

Commentary on the Uses of Classics in *An Old Man's Love*

Authors for individual entries are identified by their initials in square brackets, along with the year in which the entry was written or revised. Contributor names and source abbreviations are provided at the end of the document.

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Chapter 1 – Mrs. Baggett

on fate

- At the novel's outset, Mr. Whittlestaff "had during the last three months been asking himself the question as to what should be Mary Lawrie's fate in life when her stepmother should have gone." Trollope's use of "fate" here and elsewhere in the novel is notable because although it seems like an invocation of a higher power at play in human life—the destiny overseen by the Classical goddesses the Fates—Trollope also signals that the "fate" of Mary (as well as other characters) is in very human hands: those of Mr. Whittlestaff. The novel will repeatedly show how Mr. Whittlestaff's privileges of class and gender give him a fate-like power over others. [RR 2018]

tricolon

- Trollope is fond of the tricolon figure, and this first chapter has several. A tricolon is a rhetorical figure composed of three equivalent parts—three words or three phrases or clauses, often called *tricolon crescens*, meaning that the tricolon grows in impact, as in "I came, I saw, I conquered." But often too the three elements simply make something clear and easy to grasp without undue complexity.

The first tricolon comes late in Emma King's letter: "You did not like Mrs. Lawrie, nor did I; nor, indeed, did poor Mary love her very dearly." This tricolon is nicely complex: neither the writer nor the recipient liked Mrs. Lawrie, and Mary did not "love her very dearly." Mr. Whittlestaff's expression to Mrs. Baggett, "Here she is to come, and here she is to remain, and here she is to have her part of everything as though she were my own daughter," follows the same pattern: the first two elements are brief, the third one elaborated, but each is anchored with the expression "here she is to...." Again, with the same pattern in the tricolon that expands the third element, Mr. Whittlestaff asks Mrs. Baggett with impatience, "Haven't you got enough to eat, and a bed to lie on, and an old stocking full of money somewhere?" [CMS 2018]

Chapter 2 – Mr. Whittlestaff

infernial gods

- Mr. Whittlestaff's father had not supported Mr. Whittlestaff's academic aspirations and had "sent literature to all the infernal gods." Despite the elder Mr. Whittlestaff's disapproval of his son's desire to pursue a fellowship (presumably in Classical literature) at Oxford, Trollope's very phrasing of the disapproval has Classical overtones: the infernal gods mentioned recall the *di inferi* or Roman gods of the underworld. [RR 2018]

tricola

- Trollope describes Mr. Whittlestaff's sporting disposition, before and after the rejection by Catherine Bailey, with two related tricola. First, before the misfortune Whittlestaff is a moderate sportsman "fishing a good deal, shooting a little, and devoted to hunting," but afterwards, Trollope says crisply, "he never fished or shot, or hunted again." See the entry on the tricolon rhetorical figure in the commentary for Chapter 1. [CMS 2018]

Mr. Compas

- It is attractive to think Trollope is punning with the name of the winning suitor here, if only because the name Compas sounds invented. Mr. Compas is missing the double S of *compass*, which would have made the name seem directed. The Greek verb *kompazein* means "boast" (with an aorist stem *kompas-* meaning "upon boasting," "just having boasted") while the noun *kompos* is a noise that can also be a boast; thus is Mr. Whittlestaff's rival degraded (on the next page Compas is overtly referred to as "so poor a creature"). Possibly, however, the name describes the man's conquest of Catherine Bailey: the Latin adjective *compos* means "in possession of," or "having control over;" we reason that Trollope has put us off the scent by changing the vowel in Compas' name, or has made a small joke of his possession of Catherine. [CMS 2018]

- sources: OLD and LSJ

Classics and consolation

- Mr. Whittlestaff has taken his loss so hard that he silences his mother when she brings up Catherine Bailey, and then "was not seen for many hours." He intimidates others with his grief, a way for us to see his solitude. He considers murder, then suicide, then he takes "to his classics for consolation" and reads the Roman prose authors Cicero, Caesar, and Livy. Trollope calls Cicero's *De Natura Deorum* (*On the Nature of the Gods*) "more effective." It is a discussion of theology in three books, from the ancient philosophical points of view of an Academic, a Stoic, and an Epicurean, in which Cicero ultimately favors the Stoic perspective. [CMS 2018]

abstract

- The English use of the verb *abstract* reflects the word's Latin etymological components: *abs-* ("away from") and *tract* (from *tractus*, "drawn" or "dragged"). It is fitting that Trollope uses a Classically resonant word when describing how pursuits like fishing and fox-hunting cannot engage Mr. Whittlestaff's mind after his disappointment in love, but Classics can. [RR 2018]

reverend

- Mr. Whittlestaff does not speak about his mother to Mrs. Baggett, and Trollope attributes the reticence to there being "something too reverend to him in the idea of his mother" for Mr. Whittlestaff to speak of her to his serving woman. Trollope's use of *reverend* relies on the force of the Latinate suffix *-end*, conveying a sense of necessity: Mr. Whittlestaff's image of his mother *must be* revered. [RR 2018]

naming the name

- Trollope's English phrasing here recalls the use of internal or cognate accusatives found in both Latin and ancient Greek: the verb-based form (*naming*) and its object (*name*) have the same etymological origin. [RR 2018]

- While the unusual construction, for English, is worth noting here, the phrase also elaborates the force of words already alive in this paragraph. The words of Classical writers, and Cicero's theological meditations in particular, have saved Whittlestaff from "an idea of blood." While he could not have words about his mother "with a servant" after her death, yet Mrs. Baggett could herself speak of Mrs. Whittlestaff, and by such words he was comforted. The pain caused by Catherine Bailey consists in that she had given him up "after receiving the *poetry* of his vows" [my italics]. The power and powerlessness of words, their exchange, their failure and their blockage, here suggest the intense, and somewhat restrained, relationship Whittlestaff has to his emotional life. [CMS 2018]

agony, despair, pain, grief

- These are the near-synonymous nouns that tumble out of Whittlestaff's ruminations in a single paragraph as he contemplates whether to propose to be Mary's lover not her father; he imagines a recreation of the old anguish with Catherine Bailey. All of these words are Greek or Latin in derivation, and perhaps the high diction of tragedy reflects the intensity, and what feels like the cosmic reach, of Mr. Whittlestaff's pain. [CMS 2018]

great nasal prolongation

- Mr. Whittlestaff's face avoids the undesired effect of a long nose. Trollope's description gains texture and humor from the polysyllabic Latinate *nasal prolongation* after the monosyllabic and Germanic *great*. [RR 2018]

Chapter 3 – Mary Lawrie

making Mr. Whittlestaff a god

- Both Mary and Mrs. Baggett metaphorically apotheosize Mr. Whittlestaff by prioritizing his wishes and happiness. In Classical mythology we have the case of Heracles/Hercules, a mortal who is promoted to divine status upon death, and in Hellenistic and Roman history there are many examples of human rulers who are worshipped as gods. The virtual deification of Mr. Whittlestaff underscores not only the power he has over other members of his household but also their willingness to support and maintain that power. [RR 2018]

Chapter 4 – Mary Lawrie Accepts Mr. Whittlestaff

Mary as *simplex munditiis*

- Trollope says of Mary Lawrie: “her hair was dark, worn very plain, but with that graceful care which shows that the owner has not slurred over her toilet with hurried negligence.” Considering how deep and important Whittlestaff's knowledge of Horace is, perhaps this is an echo of Horace *Ode* 1.5 which famously describes the seductive Pyrrha tying up her auburn hair, *simplex munditiis*, “simple in elegance.” The poet asks what boy Pyrrha is seducing, for whom she has tied up her hair, and the poem implies that Pyrrha will leave the boy undone; Horace has learned to stay away. The specific characteristics of Pyrrha and Mary are superficially very different, but perhaps Trollope hints here at the world-shattering effect Mary will ultimately have on Mr. Whittlestaff. [CMS 2018]

- source: Horace, *Odes* 1.5.5

thoughtful and contemplative

- These are synonyms, one Germanic, the other derived from Latin (by way of French); the doubling of the idea enforces the character of one who would, “study a lady's eyes,” but also give thought to the results of study. [CMS 2018]

Chapter 5 – “I Suppose It Was a Dream”

second self

- In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle describes a friend as “another self” (*heteros autos*), which is often conveyed in English as “second self.” Mr. Whittlestaff echoes Aristotle and adapts the ancient philosopher’s sentiment to a marital context when he tells Mary, his bride-to-be, that she should “come and go now like my very second self.” [RR 2018]
- source: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1170b

resume

- Trollope tells us that Mary Lawrie “had endeavoured to resume the gift” of marriage to Mr. Whittlestaff, and this use of *resume* activates its etymological components: *re-* (“back,” “again”), *sum-* (from *sumere*, “take,” “appropriate”). [RR 2018]

Chapter 6 – John Gordon

habitation of the blest

- Mrs. Baggett’s impression of reality is presented with much irony. Croker’s Hall is heaven and Portsmouth hell, for reasons outlined, but not so called. Croker’s Hall is given a Vergilian cast, recalling the sixth book of the *Aeneid* and the isles of the blest where the shades of heroes live, whereas Portsmouth is “the other place,” beyond naming even Classically. [CMS 2018]

book of Fate

- Mrs. Baggett is committed to leaving Croker’s Hall if Mary Lawrie marries Mr. Whittlestaff. While she may consider her departure to be as fixed as something “written in the book of Fate,” Trollope makes it clear that such would be her own decision, not the dictate of a higher power. As he does with Mr. Whittlestaff, Trollope invokes the Classical Fate in a way which may highlight the opposite: the ability of humans to shape their trajectories in life. See the entry on fate in the commentary for Chapter 1. [RR 2018]

ambition

- In *Julius Caesar* Shakespeare has Brutus say of Caesar, “as he was / valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I / slew him.” In Republican Rome the Latin word *ambitio*, which means “a going around,” expressed the movement of a political candidate going about canvassing for votes; while it also could refer to striving for honor or to the darker senses of ambition, it is very much an idea attached to public life. In Trollope’s world, the range of motion for a woman is so constrained that the word *ambition*, as Mr.

Whittlestaff applied it to Mary's options (governess, or his wife) in Chapter 5, or as Mary applies it to her dream of John Gordon, seems nearly perverse. Mr. Whittlestaff comes to recognize some of this constraint as the novel proceeds. [CMS 2018]

- sources: William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* 3.2.25-26 and OLD

dreamed a dream, dreaming of that dream

- These phrases arise in adjacent sentences and contain cognate or internal accusatives, in which the object of the verb is the same word as the verb. (See the entry on "naming the name" in the commentary for Chapter 2.) Here a dream seems opposed to ambition, and the repetition makes a problem out of Whittlestaff's view that a dream is passive and insubstantial, in contrast to ambition. Both terms are Whittlestaff's, to describe Mary's experience, and as if she were then unable to do away with his terminology she tries in her thinking to object that the dream has more aspect of ambition than Whittlestaff's arrangements for her do. The four repetitions of *dream* seem to protest against Whittlestaff's insistence that Mary see her own life as he would see it. [CMS 2018]

John Gordon's fate

- At the chapter's end Trollope provides a quick sketch of John Gordon's time in Africa. We find here another instance in which a character's so-called fate is the result of human decisions and determinations; see the commentary on "the book of Fate" earlier in this chapter. [RR 2018]

Chapter 7 – John Gordon and Mr. Whittlestaff

a paternal providence, a God-sent support in lieu of a father

- The phrase somewhat over-determines how John Gordon happily imagines Mr. Whittlestaff as one who, as father-figure to Mary (not a lover), would block other suitors and preserve Mary *for* her lover. Providence and God have lent their backing to the doubly-stated paternal force of Whittlestaff-as-father, *paternal* and *father* belonging to a common Indo-European root, though *paternal* is Latinate and *father* Germanic. This linguistic variety in Trollope's narration of John Gordon's thinking emphasizes the comfort of uncompetitive, rather than amorous, feelings. [CMS 2018]

Chapter 8 – John Gordon and Mary Lawrie

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 9 – The Revd. Montagu Blake

per annum

- The Latin prepositional phrase (meaning “by the year” or “annually”) has a crisp and formal ring, fitting for the description of Mr. Blake’s clerical compensation. Compare the less elevated sound of “300 a year perhaps,” naming the amount of Mr. Blake’s personal fortune. [RR 2018]

crescit amor diamonds

- John Gordon and Montagu Blake had known one another during their student days at Oxford. When the two reconnect after John Gordon’s time in the African diamond fields, John Gordon mentions that “a man is not easily contented who has been among diamonds.” Mr. Blake responds, “*Crescit amor diamonds!*” Mr. Blake is alluding to a line from Juvenal’s *Satire* 14: *crescit amor nummi quantum ipsa pecunia crevit* (“the love of cash increases as much as money itself has increased”). After establishing the connection to Juvenal with the first two words, Mr. Blake shifts to English and substitutes *diamonds* for the Latin genitive *nummi* (“of cash”) to make the quotation suit John Gordon’s particular circumstances. Mr. Blake uses Latin literature—a staple of an Oxford education at the time—to claim and reestablish his social link to John Gordon. While this is fitting, it is also strained: Mr. Blake’s insertion of *diamonds* disrupts the syntax of the Latin by making it sound like the object of *crescit* (“increases”) rather than an objective genitive after *amor* (“love”). Mr. Blake’s repetition of his exclamation might also signal some over-investment on his part in using Classical currency to connect to his former acquaintance. [RR 2018]

- Juvenal rails against avarice in *Satire* 14—against the abstract idea of avarice as exemplified by types of people. Mr. Blake paraphrases aptly when he observes that the problem with diamonds is that the appetite grows with the getting of them, but the novel also lets us see that Mr. Blake has his own appetite for wealth, and perhaps Trollope enjoys alluding to Juvenal’s direct, vivid condemnation in his own sly satire on Mr. Blake. [CMS 2018]

- source: Juvenal, *Satires* 14.149

pecuniary distress

- Mr. Blake explains to John Gordon that Mary Lawrie’s father “died in pecuniary distress.” The use of the two Latinate words *pecuniary* and *distress* have a euphemistic effect, softening the naming of money troubles, and also enact Mr. Blake’s predilection for inflated speech. [RR 2018]

Chapter 10 – John Gordon Again Goes to Croker’s Hall

rush at his subject

- John Gordon does not feel like he can delay talking with Mr. Whittlestaff about Mary Lawrie; indeed, “[h]e must rush at his subject.” Trollope’s phrasing may recall Horace’s description of Homer in the *Ars Poetica*: *semper ad eventum festinat et in medias res...auditorem rapit* (“Homer always hastens toward the issue and snatches a listener into the middle of things”). Although John Gordon might wish his approach to the sensitive topic could be otherwise, at least it is Classically approved. [RR 2018]
- source: Horace, *Ars Poetica* 148-149

Chapter 11 – Mrs. Baggett Trusts Only in the Funds

character and action

- Aristotle says in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that a person’s actions tell the character; that is, the only means of discerning character is through action. So says Trollope here, of Mr. Whittlestaff: “as was his character, so must he act.” The surprising consequence here is that Mr. Whittlestaff cannot take the clear route Mrs. Baggett commands him to take; he must “work it through” as we say, because his character is founded on that sort of action, and thus he has no choice. Whereas to Aristotle the character is based on chosen acts, to Trollope the character is formed and thus dictates the acts which are possible for Mr. Whittlestaff, whether chosen or not. He will soften. [CMS 2018]
- source: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 4

by her means

- “He had told himself that by her means might be procured some cure to the wound in his heart which had made his life miserable for so many years.” The adverbial phrase *by her means* is equivalent to, and works like, a Latin phrase grammatically known as the ablative of means: Mary might have been the instrument, the means, to relieve Mr. Whittlestaff of his sorrow. It seems possible that Trollope’s specific grammatical reference here hints at the problem: Mary cannot be an instrument to treat Mr. Whittlestaff’s heart, since she has her own heart. [CMS 2018]

procured some cure

- Trollope’s wording here demonstrates polyptoton, a rhetorical device in which an author or speaker uses two or more words which share the same stem, in this case *cur-* from Latin *cura* (“care”). This use of polyptoton perhaps underscores Mr. Whittlestaff’s need and desire for a cure for his cares. [RR 2018]

Chapter 12 – Mr. Blake’s Good News

***contretemps* or misadventure**

- *Contretemps* is from Latin via French meaning a “mishap,” or a “delay,” a “hitch,” and in English comes to include the sense of a “disagreement.” The Latin combines *contra* “against,” and *tempus*, “time,” thus “inopportune.” *Misadventure* is a hybrid word, *mis-* being a Germanic prefix to indicate “badly” or “wrongly,” combined with Latin *adventus*, “chance” or “outcome,” so *misadventure* has a more pronounced sense of “bad luck.”

This phrase, “*contretemps* or misadventure,” alludes coyly to Mr. Blake’s encounter with Mr. Baggett in the stable, where, because the stableman Hayonotes was absent discussing the problem of Mr. Baggett with Thornybush, Mr. Blake has stabled his own horse. The two mostly synonymous words give some latitude to our interpretation of Blake’s response: a disagreement, French and humorously posh, or a disagreeable event for Blake being asked by Baggett to get him some cream (i.e., gin), or a misfortune that Mr. Blake had to stable his own horse?

The scene is a lead-in to Mr. Blake’s glorious narcissism, where he reflects anxiously on the “disagreeable incidents” (e.g. Baggett’s occupation of the stable) that might be his were he himself yet wealthier. [CMS 2018]

- sources: AHD and OED

Fortune

- Mr. Blake will receive the living at Little Alresford upon the death of the incumbent Mr. Harbottle. In anticipation of this event, Mr. Blake talks “frequently of the good things which Fortune was to do for him,” Fortuna (or Fortune) being the Roman goddess of luck. Although this is conveyed in the narrator’s voice and hence with some wryness, it seems to be reflecting Mr. Blake’s penchant for inflated, “educated” speech without ironic overtones. [RR 2018]

I wouldn’t for worlds that the train should come in

- Mr. Blake’s diction here is formal and Latinate, in word order and word choice, a nutshell summary of his education and character as a privileged representative (a cohort widely satirized not only by Trollope) of the Church of England. *Would* is the conditional mood of *will*, and *will* is used with the archaic sense of “desire” or “wish for;” Blake attaches to *would* what grammar books call a noun-clause, “that the train should come in,” with a careful subjunctive verb (*should come*)—a perfect rendition of a Latin construction. (Contemporary English might say “I wouldn’t want the train to come....”) Blake’s resort to formal diction perhaps dramatizes his anxiety about Kattie Forrester, but also hints at his pomposity, and repeats his advertisement of his Oxford credentials which John Gordon has just teased him about. [CMS 2018]

Chapter 13 – At Little Alresford

Miss Augusta Hall

- One of Mr. Hall's four daughters is named Augusta. Augusta is the feminine form of the Latin adjective *augustus*, -a, -um, "venerable;" the masculine form Augustus was used for Roman emperors. The daughter's Latinate name perhaps prepares us for Mr. Hall's uses of Latin a little later in the chapter. [RR 2018]

spem gregis

- "The hope of the flock" is a quotation from Vergil's first *Eclogue*, and it is difficult to know how deeply to read Trollope's meaning here. Vergil's opening poem to the *Eclogues* is a heart-breaker: two shepherds exchange songs which tell how one is safe on his farm while the other is being driven off the land by the convulsions of civil war, and now must leave his dwindling flocks and his home. How dire the omens and his situation are is first made clear when his ewe struggles to give birth on bare rock to twin kids, "the hope of the flock," who are destined to die. Mr. Hall's suggestion that his daughter calls herself *spem gregis*, and her reply that she has no idea what that means, might simply suggest that Vergil's phrase has stuck in the cultural milieu detached from its context, as Vergil's phrases often have. Overtly in this case Mr. Hall is teasing his daughter, who like other women of her class and era would not know Latin, and the scene conjures a jocular relationship between the father and daughter. Whether Trollope is having a bigger joke on the infelicitous quotation from Vergil we can only speculate. Perhaps Trollope finds humor in thinking of this group of women in their thirties as Mr. Hall's flock. [CMS 2018]

- The infelicity of Mr. Hall's quotation could contain elements of personal and social critique. Mr. Hall uses Latin as an expression of his individual identity and social standing, but his jokey application of *spem gregis* is heedless of its Vergilian context and so suggests that he values the gesture of using Latin over the light that Classical literature can cast on a situation. Trollope is consistently critical of uses of Classics that serve as assertions of status rather than expressions of (or means toward) a deeper understanding. [RR 2018]

- sources: Vergil, *Eclogues* 1.15 and James Wood, *Dictionary of Quotations*. London and New York: Frederick Warne & Co., 1899.

resurgam

- Because Mr. Harbottle the vicar has passed away, Mr. Blake will assume the living and be able to marry Kattie Forrester. In a questionable attempt at humor Mr. Hall remarks that Kattie "won't wish to have [Mr. Harbottle's] *resurgam* sung." *Resurgam* is Latin for "I will rise again," and here it refers to the title of an Episcopal hymn. Mr. Hall's

attempted witticism relies on a listener's knowledge of Latin; Kattie both brushes off his invocation of Latin ("I don't know much about *resurgams*") and asserts her confidence that her intended will be a good vicar. Neither of Mr. Hall's uses of Latin in this chapter proves apt. [RR 2018]

garrulous

- John Gordon calls the Reverend Blake "this garrulous young parson" at the point he recognizes it was a mistake to have told Blake of his disappointed hopes for Mary Lawrie (Gordon says to himself that he was "betrayed" into telling him). Mr. Blake's subsequent greedy and unkind competition with John Gordon for top marks in the bridal category is a display of his worst nature. The Latin word *garrulus* will describe Mr. Blake in the next chapter; see the commentary for Chapter 14. [CMS 2018]

silence and assent

- John Gordon remains quiet as Mr. Blake talks, giving "that assent which silence is intended to imply." The notion that silence signals agreement can be found at least as far back as the 5th century BCE; in *Iphigenia at Aulis* by Euripides Clytemnestra explains to her husband Agamemnon that he needn't give a long speech explaining or justifying his plan to sacrifice their daughter Iphigeneia since "being silent itself is a sign of your agreeing." The sentiment is also conveyed in the Latin legal maxim *qui tacet consentire videtur* ("he who is silent seems to agree"). Here, John Gordon's silence allows him to avoid voicing opinions concerning things he does not know about or may feel differently about. [RR 2018]

- sources: Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis* 1142 and Carew Hazlitt, *English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*. London: John Russell Smith, 1869, 337.

Chapter 14 – Mr. Whittlestaff Is Going Out to Dinner

percontatorem fugito nam garrulus idem est

- Mr. Whittlestaff, who has perfectly sized up Mr. Blake and the Halls' state of information, quotes Horace's epistle to Lollius on friendship to Mary: "Run away from an interrogator for the same man is also a chatterbox." He notes that he has taught Mary enough Latin to know what it means (contrast Miss Hall and *resurgam* in Chapter 13). The Latin adjective *garrulus* ("chatterbox," "talker") from which the English adjective *garrulous* is taken directly, is never complimentary: it means "talkative" but further connotes a general absence of judgment in the talker; the *garrulus* man will exhaust his listener with endless words and will repeat to anyone whatever he has heard. See the entries on the use of *garrulous* in Chapters 13 and 24. [CMS 2018]

- source: Horace, *Epistles* 1.18.69; cf. Horace *Satires* 1.4.12, 1.9.33, 2.5.90

Chapter 15 – Mr. Whittlestaff Goes Out to Dinner

not unsuccessfully and not unhappy

- Trollope twice uses litotes—the ancient rhetorical technique of asserting something by negating its opposite—to good effect in this chapter. When Mary Lawrie dines in the company of John Gordon, Mr. Whittlestaff, and those who know her story, she attempts to hide her self-consciousness “not unsuccessfully.” Later she declares to Mr. Whittlestaff that she is “not unhappy.” The use of litotes strikes an ambivalent note, consonant with Mary Lawrie’s own mixed and conflicted feelings about her situation. [RR 2018]

Chapter 16 – Mrs. Baggett’s Philosophy

philandering

- Mrs. Baggett describes Mary Lawrie as philandering with John Gordon. The Greek etymological components of this word are *phil-* (love) and *andr-* (man), and the English word usually refers to a man’s flirtatious or promiscuous behavior. Mrs. Baggett’s reverse usage—to refer to loving a man rather than a man loving—reflects the force of the Greek adjective *philandros* (“man-loving” or “husband-loving”). [RR 2018]

Mr. Whittlestaff and Horace

- We are told that Mr. Whittlestaff weighs what he reads in Horace’s works, pondering whether or not the poet incorporated the wisdom of his words into his own life. *Gemmas, marmor, ebur...Sunt qui non habeant; est qui non curat habere* comes from Horace’s *Epistle 2.2* (“There are those who do not have jewels, marble, ivory; there is he who does not care to have them”), and *Me lentus Glycerae torret amor meae* comes from *Ode 3.19* (“A slow desire for my Glycera burns me”). Despite Horace’s poetic protestation of love and versified praise of moderation, Mr. Whittlestaff supposes that the actual Horace cared more for wealth and less for Glycera than his writing suggests. Trollope presents a dynamic relationship between ancient author and reader here: while Horace holds pride of place as Mr. Whittlestaff’s favorite Classical author, Mr. Whittlestaff also interrogates him, questioning the relationship between fine-sounding words and lived life. [RR 2018]

- sources: Horace, *Epistles 2.2.180-182* and *Odes 3.19.28*

Chapter 17 – Mr. Whittlestaff Meditates a Journey

Mr. Whittlestaff and quotations from Horace

- Trollope directly quotes the first poem of Horace’s fourth (and last) book of *Odes*, as if his readers may know it: *Intermissa, Venus, diu / rursus bella moves? Parce, precor,*

precor. / Non sum qualis eram... (“Venus, are you starting up the wars again, left off so long ago? I beg of you, I beg, spare me. I am not the man I once was...”). Mr. Whittlestaff chooses a poem devastatingly apt for his own situation, since Horace goes on to say he is near fifty years old and is not able to love as when he was young (he is too toughened with age to bend to Venus’ “soft commands”), while he protests against Venus’ apparent urgings. The poet recommends to Venus that she go where young men of a suitable age send their prayers to her, and he even recommends one Paulus Maximus, who is distinguished, wealthy, and handsome. Horace takes a posture of desperate pleading, which is of course hopeless against Venus—he already is in love. Mr. Whittlestaff’s ruminations stop at the poem’s first line to critique Horace, calling him crafty or vain for harking back to his past life when the pleasures of Venus were right for him. But this irritation with Horace takes him to the next line, “I am not the man I once was,” and then to Catherine Bailey. Then the difference between himself and Horace and his shame at having been jilted make him pocket the book of poetry. [CMS 2018]

- source: *Horace, Ode 4.1.1-3*

poet draining the dregs

- The poet mentioned here is presumably Horace, whom Mr. Whittlestaff has just consulted and whose *Ode 4.1* Trollope has just quoted. The image of drinking to the dregs perhaps recalls *Ode 3.15*, in which Horace finds fault with Chloris, an older woman who remains interested in parties and love affairs despite her age. Horace closes the poem with the admonition, “Citharas do not befit an old woman, nor the purple blossom of the rose, nor jars drunk to the dregs.” Although Horace criticizes Chloris for interests that he finds unseemly due to her age, we have seen that in *Ode 4.1* an older Horace himself feels the pull of love’s battles. Mr. Whittlestaff here seems to be turning Horace’s critique of Chloris against the poet himself; Mr. Whittlestaff, by contrast, curtailed his romantic ambitions after his disappointment with Catherine Bailey and is again readying himself to give up his interest in love and Mary Lawrie in favor of a younger man. [RR 2018]

- source: Horace, *Odes 3.15* esp. 14-16

August, Augustus, and auspicious

- Mr. Blake recalls a connection between the first of August and the Roman emperor Augustus. The entire month of August was named in honor of Augustus, and the first of the month is the anniversary of his conquering of Alexandria in 30 BCE. The defeat of the forces of Marc Antony and Cleopatra consolidated Augustus’ power. It seems appropriate that Mr. Blake is eager to invoke Classics but doesn’t have the specifics to back up the gesture—and if he did, he might realize that a military anniversary is not necessarily auspicious for a wedding. Even Mr. Blake’s use of *auspicious* has a Classical

ring, since it refers to the Roman practice of bird-watching and prognosticating via omens. Mr. Blake's bride-to-be finds his Classical citation unusual for a clergyman. [RR 2018]

Chapter 18 – Mr. and Mrs. Tookey

fighting against the poet's pretences

- The chapter begins with John Gordon's departure to London, and in describing his state of mind Trollope tells us that Gordon's understanding of Mary's feelings is accurate, but partial, while of Mr. Whittlestaff's character John comprehends nothing. Trollope notes two arenas of Mr. Whittlestaff's struggle, Horace and Mrs. Baggett, which John Gordon would never imagine. What are the poet's pretenses that Mr. Whittlestaff fights against? We know that Mrs. Baggett defines Mr. Whittlestaff's social power as the reason for him to have whatever he wants, just as her social powerlessness means she herself cannot have what she wants; he rejects this as damnable, the teaching "by which the world was kept going in its present course" (Chapter 16). Horace too, perhaps, is too much of the world and not enough of the right. Did Horace, the Emperor Augustus' poet of the Golden Mean, ever really love a girl? Probably not thinks Mr. Whittlestaff, and he probably did "care for jewels, marble, and ivory, as much as any one" (see the commentary for Chapter 16). Horace has been one of Mr. Whittlestaff's companions and sources of wisdom, we infer, since the crisis of Catherine Bailey, but the poet specifically now arises in Mr. Whittlestaff's mind as one who also has indulged himself quite as much as the world would have it. Horace's lessons, like Mrs. Baggett's, perhaps do not "run smoothly with those of Jesus Christ" (Chapter 16), however much Mr. Whittlestaff enjoys picking to pieces the Rev. Lowlad's Christian theology (Chapter 17). The Augustan poet pretends, Mr. Whittlestaff intuits, to a philosophy that he never practiced. Fighting with Horace's pretensions, in his battle to find the just path with Mary Lawrie, seems to mean that Mr. Whittlestaff must even temper his love for his favorite poet. [CMS 2018]

gemmiferous dirt

- In his description of earth that holds diamonds Trollope creates a playful contrast between the Latinate adjective *gemmiferous* ("gem-bearing") and the more direct English noun *dirt*. [RR 2018]

Fitzwalker Tookey and Classics

- Trollope tells us that Mr. Tookey received the "education of a gentleman," which would have included the study of Classics. Mr. Tookey enlists that education and the bond between gentlemen which it presumes when he quotes an "old Roman saying" to John

Gordon: “Never be conscious of anything within your own bosom.” This seems to refer to a passage from Horace’s *Epistles* used by Trollope in other novels (e.g., *The Claverings* and *Dr. Wortle’s School*): *nil conscire sibi* (“be conscious of no wrong in oneself”). This sentiment appears in the context of Horace counseling against the valuation of money over ethics, and so Mr. Tookey’s invocation of it here seems reflective of its original context. And yet there is an irony in that Mr. Tookey is himself putting material profit over ethical considerations in trying to convince John Gordon that it’s his duty to sell his mining shares. [RR 2018]

- source: Horace, *Epistles* 1.1.61

Chapter 19 – Mr. Whittlestaff’s Journey Discussed

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 20 – Mr. Whittlestaff Takes His Journey

Mr. Whittlestaff’s triumph

- A triumph was a peculiar feature of historical Roman life, a great parade through the city of Rome to celebrate the victory of an exceptional general’s military campaign upon his return to Rome. The most familiar depictions come from writers in the late Roman Republic, in the 1st century BCE, when a triumph also indicated political power; later triumphs were only allowed to be conducted by the imperial family. The victorious general was allowed to retain his command inside the city of Rome, normally forbidden; he rode in a four-horse chariot and his soldiers were included in the procession, as well as the whole senate and all the magistrates, in procession to the Capitol. His retinue carried the spoils of war, led prisoners in chains along with animals for sacrifice, and advertised the absolute domination of a foreign land and people by this now-exalted general. So familiar a feature of life was the triumph that Roman poets often depict them to signal various modes of domination, victory, the value of public display; sometimes they also mock the practice of the triumph.

If Trollope is making any shorthand reference to this omnipresent Roman convention when he says “So far his triumph was complete,” then he is having us smile at Mr. Whittlestaff’s dilemma, perhaps at the ferocious loyalty of Mary and Mrs. Baggett and the soldier’s spirit required of him to fulfill Mary’s happiness, not his own (“a great deed,” in the next paragraph). And yet what Mr. Whittlestaff is doing has a strong heroic cast. Trollope then moves from the kindly, ironic depiction of Whittlestaff’s success in his evasion of “the two dominant women,” to note, deflatingly, that as Mr. Whittlestaff reflects on his purpose “he cannot be said to have been triumphant.” Indeed, it is a deep irony that Mr. Whittlestaff is rejecting the masculine, dominant, triumphant privilege that

Mrs. Baggett so badly wants him to deploy, in order to enact his love for Mary. [CMS 2018]

- source: OCD

robur et aes triplex

- Although Mr. Whittlestaff has the strength of character to act unselfishly, he can nevertheless be stung by the opinions of others. Trollope quotes Horace—*robur et aes triplex* (“oak and three-fold bronze”)—to describe Mr. Whittlestaff’s deep commitment to doing the right thing. Horace uses this phrase to describe the bravery of the first man to travel on the sea; Trollope transfers it to Mr. Whittlestaff’s ethical fortitude. [RR 2018]

- source: Horace, *Ode* 1.3.9

pervious

- Latin *per* (“through”) and *via* (“path”) give us the adjective *pervious* meaning “with a path through,” “susceptible to a path through.” As a prefix *per-* can also act as an intensifier, so that the force of the word’s meaning is enhanced. We know the word in the more usual negative form, *impervious*, meaning “unsusceptible (to a path through).” Trollope’s use of the unusual, positive sense of the adjective *pervious* helps us feel keenly how terribly vulnerable Mr. Whittlestaff is to these “stings” of ridicule—he is built with a path through. [CMS 2018]

his favourite Horace

- On the train to London Mr. Whittlestaff considers the point he has reached with respect to Mary and reviews the beginning when “he had brought this girl home to his house.” The novel observes that Mr. Whittlestaff had thought much about love, to be clear that he had understood the feelings he had about Mary, the flavor, “sweetness beyond all other sweetnesses.” He had thought with poets, interacted with their verses and sized up his own feelings against theirs. As we see in Chapter 18 and here, “he had told himself that Horace knew nothing of love”—he has taught himself to suspect his favourite poet, not to be so freely, maybe falsely, moved, it seems, by Horace’s gem-like verse. [CMS 2018]

Mary as docile

- Mr. Whittlestaff reflects on Mary Lawrie: “She was there living in his house, subject to his orders, affectionate and docile, but, as far as he could judge, a perfect woman.” The meaning of *docile* here seems to recall its Latin origin—“able to be taught”—from the verb *docēre* (to teach). Like the phrase “subject to his orders,” the adjective underscores the degree to which Mr. Whittlestaff has power over Mary. [RR 2018]

Pandemonium

- Milton draws on Classical languages to coin this word for “the palace of Satan,” the place (Latin *-ium*) of all (Greek *pan*) demons (Greek *daimon*). Trollope shows a sensitivity to the word’s Miltonian origin by contrasting the Mr. Whittlestaff’s current and future “misery of Pandemonium” with the “light and joy of Paradise” that a marriage with Mary Lawrie would offer. [RR 2018]

Chapter 21 – The Green Park

sub dio

- A Latin prepositional phrase meaning “under the open sky.” Mr. Whittlestaff prefers to speak to John Gordon about Mary Lawrie outdoors rather than in a men’s club. Although Mr. Whittlestaff eschews a social location that would reinforce gender and class, his use of Latin calls upon and reinforces the identity of educated gentlemen that he and John Gordon share. [RR 2018]

If I know what love is

- In Vergil’s eighth *Eclogue* a goatherd sings a song of the girl Nysa, who once loved him, has jilted him, and is now marrying another; he remembers how they met as children, in an orchard picking apples, and Vergil’s verse is urgent and quick as the goatherd sings that he saw her, he died, and he was swept up by madness. And then the shepherd says *nunc scio quid sit Amor*, “now I know what Love is,” and he adumbrates that Love is a cruel god, born in desolation. The goatherd’s song takes the pathos of pastoral love to an extreme. Does Mr. Whittlestaff in his own agitation speaking with John Gordon echo Vergil’s goatherd here? It is not the cruelty of Love nor of Mary that he laments, as the goatherd does, but still his narrative is that of the lover who loses, and here he faces the rival who will take her. Like the goatherd, as Mr. Whittlestaff knows his love, he feels its loss. And the world he anticipates for himself is just as desolate as the goatherd’s god of Love is. [CMS 2018]

- source: Vergil, *Eclogues* 8.43

Chapter 22 – John Gordon Writes a Letter

(No uses of Classics identified.)

Chapter 23 – Again at Croker’s Hall

tantalised

- Trollope uses *tantalised* to denote Mr. Whittlestaff’s effect on Mary as he prepares to release her from her betrothal to him so that she can marry John Gordon. The English

verb recalls the underworld punishment of the Greek mythological figure Tantalus, who forever reaches for fruit that he cannot grasp and bends down for water that he cannot drink. The connection to Tantalus underscores Mary's suffering as well as Mr. Whittlestaff's power. [RR 2018]

hymeneal altar

- Mr. Blake explains that he went to London to procure "a new black suit, fit for the hymeneal altar." This description of the wedding altar in terms of Hymen, the Greek god of marriage, is in accord with Mr. Blake's other Classical turns of phrase. [RR 2018]

Mr. Blake's patron

- Mr. Hall is called Mr. Blake's patron, echoing the Roman social institution of patron/client relationships in which Romans of higher and lower status were bound together by ties of mutual obligation and support. Here Mr. Blake somewhat presumptuously takes it upon himself to offer his patron's hospitality to Mr. Whittlestaff. [RR 2018]

just a few books to read

- Mr. Whittlestaff has in some sense come to this place in his life, and without Mary as a wife, in dialogue with his books, not so much directed by these writers as in active conversation with them. When he lost Catherine Bailey he filled his heart with books; if now he needs "just a few books to read," perhaps his needs for comfort and instruction and dialogue with books is simpler, and he is at peace. The prospect of a place in Italy (however idle the thought), with a few books to read, is not so bleak, we might note, as he believed life would be without Mary. [CMS 2018]

the fates seem to have decided

- See the entry on fate in the Chapter 1 commentary.

Chapter 24 – Conclusion

fixed as fate

- Mary understands that once Mr. Whittlestaff has decided not to come to Little Alresford it is a determination as "fixed as fate." Throughout the novel Mr. Whittlestaff's decisions have had a determining power over the lives of others, and here Mary sees that what Mr. Whittlestaff decides stands immovable. See the note on fate in the commentary for Chapter 1. [RR 2018]

Blake-cum-Forrester marriage

- *Cum* is the Latin preposition meaning “with,” and its use here in regard to Mr. Blake’s marriage with Kattie Forrester is simultaneously formal and playful. [RR 2018]

garrulous

- Once again Mr. Blake is garrulous, though less so, echoing the Latin quotation from Horace in Chapter 14 as well as John Gordon’s assessment in Chapter 13. Mr. Blake’s garrulity has had no small impact on the lives of the protagonists, although the trait is regarded as odious. That he is made timid by his upcoming marriage to Kattie Forrester, and that he is made quieter by it, may improve our view of Mr. Blake. [CMS 2018]

Source abbreviations

AHD : American Heritage Dictionary

LSJ : Liddell-Scott-Jones *Greek-English Lexicon*

OCD : Oxford Classical Dictionary

OED : Oxford English Dictionary

OLD : Oxford Latin Dictionary

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