Martial's Use of Physical Defects in His Epigrams

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MARTIAL'S USE OF PHYSICAL DEFECTS
IN HIS EPIGRAMS

by

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS
of
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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.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.  INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. NATURAL DEFECTS</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.  Defects of Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgusting Defects of immoral women</td>
<td>10-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of teeth</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baldness</td>
<td>15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False teeth</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False hair</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.  Defects of Men</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baldness</td>
<td>17-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of teeth</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effeminacy</td>
<td>19-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blindness</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deafness</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugly noses</td>
<td>21-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwarf's</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various deformities</td>
<td>24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. DEFECTS RESULTING FROM ILLNESS</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.  Defects of Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>26-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemorrhoids</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itch</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toothache</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swollen veins</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.  Defects of Men</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blear eyes</td>
<td>28-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itch</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemorrhoids</td>
<td>30-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernia</td>
<td>31-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gout</td>
<td>32-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nose and chin ailments</td>
<td>33-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paleness</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigestion</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III. DEFECTS RESULTING FROM NEGLIGENCE OR MUTILATION

1. Defects of Women
   - Unpleasant odor
   - Mutilation

2. Defects of Men
   - Unpleasant odor
   - Mutilation

#### Mutilation

1. Defects of Women
   - One eye

2. Defects of Men
   - One eye
   - Loss of nose and ears
   - Eunuchs

### CONCLUSION

#### ALPHABETICAL CATALOGUE OF DEFECTS

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY
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 Iliad in which Thersites appears as an exaggerated caricature of the common man.

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. 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 Canterbury Tales with the lines,

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 sowes eres;
His nose-thirles blake were and wyde,
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.

macilentis malis, rufulus, . . . aliquantum ventricosus, truculentis oculis, commoda statura, tristi fronte.
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 thycke lypped,
Lyke an onyon syded,
Lyke tan ladder hyded...
Nyth that her had shaked,
And her handes quaked:
Ones had wold have askd
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 cast 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.

his totus volo rideat libellus
et sit nequior omnibus libellis
qui vino masedt nec erubescat
pingui sordidus esse Cosmiolina,
ludat cum pueros, amet puellas,
nec per circuitus loquatur illae,
ex qua nascitur, omnium parentem,...
versus hos tamen esse tu memento
Saturnaliciens, Apollinaris:
mores non habet his meas libellus.

Through all his indenency 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, II, 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 sandoris minus. Prosecutus eram viatico secedentem: dederam hoc amicitiae, dederam etiam versiculis quos de me compositi... Merito sum, qui haeo de me scripti, et tune dimisi amicissime et nunca ut amicissimum defunctum esse dolce? Dedid anim mihi quantum maximum potuit, daturus amplius, si putissent." ¹

¹ Pliny, Ep. III, xxxi.
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
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 included 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 disagreeable 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,™ blear eyes, pallid faces,

pointed heads, long ears, red hair, and dark skin. Martial
distastefully pictures the defects of the children rather than
of the mother herself.

at ille sina mare, turgidiae labris
ipsa et imago Pannychi palaestritae...
quartus einea fronte, candido voltu
ex consublime natus est tibi Lygdo...
hume vero acuto capite et suribus longis,
quae sic movantur ut solent asellorum,
quae morionis filium negat Cyrtas?
duae sorores, illa nigra et haec rufa,
Croti chor Eaui solisque sunt Garpi.

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
courageous 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.2

Cum tibi trecenti consules, Vetustilla,
et tres capilli quattuorque sunt dentes,
pestit cisadac, corn colorque formaes;
rugosierum cum geras stola frontem,
et araneorum cassibus pares mammes;
cum comparata riictibus tuis ora
Miliacem habeat crocodilus angusta,
meliusque ranae garriant Ravennates
et Adriamus dulcis eulec ciantet,
videoaque quantum noctua vident mane,

1. Cf. Persius, I, 121: suribus asini

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. 159-112. Cf. also Saunders, Catherine, Costumes
in Roman Comedy. pp. 72-6.
et illud oleas quod viri capellars,
et anatis habes orthopygium macras,
sanemque Cynium vincent osseos cunnus;

Saufeis, 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 dependent pectore mamas
aut sulcoe uteri proderar nuda times
aut infinito lacerum patet inguen hiatu...  

In III, iii, a woman's unsightly body has offended him and he requests her to bathe in her shift, and conceal her "non formoso 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;
on es et es Chione.  

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 Herculisos collis. quid Tiburis alti
aura valeti parvo tempore nigra reddit. 

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: poposit
mammosam Spatalen pro tribus: illa dedit.  

In XIV, oxxix, 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.

Mammatas metuo;...

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

Habere amicas nolos, Flaccas, subtiles, cuius lacertas amici sei cingant,
quae clune nude radat et genu pungat,
cui serra lumbis, suspis aminet culto,
se s idem amicas nolo mille librarum.
carnarius sum, pinguarius 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
salvo 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 deformatem amaseque,
res perridicula 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.

Camis aut vetulas habes amisae
aut turpis vetulisque foediores...
sie, formosa, Fabulla, sie puella es.

VIII, lxxix

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

De cathedra quoties surgis (iam saepe notavi),
pedicant miserae, Lesbia, te tunicae...
sie constringuntur magni Symplegades culi
et nimias intrant Cyaneaque natis,
emendare cupis vitium deforme? docebo;
Lesbia, nec surgas nec sedas.

II, xxix

Polla, who tries to conceal her wrinkles 1 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.

III, xiii

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 scisso nec inutile ventri,
si clara Stephani balnea luce petes.

XIV, lx

Juvenal, IX, 9: rugae
Juvenal, X, 193
Lucilius, XIII, 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 pioseque buxique.
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 caroty Philasnis and
refuses to kiss her.

Our non basic te, Philasni? calva es.
our non basic te, Philasni? rafa es.
II, xxdii

Such too is the red pate of Vassara'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, xxdii.

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, vili
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 dentes 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 solex 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, pederat?

- 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.

\[\text{sic dentata sibi videtur Aegle} \\
\text{emptis ossibus Indicoque cutreus;} \\
\text{sic quae nigrior est cadente moro,} \\
\text{cerussata sibi placet Lycoris.} \\
\text{has et tu ratione qua poeta es,} \\
\text{calvus cum fueris, eris comatus.}\]

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.

\[\text{Haros e o lligis hine et hine capillos} \\
\text{et latum nitidae, Marine, calvas} \\
\text{campum temporibus tegis comatis;} \\
\text{sed moti redeunt iubente vento} \\
\text{reddunturque sibi caputque nudum} \\
\text{cirris grandibus hinc et inde cingunt...} \\
\text{calvo turpius est nihil comato.}\]

\[\text{I, lxxdii}\]

---

1. Thus in the Cena Trimalchionis Petronius emphasizes 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 
\[\text{V: oscurbita calviores}\]
Juvenal, I, 199: caput leve 
Lucilius, XXX, 1123: calvum 
Lucilius, Unassigned Fragment 1272 
Persius, I, 56 
Petronius, 15, 4 
\[\text{27, 1}\]
\[\text{107, 8; 15}\]
\[\text{108, 1 ("superciliones etiam aequalis cum fronte calvites")}\]
Varro, Frag. 186, (gaber)
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.

In Epigram lvi 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."

In No. 1xxiv, of Book VI, he calls to our attention a resourceful gentleman who had neither hair nor teeth, but fraudulently pretends to have both.

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, I, 200 ("gingiva inermi")
Martial taunts the man who uses hair eradicator on his bald pate and accuses him of being afraid of a barber.

Psilothro facies levas it dropace calvam.
mamquid 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.

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 Sabellum.
tabes cas utinem, Sabelle, bellar

Martial: [p. 19]
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.

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

Charmenion's lispimg 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.

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

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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.

---
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 Caecilius 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, xcv, 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 "tactus nasus" of Papylus is ridiculed in VI, xxxvi, in a most vulgar jest.

Again a prominent nose may be satirised 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 has the connotation of deriding or scoffing, while polyposum refers to his wit as being actually bulbous.

Nasutus nimium supis videre.

nasutum velo, nolo polyposum.

XII, xxxvii

   Luciliius, 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.¹ The dwarf farmer is satirized in X, 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".²

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; 
XII, xiii

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 fuimus, Mancine, vocatis 
et positum est nobis nil here, praefer aprum:... 
nudus aper: sed et hic minimum qualisque necari 
a non armato pumilions potest. 
I, xli

   * , Ep. I, XVII, 40: parvo corpore
   Juvenal, VI, 306: 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 vaticium cum vernula muper,
et supra togulam luseta sedaret amus;
atque olei stillam darent enterocalicus unctor,
udorum 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 simulant 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
tomatos, horridulos, rudes, pusillos
hircosi mihi filios subuloi...

Martial registers his distaste at the thought of marriage between two gigantic monstronsities, whom he appropriately names Polyphemus and Scylla, in VII, xxxviii.

Tantus as et talis nostri, Polypheme, Severi ut te mirari possit et ipse Cyclops. sed nec Scylla minor, quod si fera monstra dorum iunxeris, alterius fiet uterque timor. VII, xxxviii

Hulking Syrians are mentioned by Martial in VII, lli, when he states that all the presents Umber 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.

qui facies sub aqua, Sexte, natantis habes. II, lxxvii

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.

Crine ruber, niger ore, brevis pede, lumine laesus, rem magnum praestas, Zoile, si bonus es. XIII, lii
CHAPTER II

DEFECTS RESULTING FROM ILLNESS
Among the physical defects satirized 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.

adonee pulchra est? immo fecius 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 
ettice the attentions of hopeful heirs. It is no sign of near 
death.

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

In a play on the word "ficosus," (ficus meaning in medical 
terminology, hemorrhoids), Martial describes a whole family, wife, 
husband, daughter, son-in-law, and grandson, as being tuberous\(^1\) 
while not a single tuber grows in their fields.

\[
\text{Ficosa est uxor, ficosa et ipse maritus,} \\
\text{filia ficosa est et gener atque nepos,...} \\
\text{res mira est, ficos non habet unus aeger.} \\
\text{VII, lxxi}
\]

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.

\[
\text{sed Phlogis ulcus habet,}^2 \\
\text{ulcus habet Primi quod tendere possit alutam} \\
\text{quodque senem Pilian non sinat esse senem;} \\
\text{ulcus habet quod habere suam vult quisque puellam,} \\
\text{quod sanare Criton, non quod Hygia potest.}
\]

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

\[
\text{respondit Glycerae dolere dentes.} \\
\text{XI, xi}
\]


2. Cf. Lucilius, I, 52, herpestica 
Horace, Ep. I, xvi, 24, incurata ulcera 
Juvenal, VI, 473, ulcus
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 in-
flamed by Apollo and not by Bacchus.

hanc tu rubentem prominentis venis\(^1\)
quotiens venire, Paule, videris contra,
dicas licebit "Myrtale bibit laurum."
\(V, \text{iv}\)

- 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 bleared eyes.\(^2\)

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

\textit{pistoris esse tertium quis ignorat,}
\textit{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)
\begin{itemize}
\item II, 52
\item Sat. I, III, 25
\item V, 30
\item V, 49
\end{itemize}

Juvenal, I, 130
Lucilius, V, 217
Persius, I, 79 and V, 77
Petronius, 28, 5
\begin{itemize}
\item 64, 6
\item 132, 14
\end{itemize}
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 dodrantes nuper tibi, Quinte, volubat
lippus Hylas, luscus vult dare dimidium.
accipe 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 sulphuratae 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 libidinibus.

XIV, xxiii

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, ride quasi barbara verba
et dixi ficos, Caeciliane, iubes.
dicamus ficos, qua seimus in arbore nasci,
dicamus ficos, Caeciliane, tuos.

I, lxxi

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

Gestari junetis nisi desinis, Hedyle, capris,
qui modo ficos 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 sume veredi; nam solet a nudo surgere ficus 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 rusticus atque sectat, hoc ratus antiquos saecrorum poscere ritus talibus et fibris numina prisca colit. sic, modo qui tuseus fueras, num Gallus haruspex, dum ingulas 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.

Entrecalarum ferat 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 secat enteroelas
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 enteroelicus unctor.

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

Desisor Fabianus hirsearum
omnes quem modo olei timebant
dicentem tumidas in hydroelas
quantum nec duo dicerant Catulli,
in thermis subito Neronianis
vidit se miser et tacere coepit.

XII, lxxxiv

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" which affects the feet, or from "cheragra" 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, Flaccus, laborat.
sed nil patrono porrigit: haec cheragras est.

I, xix

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."

ecepit fingere Caalius podagram.
quam dum volit nimirum adprobare veram
et sanas limit obligatque plantas
inceditque gradu laborioso,
(quantum cura potest et ars doloris!) desit fingere Caalius podagram.

VII, xxxix

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.

tortorem metuas? podagra cheragraque secatur
Gaius et mallet verbera mille pati.

IX, xiii

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.

non ulcus acre pusulaeae lucantes,
nec triste mentum, sordideque lichenes
nec labra pingui delicuta cerato,
nec congelati gutta proderit nasi.

XI, xvi

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, lxxv

Through employing a play on the word "pallet" 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 cutes 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.

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

1. Cf. Album Horace, Sat. II, II, 21
   Persius, III, 94 pallor infermus
   I, 26 pallor infermus
   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", 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, omnibus, 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 XII, 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 hic est, sulpureusque color carnificesque pedes.

---

1. Cf. Lucilius, XVIII or XXII, 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, xiii, 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

¹ Cf. Horace, Sat. I, IV, 92 oleat hircum
   Petronius, 34, 5 putidissimi

² Cf. also Lucilius, III, 130 (acidos exhalas)
   Persius, III, 68, (gravis halitus) 99, (sulpureas exhalante nefites)
   Petronius, 9, 6, (ne spiritus quidem purus)
redoubled. The drugs discolor her teeth.\(^1\)

Ne gravis hesterno fragres, Foscennia, vino, pastillos Cosmi luxuriosa voras.  
ista limunt dentes ientacula, sed nihil opstatt,  
extremo ruetus cum venit a barathro.  
quid quod olet gravius mixtum diapasmate virus  
atque duplex animae longius exit odor?  
notas ergo nimis fraudes depransaque 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 feterente merce qui credit Acerram,  
fallitur: in lucem 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 un-  
pleasant odors.

Quod sicceae redolet palus lacunae,  
crudarum nebulae quod Albularum,  
piscinae vetus aura quos marinae,  
quod pressa piger hircus in capella,  
lassi bardaious quod avocati,  
quod bis murice vellus inquinatum,  
quod ieiunia sabbatariorum,  
aeaeo quod anhalitus reorum,  
quod spuresae moriens lucerna Ledae,  
quod concrata faecce de Sabina,  
quod volpis fuga, vipersae eubile,  
mallem quam quod oles olere, Bassa.

IV, iv

---

1. Cf. Petronius 124, 274, (seabra rubigine dentes), 64, 6 (sordidissimis dentibus)
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.

Ten male Thais olet quam non fullenis avari testa vetus media sed modo fracta via, non ab amore recens hircus, non ora leonis, non detracta cani Transtiberina cutis, pullus abortivo nec cum putrescit in ovo, amphora corrupto nec vitata garo. virus ut hoc alio fallax permutet odore, deposita quotiens balnea veste petit, psilothro vires cot acida lateb oblita creta 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.

Auriculam Mario graviter miraris clare. tu facias hocos garris, Nestor, in auriculam.

In X, 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 XII, Martial reviles a man who corrupts young boys and makes them acquire a goatish odor.

inde tragus calaresque pili mirandaque matri barba,

XII, 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.

Os male causidecis et dicis olere poetis.
sefalatorii, Zoile, peius olet.

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.

Pediedonibus os olere dicis.
quid te credis olere --?

XII, lxxxv

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

quod bucca est vetuli disax 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.

Vicina in ipsum silva descendat focum
infante cinotum sordido; 1

I, xlv

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.

\[
\text{qui cana putrisque} \\
\text{stat coma et in pectus sordida barba cadit,} \\
\text{IV, liii}
\]

In VI, lvii, the bald Phoeus 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.

\[
\text{Zoile, quid solium subluto podice perdis?} \\
\text{spurcius ut fiat, Zoile, merge caput.} \\
\text{II, xlii}
\]

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

\[
\text{ecco iterum nigros conrodit lividos unguis.} \\
\text{IV, xxvii}
\]

Martial derides the scowl and unkempt hair\(^2\) of a man who was wed only yesterday.

\[
\text{aspicis incomptis illum, Deciane, capillis,} \\
\text{I, xxiv}
\]

Pannychus prates of all the schools of philosophy, whose leaders were dirty\(^3\) 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.

Democritus, Zenonas inexplicitosque Platonas
quidquid et hirsutis squalis imaginibus,...
IX, xlvii

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 satis
horrida, sed mens est, Pannyche, volsa tibi.
II, xxxvi

- 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 baso te, Philaeni? lusca es.
II, xxxiii

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

"Thaida Quintus amat." "Quam Thaida?" "Thaida
luscem."
unum oculum Thais non habet, ille duos.

   X, 228
   Persius, I, 128
   V, 186
   Varro, Frag. 12, (luscinia)
   Cf. Ennius, Unplaced Frag. 25-6 (eclites)
   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 Lycuris loves a youth as handsome as the cup-bearer of Zeus from Ilum, Ganymede. Martial comments on how well the one-eyed sees.

Iliaco similam puerum, Faustine, ministro
lusce Lycuris 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, lxixii

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

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

Defects of Man

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, eunus lippa sub adtrita fronte lasuma 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 XI, 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 fodiam digito qui superest oculum:

Thais' lover of III, viii, lacked two eyes, duos oculos. In V, xiv, Naevius 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

the lake at Baine.

\[ \text{raptis luminibus repente caecus} \\
\text{captum non potuit videre piscem...} \]

\[ \text{IV, xxx} \]

Various mutilations and accidents are mentioned by Martial.

In II, lxxviii, 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.

\[ \text{Fuscristi miserum, marit, monechum,} \\
\text{et se, qui fuerant prius, requirunt} \\
\text{trunae naribus auribusque voltus.} \\
\text{credies te satis ess esse vindicatum?} \]

In XI, lxxxiv, Martial jestingly describes the scars\(^2\) that the rough barber Antiochus leaves on his skin as comparable to those made by a wrathful wife with her formidable finger nails.

\[ \text{haec quaeque meo numeratis stigmata mento,} \\
\text{in vetuli paulae qualia fronte sedent,} \\
\text{non iracundis fecit gravis unguibus uxor:} \\
\text{Antiochi ferrum est et sceleca manus.} \]

In the same epigram the broken bones of a workman’s hand are referred to.\(^3\)

Frequent mention is made of eunuchs\(^4\) (spadones), who were

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Sat. II, iii 44  
Varro F. 12

2. Cf. Lucilius, XXVII, 743 cieatrix  
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.

\[ \text{sic, modo qui Tusceus fueras, nunc Gallus aruspex, dum ingulas hircum, factus es ipse easper.} \]

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

\[ \text{Quid de te, Line, suspicetur uxor et qua parte velit pudiciorem, cartis indicis} \]
\[ \text{satis probavit, custodam tibi quae dedit spadonem. nil nasutius has maligniusque.} \]

II, liv

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

\[ \text{Spadone cum sis eviratior fluxo, et concubino molior Calacaceo, quem sectus ululat matris et idaeae Gallus,} \]

V, xli

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

\[ \text{Cur tantum eunochos habeat tua Caelia, quaeris, Pannyche? volt futui Caelia nec parere.} \]

VI, lxvii

\[ \text{Omnes eunochos habeat Almo, nec arrigit ipse, Et queritur, pariat quod sua Polla nihil.} \]

IX, xxi.

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1. Cf. also VI, ii; VI, xxxix; VIII, lxiv; X, li; XI, lxxv; X, lxxd.
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 irrepressible 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, xx, and II, xxi, 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, lvii, and XII, lix, 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, lxxiiii, or at sexual perverts such as are found in XI, xxi 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, xxxii, 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, xcv,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

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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
Vetustinae quandam, su jus nomen a vetustate deducit,
quae in extrema senectute virum quaerebat; estque
totum id epigrammata hyperbolicum, ut moris est
huic poetae. 1

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

Nomen illus (Zoilus) usurpabatur ad designandum saepius invidum,
saepe quoque modo improbum et fugiendum virum, sax 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
Philaeisius always weeps with one eye, or in III, xxviii, which presents

2. p. 48, Vol. III
3. Cf. also II, lii; 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, un-
doubtedly 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 approx-
imately 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, lxxii, 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, li, 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, xxxii; XII, lxx; II, xxxii; II, xxxi;
   III, vii; X, xxxvii; III, xxxii.
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 Philaeis 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

1. Cf. also II, lxxxii; XI, lx; I, xxvii; XI, xxi.

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, xcvi
acuto capite
   VI, xxxix
aegrum dentem
   X, lvi
albus
   I, lv
anotis orthopygium macrae
   III, xci
araneorum cassibus pares mammam
   III, xci
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

cacca
 IV, li
 XII, xxii

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

calva
 II, xxxii

calva mordida
 VI, lvii

calvae
 V, xlix
 X, lxxvii
 XII, xliv

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, xcvi
   IX, xci

clune nudo
   XI, c

comis emptis
   XII, xxiii

congelati gutta nasi
   XI, xcvi

crine ruber
   XII, liv

crude
   IV, xlix

crura simulenta quae cornua lunae
   II, xxxv

crura pilis
   II, xxxvi

crus colorque formicae
   III, xci

deformia anusque
   VII, lxxv

dentata...emptis
   I, lxxiii

dentes nocte reponas
   IX, xxxvii

dentibus emptis
   XII, xxiii

dexiocholus
   XII, lix

dolere dentes
   XI, xl
dolent capilli
    XII, lxxxix

duas oculos non habet
    III, viii

emptos dentes
    XIV, lvi

enterocellarum
    X, lvi

enterocelas
    XI, lxxxiv

enterocelicus
    XII, lxx

eunochos
    VI, lxvii
    VIII, xlv
    X, xci

eunuchus
    III, lxxxi

exiguos capillos
    XII, lxxii

faciem sub aqua natantis
    II, lxxxvii

fiant absentes comae
    IX, xxxvii

ficos
    I, lxv

ficosa
    VII, lxxi

fictos capillos
    VI, lvi
ficus
   IV, lii
   XIV, lxxxvi

fracta ossa
   XI, lxxxiv

grandes Syri
   VII, liii

hesterno fetero mero
   I, xxviii

hesterno fragres vino
   I, lxxxvii

hircosi
   X, xcvi

hircosis
   IX, xlvii

hircoso
   IX, lvii

hirnearum
   XII, lxxxiii

Horridus
   I, xlix

incomptis capillis
   I, xxiv

indeces nasus
   II, xi

ingens hirnea
   III, xxiv

linunt dentes
   I, lxxxvii

lippa lacuma
   VIII, lix
lippum
   VI, xxxix
lippus
   VI, lxxviii
   VIII, ix
   XII, lvii
   XII, lix
livide
   I, xi
lumine laesus
   XII, liv
lusca
   II, xxxiii
   III, xi
   III, xxxix
   IV, lxv
   IX, xxxvii
   XII, lxx
   XII, xli
luscae
   XI, lxxiii
luscam
   III, viii
luscaus
   VI, lxxviii
   VIII, ix
   VIII, lix
magni culi
   XI, xcix
male olere
   XI, xxx
male olet
   VI, xciii
mali coloris
   VII, iv
mammoseam
   II, lii
mammosae
   XIV, cxcix

mollem virum
   I, xcvi

monstra
   VII, xxviii

naribus caninis
   VII, xcv

nasum rorantem frigore
   VII, xxxvii

niger ore
   XII, liv

nigra
   III, xxxiv
   VII, xii

nigrior cadente moro
   I, lxxii

nigroes dentea
   V, xliii

nigroes ungues
   IV, xxvii

nil praeter nasum
   XII, lxxxviii

nivesa dentea emptos
   V, xliii

non formoso corpore
   III, iii

non habet dentea
   VI, lxxiv

odor animae
   I, lxxxvii
olesae quod viri capellarum
III, xciii

oleret hircus
IV, iv

os oleret
XII, lxxxv

pallet
I, lxxvii

pannosae mammae
III, lxxii

parvum
XII, xciii

pectora saetis horrida
II, xxxvi

pectus cicadasae
III, xciii

periculosi menti
XII, lix

pigro ventri
III, xlvi

pinguis coma olet
II, xxix

podagra
I, xcvi
IX, xcvii

podagram
VII, xxxix

polyposum
XII, xxxvii

prolatum supercilio
IX, xxxvii
prominentis venia
V, iv

prurigine
XIV, xxiiii

pumilione
I, xliii

pusilla
VII, lx

pusillos
X, xcviii

pusillus
I, ix

pusulae lucentes
XI, xcviii

quattuor dentes
I, xix
III, xciii

querulum spirat
II, xxvi

qui superest oculum
I, xciii

rugas
III, xlii

rugosiorem frontem
III, xciii

scabies
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, lxxx
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, xlviii
sardus
   IX, xxxvii
   XI, xxxviii
tantus nasus
   VI, xxxvi
tragus
   XI, xxii

tres capilli
   III, xciii

tres capillos
   XII, vii

tres dentes
   II, xli
   VIII, lvii

triste mentum
   XI, xcvi

trunci naribus auribusque voltus
   II, lxxxiii

turgidis labris
   VI, xxxix

turpis
   VIII, lxxix

tussit
   I, x

ulcere
   VII, lxxi

ulcus
   XI, lx

uno lumine
   VIII, lxx

uno oculo
   V, xiv

unum oculum
   III, viii

vatus
   XII, lxx
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