and deafness are lightly touched upon, the former,
in fact, in a purely figurative sense. Thus in XII, lxiii, Martial
is hurt because a poor poet steals his verse and recites it without

1. Blindness is once more figurative rather than actual in
the case of Codrus. The epigram illustrates well Martial's
device of a play on words.

\[ \text{Plus credit nemo, quam tota Codrus in urbe.} \]
\[ \text{Cum sit tam pauper, quamodo? causus amat. III, xv} \]
being able to make equal return. He could bear it if a good writer did this, for he could pay him back, but the bad poet is like a blind man (caecus) who cannot return the eye which he has gouged out of another's face.

Though blind, Asper is in love with a truly beautiful girl; says Martial, he loves more than he sees. There is a play on words in the contrast between caecus and videt in VIII, xlix.

Sudden wealth had made Caecilianus so niggardly that Martial advised the gods to restore his former poverty. He describes the goddess who bestowed the riches as "caeca," a stock epithet for fortune, in IV, li.

The deafness of a mule driver is a great advantage for he cannot hear the talk of those in the carriage. Thus a high price was paid for the sale of the deaf chauffeur of XI, xxxviii.

Mulio viginti venit modo millibus, Aule.
Miraris pretium tam grave? surdus erat.

The nose is a feature which has always served as a basis for jesting. In VII, xxv, Martial requests an old reprobate, who kissed everyone he met, to put off his osculations until summer, when there would no longer be a livid icicle hanging from his dog-like nostrils. We get from this epigram a sense of real physical repulsion.

cuius livida naribus caninis
dependet glacies rigetque barba...

1. For a similar use Cf. Horace, Ep. I, XVII, 4
   Sat. II, III, 44
   Varro, Frag. 12
Purely descriptive, but lending a distinctly dramatic touch is the long and ugly nose of Selius, the gentleman in search of an invitation to dinner, in II, xi, as late in the afternoon he paces through the portico with sad looks.

paene terram nasus indecens tangit.

The "tantus nasus" of Papyrus is ridiculed in VI, xxxvi, in a most vulgar jest.

Again a prominent nose may be satirized in XII, lxxxviii, when Martial states that Tongilianus has a nose but nothing else.

Tongilianus habet nasum, scio, non nego. sed iam nil praeter nasum Tongilianus habet.

Probably, however, the nose as the smelling agent is used for keenness of judgment, as we use the expression "smelling out".

A man who is all nose is shown no mercy as Martial sarcastically refers to his nose as a polyp. Nasutus ¹ has the connotation of deriding or scoffing, while polyposum ² refers to his wit as being actually bulbous.

Nasutus nimium supis videri. nasutum velo, nolo polyposum. XII, xxxvii

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   Lucilius, VI, 259

2. Cf. Horace, Sat. I, iii, 40: polypus
Small size and deformity lend themselves readily to good-humored jest with Martial as elsewhere. The dwarf farmer is satirized in XII, xiv, when Martial begs the heirs not to bury him, for any earth at all would lie heavily on his body. The key to the epigram lies in the traditional wish inscribed on a tombstone, "sit tibi terra levis".

Heredes, nolite brevem sepelire colonum:
nam terra est illi quantulacumque gravis.

A deformed dwarf serves as intermediary between lovers, for Fabulla, the wanton wife, kisses him in the presence of her husband, whereupon her lover then fondles him to receive her kiss and send it back again. The husband is also a "morio," but his trouble is mental.

parvum basiat usque morionem;

Dwarfs were comparative rarities and were kept as interesting pets. Martial refers off-hand to one in sneering at the tiny boar upon which his patron allows the clients to feast their eyes but not their stomachs.

Bis tibi triceni suimus, Mancine, vocatis
et positum est nobis nil here, praefer aprum:...
mudus aper: sed et hic minimum qualisque necari
a non armato pumiliones potest.

I, xlii

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1. Cf. Horace, EP. I, IX, 24: corporis exigui
   ---, EP. I, XIVII, 40: parvo corpore
   Juvenal, VI, 506: Pygmaea

2. Cf. V, xxxiv
Finally in a number of epigrams varied defects are introduced, which though essentially descriptive, lend a dramatic color.

When Aper had only wretched slaves to wait on him he was a stern prohibitionist. Now that he is wealthy, he stays drunk. The slaves of his poverty are described as bow-legged, one-eyed, and ruptured.

Lintea ferret Apro vatius cum vernula muper,
et supra togulam luseta sedaret amus;
atque olei stillam daret enterocaiicus unctor,
uudorum tetricus censor et asper erat:
XII, lxx

A bandy-legged man is told in II, xxxv, that he could bathe his feet in a drinking horn, so crooked are his legs. Martial is here in a jocular mood.

Cum sint crura tibi simulent quae cornua lunae,
in rhytio poteras, Phoebe, lavare pedes.

In reminding his host that a guest cannot direct his attention to beautiful surroundings, to say nothing of controlling his morals, when served by a voluptuous slave, Martial begs him to replace the lovely attendant with a rough country fellow who may in contrast be short-haired, unkempt, clownish, puny, and malodorous, qualities typical of the common farm slave.

praesta de grege sordidaque villa
tomos, horridulos, rudes, pusillos
hircosi mihi filios subulci...
X, XCVIII

1. Cf. Petronius, 102, 15: "crura in orbem pandere"
   Lucilius, XVIII, 849-50: vatex
Martial registers his distaste at the thought of marriage between two gigantic monstrosities, whom he appropriately names Polyphemus and Scylla, in VII, xxxviii.

Hulking Syrians are mentioned by Martial in VII, lxi, when he states that all the presents Ummber sent him for the Saturnalia were worthless yet eight slaves were needed to carry them. The grandes Syri were typical of their nation.

He taunts Sextus, a man who believes the women love him, but who has the bloated appearance of a man swimming under water.

Lastly, Martial paints a lurid pen picture of Zoilus whose numerous defects reflect, as he implies, the inner malignity of the man. He claims that if this man with such an exterior has morals, he is a veritable miracle.
CHAPTER II
DEFECTS RESULTING FROM ILLNESS
MARTIAL'S USE OF PHYSICAL DEFECTS
IN HIS EPIGRAMS

CHAPTER II

- DEFECTS RESULTING FROM ILLNESS -

Among the physical defects satirised by Martial there appear certain ones resulting from a fortuitous illness, or from physical and moral weaknesses or sins. The physical aspects of these may contribute to the comical appearance of the character and serve as the basis for wit or biting jest as they manifest themselves in bleary eyes, gouty limbs, protuberances, and other more or less repulsive outward signs. As in Chapter I, the defects of women will be presented first.

- Defects of Women -

Epigram xi of Book I presents to us Maronilla whom Gemellus is courting with an eye to her money, not because she is lovely or desirable, but because she has a cough which indicates that she is not long for this world.

adone pulchra est? immo foedius nil est.
quid ergo in illa petitur et placet? tussit.

The Naevia of II, xxvi, suffers from a similar ailment. Martial describes her as a disgusting creature having a racking
cough which flings out spittle. She is, however, using this to
toentic the attentions of hopeful heirs. It is no sign of near
death.

Quod querulum spirat, quod acerbum tussit,
inque tuos mittit sputa subinde sinus,...
blunditur Naevia, non moritur.

In a play on the word “ficusus,” (ficus meaning in medical
terminology, hemorrhoids), Martial describes a whole family, wife,
husband, daughter, son-in-law, and grandson, as being tuberous
while not a single tuber grows in their fields.

Ficosa est uxor, ficus et ipse maritus,
filia ficosa est et gener atque nepos,...
res mira est, ficus non habet unus aeger.

VII, lxxi

In XI, lx, Martial obscenely weighs the virtues of beauty and
an itch in the balance, and decides that only to have both would be
a great gift of the gods. The itch is described in some detail.

sed Phlogis ulcer habet,
ulcus habet Primi quod tendere possit alutam
quoque senem Piliam non sinat esse senem;
ulcus habet quod habere suam vult quisque puellam,
quod sanare Crito, non quod Nygia potest.

Glycera, the mistress of Lupercus, has refused to see her
lover, who explains her coldness as due to the toothache.

respondit Glyceras dolere dentes.

XI, xi


2. Cf. Lucilius, I, 52, herpestica
Horace, Ep. I, xvi, 24, incurata ulcera
Juvenal, VI, 473, ulcer
Swollen veins make it evident that Myrtale has been drinking wine and chewing laurel leaves which she hopes will destroy the scent. Her flushed countenance gives her away. As the laurel is sacred to Apollo, it is hinted that it was her pretense to be inflamed by Apollo and not by Bacchus.

\[\textit{hanc tu rubentem prominentis venis\textsuperscript{1}}\]
\[\textit{quotiens venire, Paule, videris contra, dicas licebit "Myrtale bibit laurum."}\]
\[\textit{V, iv}\]

- Defects of Men -

In distinction from Martial's apparent obsession with women's defects and failings, of the type discussed in the previous chapter, with the exception of the few examples given above, the defects grouped in this chapter are concerned almost exclusively with those of men. Most often mentioned is the defect of bleary eyes.\textsuperscript{2}

In epigram xxxix of Book VI, which has been cited in the previous chapter, the third child of the notorious adulteress is recognisable as the son of a baker by the inflicted eyes which he has inherited.

\[\textit{pistoris esse tertium quis ignorat, quicunque lippum novit et videt Damam?}\]

---

1. Cf. Juvenal, VI, 397 and Lucilius, XVIII, 849-50

2. See also Horace, Ep. I, I, 20 (lippus)
   II, 52
   Sat. I, III, 25
   V, 30
   V, 49
   Juvenal, I, 130
   Lucilius, V, 217
   Persius, I, 79 and V, 77
   Petronius, 28, 5
   64, 6
   132, 14
No. lxxviii of Book VI, tells how a Phrygian, blind in one eye and bleary-eyed in the other, was advised by his doctor to give up drinking lest he lose the one remaining eye. Rather than to deprive himself of liquor, he bids his bleary eye adieu.

Potor nobilis, Aule, lumine uno luscus Phryx est Lalteroque lippus... vinum Phryx oculus bibit venenum.

Martial makes a dig at a man whom he calls Hylas, who, when he was bleary-eyed, offered to pay three-fourths of his debt; but having lost one eye, now he offers to pay half. Martial advises the money lender to collect quickly before the man becomes totally blind and he cannot collect a cent.

Solvere dodrantem nuper tibi, Quinte, volebat lippus Hylas, luscus vult dare dimidium.
acciue quam primum; brevis est occasio lucri;

si fuerit caecus, nil tibi solvet Hylas.
VIII, ix

In XII, liv, the unattractive Zoilus is described as having bleary eyes, "lumine lassus."

Martial complains in XII, xvii, that the poor man has no relief from the noises of the town. On every side the raving throng assaults his ears. In the noisy crowd from which he cannot escape is the bleary-eyed huckster.

nec sulfuratae lippus institor mercis.

Judging from the figurative expression employed by Martial in Epigram lx of Book V to reveal his unwillingness to give publicity
to an insulting critic by answering him in his verse, itching and
the accompanying scratching must have been a common and ludicrous
defect.

nos hac a scabie 1 tenemus ungues.

In a couplet to be attached to the gift of an earpick,
Martial recommends that it be used to relieve the persistent itching
of the ears.

Si tibi morosa prurigine verminat auris,
arma damus tantis apta libidinisub.

XIV, xxi

Returning to Martial's tuberous farmers, in VII, lxxi, we
find mention of the unsightly wen (ulcus) with which the sturdy
ditcher, ploughman, and bailiff are afflicted.

nec dispensator nec vilicus ulcere turpi
nec rigidus fossor sed nec arator eget.

Caecilianus insists that the form "ficos" and not "ficus" be
used. Martial agrees to call the "figs" or hemorrhoids of Caecilianus
by the name ficos, but not real tree-grown figs.

Cum dixi ficos, rides quasi barbara verba
et dixi ficos, Caeciliane, iubes.
dicamus ficos, quas scimus in arbore nasci,
dicamus ficos, Caeciliane, tuos.

I, lxvi

In IV, lxxi, Martial makes a cumbersome pun on the meaning of
the caprifious or goat-fig, which is called in medical terminology,
hemorrhoids.

Gestari iunctis nisi desinis, Hedyle, capris,
qui modo figus eras, iam caprifious eris.

---

1. Cf. Juvenal, II, 80, viii, 34, scabie
Lucilius, XXVI, 729-30, XXX, 1113-14
XIV, lxxxvi, contains a similar jest written to accompany the gift of a pad saddle.

Stragula succincti venator sumae veredi;
nam solet a nudo surgere ficos equo.

Martial makes sufferers from hernia the special victims of his sarcastic humor. In III, xxiv, he tells of a Tuscan soothsayer who wished to sacrifice to Bacchus a he-goat, guilty of having gnawed a vine. A countryman, called upon to aid him, saw an "ingens hirnea" revealed as the soothsayer struggled with the goat, and immediately offered it also to the god.

ingens iratis apparuit hirnea sacris.
occupat hanc ferro rusticos atque sectat,
hoc ratus antiquos sacrorum possere ritus
talibus et fibris numina prisca colit.
sic, modo qui tuscus fueras, nunc Gallus haruspex,
dum lugulas hircum, factus es ipse caper.

In a play on the word "ruptos" Martial claims that there are physicians on the Aventine who can heal every ailment including hernia, but there is no one to heal the ruptured in the sense of broken down.

Entercularum feitur Podalirius Hermes:
qui sanet ruptos, die mihi Galle, quis est?
I, lvi

In this same epigram he mentions physicians who can cure such defects as bad teeth, diseased eyes, and running abscesses.

In a cynical description of the violence with which the barber Antiochus plies his trade, Martial compares him to the surgeon Aloon, whose hands are gentler even when he cuts the knotted
hernia and lops away broken bones.

mitior implicitas Alcon sectat enterocalas
fractaque fabrili dedolat ossa manu.

XI, lxxxiv

In XII, lxx, he refers to the ruptured bath attendant of Aper, recent heir to a fortune.

atque olei stillam daret enterocalicus unctor.

Finally Martial mocks Fabianus who was accustomed to deride hernia in other men, but on beholding himself in the bath, suddenly began to hold his tongue.

Derisor Fabianus hirnearum
omnes quem modo olei timebant
dicentem tumidas in hydrocalas
quantum nee duo diceant Catulli,
in thermis subito Neronianis
vidit se miser et tacere coepit.

XII, lxxxi

Gout was a common and unpleasant ailment among the Romans. It still is a burdensome and humorous affliction. The victims of Martial's wit suffer from "podagra" 1 which affects the feet, or from "cheragra" 2 which affects the hand.

Martial disagrees with the diagnosis that Diodorus, a litigant, is suffering from gout. He declines to pay his lawyer and Martial claims that this is manual rheumatism.

Litigat et podagra Diodorus, Placce, laborat.
sed nil patrono porrigit; haec cheragae est.

I, xxix

1. Cf. Ennius, Unplaced Frag. 21 podager
Horace, Ep. I, II, 52
Lucilius, IX, 354-55
Petronius, 132, 14
140, 6
Seneca, Apocolocyntosis, 13

Caalius pretended that he had gout in order to escape the demands of society, but after he had bandaged his feet and lumbered around, he was really attacked with "podagram."

Martial points out to a slave his many advantages over his master. His master salutes many other masters, but Condylus salutes no one, nor must he pay bills. He also has his health, while his master endures gout, nausea, and other misfortunes.

It would seem from Martial's complaint that it was impossible to go unmolested by kissers in Rome. Various defects made them unbearable, such as malignant ulcers, inflamed pustules, diseased chins, dirty scabs, and leaky noses. Martial claims that the only remedy is to make a friend of the man you don't want to kiss.

Another leaky nose is introduced in VII, xxxvii, where Martial explains that whenever Castricus, a quaestor in charge of trials for
murder, blew his nose it was a signal for judgment for execution.
Hence even though in December his running nose was overflowing, his
colleagues would not let him use his handkerchief.

> turpis ab inviso pendebat stiria naso.

Martial scorns the kisses of Rome, given by an evil-smelling farmer, cobbler, a sufferer from "mentagra," the one-eyed and the bleary-eyed.

> hinc menti dominus periculosi,
hinc dexiocholus, inde lippus...

XII, lx

Through employing a play on the word "pallet"¹ Martial
comments on the pallor of Charinus who is pale even though he
enjoys good health.

Pulchre valet Charinus, et tamen pallet.
Parce bibit Charinus, et tamen pallet.
Bene concoquit Charinus, et tamen pallet.
Sole utitur Charinus, et tamen pallet.
Tinguit cutem Charinus, et tamen pallet.

I, lxxvii

In XII, iv, Martial tells how Oppianus has decided that he
is a poet because he habitually looks so pale and wan.²

Esset, Castrice, cum mali coloris,
versus scribere coepit Oppianus.

---

1. Cf. Album Horace, Sat. II, II, 21
   Persius, III, 94 pallet
   " , I, 26 pallor infarus
   Apuleius, X, 10 "

In what is possibly an attack on the poet Statius, Martial boasts that there is no tragic theme in his poetry and states that though men may love the tragedy, they do not read it. One of the tragic themes that he mentions is the banquet of the dyspeptic Thyestes whom Martial terms "crude Thyestes", 1 in IV, xlix.

In I, xii, Martial wishes that a certain man whom he nicknames "Lividus" (jaundiced) may envy everyone and be envied by no one.

Qui ducis vultus et non legis ista libenter,
omenibus, invidias, livide, nemo tibi.

Martial prescribes beets as a cure for indigestion (III, xlvii), when he recounts all the country food that Bassus took with him into the country.

pigroque ventri non imutiles betas;

In Epigram xlvii of Book XIII, Martial refuses a dinner invitation from a man who hopes that he will return the kindness or make him an heir in his will. He says that no sumptuous dinner is worth the bilious complexion and torturing feet which are its natural result.

mullorum leporumque et suminis exitus hie est,
sulpuresusque color carnificesque pedes.

1. Cf. Lucilius, X V I I I or X X I X , 976-77
Horace, Sat. I, V, 49 crudis
CHAPTER III

DEFECTS RESULTING FROM NEGLIGENCE OR MUTILATION
MARTIAL'S USE OF PHYSICAL DEFECTS
IN HIS EPIGRAMS

CHAPTER III
DEFECTS RESULTING FROM NEGLIGENCE OR MUTILATION

- Defects Resulting from Negligence -

Defects of Women

Martial showed no mercy to those who were offensive to him for reasons that could be remedied. He attacked chiefly the same defects against which the advertisements of today wage their war of publicity for selling purposes, namely "B.O.," "halitosis," and careless filth. One receives the impression that the women of his acquaintance were a disgusting lot, for he complains that many of them reek.

In his most violent slap at womanhood, III, xxxii, he declares that Vetustilla's odor is that of the husbands of she-goats.¹

Martial mocks a woman who sucks drugged tablets to keep the smell of yesterday's wine from her breath, and claims that when mixed with drugs (pastilli Cosmi) the reek of her breath ² is

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Petronius, 34, 5 putidissimi

2. Cf. also Lucilius, III, 130 (acidos exhalas)
Persius, III, 88, (gravis halitus) 99, (sulpureas exhalantes nefites)
Petronius, 9, 6, (ne spiritus quidem purus)
redoubled. The drugs discolor her teeth.\footnote{Of. Petronius 124, 274, (scabra rubigine dentes), 64, 6 (sordidissimis dentibus)}

Ne gravis hesterno fragres, Pascennia, vino, pastillos Cosmi luxuriosa voras. ista limunt dentes ientacula, sed nihil opstatt, extremo rustus cum venit a barathro.

quid quod olet gravius mixtum diapasmate virus atque duplex animae longius exit odor?

notes ergo nimis fraudes depressaque furta

iam tollas et sis ebris simpliciter.

I, lxxxvii

In I, (xxviii), Martial sarcastically defends Acerra from the taunt that she reeks of yesterday’s wine by stating that she always drinks till daylight.

Hesterno fetero mere qui credit Acerram, fallitur. inlucem semper Acerra bibit.

Thus it is today’s wine which you smell.

Bassa smells like all the worst things imaginable — the bed of a drained marsh, a sulphur spring, a sea-water fishpond, a stale he-goat in the midst of his amours, a sweaty shoe, the breath of a fasting Jew, a wolf in flight, a viper’s lair, and other unpleasant odors.

\footnotesize Quod siccae redolet palus lacunae, crudarum nebulae quod Albularum, piscinae vetus aura quos marinae, quod pressa piger hircus in capella, lassi bardaious quod evocati, quod bis muriae vellus inquinatum, quod ieiunia sabbatariorum, maestorum quod anhalitus reorum, quod spuresae mortiens lucerna Ledaet, quod seromata fauce de Sabina, quod volpis fuga, vipersae cubile, mallem quam quod oles clare, Bassa. IV, iv
Thais runs Bassa a close second. She smells worse than a fuller's crock, a he-goat, the breath of a lion, a dog's hide, a rotten egg, and putrid fish sauce. In order to disguise her odor, she covers herself with depilatory, chalk and vinegar, or bean flour. But no matter what she does, she still smells of Thais.

 но мае Thais olet quam non fullonis avari
testa vetus media sed modo fracta via,
non ab amore recens hircus, non ora leonis,
non detracta cani Transiberina cutis,
pullus abortivo nec sum putrescit in ovo,
aphora corrupto nec vitiate gare.
virus ut hoc alio fallax permutet odore,
deposita quotiens balnea veste petit,
psilothro viaret aut acida lastet oblita etra
aut tegitur pingui terque quaterque faba,
cum bene se tutem per fraudes mille putavit,
omnia cum fecit, Thaida Thais olet.
VI, xxiii

- Defects of Men -

Men seem to have smelled as bad as the women and to have been much filthier. In III, xxviii, Martial slyly points out that the reason Marius' ear smells so abominably is that Nestor whispers into it with his foul breath.

Auriculum Mario graviter miraris olere.
tu facis hoc; garris, Nestor, in auriculam.

In I, xxviii, he expresses his preference for the son of a malodorous swineherd to wait on him rather than the beautiful slave who will distract his attention from his host.

hircosi mihi filios subulci.
In epigram xxii of Book XI, Martial reviles a man who corrupts young boys and makes them acquire a goatish odor.

\[ \text{inde tragus calaresque pili mirandaque matri barba,} \]

\[ \text{XI, xxii} \]

Zoilus may claim that the breath of poets and of lawyers smells vilely, but Martial says that that of a depraved man, such as Zoilus is, is worse.

\[ \text{Os male causidicis et dicis clare poetis.} \]
\[ \text{sed fallatori, Zoile, peius olet.} \]

\[ \text{XI, xxx} \]

Martial is obscenely insulting when he claims that the breath of the foul Fabullus is more vile than that of one guilty of sexual perversion.

\[ \text{Pedicomibus os clare dicis.} \]
\[ \text{quid te credis clare --?} \]

\[ \text{XII, lxxxv} \]

In I, xii, he taunts a would-be poet with the fact that he is only a dull hack, no better than a foul-mouthed old debauchee.

\[ \text{quod bucca est vetuli dicax cinaedi.} \]

Martial extols the charms of his native Bilbilis, especially in the chance for a leisurely country life where unkempt slave-boys circle the hearth and the harrassment of life in Rome is far away.

\[ \text{Vicina in ipsum silva descedet focum} \]
\[ \text{infante cinctum sordido; 1} \]

\[ \text{I, xiv} \]

In his description of a cynic, Martial decides that the man is so unkempt that he is actually a dog. He is punning on the

1. Cf. Varro, Frag. 67, (sordido)
origin of the word cynic as derived in one of its senses from the Greek for dog. The dotard's hair is shaggy, his beard filthy and falling over his breast.

sui cana putrisque
stat coma et in pectus sordida barba cadit,
IV, liii

In VI, lvii, the bald Phoebus is said to need a sponge, not a barber, to treat the dirty (sordida) scalp underneath the feigned hair produced by daubing on ointment. Similarly the head of Zoilus, a filthy fellow, is described as being dirtier than his rear end.

Zoile, quid solium subluto podice perdis?
spurcius ut fiat, Zoile, merge caput.
II, xlii

Martial acknowledges praise from Domitian and begs for more in order that a certain jealous man may writhe and gnaw his filthy nails.

ecco iterum nigros conrodit lividos unguen.
IV, xxvii

Martial derides the scowl and unkempt hair of a man who was wed only yesterday.

aspicis incomptis illum, Deciane, capillis.
I, xxiv

Pannychus prates of all the schools of philosophy, whose leaders were dirty and hirsute. He himself is evil-smelling and

1. Cf. Lucilius, IV, 172-75, (spurcus)
2. Cf. Varro, Frag. 67, (intonsa coma)
3. Cf. Varro, Frag. 100, (squale)
hairy.

Democritos, Zenonas inexplicitosque Platonas
quidquid et hirsutis squalis imaginibus,...

Romans of Martial's day were admirers of a smooth, hairless body and took pains to insure this. Thus a shaggy chest and legs were scorned. Martial tells Pannychus that his body is shaggy but his mind is depilated.

mune sunt crura pilis et sunt tibi pectora sastis
horrida, sed mens est, Pannyche, volsa tibi.

- Defects Resulting from Mutilation -

Defects of Women

Judging from the frequent allusions in the epigrams, one-eyed women were not uncommon in Roman society. Martial claims that the man who can kiss the one-eyed, bald, and red-faced Philaenis is capable of anything.

cur non basio te, Philaeni? lusca es.

Thais, in III, viii, is one-eyed and is loved by a lover who has lost both eyes.

"Thaida Quintus amat." "Quam Thaida?" "Thaida luscam."
uum oculum Thais non habet, ille duos.

   X, 228
   Persius, I, 126
   V, 186
   Varro, Frag. 12, (lussiatus)
   Cf. Ennius, Unplaced Frag. 28-6 (eolites)
   Lucilius, III, 112-13 (uno oculo)
Quintus seems to think that the poem on Thais is aimed at Hermione. Martial denies this and adds that if Quintus is unwilling to be Thais' lover, he will change the name to Sextus. Hermione is not one-eyed.

Si tua nec Thais nec lusca est, Quinte, puella,
cur in te factum distichon esse putas?
   III, xi

The one-eyed Lycoris loves a youth as handsome as the cup-bearer of Zeus from Ilium, Ganymede. Martial comments on how well the one-eyed sees.

Iliaco similis puerum, Faustine, ministro
lusca Lycoris amat. quam bene lusca videt!
   III, xxxix

In IV, lxv, Philaenis is depicted as the woman who always weeps with one eye because she is one-eyed.

Oculo Philaenis semper altero plorat.
quo fiat istud, quaeritis, modo? lusca est.

Martial describes a one-eyed courtesan who also has false teeth and hair.

et sit lusca licet, te tamen illa videt.
   IX, xxxvii

Martial wishes bad luck to a boy who has often broken dates with him, and hopes that he may carry the sunshade of a one-eyed mistress.

umbellam luscae, Lygde, feras dominae.
   XI, lxxviii

He says tersely that the one-eyed Philaenis would be somelier if she were totally blind.

Quam sit lusca Philaenis indecenter
vis dicam breviter tibi, Fabelle?
esset caeca decentior Philaenis.
Among Aper's servants when he was poor was an old one-eyed crone, luscaanus. XII, lxx.

Defects of Men

There was no scarcity of one-eyed men. In VIII, lix, a one-eyed thief is described as being so sharp that he can see with both eyes, though an empty socket gapes under his shameless brow.

Aspicis hunc uno contentum lumine, cuius lippa sub adtrita fronte lamina patet?... Hunc tu convivam cautus servare memento tune furit atque oculo luscus utroque videt.

VIII, ix, refers to the one-eyed Hylas who refuses to pay more than half his debt. In VI, lxxviii, also previously cited, Martial mentions the one-eyed drunkard who sacrifices his remaining eye rather than give up drinking. Among the nauseous kissers of Rome listed in XII, lix, is the one-eyed man, "dexiocholus".

In I, xcii, Martial threatens to gouge out the one remaining eye of a rascal for annoying his friend Cestos.

sed fodiám digito qui superest oculos: Thais' lover of III, vii, lacked two eyes, duos oculos. Thais' lover of III, viii, lacked two eyes, duos oculos. 1

In V, xiv, Hannaeus views a show with only one eye.

Martial claims that a fisherman was struck blind because he attempted to catch one of the emperor Domitian's hallowed fish in

1. Cf. Juvenal X, 227-8 ambos periddit oculos
   Lucilius VII, 299 oculi non sunt
the lake at Baiae.

raptis luminibus repente caecus
captum non potuit videre piscem...1
IV, xxx

Various mutilations and accidents are mentioned by Martial.

In II, lxxxii, he tells of the unfortunate lover who was shorn of
nose and ears by an angry husband. Martial points out that the
husband has not sufficiently avenged himself for the man still has
other activities.

Possasti miserum, marit, moeohum,
et se, qui fuerant prius, requirunt
trunsi naribus auribusque voltus.
credis te satis esse vindicatum?

In XI, lxxxiv, Martial jestingly describes the scars2 that
the rough barber Antiochus leaves on his skin as comparable to those
made by a wrathful wife with her formidable finger nails.

haec quaecunque uel numeratis stigmate mento,
in vetuli pyctae qualia fronte sedent,
non iracundis fecit gravis unguibus uxor:
Antiochi ferrum est et scelerata manus.

In the same epigram the broken bones of a workman's hand are
referred to.3

Frequent mention is made of eunuchs4 (spadones), who were

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Sat. II, iii 44
Varro F. 12

2. Cf. Lucilius, XXVII, 743 cnicatrix
Petronius 102, 15 and 105, 10

3. Horace Sat. I, I, 5 fracta membra
Ep. I, xvii, 59 fracto crure

4. Cf. Juvenal VI, 513 semivir
I, 22 spado
XIV, 91
Petronius 27, 3
common in Martial’s period but were regarded as objects of ridicule.

The priests of Cybele were eunuchs, known as Galli. Thus in III, xxiv, Martial jokes about the Tuscan soothsayer who is gelded by having his hernia removed by his assistant and becomes a Gallus.

sodic modo qui Tuscius fueras, nunc Gallus aruspex,
dum inigulas hircum, factus es ipse caper.

A spiteful wife sets a nun on guard over her husband, thus proving what her suspicions of his impropriety are.

Quid de te, Line, suspectetur uxor
et qua parte velit pudiciosum,
cartis indicis satis probavit,
custodem tibi quae dedit spadonam.
nil nasutius has maligniusque.

Martial taunts an effeminate man, saying that he is more unmanned than a nun and than Attis whose name the emasculated priest of Cybele chants.

Spadone cum sus eviratior fluxu,
et concubino mollior Galaceno,
quem sectus ululat matris enthesae Gallus,

In other epigrams the nun is used in vicious attacks upon immoral men and women alike. Thus:

Cur tantum eunochos habeat tua Caelia, quaeris,
Pannyebe? volt futui Caelia nec parere.

Omnes eunochos habeat Almo, nec arigit ipse,
Et queritur, pariet quod sua Polla nihil.

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1. Cf. also VI, ii; VI, xxxix; VIII, lxiv; X, lxvi; XI, lxxv; XI, lxxi.
CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

A great deal of humorous and sarcastic writing has always been done at the expense of man's misfortunes, and physical peculiarities have constantly been the source of repressed or irrepresible mirth. There is a certain savage instinct in human nature that often awakens laughter instead of pity. Today, even as was true in the past, humanity is universally amused at the frailties of brother men. Martial was not an unfeeling scourger because he yielded on occasion to this impulse which is common to us all.

An analysis of the epigrams reveals that only nine per cent of the one thousand five hundred odd poems are concerned with physical defects. This is a most significant fact, for it shows that this study is necessarily limited to a small portion of the entire body of Martial's works. Therefore the reader must reserve judgment upon the poet, his interests, his character, and his purposes, until he has enjoyed the vast remainder of the epigrams which deal with more palatable topics and show more clearly the light, witty touch of Martial's hand. The very nature of the subject with which I have dealt necessitated the frequent use of a coarse, harsh humor, and conclusions drawn from the material presented here should not be taken as representative of all the entertaining books of epigrams.
The fact that almost forty-two per cent of the epigrams studied are written in a malicious vein should not lead one to believe that Martial was exclusively sarcastic and evil minded. Most of the barbed taunts which carry true scorn and ill feeling are directed toward lewd prostitutes, about whose base natures he is in direct accord with public feeling almost two thousand years after his death. While he seems to take pleasure in reviling such women, it must be remembered that elsewhere he commends noble Roman matrons and womanly virtue. Such tributes appear in II, xli, and II, xiii, when Martial speaks of his wife as an inspiration for the future, and in V, xxxiv, in which he commends the spirit of his beloved slave girl, Erotion, to his father and mother in the underworld.

Stylistically, Martial's use of physical defects serves several distinct purposes. These may be classified as follows: to attack a disagreeable personality or an individual representative of an obnoxious type; to lend humor to a theme or to supply the theme itself as an opportunity for a play of wit; to describe or characterize a person, using the defect as an epithet mentioned in passing.

Often Martial's use of defects creates an opportunity for attacks on social evils of his day, as in XII, lvi, and XII, lxx, in which he bewails the noise and crowds of Rome. Again, his introduction of a defect may lend distinct dramatic emphasis as
in IV, liii, in which he portrays the filthy cynic, Cosmus. 1

A number of Martial's vitriolic attacks are aimed at adulterers such as the one shorn of nose and ears in II, lxxxiii, or at sexual perverts such as are found in XI, xxii and XII, lxxv. At times Martial employs physical imperfections as darts with which to crucify his victims. Vetustilla, in III, xiii, with her sparse hair, toothless gums, and unpleasant odor is typical of this type.

Martial does not spare details which to modern taste are frequently revolting. This is done sometimes to produce the very effect of disgust for which he is striving. Examples of this vulgar jest are found in VI, xxiii, in which the odor of Thais is compared with innumerable nasty smells, and in IV, iv, where he discusses the stench of Bassa in a similar vein. Evil characters are dealt with in forcible terms designed to malign and humiliate. Such is the epigram VII, xxv, 2 on Linus who is physically repulsive yet insists on kissing everyone he meets, though his nose is running.

In this connection, Martial's use of proper names may be examined profitably. Most often they are not those of actual individuals, but an actual person may, however, have been recognised by the reader. Again the name is frequently generic, and under the guise of a particular individual he actually introduces a type from everyday life at Rome. Thus xiii of Book III, a vitriolic attack

1. Cf. also II, iii; XII, lxx.
2. Cf. VI, xxxix; XI, xxx
on the aged Vetustilla, read by some editors as Vetustina, is
explained by Ramiris in the Lemaire edition of Martial's works as
follows:

Est invectiva in Vetustillam, seu ut alii legunt
Vetustinam quandam, sujus nomen a vetustate deducit,
quae in extrema senectute virum quaerebat; estque
totum id epigrammata hyperbolicum, ut moris est
huius poetae. 1

Similarly the name Zoilus is frequently attached to an undesirable
character, as in XII, liv.

Nomen illus (Zoilus) usurpatur ad designandum saepius invidum,
saeppe quoque modo improbum et fugiendum virum, sum uno verbo,
de quo Horatius lib. I, satira iv, vs. 85. 2

Thirty-three percent of the epigrams are goodnatured and
witty, with the defect imparting a touch of humor or even supplying
a humorous theme for the whole poem. Martial's wit is predominant
throughout all the epigrams, and whether broad or subtle, it can
arouse a smile in the midst of disgust. In this category 3 belong
III, xxxiv, which tells of the gelding of a Tuscan soothsayer, and
VII, xiii, which ridicules the black teeth of Lycoris.

In some cases the point of the epigram itself may turn on
some defect, as in IV, lxv, where Martial points out that one-eyed
Philaenis always weeps with one eye, or in III, xxviii, which presents

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2. p. 48, Vol. III
3. Cf. also II, lxi; III, xxxiv.
the reason why Nestor's ear smells. Sometimes there is a play on words in the actual and figurative sense, as is the case in III, xv, in which the "blind" lover appears, and in the similar VIII, xlix. If this analysis dealt with the whole body of the epigrams, undoubtedly the vast majority of Martial's works would fall in this classification of poems characterized by the light touch of the master epigrammatist.

Defects are used to vivify a character portrayal in approximately twenty-six per cent of the instances noted. Most of these are used almost in the manner of Homeric epithets, describing the bald Melanthion of I, lxvii, or the one-eyed Thais of III, viii. In other cases, the defect may be applied in a stock epithet, such as in the "caeca dea" of IV, 11, which is prevalent today in the expression "blind fate". Other descriptive uses are typified by XII, xxix; XII, lxx; and IV, xxvii.

From the detailed review of references to physical defects which is presented in Chapters I, II, and III, it will readily be recognised that Martial has employed a group of defects ranging from the purely adventitious resulting from mere chance at birth to those caused by the most heinous personal sins. In the category of the former, dwarfs, bandy-legged men, bald men and women, blind and deaf men, and women cursed with ugly form or feature appear. 1

1. Cf. XII, xiii; XII, lx; II, xxxii; II, xxi; III, viii; II, xxxvii; III, xiii.
In the latter group fall defects caused by excessive self-indulgence, licentiousness, and wantonness as exhibited by adulterers, prostitutes, drunkards, and sexual perverts.¹

Between the two extremes lie an extensive group of peculiarities, some the result of unintentional accident or mishap, as the one-eyed Phlaenius of II, xxxii, or the "lusca Lycoris" of III, xxxix. Others are produced by such minor sins as inattention to personal cleanliness, and chance afflictions.²

Martial undoubtedly had many and various motives for his employment of the faults and frailties of his acquaintances in his verse. Though the types here mentioned constitute but a small part of the complete works of Martial, they contain glimpses into the life and society of the era of Domitian, with the result that we know the period as we know hardly any other period in ancient history. In judging from them the personal character of the poet, we should recall once more his own plea -

lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba est.
I, v, 8.

Perhaps the content dealt with in this study is of an unfortunate nature in that it presents a distorted picture of Martial's works and character, and even of Roman life in the first

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¹ Cf. also II, lxxxiii; XI, lx; I, xxviii; XI, xxii.
² Cf. II, xxxvi; IX, xlvi.
century A.D. The development of a topic often leads the writer far from the presupposed path. My original interest was in the milder forms of defects found in the epigrams more generally read. It may be deplored that this investigation has to such a degree dealt with unpleasant and even unspeakable themes, but a true report of the use of physical defects could not be presented without the vile as well as the laughable. Nonetheless, I feel that I have gained an understanding of Martial, the man, and even of mankind, from the reading of this element in the epigrams. Disgusted though the reader may become, and I have shared that disgust, he must recognize a glimmer of genius even in the use of the most excruciating pornography.
ALPHABETICAL CATALOGUE
OF
PHYSICAL DEFECTS
Catalogue

acerbum tussit
   II, xxvi
acre ulcus
   XI, xcviii
acuto capite
   VI, xxxix
aegrum dentem
   X, lvi
albus
   I, lv
anotis orthopygium macrae
   III, xciii
araneorum cassibus pares mammam
   III, xciii
auribus longis
   VI, xxxix
auriculam graviter olere
   III, xxviii
bellus homo
   I, ix
   III, lxiii
bellus
   XII, xxxix
blaesum
   X, lxv
breve
   XI, xiv
brevis pede
   XII, liv
bucca dicax
   I, xli

caecca
   IV, li
   XII, xxii

caucus
   III, xv
   IV, xxx
   VIII, xlix
   XII; lxiii

calva
   II, xxxiii

calva sordida
   VI, lvii

calvae
   V, xlix
   X, lxxxiii
   XII, xlv

calvam
   III, lxxiv

calvam trifilem
   VI, lxxiv

calvi
   XII, xxix

calvo
   X, lxvii

calvus
   I, lxxii

caper,
   III, xxiv

capillos quos emit
   VI, xii
cheragra
   I, xcviii
   IX, xcii

cline nudo
   XI, c

come emptis
   XII, xxiii

congelati gutta nasi
   XI, xcviii

crine ruber
   XII, liv

crude
   IV, xlix

crura simulent quae cornua lunae
   II, xxxv

crura pilis
   II, xxxvi

crus colorque formicae
   III, xcvii

deformis anusque
   VII, lxxv

dentata...emptis
   I, lxxiii

dentes nocte reponas
   IX, xxxvii

dentibus emptis
   XII, xxiii

dexiocholus
   XII, lxx

dolere dentes
   XI, xlv
do l e n t · c a p i l l i
   X I I, l x x x i x

duoœ o c u l o s n o n h a b e t
   I I I, vii

emptœ d e n t e s
   X I V, l v i

enterocelarum
   X, l v i

enterocelas
   X I I, l x x x i v

enterocelicus
   X I I, l x x

eunochos
   V I, l x v i i
   V I I I, x l i v
   X, x c i

eunuchus
   I I I, l x x x i i

exiguos capillos
   X I I, l x x ii

faciem sub aqua natantis
   I I, l x x x v i i

fiunt absentes comae
   I X, x x x v i i

ficos
   I, l x v

ficosa
   V I I, l x x i

fictos capillos
   V I, l v i i
ficus
IV, lii
XIV, lxxxvi

fracta ossa
XI, lxxxiv

grandes Syri
VII, liii

heesterno fetera mero
I, xxviii

heesterno fragres vino
I, lxxxvii

hircosi
X, xcviii

hircosis
IX, xlvii

hircoso
IX, lvii

hirnearum
XII, lxxxiii

Horridus
I, xlix

incomptis capillis
I, xxiv

indecens nasus
II, xi

ingens hirnea
III, xxiv

linunt dentes
I, lxxxvii

lippa lacuna
VIII, lix
lippum
VI, xxxix

lippus
VI, lxxviii
VIII, ix
XII, lvi
XII, lix

livide
I, xi

lumine laesus
XII, liv

lusca
II, xxxiii
III, xi
III, xxxix
IV, lx
IX, xxxvii
XII, lxx
XII, xxi
luscae
XI, lxxiii

luscam
III, viii

lusca
VI, lxxviii
VIII, ix
VIII, lix

magni culi
XI, xcix

male olere
XI, xxx

male olet
VI, xciii

mali coloris
VII, iv

mammoam
II, lii
mammosas
XIV, cclix

mollem virum
I, xcvi

monstra
VII, xxxviii

naribus caninis
VII, xcv

nasum rorantem frigore
VII, xxxvii

niger ore
XII, liv

nigra
III, xxxiv
VII, xiii

nigrior cadente moro
I, lxii

nigros dentes
V, xliii

nigros ungues
IV, xxvii

nil praeter nasum
XII, lxxxviii

niveos dentes emptos
V, xliii

non formoso corpore
III, iii

non habet dentes
VI, lxxiv

odor animae
I, lxxxvii
oleas quod viri capellarum
III, xcvii

oler hircus
IV, iv

os olera
XII, lxxv

pallet
I, lxxxvi

pannosae mammæ
III, lxxii

parvum
XII, xcvii

pectora sætis horrida
II, xxxvi

pectus cicadae
III, xcvii

periculosis menti
XII, lxi

pigro ventri
III, xlvii

pinguis coma olet
II, xxix

podagra
I, xcvi

podagram
VII, xxxix

polyposum
XII, xxxvii

prolatum supercilii
IX, xxxvii
prominentis venia
  V, iv
prurigine
  XIV, xxiii
pumilione
  I, xliii
pusilla
  VII, Ixv
pusillos
  X, xcvi
pusillus
  I, ix
pusulae lucentes
  XI, xcvi
quattuor dentes
  I, xix
  III, xci
querulum spirat
  II, xxvi
qui superest oculum
  I, xcii
rugas
  III, xlii
rugosiorem frontem
  III, xci
scabie
  V, lx
scisso ventri
  XIV, lx
sima nare
  VI, xxxix
sordida barba
   IV, liii
sordidi lichenes
   XI, xcviii
sordido
   I, xlix
spadone
   V, xli
spadonem
   II, liv
   X, liii
spadones
   XI, lxxv
   XI, lxxxi
spado
   VI, ii
   VI, xxxix
spurcius
   II, xlii
squalet hirsutis
   IX, xlvi
stigmata
   XI, lxxxiv
subtilem
   XI, c
sulcos uteri
   III, lxxii
sulpureus color
   XII, xlvii
surdus
   IX, xxxvii
   XI, xxxviii
tantus nasus
   VI, xxxvi
tragus
   XI, xxi

tres capilli
   III, xciii

tres capillos
   XII, vii

tres dentes
   II, xli
   VIII, lvii

triste mentum
   XI, xcviii

trunci maribus auribusque voltus
   II, lxxxiii.

turgidis labris
   VI, xxxix

turpis
   VIII, lxxix

tuusit
   I, x

ulcere
   VII, lxxi

ulcus
   XI, lx

uno lumine
   VIII, lix

uno oculo
   V, xiv

unum oculum
   III, viii

vatus
   XII, lxx
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VITA

Caroline Warner Stott was born in Richmond, Virginia, on April 24, 1927. She received her primary education in the public schools of Richmond and Newport News, Virginia. On June 2, 1947, she received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the Randolph-Macon Woman's College. On June 5, 1947, she was married to Warren Walter Stott.