

MARTIAL'S USE OF PHYSICAL DEFECTS
IN HIS EPIGRAMS
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PREFACE

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 satirized 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 editions.

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

φολλός ἔην, χλωλός δ' ἕτερον ποδα· τῷ δέ οἱ ὤμων
 κυρτῷ, ἐπεὶ στήθος συνοχωκότα· αὐτὰρ ὑπὲρ θέν
 φόξος ἔην κεφαλὴν, ψεδρὴ δ' ἐπερήροθε λάχρη.
 II, 217-19

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 bellied 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 werthe, 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.
 ll. 551-57

1. Cf. Plautus, The Comedy of Asses, l. 400-1.
 macilentis malis, rufulus, . . . aliquantum ventriosus,
 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 skyped:
 She was ugly hypped,
 And ugly thycke lypped,
 Lyke an onyon syded,
 Lyke tan ledder hyded...
 Wyth that her hed shaked,
 And her handes quaked:
 Ones hed wold have aked
 To se her naked:
 She dranke so of the dregges
 The dropay 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.

1. Philip Henderson, ed., The Complete Poems of John Skelton (London, 1931), pp. 113, 117-118.

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.¹ 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.

1. Walter G.A. Ker, ed., Martial Introd. p. xv

hic totus volo rideat libellus
 et sit nequior omnibus libellis
 qui vino madaet nec erubeseat
 pingui sordidus esse Comiano,
 ludat cum pueris, amet puellas,
 nec per circuitus loquatur illam,
 ex qua nascimur, omnium parentem,...¹
 versus hos tamen esse tu memento
 Saturnalicios, Apollinaris:
 mores non habet hic meos libellus.

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,² 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

1. Worcester, The Art of Satire, p. 3
2. Cf. Edwin Post, ed., Selected Epigrams of Martial,
Intro. p. xxiii.

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 candoris minus. Prosecutus eram viatico secedentem: dederam hoc amicitiae, dederam etiam versiculis quos de me composuit... Meritum eum, qui haec de me scripsit, et tunc dimisi amicissime et nunc ut amicissimum defunctum esse doleo? Dedit enim mihi quantum maximum potuit, daturus amplius, si potuisset." ¹

1. Pliny, Ep. III, xxi.

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
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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,¹ bleary eyes, pallid faces,

1. Cf. Petronius, Chap. 102, 15: labra tumore
taeterrimo implere.

pointed heads, long ears,¹ red hair, and dark skin. Martial distastefully pictures the defects of the children rather than of the mother herself.

at ille sine nare, turgidis labris
 ipsa est imago Pannyohi palaestritae...
 quartus cinaeda fronte, candido voltu
 ex concubine natus est tibi Lygdo...
 hunc vero acuto capite et auribus longis,
 quae sic noventur ut solent asellorum,
 quis morionis filium negat Cyrtae?
 duae sorores, illa nigra et haec rufa,
 Croti choraulas villicique sunt Carpi.

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 grasshopper, 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 sint dentes,
 pectus cicadae, crus colorque formicae;
 rugosiorum cum geras stola frontem,
 et araneorum cassibus pares mammas;
 cum comparata rictibus tuis ora
 Nilivacus habeat crocodilus angusta,
 meliusque ranae garriant Ravenmates
 et Adrianus dulcius culex cantet,
 videasque quantum noctuae vident mane,

-
1. Cf. Persius, I, 121: auribus 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, *Mero.*, 13; *Most.* 159-312. Cf. also Saunders, *Catherine, Costume in Roman Comedy*, pp. 72-6.

et illud oleas quod viri capellarum,
 et anatis habeas orthopygium maorae,
 senaeque Cynicum vineat osseus cunnus;

III, xciii

Saufeia, who refuses to bathe with him, is suspected of having some monstrous belmish, 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 mammae
 aut sulcos uteri prodere nuda times
 aut infinito lacerum patet inguen hiatus...

III, lxxii

In III, iiii, 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;
 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 albescere solibus audit
 antiqui dentis fusca Lycoris ebur,
 venit in Herculeos colles. quid Tiburis alti
 aura valet! parvo tempore nigra redit.

VII, xlii

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, lxi

1. Cf. Juvenal, XIII, 163: maiores infante mamillas

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.

Mammosas metuo;...

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

Habere amicam nolo, Flacce, subtilem,
cuius lacertos amuli mei cingant,
quae clune nudo radat et genu pungat,
cui serra lumbis, cuspis eminet culo.
sed idem amicam nolo mille librarum.
carnarius sum, pinguiarius non sum.

XI, e

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, Priam, 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 Melanthon.

hec tandem sita prurit in sepulchro
calvo Plotia cum Melanthono.

X, lxxvii

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 anusque,
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.

Omnis aut vetulas habes amicas
aut turpis vetulisque foediores...
sic, formosa, Fabulla, sic 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 quotiens surgis (iam saepe notavi),
pedicant miserae, Lesbia, te tunicae...
sic constringuntur magni Symplegade culi
et nimias intrant Cyaneasque natis.
emendare cupis vitium deformae? docebo:
Lesbia, nec surgas censeo nec sedes.
XI, xxix

Polla, who tries to conceal her wrinkles¹ by plastering her face with bean meal, is held up to ridicule.

Lomento rugas uteri quod condere temptas,
Polla, tibi ventrem, non mihi labra linis.
III, xlii

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 munus erit scisso nec inutile ventri,
si clara Stephani balnea luce petes.
XIV, lx

1. Cf. Juvenal, VI, 144: tres rugae.
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...
nil 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 piceique buxeique.
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 carrotty Philaenis and refuses to kiss her.

Cur non basio te, Philaeni? calva es.
cur non basio te, Philaeni? rufa es.
II, xxxiii

Such too is the red pate of Vacerra'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, xxxi.

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

Toto vertice quot gerit capillos
annos si tot habet Ligia, 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 dentes of two women.

"The teeth of Thais look like jet;
Laccania's are white.
The cause, you ask? The pallid set
Go out at night."
V, xliii ¹

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

1. Potest, Selected Epigrams of Martial, p. 174.

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.

sic dentata sibi videtur Aegle
emptis ossibus Indicoque cernu;
sic quae nigrior est cadente nero,
cerussata sibi placet Lycoris.
haec et tu ratione qua poeta es,
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.

Raros colligis hinc et hinc capillos
et latum nitidae, Marine, calvae
campum temporibus tegis comatis;
sed moti redeunt iubente vento
reddunturque sibi caputque nudum
cirris grandibus hinc et inde cingunt...
calvo turpius est nihil comato.

I, lxxxiii

-
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.

Gf. also Apuleius, VIII, 24, : calvum
" V: cucurbita calviorem
Juvenal, X, 199: caput leve
Lucilius, XXX, 1123: calvum
Lucilius, Unassigned Fragment 1272
Persius, I, 56
Petronius, 15, 4
" 27, 1
" 107, 8; 15
" 108, 1 ("superciliones etiam aequalis
cum fronte calvities")
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.

Vidissen modo forte cum sedentem
solum te, Labiene, tres putavi.
calvae me numerus tuae fefellit.
sunt illinc tibi, sunt et hinc capilli
quales vel puerum decere possunt:
nudumst 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 necesse:
radere 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 trifilem semitactus unguento,
foditque tonsis ora laxa lentiscis,¹
mentitur, Aefulane: 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, I, 200 ("gingiva inermi")

Haedina tibi pelle contegenti
 nude tempore verticemque calvae
 festive tibi, Phoebe, dixit ille
 qui dixit caput esse calceatum.

XII, xiv

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.
 numquid tonsorem, Gargiliane, times?

III, LXXIV

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, sistrataque turba,
 inter adorantes cum stetit Hermogenes.

XII, xxix

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.

Tres habuit dentes, pariter quos expuit omnes,
 ad tumulum Picens dum sedet ipse summ;
 collegitque sinu fragmenta novissima laxi
 oris et adgesta contumulavit humo.

VIII, lvii

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.
 tabescas utinam, Sabelle, belle!

XII, xxxix

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.

suspicer virum mollem.
I, xcvi

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

levis dropace tu cotidiano,
hirsutis ego cruribus genisque;
os blaesum tibi debilisque lingua est,
nobis filia fortius loquetur:
I, lxxv

Charmenton's lisping tongue was probably a fashionable affectation.

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

Bellus homo est, flexos qui degerit ordine crines,
balsama qui semper, cinnama semper olet;...

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

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.¹ Thus in XII, lxxiii, 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.

Plus credit nemo, quam tota Codrus in urbe.
Cum sit tam pauper, quomodo? caecus 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*)¹ 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 Caeciliamus 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 Salius, 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. Nasutus¹ has the connotation of deriding or scoffing, while polyposum² refers to his wit as being actually bulbous.

Nasutus nimium cupis videri.
nasutum volo, nolo polyposum.

XII, xxxvii

1. Cf. Horace, Sat. I, ii, 95: nasuta
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.¹ The dwarf farmer is satirized in XI, 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, praeter aprum: . . .
nudus aper: sed et hic minimum qualisque necari
a non armato pumillione potest.

I, xliv

1. Cf. Horace, EP. I, XX, 24: corporis exigui
" , EP. I, XVII, 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,¹ one-eyed, and ruptured.

Lintea ferret Apro vatius cum vernula nuper,
 et supra togulam lusca sederet anus;
 atque olei stillam daret 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 simulent quae cornua lunae,
 in rhytio poteris, 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
 tonsos, horridulos, rudes, pusillos
 hircosi mihi filios subulci...

X, xcvi

1. Cf. Petronius, 102, 15: "crura in orbem pandere"
 Lucilius, XVIII, 849-50: vatax

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

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

Hulking Syrians are mentioned by Martial in VII, lii, when he states that all the presents Ueber 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 faciem sub aqua, Sexte, natantis habes.
 II, lxxxvii

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 magnam praestas, Zoile, si bonus es.
 XII, liv

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 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.

adeone 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 entice 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 tubercous¹ while not a single tuber grows in their fields.

Ficosa est uxor, ficosus et ipse maritus,
 filia ficoso est et gener atque nepos,...
 res mira est, ficos 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 ulcus habet,²
 ulcus habet Priami quod tendere possit alutam
 quodque senem Piliari non sinat esse senem;
 ulcus habet quod habere suam vult quisque puellam,
 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.

respondit Glycerae dolere dentes.
 XI, xl

1. Cf. Persius, III, 63, cutis aegra tumebit.
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 inflamed by Apollo and not by Bacchus.

hanc tu rubentem prominentis venis¹
 quotiens venire, Paule, videris contra,
 dicas licebit "Myrtale bibit laurum."

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.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.

pistoris esse tertium quis ignorat,
 quicumque lippum novit et videt Daman?

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, X, 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 blear 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 blear-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.
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 blear 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 blear 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 unguis.

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 prurigne verminat auris,
arma damus tantis apta libidinibus.

XIV, xxiii

Returning to Martial's tubercous 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.

Quam dixi ficus, rides quasi barbara verba
et dici ficos, Caeciliane, iubes.
dicemus ficos, quas scimus in arbore nasci,
dicemus ficos, Caeciliane, tuos.

I, lxvi

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

Gestari iunctis nisi desinis, Hedyle, capris,
qui modo ficus eras, iam caprificus 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 secat,
hoc ratus antiquos sacrorum poscere ritus
talibus et fibris numina prisca coli.
sic, modo qui Tuscus fueras, nunc Gallus haruspex,
dum iugulas 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.

Enterocelarum fertur Podalirius Hermes:
qui sanet ruptos, dic mihi Galle, quis est?
X, 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 Alcon, whose hands are gentler even when he cuts the knotted

hernia and lops away broken bones.

mitior implicitas Alcon secat enterocelas
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 enterocelicus 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
canes quem modo colei timebant
dicentem tumidas in hydrocelas
quantum nec duo dicerent Catulli,
in thermis subito Neronianis
vidit se miser et tacere coepit.
XII, lxxxiii

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, Flacce, laborat.
sed nil patrono porrigit: haec cheragrae est.
I, xcix

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

2. Cf. Horace, Ep. I, I, 31 cheragra; Petronius 132, 14

Caelius 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."

coepit fingere Caelius podagram.
 quam dum volt nimis adprobare veram
 et sanas linit obligatque plantas
 inceditque gradu laborioso,
 (quantum cura potest et ars doloris!)
 desit fingere Caelius 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 metuis? podagra cheragraque secatur
 Gaius et mallet verbera mille pati.

IX, xviii

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 pusulaeve lucentes,
 nec triste mentum, sordidique lichenes
 nec labra pingui delibuta cerato,
 nec congelati gutta proderit nasi.

XI, xviii

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 invisio 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 blear-eyed.

hinc menti dominus periculosi,
hinc dexiochulus, inde lippus...
XII, lix

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 infernus
 Apuleius, X, 10 "

2. Cf. *Horace*, *Epistles*, I, xix, 28.

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, xl, 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 inutiles 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 XXIX, 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, xxiii, 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 breath² is

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

2. Cf. also Lucilius, III, 130 (acidus exhalas)
Persius, III, 88, (gravis halitus) 99, (sulpureas
exhalante nefites)
Petronius, 9, 6, (ne spiritus quidem purus)

redoubled. The drugs discolor her teeth.¹

Ne gravis hesterno fragres, Fescennia, vino,
 pastillos Cosmi luxuriosa voras.
 ista linunt dentes ientacula, sed nihil opstatt,
 extremo ructus cum venit a barathro.
 quid quod olet gravius mixtum diapasmate virus
 atque duplex animae longius exit odor?
 notas ergo nimis fraudes deprensaque furta
 iam tollas et sis ebria 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 fetere mero qui credit Acerram,
 fallitur. inluces 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.

Quod siceae redolet palus lacunae,
 crudarum nebulae quod Albularum,
 piscinae vetus aura quos marinae,
 quod pressa piger hircus in capella,
 lassi bardaicus quod evocati,
 quod bis murice vellus inquinatum,
 quod ieiunia sabbatariorum,
 maestorum quod anhelitus reorum,
 quod spurcae moriens lucerna Ladae,
 quod ceromata faece de Sabina,
 quod volpis fuga, viperæ cubile,
 malleum quam quod oles olere, Bassa.

IV, iv

1. Cf. Petronius 124, 274, (scabra 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.

Tam male 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 cum putrescit in ovo,
 amphora corrupto nec vitata garo.
 virus ut hoc alio fallax permutet odore,
 deposita quotiens balnea veste petit,
 psilothro viret aut acida latet oblita creta
 aut tegitur pingui terque quaterque faba.
 cum bene se tutam per fraudes mille putavit,
 omnia cum fecit, Thaida Thais olet.
 VI, xviii

- Defects of Men -

Men seem to have smelled as bad as the women and to have been much filthier. In III, xviii, 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 olere.
 tu facis hoc: garris, Nestor, in auriculam.

In X, xviii, 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 subulei.

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

inde tragus celeresque pili mirandaque matri
barba,

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.

Os male cauidicis et dicis olere poetis.
sed fallatori, 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.

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

XII, lxxxv

In I, xli, 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 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.

Vicina in ipsum silva descendet focum
infante cinctum sordido;¹

I, XLIX

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.

cui sana 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 pedice perdis?
spureius¹ 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.

ecce iterum nigros conrodit lividus unguis.
IV, xxvii

Martial derides the scowl and unkempt hair² 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 dirty³ and hirsute. He himself is evil-smelling and

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

hairy.

Democritos, Zenonas inexplicitosque Platonas
quidquid et hirsutis squalet 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.

nunc sunt crura pilis et sunt tibi pectora saetis
horrida, sed mens est, Pannycha, 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 basio te, Philaeni? lusca¹ es.
II, xxxiii

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

"Thaïda Quintus amat." "Quam Thaïda?" "Thaïda
luscam."
unum oculum Thaïs non habet, ille duos.

-
1. Cf. Juvenal, VII, 128 (lusca)
X, 228
Persius, I, 128
V, 186
Varro, Frag. 12, (lusciosus)
Cf. Ennius, Unplaced Frag. 28-6 (coelites)
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 lusea 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 similem puerum, Faustine, ministro
lusea Lycoris amat. quam bene lusea videt!
III, xxxix

In IV, lxxv, 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? lusea est.

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

et sit lusea 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 luseae, Lygde, feras dominae.
XI, lxxiii

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

Quam sit lusea 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, *lusca anus*. 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 lacuna patet?...
Hunc tu convivam cautus servare memento
tunc 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 Cestus.

sed fodiam digito qui superest oculus:

Thais' lover of III, viii, lacked two eyes, *duos oculos*.¹

In V, xiv, Nanneius 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 I, 227-8 *ambos peridit oculos*
Lucilius VII, 299 *oculi non sunt*

the lake at Baine.

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

Various mutilations and accidents are mentioned by Martial. In II, lxxxiii, 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.

Foedasti miserum, marite, moechum,
et se, qui fuerant prius, requirunt
trunci 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 quaecumque meo numeratis stigmata 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

1. Caecus Cf. Horace EP. I, xvii 4
Sat. II, 111 44
Varro F. 12
2. Cf. Lucilius, XIXVII, 743 cicatrix
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.

sic, modo qui Tuscus fueras, nunc Gallus aruspex,
dum iugulas hircum, factus es ipse eaper.

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

Quid de te, Line, suspicetur uxor
et qua parte velit pudicioram,
certis indicis satis probavit,
custodem tibi quae dedit spadonem.
nil nasutius hac 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.

Spadone cum sis eviratio fluxo,
et concubino mollior Celasnaeo,
quem sectus ululat matris enthae Gallus,
V, xli

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

Cur tantum eunochos habeat tua Caelia, quaeris,
Pannyche? volt futui Caelia nec parere.
VI, lxxvii

Omes eunochos habet Almo, nec arrigit ipse,
Et queritur, pariat quod sua Polla nihil. 1
X, xci.

1. Cf. also VI, ii; VI, xxxix; VIII, lxiv; X, lxx; XI, lxxv; XI, lxxx.

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, x, and II, xcii, 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, lxxxiii, or at sexual perverts such as are found in XI, xxii and XII, lxxxv. At times Martial employs physical imperfections as darts with which to crucify his victims. Vetustilla, in III, xciii, 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, xciii, 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 recognized 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 xciii 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* quendam, cujus 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, cum 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, lxxv, where Martial points out that one-eyed *Philaenis* always weeps with one eye, or in III, xxviii, which presents

1. p. 356, Vol. I

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, 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 Melanthon of I, lxxvii, 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 recognized 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, xxiii; XII, lxx; II, xxxiii; II, xxxii; III, viii; XI, xxxviii; III, xxiii.

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 Philaenis of II, xxxiii, 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, lxxxiii; XI, lx; I, xxviii; 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, xciii
- araneorum cassibus pares mammae
III, xciii
- auribus longis
VI, xxxix
- auriculam graviter olere
III, xxviii
- bellus homo
I, ix
III, lxiii
- bellus
XII, xxxix
- blaesum
X, lxv
- brevem
XI, xiv
- brevis pede
XII, liv

bucca dicax
 I, xli

caeca
 IV, li
 XII, xxii

caecus
 III, xv
 IV, xxx
 VIII, xlix
 XII, lxxiii

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, xli

cheragra
 I, xcvi
 IX, xcii

clune nudo
 XI, c

comia emptis
 XII, xxiii

congelati gutta nasi
 XI, xcvi

crine ruber
 XII, liv

crude
 IV, xlix

crura simulent quae cornua lunae
 II, xxxv

crura pilis
 II, xxxvi

crus colorque formicae
 III, xciii

deformis anusque
 VII, lxxv

dentata...emptis
 I, lxxiii

dentes nocte reponas
 IX, xxxvii

dentibus emptis
 XII, xxiii

dexiochulus
 XII, lix

dolere dentes
 XI, xl

dolent capilli
 XII, lxxxix

duos oculos non habet
 III, viii

emptos dentes
 XIV, lvi

enterocelarum
 X, lvi

enterocelas
 XI, lxxxiv

enterocelicus
 XII, lxx

eunochoe
 VI, lxvii
 VIII, xliiv
 X, xci

eunuchus
 III, lxxxii

exiguos capillos
 XII, lxxii

faciem sub aqua natantis
 II, lxxxvii

fiant absentes comae
 IX, xxxvii

ficos
 I, lxv

ficosa
 VII, lxxi

fictos capillos
 VI, lvii

ficus
 IV, lii
 XIV, lxxxvi

 fracta ossa
 XI, lxxxiv

 grandes Syri
 VII, liii

 hesterno fetere mero
 I, xxviii

 hesterno fragres vino
 I, lxxxvii

 hircosi
 X, xcvi

 hircosis
 IX, xlvi

 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, lvii
 XII, lix

livide
 I, xl

lumine laesus
 XII, liv

lusca
 II, xxxiii
 III, xi
 III, xxxix
 IV, lxxv
 IX, xxxvii
 XII, lxx
 XII, xxii

luscae
 XI, lxxiii

luscum
 III, viii

luscus
 VI, lxxviii
 VIII, ix
 VIII, lix

magni culi
 XI, xcix

male olere
 XI, xxx

male olet
 VI, xciii

mali coloris
 VII, iv

mammosam
 II, lii

mamosas
XIV, cxlix

mollem virum
I, xcvi

monstra
VII, xxxviii

naribus caninis
VII, xcvi

nasum rorantem frigore
VII, xxxvii

niger ore
XII, liv

nigra
III, xxxiv
VII, xiii

nigrior cadente more
I, lxxii

nigros dentes
V, xliii

nigros ungues
IV, xxvii

nil praeter nasum
XII, lxxxviii

niveos dentes emptos
V, xliii

non formoso corpore
III, iiii

non habet dentes
VI, lxxiv

odor animae
I, lxxxvii

oleas quod viri capellarum
III, xciii

olere hircus
IV, iv

os olere
XII, lxxxv

pallet
I, lxxvii

pannosae mammae
III, lxxii

parvum
XII, xciii

pectora saetis horrida
II, xxxvi

pectus cicadae
III, xciii

periculosi menti
XII, lix

pigro ventri
III, xlvi

pinguis coma olet
II, xxix

podagra
I, xcvi
IX, xcii

podagram
VII, xxxix

polyposum
XII, xxxvii

prolatum supercilio
IX, xxxvii

prominentis venis
 V, iv

 prurigine
 XIV, xxiii

 pumilione
 I, xliii

 pusilla
 VII, lv

 pusillos
 X, xcvi

 pusillus
 I, ix

 pusulae lucentes
 XI, xcvi

 quattuor dentes
 I, xix
 III, xciii

 querulum spirat
 II, xxvi

 qui superest oculum
 I, xcii

 rugas
 III, xlii

 rugosiorum frontem
 III, xciii

 scabie
 V, lx

 scisso ventri
 XIV, lx

 sima nare
 VI, xxxix

sordida barba
IV, liii

sordidi lichenes
XI, xviii

sordido
I, xlix

spadone
V, xli

spadonem
II, liiv
X, lli

spadones
XI, lxxv
XI, lxxxii

spado
VI, li
VI, xxxix

spurcius
II, xlii

squalet hirsutis
IX, xlvi

stigmata
XI, lxxxiv

subtilem
XI, c

sulcos uteri
III, lxxii

sulpureus color
XII, xlvi

surdus
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, lix

 uno oculo
 V, xiv

 unum oculum
 III, viii

 vatius
 XII, lxx

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