

**SELECT EPIGRAMS OF
MARTIAL;
SPECTACULORUM
LIBER AND BOOKS I-VI**

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Select Epigrams of Martial; Spectaculorum Liber and Books I-VI by R. T. Bridge & E. D. C. Lake

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R. T. BRIDGE & E. D. C. LAKE

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SELECT EPIGRAMS
OF MARTIAL

SPECTACULORUM LIBER AND
BOOKS I-VI

EDITED FROM THE TEXT OF PROFESSOR LINDSAY

BY

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PREFACE

THIS edition of selected epigrams from the first six books of Martial is intended for the use of upper forms in schools. There are two reasons why Martial should be read in these forms. In the first place, his epigrams belong to a distinct species of literature, characteristically Roman both in form and matter. Secondly, Martial throws a valuable and instructive light on the social life of Rome in the first century of our era. If these are the two reasons why boys still at school should read Martial, yet it is probably true that they should read him rapidly and without the rigid attention to detail which is necessary in studying the best classical writers. It has been our aim, therefore, to keep our notes concise, and not to fill the place of the dictionary and the atlas, but, as far as possible, to make clear the thought and point of each epigram. With this end in view a short abstract of the meaning is prefixed to the notes on each poem, but few attempts have been made to supply ready-made translation.

In the Introduction has been added a connected account of certain features of Roman life which are constantly referred to in the epigrams; this seemed better than writing short and scattered notes on the passages concerned. We have also given a biographical index of some of the proper names occurring in the text, and we hope that our general index may be of use in finding references in the poet to the many features of Roman life on which he touches.

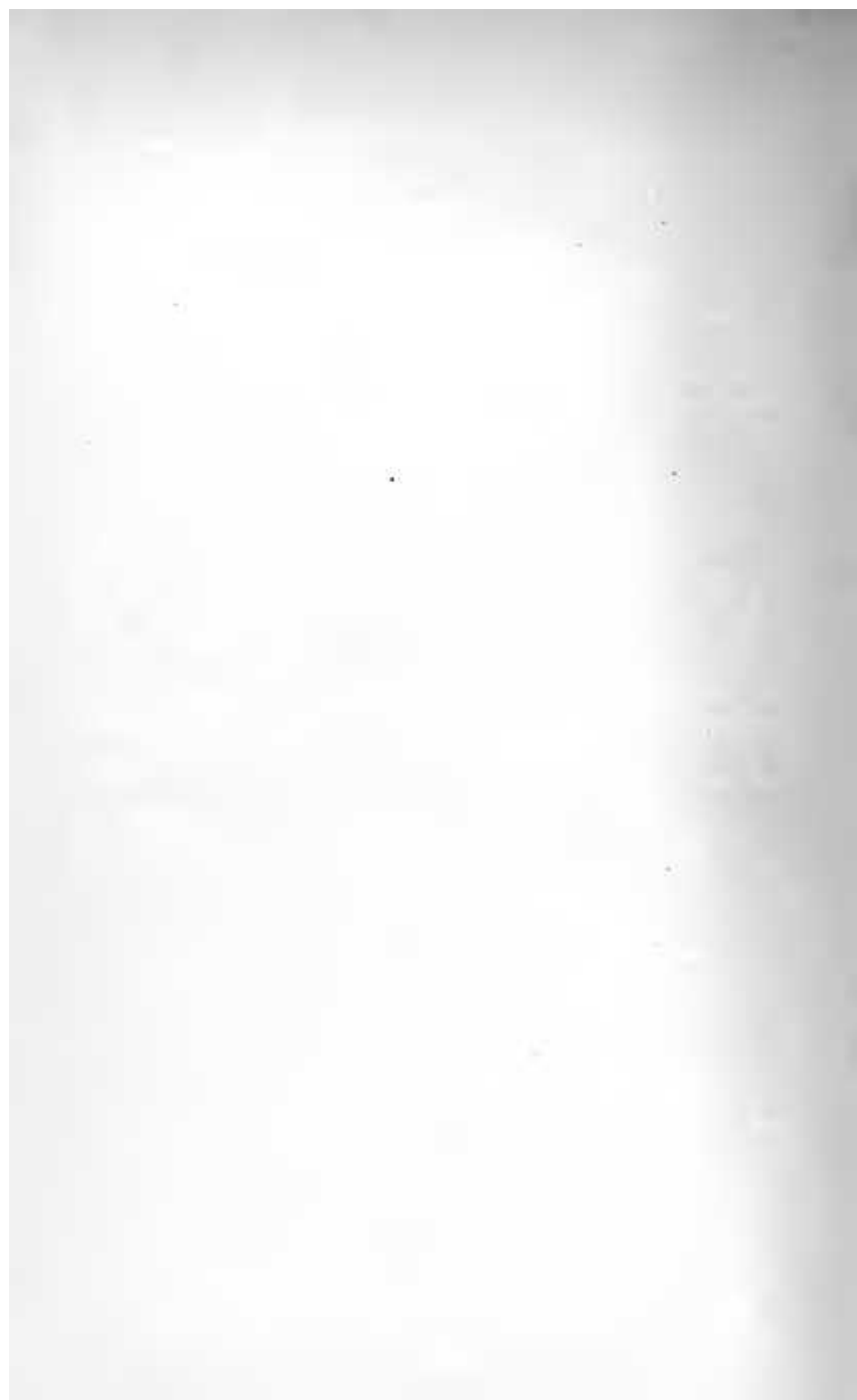
The text is that of Professor W. M. Lindsay, published in the Oxford Classical Texts, and we are indebted to him for

kindly looking over our brief sketch of the MSS. In the Notes we are under obligation on every page to the great edition of Friedländer, which combines wonderful thoroughness with an invariable appreciation of what is relevant. We also wish to acknowledge the help received from various friends, above all from Mr. H. E. Butler, Fellow of New College, Oxford, who has read our proofs and made many valuable suggestions.

R. T. B.
E. D. C. L.

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INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF MARTIAL

MARCUS VALERIUS MARTIALIS was born at Bilbilis, a centre of iron and gold-mining in Spain. The exact year of his birth is unknown, but it was on March 1 in one of the years 38 to 41 A.D.¹ His parents had him well educated in the province,² but a young man of talent was sure to be drawn to Rome, and to Rome Martial went in about his 25th year.³ Here he assumed the position of a client, and naturally attached himself to the great Spanish family of the Senecas. While the Senecas were still powerful Martial's lot was no doubt easy enough. But with the fall of this house in the Pisonian conspiracy of 65, soon after his arrival in Rome, Martial had to enter other service, and this he found much more irksome. He is perpetually dwelling on the hardships and indignities which ordinary clientship involved. But he never exerted himself to obtain an independent position by the practice of a profession, though urged by his fellow-countryman Quintilian to do so.⁴ His patrons he repaid by writing complimentary poems in their honour.

Martial first came into connexion with the imperial circle in the year 80 A. D., by publishing a small book of poems, the *Spectaculorum Liber*, to celebrate the consecration of the Flavian amphitheatre. But while Titus probably gave him the *ius trium liberorum*,⁵ he did not receive much from the imperial bounty, although under Domitian he was never weary of extolling the merits of the Emperor and the imperial freedmen. The Emperor read his poems with

¹ His tenth book, of which the poems were written in the years 95 to 98, contains one (xxiv.) written on his fifty-seventh birthday.

² IX. lxxiii. 7 'at me litterulas stulti docuere parentes.'

³ X. ciii. 7 (written in 98) 'quattuor accessit tricesima messibus aestas, | ut sine me Cereri rustica liba datis.'

⁴ II. xc.

⁵ IX. xcvi. 5 'tribuit quod Caesar uterque | ius mihi natorum' (uterque = Titus and Domitian).