

**A HANDBOOK OF LATIN
HOMONYMS, COMPRISING THE
HOMONYMS OF CAESAR, NEPOS,
SALLUST, CICERO, VIRGIL, HORACE,
TERENCE, TACITUS, AND LIVY**

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A handbook of Latin homonyms, comprising the homonyms of Caesar, Nepos, Sallust, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Terence, Tacitus, and Livy by George B. Hussey

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BY
GEORGE B. HUSSEY, PH.D. (J. H. U.)

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PREFACE

THIS handbook is intended to perform the same service for Latin that some books on homonyms already do for several modern languages, notably French.

The homonyms are arranged in an alphabetical list. Care has been taken not to enter in it any group of homonyms whose actual use by the authors mentioned on the title page could not be proved. The many references that the list contains are inserted as evidence in support of this actual usage.

In such an uninflectional language as English, a list of homonyms collected by looking over the leading words in a dictionary would not be altogether incomplete. This is because English case-forms are mostly alike, and because several of the persons of the English verb are identical in form. On this account a list of homonyms, such as that contained in Professor Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*, is tolerably exhaustive, although taking into account only the nominative singular of nouns and the infinitive form of verbs. Yet there are many words such as *feed*, *dove*, *stove*, *rung*, *cooler*, *lives*, *leaves*, and *does* which are of quite common occurrence, but which would escape notice as words of double meaning if looked for under the form in which they are usually given in English dictionaries.

This is still more the case in a highly inflected language like Latin. Here the dictionary, giving, as it often does, but a

single form or a very few forms for each word, would afford only an imperfect means of discovering the homonyms of the language. Examining the nominative singular of nouns and the first person present indicative of verbs, we should arrive at but very few of the homonyms that Latin possesses. Yet these are often the only forms given in Latin dictionaries. Working in this way, we should never find such groups of homonyms as are made by the words *cūstōdī*, *māturā*, *pūgnās*, *statuam*, or *verris*. The only method of discovering the existence of such homonyms in a Latin author is to consider the entire range of his vocabulary.

In the Latin that has come down to us, by no means every word is completely inflected. This is, of course, largely due to accident. But an author may also use one member of a group of homonyms while he consciously avoids the others. Again it may happen from some cause that all the members are unused and, in so far, imaginary. These two kinds, the (1) incomplete and the (2) unused groups, should evidently not be placed in the same list with groups of homonyms whose use is thoroughly established.

This is not because they would be altogether valueless to the student of Latin. A list of the words that an author might employ, but does not make use of, may be of considerable interest. What he avoids is almost as instructive as what he chooses. But the two lists should certainly not be merged.

Therefore, beginning at p. 1 in this book, a separate list has been made of the instances where one of a possible pair of homonyms occurs in actual use, but lacks its counterpart. These incomplete, or unmated, homonyms are put at the lower part of the page and described in the briefest manner possible.

The main space above them is occupied by the regular alphabetical list of complete groups. Each member of such a group is given a separate number to distinguish it. This is followed by its case or tense, as it may be, the word from which it comes, and its translation. The translation is, however, merely for the purpose of identifying the homonym. It must not be supposed that it will exactly suit every passage in which the word occurs.

The different classes of homonyms are discussed in the Introduction at pp. xix-xxxi. The word *homonym* is there taken in its most general sense. But in the alphabetical lists this sense of the word has had to be, to some extent, restricted. To have inserted all kinds of homonyms in the lists, would have made the book too large, and not appreciably increased its usefulness. The selection that it contains is made on the lines of certain natural classes, into which homonyms fall. By this means it is thought that none of the more interesting ones have been omitted.

Class I. (described on pp. xix-xxiv), where the homonyms are inflectional variations of the same word, has been entirely omitted (with the exception of some words noticed in Appendix A., pp. 173-177).

Class II. (described on pp. xxv-xxviii), where the homonyms are different words, but derived from the same stem, has been in part listed and in part omitted. This class falls naturally into a number of subdivisions. Those that have been inserted in the list are instances where : —

- (1) A noun or adjective becomes a preposition.
- (2) A noun or adj. becomes a noun (with a different nom.).
- (3) A noun, adj., or pronoun becomes a conjunction.
- (4) A pronoun becomes an adverb.

Class III. (described on pp. xxix–xxxi), where the homonyms are derived from different stems or roots, is listed in its entirety. This class forms the larger part of the whole list and by far its most important part.

One member of a group of homonyms may be some very common word. Then only its first few occurrences are referred to in the list. The remaining ones are denoted by the sign +. In case the word is rarely used the references given are exhaustive, provided they are less than six or eight in the author considered.

The complete works of each author have been examined for homonyms, except in the case of Cicero and Livy. For Cicero the field comprises the orations only, and for Livy the earlier books (I. to XXII.). The rest of these two authors, except very small portions of Cicero, are much more rarely read. To insert the homonyms contained in them would seem to justify taking into consideration Ovid, Plautus, and others, and extending the book beyond intended limits.

In the case of most of the authors, the references are made to their books in the order in which these usually stand in complete editions. Thus the references to Caesar come first from the *Gallic War*; then from the *Civil*, *Alexandrine*, *African*, and *Spanish* in the order named. In Cicero, Vergil, and Tacitus, however, the references are taken from their works in the order in which these are customarily read. Thus in Cicero the references given come first from the four *Catilines*, then from the *Archias* and *Manilian Law*, and finally from the other orations in their order as usually edited. The references to Vergil begin with the *Aeneid*, and go then to the shorter poems; those of Tacitus begin with the shorter works, and afterward go to the *Annals* and *Histories*.

In making these lists of homonyms, it may be that the search for them has been carried over rarely read parts of authors, but if this is so it is only to render the lists more scientifically complete. Valuable corroboration has been gained from the indexes of Merguet for Cicero and Caesar, of Keller and Holder for Horace, and of Gerber and Greef for Tacitus. None of these are without occasional inaccuracies among the large number of references they contain. Nor can it be hoped that the present lists are better in this regard. Their maker will be completely satisfied if errors appear in them in no larger measure.

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