

Ars poetica

[1] Hūmānō capitī cervicem pictor equīnam
[2] jungere sī velit et variās inducere plūmās
[3] undique collātis membrīs, ut turpiter ātrum
[4] dēsinat in piscem mulier fōrmōsa supernē,
[5] spectātum admissī, rīsum teneātis, amīcī?
[6] Crēdite, Pīsōnēs, istī tabulae fore librum
[7] persimilem, cujus, velut aegrī somnia, vānae
[8] fingentur speciēs, ut nec pēs nec caput ūnī
[9] reddātur fōrmae. "Pictōribus atque poētīs
[10] quidlibet audendī semper fuit aequa potestās."
[11] Scīmus, et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim,
[12] sed nōn ut placidis coeant immītia, nōn ut
[13] serpentēs avibus gementur, tigribus agnī.
[14] Inceptīs gravibus plērumque et magna professīs
[15] purpureus, lātē quī splendeat, ūnus et alter
[16] adsuitur pannus, cum lūcus et āra Diānae
[17] et properantis aquae per amoenōs ambitus agrōs
[18] aut flūmen Rhēnum aut pluvius dēscribitur arcus;
[19] sed nunc nōn erat hīs locus. Et fortasse cupressum
[20] scīs simulāre; quid hoc, sī frāctis ēnatat expēs
[21] nāvibus, aere datō quī pingitur? Amphora coepit
[22] instituī; currente rotā cūr urceus exit?
[23] Dēnique sit quod vīs, simplex dumtaxat et ūnum.
[24] Maxima pars vātum, pater et juvenēs patre dignī,
[25] dēcipimur speciē rēctī. Brevis esse labōrō,
[26] obscūrus fiō; sectantem lēvia nervī
[27] dēficiunt animīque; professus grandia turget;
[28] serpit humī tūtus nimium timidusque procellae;
[29] quī variāre cupit rem prōdigiāliter ūnam,
[30] delphīnum silvis adpingit, flūctibus aprum.
[31] In vitium dūcit culpaē fuga, sī caret arte.
[32] Aemilium circā lūdum faber īmus et unguīs
[33] exprimet et mollis imitābitur aere capillōs,
[34] infēlix operis summā, quia pōnere tōtum
[35] nesciet. Hunc ego mē, sīquid compōnere cūrem,
[36] nōn magis esse velim quam nāsō vīvere prāvō
[37] spectandum nigrīs oculīs nigrōque capillō.
[38] Sūmite māteriam vestrīs, quī scrībitis, aequam
[39] vīribus et versāte diū quid ferre recūsent,
[40] quid valeant umerī. cui lēcta potenter erit rēs,
[41] nec fācundia dēseret hunc, nec lūcidus ōrdō.
[42] Ōrdinis haec virtūs erit et venus, aut ego fallor,
[43] ut jam nunc dīcat jam nunc dēbentia dīcī,
[44] plēraque differat et praesēns in tempus omittat,
[45] hoc amet, hoc spernat prōmissī carminis auctor.
[46] In verbis etiam tenuis cautusque serendīs
[47] dixeris ēgregiē, nōtum sī callida verbum
[48] reddiderit jūctūra novum. Sī forte necesse est
[49] indicatiīs mōnstrāre recentibus abdita rērum, et

[50] **fingere cinctūtis nōn exaudīta Cethēgīs**
[51] **continget dabiturque licentia sūmpta pudenter,**
[52] **et nova fictaque nūper habēbunt verba fidem, sī**
[53] **Graecō fonte cadent parcē dētorta. Quid autem**
[54] **Caecilīo Plautōque dabit Rōmānus, adēptum**
[55] **Vergiliō Variōque? Ego cūr, adqūirere pauca**
[56] **sī possum, invideor, cum lingua Catōnis et Ennī**
[57] **sermōnem patrium dītāverit et nova rērum**
[58] **nōmina prōtulerit? Licuit semperque licēbit**
[59] **signātum praesente notā prōdūcere nōmen.**
[60] **Ut silvae foliīs prōnōs mūtantur in annōs,**
[61] **prīma cadunt, ita verbōrum vetus interit aetās,**
[62] **et juvenum ritū flōrent modo nāta vigentque.**
[63] **Dēbēmur mortī nōs nostraque. Sive receptus**
[64] **terrā Neptūnus classēs Aquilōnibus arcet,**
[65] **rēgis opus, sterilisve diū palus aptaque rēmīs**
[66] **vīcīnās urbēs alit et grave sentit arātrum,**
[67] **seu cursum mūtāvit inīquum frūgibus amnis,**
[68] **doctus iter melius, mortālia facta perībunt,**
[69] **nēdum sermōnem stet honōs et grātia vīvāx.**
[70] **Multa renāscuntur quae jam cecidēre, cadentque**
[71] **quae nunc sunt in honōre vocābula, sī volet ūsus,**
[72] **quem penes arbitrium est et jūs et norma loquendī.**
[73] **Rēs gestae rēgumque ducumque et trīstia bella**
[74] **quō scribī possent numerō, mōnstrāvit Homērus.**
[75] **Versibus impariter jūctīs querimōnia prīmum,**
[76] **post etiam inclūsa est vōtī sententia compos;**
[77] **quis tamen exiguōs elegōs ēmiserit auctor,**
[78] **grammaticī certant et adhūc sub jūdice līs est.**
[79] **Archilochum propriō rabiēs armāvit iambō;**
[80] **hunc soccī cēpēre pedem grandēsque coturnī,**
[81] **alternīs aptum sermōnibus et populārīs**
[82] **vincentem strepitūs et nātum rēbus agendīs.**
[83] **Mūsa dedit fidibus dīvōs puerōsque deōrum**
[84] **et pugilem victōrem et equum certāmine prīmum**
[85] **et juvenum cūrās et libera vīna referre.**
[86] **Dīscriptās servāre vicēs operumque colōrēs**
[87] **cūr ego, sī nequeō ignōrōque, poēta salūtor?**
[88] **Cūr nescīre pudēs prāvē quam discere mālō?**
[89] **Versibus expōnī tragicīs rēs cōmica nōn vult;**
[90] **indignātur item prīvātīs ac prope soccō**
[91] **dignīs carminibus nārrārī cēna Thyestae.**
[92] **Singula quaeque locum teneant sortita decentem.**
[93] **Interdum tamen et vōcem cōmoedia tollit,**
[94] **īrātusque Chremēs tumidō dēlītigat ōre;**
[95] **et tragicus plērumque dolet sermōne pedestrī**
[96] **Tēlephus et Pēleus, cum pauper et exul uterque**
[97] **prōicit ampullās et sēsquipedālia verba,**
[98] **sī cūrat cor spectantis tetigisse querellā.**
[99] **Nōn satis est pulchra esse poēmata; dulcia suntō**
[100] **et, quōcumque volent, animum auditōris aguntō.**
[101] **Ut rīdentibus adrīdent, ita flentibus adsunt**

[102] hūmānī voltūs; sī vīs mē flēre, dolendum est
 [103] primum ipsī tibi; tum tua mē infortūnia laedent,
 [104] Tēlephe vel Pēleu; male sī mandāta loquēris,
 [105] aut dormitābō aut ridēbō. Trīstia maestum
 [106] voltum verba decent, irātum plēna minārum,
 [107] ludentem lascīva, sevērū sēria dictū.
 [108] Fōrmat enim nātūra prius nōn intus ad omnem
 [109] fortūnārum habitum; juvat aut impellit ad iram,
 [110] aut ad humum maerōre gravī dēdūcit et angit;
 [111] post effert animī mōtūs interprete linguā.
 [112] Sī dīcentis erunt fortūnis absona dicta,
 [113] Rōmānī tollent equitēs peditēsque cachinnum.
 [114] Intererit multum, dīvusne loquātur an hērōs,
 [115] mātūrusne senex an adhūc flōrente juventā
 [116] fervidus, et mātūrōna potēns an sēdula nūtrix,
 [117] mercātorne vagus cultorne virentis agellī,
 [118] Colchus an Assyrius, Thēbīs nūtritus an Argīs.
 [119] Aut fāmam sequere aut sibi convenientia finge
 [120] scrīptor. Honōrātum sī forte repōnis Achillem,
 [121] impiger, irācundus, inexōrābilis, ācer
 [122] jūra neget sibi nāta, nihil nōn arroget armīs.
 [123] Sit Mēdēa ferōx invictaque, flēbilis Inō,
 [124] perfidus Ixiōn, Iō vaga, tristis Orestēs.
 [125] Siquid inexpertum scaenae committis et audēs
 [126] persōnam fōrmāre novam, servētur ad imum
 [127] quālis ab inceptō prōcesserit et sibi cōnstet.
 [128] Difficile est propriē commūnia dīcere, tūque
 [129] rēctius Īliacum carmen dēdūcis in āctūs
 [130] quam sī prōferrēs ignōta indictaque prīmus.
 [131] Pūblica māteriēs prīvātī jūris erit, sī
 [132] nōn circā vīlem patulumque morāberis orbem,
 [133] nec verbō verbum cūrābis reddere fidus
 [134] interpres nec dēsiliēs imitātor in artum,
 [135] unde pedem prōferre pudor vetet aut operis lēx.
 [136] Nec sīc incipiēs, ut scrīptor cyclicus olim:
 [137] "Fortūnam Priamī cantābō et nōbile bellum".
 [138] Quid dignum tantō feret hic prōmissor hiātū?
 [139] Parturient montēs, nāscētur rīdulus mūs.
 [140] Quantō rēctius hic, quī nīl mōlitur ineptē:
 [141] "Dīc mihi, Mūsa, virum, captae post tempora Trōjae
 [142] quī mōrēs hominum multōrum vīdit et urbēs".
 [143] Nōn fūmum ex fulgōre, sed ex fūmō dare lūcem
 [144] cōgitat, ut speciōsa dehinc mirācula prōmat,
 [145] Antiphatēn Scyllamque et cum Cyclōpe Charybdim.
 [146] Nec rēditum Diomēdis ab interitū Meleagrī,
 [147] nec geminō bellum Trōjānum ōrditur ab ōvō;
 [148] semper ad ēventum festinat et in mediās rēs
 [149] nōn secus ac nōtās audītōrem rapit, et quae
 [150] dēspērat tractāta nitēscere posse relinquit,
 [151] atque ita mentitur, sīc vērīs falsa remiscet,
 [152] primō nē medium, mediō nē discrepet imum.
 [153] Tū quid ego et populus mēcum dēsideret audī,

[154] **sī plōsōris egēs aulaea manentis et usque**
[155] **sessūrī dōnec cantor. "Vōs plaudite" dīcat.**
[156] **Aetātis cuiusque notandī sunt tibi mōrēs,**
[157] **mōbilibusque decor nātūrīs dandus et annīs.**
[158] **Reddere quī vōcēs jam scit puer et pede certō**
[159] **signat humum, gestit paribus conlūdere et īram**
[160] **colligit ac pōnit temere et mūtātur in hōrās.**
[161] **inberbus juvenis tandem cūstōde remōtō**
[162] **gaudet equīs canibusque et aprīcī grāmine Campī,**
[163] **cēreus in vitium flectī, monitōribus asper,**
[164] **ūtīlium tardus prōvīsor, prōdigus aeris,**
[165] **sublīmis cupidusque et amāta relinquere pernīx.**
[166] **Conversīs studiīs aetās animusque virīlis**
[167] **quaerit opēs et amicitīās, īservit honōrī,**
[168] **commīsisse cavet quod mox mūtāre labōret.**
[169] **Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod**
[170] **quaerit et inventīs miser abstinet ac timet ūtī,**
[171] **vel quod rēs omnis timidē gelidēque ministrat,**
[172] **dīlātor, spē longus, iners avidusque futūrī,**
[173] **difficilis, querulus, laudātor temporis āctī**
[174] **sē puerō, castīgātor cēnsorque minōrum.**
[175] **Multa ferunt annī venientēs comoda sēcum,**
[176] **multa recēdentēs adimunt. Nē forte senilēs**
[177] **mandentur juvenī partēs puerōque virīlēs;**
[178] **semper in adjūctīs aevōque morābitur aptīs.**
[179] **Aut agitur rēs in scaenīs aut ācta refertur.**
[180] **Sēgnius inrītant animōs dēmissa per aurem**
[181] **quam quae sunt oculīs subjecta fidēlibus et quae**
[182] **ipse sibī trādit spectātor; nōn tamen intus**
[183] **digna gerī prōmēs in scaenam multaue tollēs**
[184] **ex oculīs, quae mox nārret fācundia praesēns.**
[185] **Nē puerōs cōram populō Mēdēa trucīdet,**
[186] **aut hūmāna palam coquat exta nefārius Atreus,**
[187] **aut in avem Procnē vertātur, Cadmus in anguem.**
[188] **Quodcumque ostendis mihi sīc, incrēdulus ōdī.**
[189] **Nēve minor neu sit quīntō prōductior āctū**
[190] **fābula, quae poscī volt et spectanda repōnī;**
[191] **nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nōdus**
[192] **inciderit; nec quārta loquī persōna labōret.**
[193] **Āctōris partīs chorus officiumque virīle**
[194] **dēfendat, neu quid mediōs intercinat āctūs,**
[195] **quod nōn prōpositō condūcat et haereat aptē.**
[196] **Ille bonīs faveatque et cōsiliētur amicē**
[197] **et regat irātōs et amet peccāre timentīs;**
[198] **ille dapēs laudet mēnsae brevis, ille salūbrem**
[199] **jūstitiam lēgēsque et apertīs ōtia portīs;**
[200] **ille tegat comissa deōsque precētur et ōret,**
[201] **ut redeat miserīs, abeat Fortūna superbīs.**
[202] **Tibia nōn, ut nunc, orichalcō vīcta tubaeque**
[203] **aemula, sed tenuis simplexque forāmine paucō**
[204] **adspīrāre et adesse chorīs erat ūtilis atque**
[205] **nōndum spissa nimis complēre sedīlia flātū,**

[206] **quō sãnē populus numerābilis, utpote parvus,**
[207] **et frūgī castusque verēcundusque coibat.**
[208] **Postquam coepit agrōs extendere victor et urbēs**
[209] **lātior amplectī mūrus vīnōque diurnō**
[210] **plācārī Genius fēstīs impūne diēbus,**
[211] **accessit numerisque modisque licentia major.**
[212] **Indoctus quid enim saperet līberque labōrum**
[213] **rūsticus urbānō cōnfusus, turpis honestō?**
[214] **Sic prīscae mōtumque et luxuriem addidit artī**
[215] **tībīcen trāxitque vagus per pulpita vestem;**
[216] **sic etiam fidibus vōcēs crēvēre sevērīs**
[217] **et tulit ēloquium īnsolitum fācundia praeceps,**
[218] **ūtiliumque sagāx rērum et dīvīna futūrī**
[219] **sortilegīs nōn discrepuit sententia Delphīs.**
[220] **Carmine quī tragicō vīlem certāvit ob hircum,**
[221] **mox etiam agrestīs Satyrōs nūdāvit et asper**
[222] **incolumī gravitāte jocum temptāvit eō quod**
[223] **inlecebrīs erat et grātā novitāte morandus**
[224] **spectātor fūctusque sacrīs et pōtus et exlex.**
[225] **Vērum ita rīsōrēs, ita commendāre dicācīs**
[226] **conveniet Satyrōs, ita vertere sēria lūdō,**
[227] **nē quicumque deus, quicumque adhibēbitur hērōs,**
[228] **rēgālī cōspectus in aurō nūper et ostrō,**
[229] **migret in obscurās humilī sermōne tabernās,**
[230] **aut, dum vītat humum, nūbēs et inānia captet.**
[231] **Effūtire levīs indigna tragoedia versūs,**
[232] **ut fēstīs mātṛōna movērī jussa diēbus,**
[233] **intererit Satyrīs paulum pudibunda protervīs.**
[234] **Nōn ego inōrnāta et dominantia nōmina solum**
[235] **verbaque, Pīsōnēs, Satyrōrum scriptor amābō,**
[236] **nec sic ēnītar tragicō dīferre colōrī**
[237] **ut nihil intersit Dāvusne loquātur et audāx**
[238] **Pŷthias, ēmūctō lucrāta Simōne talentum,**
[239] **an cūstōs famulusque deī Sīlēnus alumnī.**
[240] **Ex nōtō fictum carmen sequar, ut sibi quīvīs**
[241] **spēret idem, sūdet multum frūstrāque labōret**
[242] **ausus idem; tantum seriēs jūctūraque pollet,**
[243] **tantum dē mediō sūmptīs accēdit honōris.**
[244] **Silvīs dēductī caveant mē jūdice Faunī**
[245] **nē, velut innātī triviīs ac paene forēnsēs,**
[246] **aut nimium tenerīs juvenentur versibus unquam**
[247] **aut inmundā crepent ignōminiōsaque dicta;**
[248] **offenduntur enim quibus est equus et pater et rēs,**
[249] **nec, sī quid frictī ciceris probat et nucis ēmptor,**
[250] **aequīs accipiunt animīs dōnantve corōnā.**
[251] **Syllaba longa brevī subjecta vocātur iambus,**
[252] **pēs citus; unde etiam trimetrīs adcrēscere jussit**
[253] **nōmen iambēis, cum sēnōs redderet ictūs,**
[254] **prīmus ad extrēmum similis sibi; nōn ita prīdem,**
[255] **tardior ut paulō graviorque venīret ad aurīs,**
[256] **spondēōs stabilīs in jūra paterna recēpit**
[257] **commodus et patiēns, nōn ut dē sēde secundā**

[258] cēderet aut quārtā sociāliter. Hic et in Accī
[259] nōbilibus trimetrīs adpāret rārus, et Ennī
[260] in scaenam missōs cum magnō pondere versūs
[261] aut operae celeris nimium cūrāque carentis
[262] aut ignōrātae premit artis crimine turpī.
[263] Nōn quīvis videt inmodulāta poēmata jūdex,
[264] et data Rōmānīs venia est indigna poētīs.
[265] Idcircone vager scribamque licenter? An omnīs
[266] vīsūrōs peccāta putem mea, tūtus et intrā
[267] spem veniae cautus? Vītāvī dēnique culpam,
[268] nōn laudem meruī. Vōs exemplāria Graeca
[269] nocturnā versāte manū, versāte diurnā.
[270] At vestrī proavī Plautīnōs et numerōs et
[271] laudāvēre salēs, nimium patienter utrumque,
[272] nē dicam stultē, mīrātī, sī modo ego et vōs
[273] scīmus inurbānum lepidō sēpōnere dictō
[274] lēgitimumque sonum digitīs callēmus et aure.
[275] Ignōtum tragicæ genus invēnisse Camēnae
[276] dīcitur et plaustīs vēxisse poēmata Thespīs
[277] quæ canerent agerentque perūctī faecibus ōra.
[278] Post hunc persōnae pallaeque repertor honestae
[279] Aeschylus et modicīs īnstrāvit pulpita tignīs
[280] et docuit magnumque loquī nītīque coturnō.
[281] Successit vetus hīs cōmoedia, nōn sine multā
[282] laude; sed in vitium lībertās excidit et vim
[283] dignam lēge regī; lēx est accepta chorusque
[284] turpiter obticuit sublātō jūre nocendī.
[285] Nīl intemptātum nostrī līquēre poētae,
[286] nec minimum meruēre decus vestīgia Graeca
[287] ausī dēserere et celebrāre domestica facta,
[288] vel quī praetextās vel quī docuēre togātās.
[289] Nec virtūte foret clārīsve potentius armīs
[290] quam linguā Latium, sī nōn offenderet ūnum
[291] quemque poētārum līmae labor et mora. Vōs, ō
[292] Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite quod nōn
[293] multa diēs et multa litūra coercuit atque
[294] praesectum deciēns nōn castigāvit ad unguem.
[295] Ingenium miserā quia fortunātius arte
[296] crēdit et exclūdit sānōs Helicōne poētās
[297] Dēmocritus, bona pars nōn unguīs pōnere cūrat,
[298] nōn barbam, sēcrēta petit loca, balnea vītāt;
[299] nancīscētur enim pretium nōmenque poētae,
[300] sī tribus Anticyrīs caput īnsānābile nunquam
[301] tōnsōrī Licinō commiserit. Ō ego laevus
[302] quī pūrgor bīlem sub vernī temporis hōram!
[303] Nōn alius faceret meliōra poēmata; vērū
[304] nīl tantī est. Ergō fungar vice cōtis, acūtum
[305] reddere quæ ferrum valet exsors ipsa secandī;
[306] mūnus et officium, nīl scribēns ipse, docēbō,
[307] unde parentur opēs, quid alat fōrmetque poētā,
[308] quid deceat, quid nōn, quō virtūs, quō ferat error.
[309] Scribendī rēctē sapere est et prīncipium et fōns.

[310] Rem tibi Sôcraticae poterunt ostendere chartae,
 [311] verbaque prôvisam rem nōn invita sequentur.
 [312] Quī didicit, patriae quid dēbeat et quid amīcis,
 [313] quō sit amōre parēns, quō frāter amandus et hospes,
 [314] quod sit cōscriptī, quod jūdicis officium, quae
 [315] partēs in bellum missī ducis, ille profectō
 [316] reddere persōnae scit convenientia cuique.
 [317] Respicere exemplar vītae mōrumque jubēbō
 [318] doctum imitātōrem et vīvās hinc dūcere vōcēs.
 [319] Interdum speciōsa locīs mōrātaque rēctē
 [320] fābula nūlliūs veneris, sine pondere et arte,
 [321] valdius oblectat populum meliusque morātur
 [322] quam versūs inopēs rērum nūgaeque canōrae.
 [323] Grāis ingenium, Grāis dedit ōre rotundō
 [324] Mūsa loquī, praeter laudem nūlliūs avārīs;
 [325] Rōmānī puerī longīs ratiōnibus assem
 [326] discunt in partīs centum dīdūcere. "Dīcat
 [327] filius Albīnī: sī dē quīncunce remōta est
 [328] uncia, quid superat? Poterās dīxisse. " "Triēns. " "Eu!
 " " " "
 [329] Rem poteris servāre tuam. Redit uncia, quid fit? "
 " "
 [330] "Sēmīs. " An, haec animōs aerūgō et cūra pecūlī
 " "
 [331] cum semel imbuerit, spērāmus carmina fingī
 [332] posse linenda cedrō et lēvī servanda cupressō?
 [333] Aut prōdesse volunt aut dēlectāre poētae
 [334] aut simul et jūcunda et idōnea dīcere vītae.
 [335] Quicquid praecipīēs, estō brevis, ut cito dicta
 [336] percipiant animī docilēs teneantque fidēlēs.
 [337] Omne supervacuum plēnō dē pectore mānat.
 [338] Ficta voluptātis causā sint proxima vērīs,
 [339] nē quodcumque volet poscat sibi fābula crēdī,
 [340] neu prānsae Lamiae vīvum puerum extrahat alvō.
 [341] Centuriae seniōrum agitant expertia frūgis,
 [342] celsī praetereunt austēra poēmata Ramnēs.
 [343] Omne tulit pūctum quī miscuit ūtile dulcī,
 [344] lēctōrem dēlectandō pariterque monendō;
 [345] hic meret aera liber Sosiīs, hic et mare trānsit
 [346] et longum nōtō scriptōrī prōrogat aevum.
 [347] Sunt dēlicta tamen quibus ignōvisse velīmus;
 [348] nam neque chorda sonum reddit quem volt manus et mēns,
 [349] poscentīque gravem persaepe remittit acūtum,
 [350] nec semper feriet quodcumque minābitur arcus.
 [351] Vērū ubi plūra nitent in carmine, nōn ego paucīs
 [352] offendar maculīs, quās aut incūria fūdit,
 [353] aut hūmāna parum cāvit nātūra. Quid ergō est?
 [354] Ut scriptor sī peccat idem librārius usque,
 [355] quamvis est monitus, veniā caret, et Citharoedus
 [356] rīdētur, chordā quī semper oberrat eādē,
 [357] sic mihi, quī multum cessat, fit Choerilus ille,
 [358] quem bis terque bonum cum rīsū mīror; et idem
 [359] indignor quāndōque bonus dormitat Homērus;

[360] **vĕrum operī longō fās est obrēpere somnum.**
[361] **Ut pictūra poēsis; erit quae, sī propius stēs,**
[362] **tē capiat magis, et quaedam, sī longius abstēs;**
[363] **haec amat obscūrum, volet haec sub lūce vidērī,**
[364] **jūdicis argūtum quae nōn formīdat acūmen;**
[365] **haec placuit semel, haec deciēns repetīta placēbit.**
[366] **Ō major juvenum, quamvīs et vōce paternā**
[367] **fingeris ad rēctum et per tē sapis, hoc tibi dictum**
[368] **tolle memor, certīs medium et tolerābile rēbus**
[369] **rēctē concēdī; cōsultus jūris et āctor**
[370] **causārum mediocris abest virtūte disertī**
[371] **Messallae nec scit quantum Cascellius Aulus,**
[372] **sed tamen in pretiō est; mediocribus esse poētīs**
[373] **nōn hominēs, nōn dī, nōn concessēre columnae.**
[374] **Ut grātās inter mēnsās symphōnia discors**
[375] **et crassum unguentum et Sardō cum melle papāver**
[376] **offendunt, poterat dūcī quia cēna sine istīs,**
[377] **sīc animīs nātum inventumque poēma juvandīs,**
[378] **sī paulum summō dēcessit, vergit ad imum.**
[379] **Lūdere quī nescit, campestribus abstinet armīs,**
[380] **indoctusque pilae discīve trochīve quiēscit,**
[381] **nē spissae rīsum tollant impūne corōnae;**
[382] **quī nescit, versūs tamen audet fingere. Quidnī?**
[383] **Liber et ingenuus, praesertim cēnsus equestrem**
[384] **summam nummōrum vitiōque remōtus ab omnī.**
[385] **Tū nihil invītā dīcēs faciēsve Minervā;**
[386] **id tibi jūdicium est, ea mēns. Sīquid tamen ōlim**
[387] **scrīpseris, in Maecī dēscendat jūdicis aurīs**
[388] **et patris et nostrās, nōnumque premātur in annum**
[389] **membrānīs intus positīs; dēlēre licēbit**
[390] **quod nōn ēdiderīs; nescit vōx missa revertī.**
[391] **Silvestrīs hominēs sacer interpresque deōrum**
[392] **caedibus et vīctū foedō dēterrui Orpheus,**
[393] **dictus ob hoc lēnīre tigrīs rabidōsque leōnēs;**
[394] **dictus et Amphīōn, Thēbānae conditor urbis,**
[395] **saxa movēre sonō testūdinis et prece blandā**
[396] **dūcere quō vellet. Fuit haec sapientia quondam,**
[397] **pūblica prīvātīs sēcernere, sacra profānīs,**
[398] **concubitū prohibēre vagō, dare jūra marītis,**
[399] **oppida mōlīrī, lēgēs incidere lignō.**
[400] **Sic honor et nōmen dīvinīs vātibus atque**
[401] **carminibus vēnit. Post hōs īsignis Homērus**
[402] **Tyrtaeusque marēs animōs in Mārtia bella**
[403] **versibus exacuit, dictae per carmina sortēs,**
[404] **et vītae mōnstrāta via est et grātia rēgum**
[405] **Pīerīīs temptāta modīs lūdusque repertus**
[406] **et longōrum operum finis: nē forte pudōrī**
[407] **sīt tibi Mūsa lyrae sollers et cantor Apollō.**
[408] **Nātūrā fieret laudābile carmen an arte,**
[409] **quaesītum est; ego nec studium sine dīvite vēnā**
[410] **nec rude quid prōsit videō ingenium; alterius sīc**
[411] **altera poscit opem rēs et conjūrat amīcē.**

[412] **Quī studet optātam cursū contingere mētam,**
[413] **multa tulit fēcitque puer, sūdāvit et alsit,**
[414] **abstinuit venere et vīnō; quī Pŷthia cantat**
[415] **tībīcen, didicit prius extimuitque magistrum.**
[416] **Nunc satis est dīxisse: "Ego mīra poēmata pangō;**
[417] **occupet extrēmum scabiēs; mihi turpe relinqui est**
[418] **et, quod nōn didicī, sānē nescīre fatērī."**
[419] **Ut praecō, ad mercēs turbam quī cōgit emendās,**
[420] **adsentātōrēs jubet ad lucrum ire poēta**
[421] **dīves agrīs, dīves positīs in fēnore nummīs.**
[422] **Sī vērō est ūnctum quī rēctē pōnere possit**
[423] **et spondere levī prō paupere et ēripere ātrīs**
[424] **lītibus implicitum, mīrābor sī sciet inter**
[425] **nōscere mendācem vērumque beātus amīcum.**
[426] **Tū seu dōnārīs seu quid dōnāre volēs cui,**
[427] **nōlīto ad versūs tibi factōs dūcere plēnum**
[428] **laetitiae; clāmābit enim: "Pulchrē, bene, rēctē",**
[429] **pallēscet super hīs, etiam stillābit amīcīs**
[430] **ex oculīs rōrem, saliet, tundet pede terram.**
[431] **Ut quī conductī plōrant in fūnere dicunt**
[432] **et faciunt prope plūra dolentibus ex animō, sīc**
[433] **dērisor vērō plūs laudātore movētur.**
[434] **Rēgēs dīcuntur multis urgēre culillīs**
[435] **et torquēre merō, quem perspexisse labōrent**
[436] **an sit amīcitiā dignus; sī carmina condēs,**
[437] **numquam tē fallent animī sub volpe latentēs.**
[438] **Quīntiliō sīquid recitārēs: "Corrige, sōdēs,**
[439] **hoc" ajēbat "et hoc"; melius tē posse negārēs,**
[440] **bis terque expertum frūstrā; dēlere jubēbat**
[441] **et male tornātōs incūdī reddere versūs.**
[442] **Sī dēfendere dēlictum quam vertere mālles,**
[443] **nūllum ultrā verbum aut operam insūmēbat inānem,**
[444] **quīn sine rīvālī tēque et tua sōlus amārēs.**
[445] **Vir bonus et prūdēns versūs reprehendet inertīs,**
[446] **culpābit dūrōs, incōmptīs adlinet ātrum**
[447] **trānsvorsō calamō signum, ambitiōsa recidet**
[448] **ōrnāmenta, parum clārīs lūcem dare cōget,**
[449] **arguet ambiguē dictum, mūtanda notābit,**
[450] **fiet Aristarchus, nec dīcet: "Cūr ego amīcum**
[451] **offendam in nūgīs? " Hae nūgae sēria dūcent**
[452] **in mala dērisum semel exceptumque sinistrē.**
[453] **Ut mala quem scabiēs aut morbus rēgius urget**
[454] **aut fānāticus error et irācunda Diāna,**
[455] **vēsānum tetigisse timent fugiuntque poētā,**
[456] **quī sapiunt; agitant puerī incautique sequuntur.**
[457] **Hic dum sublimis versūs ructātur et errat,**
[458] **sī velutī merulīs intentus dēcidit auceps**
[459] **in puteum foveamve, licet "succurrite" longum**
[460] **clāmet "iō cīvēs", nōn sit quī tollere cūret.**
[461] **Sī cūret quis opem ferre et dēmittere fūnem,**
[462] **"quī scīs an prūdēns hūc sē dējēcerit atque**
[463] **servārī nōlit? " dīcam, Siculīque poētae**

[464] **nārrābō interitum. Deus inmortalis habēri**
[465] **dum cupit Empedoclēs, ārdentem frīgidus Aetnam**
[466] **īnsiluit. Sit jūs liceatque perīre poētīs;**
[467] **invītum quī servat, idem facit occīdentī.**
[468] **Nec semel hoc fēcit nec, sī retractus erit, jam**
[469] **fiet homō et pōnet fāmōsae mortis amōrem.**
[470] **Nec satis appāret cūr versūs factitet, utrum**
[471] **mīnxit in patriōs cinerēs, an trīste bidental**
[472] **mōverit incestus; certē furit, ac velut ursus,**
[473] **objectōs caveae valuit sī frangere clātrōs,**
[474] **indoctum doctumque fugat recitātor acerbus;**
[475] **quem vērō arripuit, tenet occīditque legendō,**
[476] **nōn missūra cutem nisi plēna cruōris hirūdō.**