

**GREEK AND ROMAN
VERSIFICATION: WITH AN
INTRODUCTION ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF ANCIENT
VERSIFICATION**

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Greek and Roman Versification: With an Introduction on the Development of Ancient
Versification by Lucian Müller & Samuel Ball Platner

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LUCIAN MÜLLER & SAMUEL BALL PLATNER

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WITH
*AN INTRODUCTION ON THE DEVELOPMENT
OF ANCIENT VERSIFICATION*

BY
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TRANSLATED BY
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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

LUCIAN MÜLLER'S "Metrik der Griechen und Römer" (2d ed., Leipzig, 1885) has met with so favorable a reception in Europe, and is in so many respects a valuable handbook, that it has seemed to be worth while to translate it into English, with the author's sanction.

Almost all students in our preparatory schools and colleges are sadly deficient in their knowledge of Latin and Greek versification, and any help whatever towards remedying this condition of things may not be amiss. Hence this translation, in which no changes have been introduced except the musical notation.

July, 1892.

S. B. P.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE kind reception of this book, which was published in the beginning of 1880 in ^{German} Russian, and has already been most carefully translated into French and Italian, of necessity spurred me on to make it still better adapted to subserve its intended purpose. Hence the criticisms, offered in the different reviews of the book, as in the "Philologische Rundschau" (1881, No. 38) and the "Revue Critique" (1881, Nos. 36 and 52), have been conscientiously considered and, as far as possible, made use of. I am especially indebted to Professor A. Eussner, who has called my attention to various inequalities in the work. The addition of an Alphabetical Index to this edition, as well as to the French and Italian translations, will please many readers.

I have not succeeded in accomplishing the desire, several times expressed, to treat exhaustively of the metres of Catullus in this little book. For these I must refer to the "Summarium rei metricæ poetarum latinorum," St. Petersburg and Leipzig, 1878, a work which has retained its popularity even by the side of the German 'Metrik,' as is shown by the continuous demand for it.

L. M.

ST. PETERSBURG, January 1, 1885.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE thought which has influenced me most in the composition of this book, is that which I have already expressed on page 101 of my Biography of Ritschl, namely, that a knowledge of the most usual classical metres, founded on a developed linguistic sense, is the most important and, in practice, the most necessary requirement—as well for the teacher as for the pupil in the gymnasium. Even among philologists there are few specialists in versification. How can more be asked of the students than is demanded above?

It is, however, a matter of great moment that this knowledge should not be simply mechanical, a mere exercise of the memory, but that it should be thoroughly understood and felt by the students, so that they, to speak with Horace, not only *legitimum sonum digitis callent*, but, as is most important, *aure*. Encouraged by the approval which has been bestowed in Germany, France, Russia, and elsewhere, upon my "Summary of Latin Versification,"—a book intended, as is stated in the Preface, for students, teachers, and philologists, who are not specialists in this line,—and by its wide circulation, in spite of the fact that it is written in Latin, I now have decided to write a treatise on the versification of the Greeks and Romans, especially adapted for the upper classes in the gymnasia. To this task I have been repeatedly urged by highly esteemed teachers.

The method is exactly the same as that pursued in the "De re metrica poetarum latinorum." Following the examples of Hermann and Lachmann, and still more that of Bentley and Porson, the attempt is everywhere made to explain the phenomena of versification from a linguistic point of view. While there may be a difference of opinion concerning the scientific justification of this mode of procedure, a question that I have discussed at more length in the Biography of Ritschl, page 100, there can hardly be any doubt among intelligent teachers of its practical usefulness for the purpose of this handbook.

The great majority of judges who are qualified to express an opinion on the subject now acknowledge that grammatical accent is wholly without influence so far as the rhythmical formation of the classical metres is concerned. My own theory, which goes much further and amounts to this, that the main object of the old poets was to produce as great variation as possible between the poetical rhythm and the grammatical accent, and that in general, in the structure of the verse, no regard was had for the accent, but only for the number of syllables, especially for the balancing of monosyllables and polysyllables, still encounters much opposition. My only hope is that after reading the Fifth Section, even my most stubborn opponents will acknowledge that this view can be put to excellent use in actual practice.

In accordance with the object of this work the Greeks principally considered are Homer, the fragments of the Elegiac, Iambic, and Æolic poets, as far as they serve to illustrate Homer; among the tragedians, especially Sophocles; of the Romans, Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Phædrus, Tibullus, and Propertius. Only occasional references are made to

the chorus and in general to the lyrical parts of the Greek tragedies, for the following reasons:—

In the first place, the criticism and metrical reconstruction of these parts is very uncertain, just as in the *cantica* of Plautus. Besides, a metrical scheme of these passages is found in all the editions ordinarily used; and although I have grave doubts about the accepted divisions, still any change in them would be dangerous without a longer argument, and polemical arguments would expand this book beyond its proper limits. Further, I am of the opinion that the teacher should read metrically the lyrical parts of tragedy, and require the same of the students, without lingering too long over the versification. Every teacher will admit that in the reading of a Greek drama in the gymnasia so many other difficult questions must be considered, that only a small portion of time can be given to metrical questions, if the reading of any particular play is to be finished or even carried to any considerable length. It is the object of the gymnasium to develop the understanding and imagination of the scholars, and to inspire in them a love and appreciation of classical antiquity, but not to make of them philologists or specialists in metre. Therefore I believe that I shall have fulfilled my duty if I succeed in bringing the students to know and understand the ordinary metres of those poets usually read in the gymnasia.

I have therefore treated especially of the two most frequent and noble metres, the Dactylic Hexameter and Iambic Trimeter (together with the Strophes of Horace), with the conviction that one who has thoroughly mastered these measures has already advanced a long way into the knowledge of ancient versification.