

FOUR SUGGESTIONS ON LUCRETIUS

2.114 *contemplator enim cum solis lumina † cumque†
inserti fundunt radii per opaca domorum.*

There is no word *cumcumque*, and it is utterly unscrupulous for D. Fowler in his commentary (Oxford 2002) to tell us that *fundunt* means *funduntur*. Therefore K. Müller in his 1975 edition alters the first *cum* to *quae*, which is discouraged by 6.189 *contemplator enim cum...* I propose *ubique*. *bi* has the same number of minims as *m*, and if this word was read as *umque*, then *cumque* would be the natural result.

6.800 *denique si calidis etiam cunctere lauabris
plenior †efflueris †, solio feruentis aquai
quam facile in medio fit uti des saepe ruinas!*

Apart from proposals which remove one problem at the cost of introducing another (and I mean in particular those which introduce postponed *et* in Lucretius), the available options are *et sudes* (K. Müller), which is weak and implausible, *effultus* (produced by Haber from a typescript of Housman, “CJ” 51, 1956, 388), which would go better with a dining-couch (*torus*) than a bath-tub (*solium*), and *ex epulis* (Brieger), which has nothing against it but implausibility. To me *-eris* looks like the termination of an adjective or participle in *-ens*, and accordingly, with due diffidence, I propose *et turgens*; *turgidus* appears in similar contexts at Persius 3.98 and Juvenal 1.143.

6.1195 *in ore iacens rictum*

in ore iacens Nonius 181 M, *in(h)oret iacet* codd. Lucr.

iacet rictum is a strange phrase indeed, not to be defended by Bailey’s ‘parallels’ referring to pendulous breasts and heavy eyes, nor by the passage which he quotes from Hippocrates referring to sagging lips. Ollier (“MH” 10, 1953, 57) suggests *rigens*, but both this and *iacens* are discouraged by the very next line *nec nimio rigidi post artus morte iacebant*. An easy correction would be *patens*; the corollary, as with Ollier, would be that the text of Lucretius was already corrupt by the time of Nonius.

Before he edited Book VI in 1991 J. Godwin had unfortunately read W. Richter’s treatise on the text of Lucretius; the deplorable results may be seen both here and passim. Here Godwin misunderstands Richter’s statement that the neuter *rictum* is “unbedenklich” as if he had said “undenkbar” and proceeds to show his unfamiliarity with the very author whom he is editing

(who has *ricta* at 5.1064) by asserting that “*rictum* does not exist as an alternative form of *rictus*”.

6.1231 *ubi se quisque uidebat*
implicitum morbo, morti damnatus ut esset,
deficiens animo maesto cum corde iacebat.

What does *ut* mean? “The attempt to take *ut* as consecutive is impossible” says Bailey pithily. Jacobson (“CP” 61, 1966, 156) understands it to mean “how” and translates “when each man saw himself caught up by the disease (and) how he was condemned to death”, but the shift in construction and the need to supply the conjunction in brackets condemn this. Lachmann produced from Valerius Flaccus 5.92 a seemingly unassailable instance of *ut* meaning “as if”, but the uneasiness which its appearance here creates is sufficient to justify looking for an alternative. K. Müller suggests *ipse* for *esset*, which does not really seem to help. I propose *a se*; the despairing invalid gives up because he has condemned himself to death.

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