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Repraesentatio Temporum in the *Oratio Obliqua* of Caesar

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PRONUNCIATION OF Δ, Θ, ΟΙ, AND THE ASPIRATE.

IN Astypalaea the local pronunciation of δ is dz, and of θ a true dental t, not cerebral, followed by a distinct aspirate (= Sanskrit th). θ is thus pronounced, not only before a vowel, where it is easy (as in θέλει) but before a consonant (as in άνθρωπος). The initial aspirate is also heard sometimes at the beginning of a phrase (as in ὦρα καλή), and occasionally where it should not be (as in the phrase ἀπὸ δῶ, ἀπὸ κεῖ 'this way and that way'). The last peculiarity I have heard in Patmos and elsewhere; it is sporadic, and is not realized by the speakers. I have not heard dz=ζ or th=θ anywhere else, and was not prepared to hear these sounds, but there is no possible mistake; they are regular amongst the women, and the men may be heard sometimes to laugh at them: 'women don't travel, you see,' as one of them said to me. This dialect also

preserves the diphthong οι in the phrase οἷος κε ἂν εἴνε 'whoever it may be'; the first word is pronounced ὄγιος with the usual very soft γ.

The only printed documents in the dialect of Astypalaea are eleven folktales in Pio's *Contes Populaires grecs* pp. 80-192 (Copenhagen, 1879). These were written down by an educated Astypaliote, and not very accurately. He represents θ sometimes by the tenuis τ, sometimes by θ.

There are many other peculiarities in this dialect, and a great number of ancient words still in use which have disappeared elsewhere (e.g. λίμνη, ληνός, ἀνεπά=δυσπή). This is to be explained by the isolation of the community, which is out of the commercial track, not visited by steamers, and offers no attractions to the tourist.

W. H. D. ROUSE.

REPRÆSENTATIO TEMPORUM IN THE ORATIO OBLIQUA OF CAESAR.

(See p. 213.)

A re-examination of the two histories has shown that Mr. Savúndranâyagam's lists, especially in the *Bellum Gallicum*, would be more useful for some further enlargements. The following supplement is accordingly appended. The passages included in it are in the subsequent discussion distinguished by an asterisk. The others are to be sought on pp. 208-213 of the first article.

B.G.

- I. 2. §§ 1, 2 (S) After *persuasit*.
3. § 6 (S) After *H.P. probat*.
16. § 6 (M) After *H.P. accusat*.
26. § 6 (S) After '*litteras nuntiosque misit*.'
42. § 1 (S) After *H.P. 'legatos ad eum mittit*.'
47. § 1 (S) After *H.P. 'legatos mittit*' (a l, *misit* β V).
- II. 1. §§ 1-3 (S) After '*litteris certior fiebat*.'
5. §§ 2, 3 (P) After *H.P. docet*.
- III. 5. § 2 (S) After *H.P. 'unam esse spem salutis docent, si eruptione*

facta extremum auxilium experientur.'

- IV. [6. § 3 (S) After *cognouit*].
27. § 1 (S) After *polliciti sunt*.
- V. 6. §§ 5, 6 (S) After '*metu territare coepit*.'
26. § 4 (S) After *conclamauerunt*.
34. §§ 3, 4 (S) After *H.P. 'pronuntuari iubet*.'
52. § 6 (P) After *H.P. docet*.
53. § 6 (S) After '*certior factus est*.'
56. §§ 4, 5 (P) After *H.P. pronuntiat*.
- VI. 1. § 2 (S) After *H.P. petit ut* (Meusel conjectures *petiit*).
29. § 5 (P) After *H.P. monet ut*.
32. § 1 (S) After '*legatos miserunt*.'
- § 2 (S) After *imperaui* —*negavit*.
- VII. 26. 3 (S) After *petierunt ne*.
44. §§ 3-5 (S) After '*constabat inter omnes*.'

71. §§ 2-4 (P) After *H.P.'s* (§ 2 *possent a V*).

89. 1, 2 (P) After *H.P. demon-
strat*.

B.C.

II. 42. § 4 (P) After *H.P. confirmat*.

The primary object of the inquiry was *Oratio Obliqua* in its developed and continuous form. Herein the consideration of single sentences in direct dependence on a verb of saying asking or commanding (or prohibiting) was not obviously included. Furthermore, Caesar not unfrequently breaks up what might have been a continuous indirect narration by the insertion of a verb of saying or the like; see, for example, *B.G.* *VII. 71. §§ 2, 3, 4. To omit all reference to such cases was neither possible nor advisable: on the other hand, to include them all would have burdened the investigation unnecessarily. The number given, it is believed, will be sufficient to be instructive. Examples of what is conveniently denominated 'Virtual' *Oratio Obliqua* have not been regarded, nor have passages of Actual *Oratio Obliqua* been included which did not happen to contain a finite verb.

PART II.—EXAMINATION OF THE MATERIAL.

§ 1.—Retention of Secondary Tenses.

The examination of the material must start with the observation of what Professor Conway has justly called an 'elementary precaution.'¹ It is nearly thirty years since my attention was drawn to its neglect by professed or occasional exponents of Latin grammar. I was struck by a remarkable comment in Seeley's edition of Livy I. on the passage quoted in the *New Latin Primer* at the place cited by Prof. Conway. At I. 51. 4 Livy has [Tarquinius Turnum] 'ait adgressurum fuisse hesterno die in concilio: dilatam rem esse quod auctor concilii afuerit quem maxime peteret,' and Seeley commented as follows 'quem maxime peteret] We expect "petat" or "petierit"'. This is the only imperfect in the passage. It is not easy to trace, as W. tries to do, any motive for the change of tense.' W.'s

¹ 'In order to understand a Tense in Or. Obliqua it is absolutely necessary to consider what it represents in the Or. Recta—an elementary precaution which Draeger and others have singularly disregarded though it seems to be implied for instance by Postgate *N.L.P.* § 430 (10).' *On the Variation of Sequence in Oratio Obliqua*, Appendix II. to his edition of Livy II., p. 189 and footnote.

(Weissenborn's) attempt is as follows 'Das Imperf., das einzige in der Rede, stellt seine Person in den Hintergrund; die Praesentia rücken, wie in Orat. recta das Praesens hist., die Sache näher, stellen sie als bedeutender dar oder bezeichnen ähnliche Nüancen des Gedankens.' On this passage I had noted that the reason why *peteret* was 'the only imperfect in the passage' in *Oratio Obliqua* was that it was the only imperfect (*petebat*) in *Oratio Recta*. Seeley's note (possibly corrected in the third edition which I have not seen) was published in 1874. But in 1905 Prof. E. B. Lease, in his edition of Livy Books I, XXI, XXII (*Gildersleeve-Lodge Latin Series*), still writes 'afuerit] cf. 'audierit,' l. 28; 'habuerint,' l. 386 and 'uenerit,' l. 1439. *peteret*] the tense is influenced by 'dilatam esse' (my italics). I have no desire to dwell on the point. So I will simply set out in full from Prof. Lease's text the second of his citations. I. 11. 8, 9 'additur fabula, quod vulgo Sabini aureas armillas magni ponderis brachio laeue gemmatosque magna specie anulos habuerint (*O.R.* habuerunt), pepigisse eam quod in sinistris manibus haberent (*O.R.* habebant); eo scuta illi pro aureis donis congesta. sunt qui eam ex pacto tradendi quod in sinistris manibus haberent directo arma petisse dicant et fraude uisam agere sua ipsam peremptam mercede.'

This inquiry will not then concern itself further with the cases in which, the tense of a finite verb being Secondary in *Oratio Recta*, its tense is naturally Secondary in *Oratio Obliqua*. But some examples are appended:

B.G. II. 14. § 4 *fuisent* (*O.R.* fuerant)—*intellegerent* (*O.R.* intellegebant)—*intulissent* (*O.R.* intulissent). V. 27. § 6 *O.R.* 'hic est dictus dies ne qua legio—uenire posset.' VII. 5 § 5 *O.R.* 'id consilii fuisse cognouimus ut si—transissemus, una ex parte ipsi altera Aruerni nos circumsisterent.' 38. 5 'equites Aeduorum interfectos quod collocuticum Aruernis dicerentur' (*O.R.* dicebantur). [The (S) after the reference on p. 211a should be deleted.] 41 § 2 'summisi copiis castra oppugnata sunt cum—succederent—defetigarent, quibus—esset (or erat)—permanendum.' *B.C.* I. 7 § 2 'nouum in r.p. introductum exemplum ut notaretur,' 22 § 5 'cuius orationem Caesar interpellat se non maleficii causa ex provincia egressum' (*O.R.* egressus sum) 'sed uti se a contumelias defenderet' (*O.R.* me defenderem) e.q.s., 32 § 2 *O.R.* 'fui contentus eo quod omnibus ciuibus patebat,' e.q.s. § 5 *O.R.* 'postulabant—recusabant—malebant.' And *B.C.* I. 7. 5,

where the sequence of *darent* after the perfect tense (O.R. *est decretum*) is quite in order.

§ 2. *Form of Introducing Verb.*

Amongst the factors determining the tense of a verb in Oratio Obliqua the tense in which it would presumably have appeared in Oratio Recta may not improperly be considered principal. The most important of the accessory factors is the form of the verb or phrase which introduces the indirect narrative.

We may distinguish three varieties :

A. *Forms associated in common usage with Present Time.*

B. *Forms associated in common usage with Past Time.*

C. *Forms with neutral or conflicting associations.*

A. The chief, in fact the only one, of these forms is the HISTORIC PRESENT INDICATIVE. Those who have realised the powerful influence which the tense of the chief verb of a principal sentence in Latin exerts upon that of the chief verb in subordinate ones will feel no surprise that in over sixty¹ cases of a total number of between eighty and ninety, the sequence after a Historic Present is Primary.

B. After (i) the *Imperfect* and (ii) the *Aorist Perfect* (the Perfect Proper being precluded by the conditions of the case) the sequence is predominantly Secondary, nearly sixty cases out of a total of between seventy and eighty.¹

(iii) After the HISTORIC INFINITIVE the sequence is Secondary. The actual cases in Caesar are too few (*B.C.* I. 64 and III. 12) to warrant an immediate deduction. And it is true first that Primary tenses may follow this form (*Ter. Eun.* 619) and secondly that it alternates with the Historic Present, which we have seen prefers the Primary Sequence, in, e.g., *Sallust Cat.* 60. §§ 2-4., *Livy* I. 41. 1. But a consideration of the usage of *Sallust*, which presents Secondary Sequence in *Cat.* 27. 2, 40. 4, 54. 4 : *Iug.* 30. 3, 36. 2, 45. 2, 51. 4, 55. 3, 58. 3, 64. 2, *ib.* 5, 67. 1, 74. 1, 88. 2, 91. 1, 93. 1, 96. 2, 107. 3, and perhaps other places with no example noted on the other side, seems to justify this conclusion.

(iv) This conclusion agrees with the fact that COEPI with the Infinitive, a form whose

usage has recognised kinship with that of the Historic Infinitive (cf. Wöflin *Archiv* x. pp. 177 sq., 181), also has Secondary Sequence in four passages *B.G.* I. 20,* V. 6, *B.C.* I. 86, II. 28. So in *Sallust Cat.* 31. 7, 40. 2.

C. Under this head are included phrases like '*haec fuit oratio*,' *B.G.* IV. 7 with Primary Sequence, but '*mandata remittunt quorum haec erat summa*' *B.C.* I. 10, compare *ib.* III. 57 and (with MS. variation) III. 10, with Secondary Sequence. The difference between *B.C.* I. 8 '*habere se—mandata demonstrat*' with Primary and *B.G.* I. 35 '*cum his mandatis mittit*' with Secondary Sequence may perhaps be sought in the fact that '*habere se demonstrat*' distinctly suggests a present '*habeo mandata*,' whereas the *H.P.* in the latter place is weak and formal. The tenses in *B.C.* III. 33 after '*litterae redduntur a Pompeio*' are (see below) the usual ones in a command.

§ 3. *Retention of Primary Tenses for intrinsic reasons. In Climax and Universal statements.*

Attempts have naturally been made to find intrinsic reasons for the appearance of Primary Tenses in Oratio Obliqua where Secondary might have been expected, and the reason usually chosen is the greater vividness of such tenses which fits them for conveying emphasis of various kinds. The proper limitations of such a procedure can only be ascertained by a detailed examination for which here there is no space. But that we should exercise great caution in construing a difference of tense into a difference of sense is shown by the fluctuations in set collocations such as '*mittit qui dicant*' or '*dicerent*.' In this regard it is instructive to compare *B.G.* I. 7 '*mittunt qui dicerent*' and IV. 11 '*mittit qui nuntiarent*' with *B.C.* I. 17 '*mittit qui orent*' and the varying sequence in *B.G.* I. 7, II. 3, I. 26.

A suggestion of Mr. Savúndranâyagam's that Primary Tenses are employed to mark a Climax in a speech as in *B.G.* I. 40. 7, IV. 16. 7, VII. 20 and 29, deserves a particular mention.

A recognised use of the Primary Tenses is the one in *General Maxims* or *Universal Statements*, and so Mr. Savúndranâyagam would explain the change to Primary Tenses in *B.G.* VII. 29; and the same may perhaps be seen in *B.G.* I. 14 § 5 (where the Secondary is not resumed after it has once been dropped). Mr. Savúndranâyagam cites also *B.G.* I. 14, 7, *consuerint* following on

¹ Exact statistics are intentionally avoided. The mixed cases are reckoned as exceptions.

respondit, I. 44, 2 and *B.C.* I. 67. 3 *conversuerit* and 4 *soleant*, where, as in *B.G.* I. 14. 5, no Secondary Tenses follow. On *B.G.* VII. 32. 3 I shall comment below.

§ 4. *Deficiencies in the Subjunctive Tense System. Future Perfect and Future.*

The deficient tense system of the Subjunctive makes it inevitable that in the distribution of the uses of the tenses in subordinate or accessory clauses *Oratio Obliqua* should differ from *Oratio Recta*.

Prof. Conway, *l.c.* p. 188, lays down, as a general principle which represents Livy's use, that 'in passages of *Oratio Obliqua* in which Livy is using Primary Tenses after a Past governing Verb where a change of Tense is unavoidable (as in converting the Imperative and the Future of the *Or. Recta*) there Livy's usage varies; but the Tense chosen is most often Secondary: *e.g.* I. 40. 3.'

To take the Futures first, the Future Perfect stands on a somewhat different footing from the Future Simple, inasmuch as the only forms available for *Oratio Obliqua* (3rd person singular and plural) are identical with those of the Perfect Subjunctive and might therefore be 'retained.' Taking examples from the first book of the *B.G.*, we find the Secondary tense (Pluperfect) in 13. 3, 35. 4, 36. 5, 44. 13, and the Primary one (Perfect) in 14. 6, 31. 15, 44. 12. The last passage is interesting. When Ariovistus is threatening Caesar with punishment, he uses the Primary tenses (Present in 11, Perfect in 12), when promising him rewards, the Secondary one (13). And it may be contended that in the first case the more vivid tense is the more natural.

For a Future Simple of O.R. we have a Secondary Tense in *B.G.* I. 13. 3, 4, 35. 41, 36. 5 and a Primary one in I. 14. 6, 44. 11. Also in 40. 15, where however the choice of *sequetur* for the future enables *dubitaret* (O.R. *dubito*) to be used without ambiguity for the present.

So far then as these two tenses go, the usage of Caesar appears to be irreducible to general rules, and inasmuch as some further uncertainty is induced by the fact that in certain uses the O.R. might show a Subjunctive, it seems unprofitable to pursue the inquiry further.

§ 5. '*Adjustments.*'

It would appear that accommodations or adjustments in the expression, induced by the unconscious desire to eke out the Subjunctive's scanty apparatus of tenses, are

more common than has hitherto been supposed.

(i) *Present Subjunctive.*

To *B.G.* I. 40. 15 I have already referred. In *B.C.* I. 26. 4 the change from '*ut conloqueretur* postulat' to '*si sit potestas facta*' may be reasonably ascribed to a wish to sharpen the expression of the future sense. So probably also in I. 11. 2 '*iturus sit.*' Compare *B.C.* I. 85. 12 '*si id sit factum.*'

(ii) *Pluperfect Subjunctive.*

It is now well recognised that Latin uses the Pluperfect Indicative to mitigate, as it would seem, the ambiguity caused by the confusion of the Aorist and Perfect forms. If this motive was operative in the Indicative, it should be stronger in the Subjunctive, practically the only finite mood of *Oratio Obliqua*, inasmuch as the Perfect there had, as a representative of future perfect time, an additional function to discharge.

Accordingly where an action is marked as prior to another action, or where there is a definite sense that it is remote in the past, we must not expect the Perfect but the Pluperfect. So we should explain the '*suscepisset*' of *B.C.* I. 30. 5, the Pluperfects of *ib.* 32. §§ 3, 4, and 6 (where the '*paulo ante*' should be observed), 74. § 2, II. 21. 1 and the noticeable '*conuessent*' of *B.G.* VII. 32. 3. The '*confirmassent*' of *B.C.* II. 34. 5 may be due to the same cause; it is however sufficiently explained by its dependence on the Perfect Participle *elocutus*.

In *B.C.* II. 25. 6 and III. 13. 3 the design being to emphasise the completion of the act rather than its future character, the Pluperfect is preferred to the Perfect. And on this ground *perequitasset* seems preferable to *perequitarit* at *B.G.* VII. 66. 7. It must be admitted that *B.G.* *I. 42. 1 cannot thus be explained.

In *B.G.* I. 40. 7 the MSS. vary between *superarint* (the α family) and *superassent* (the β family). But the former is preferable not only because the latter may well have come from *superassent* in § 6, but because there is a manifest economy in using one tense for the recent victory of the Helvetii and another for the remote defeat of the Cimbri and Teutones. In II. 4. 2 on the other hand the Belgae's repulse of these hordes is the more recent and their expulsion of the Galli from their territory the more ancient event. Hence the *prohibuerint* of α is preferable to the *prohibuissent* of β .

The need for special discrimination having passed, *sumerent* (§ 3) returns to the Secondary Sequence.

§ 6.—*Commands and Prohibitions.*

The usual practice of Latin is no doubt to use the *Imperfect Subjunctive* (with or without *ne* as the case requires) in the reports of speeches. The examples in Book I. of the *B.G.* are 7. 6, 13. 4, 5, 7, 26. 6, 35. 3, 36. 7, 42. 4, 43. 9. But the *Present* is also found: III. 8. 5, IV. 7. 4, V. 41. 8, 46. 4, VI. 23. 7.

This preference is not due to any absence of the Imperative from *Oratio Obliqua*. It appears to be due to the instinctive feeling of language that commands belong to a different mental region from statements, and that it is a much heavier tax on the imagination to represent a past command or wish as present than so to picture a past scene with its accessories. If in commands the *Present* is a sort of *tour de force* we advance a step towards understanding the variation in *B.G.* V. 58. 4 'unum omnes *peterent* Indutimarum *neu* quis quem prius *vulneret* quam illum interfectum uiderit' and VII. 86. 2 'imperat si sustinere non possit deductis cohortibus eruptione *pugnaret*; id nisi necessario *ne faciat*,' the action that was *not* to come off being allowed the *Present*. This suggestion is not inconsistent with the theory, which is no doubt the first to occur to us, that the Primary Tense expresses both in negative and in positive sentences some sharpening of the emphasis.

A noteworthy case of preference for the Secondary tense in a wish or prayer is the *cogerentur* of *B.G.* VII. 15. 4 depending on a *H.P.*, corresponding to a *cogamur* of the *O.R.* and immediately following a *Present quae sit*.

§ 7. *Vellet (-ent) and Velit (-int).*

It seems worth while to examine the details of some one special case of variation, and the two verbs of the heading offer themselves as suitable for the purpose.

The *Imperfect Subjunctive* depends on a Secondary Tense in *B.G.* I. 7. 6, 14. 3, 28. 1, 30. 4, 31. 2, 36. 1, 7, 44. 8, 13, IV. 23. 5, V. *26. 4, 43. 6 (*coepi*), VII. 16. 2, 27. 1, 38. 4, *B.C.* I. 2. 2, II. 35. 2, 44. 3, III. 1. 4, 6. 1, 17. 4, 19. 3, 23. 3, 78. 4, 89. 4, 5, 108. 2: 27 cases, *B.C.* II. 29. 3 being omitted as corrupt. In one place, *B.G.* *I. 47. 1, it follows a *H.P.* Cf. *B.C.* I. 18. 1.

The *Present Subjunctive* follows a *H.P.* or what may be a *H.P.* (for it must be remembered that in certain verbs of the third conjugation the *Present* and *Perfect*

third persons singular agree in form) in III. 8. 5, 18. 2, 26. 1, V. 2. 3, 41. 6, 51. 3, VII. 31. 4, 45. 7, 89. 2. *B.C.* I. 1. 2, 4, III. 62. 3, 82. 1: 13 cases.

The *Present* follows a Secondary Tense in *B.G.* I. 14. 5, 34. 2, 43. 8, IV. 8. 3, V. 27. 9, 36. 2, 41. 8, VI. 23. 7: 8 cases. Of these, *B.G.* I. 34. 2 and V. 27. 9 may be explained as emphatic futures, and *B.G.* I. 14. 5, and 43. 8 as general statements; V. 36. 2 and 41. 8 follow *respondit*, VI. 23. 7, *dixit*, and IV. 8. 3 '*exilus fuit orationis*.' For the Primary Sequence here no particular reason can be discerned; and in the face of *B.G.* VI. 14. 4 '*id mihi duabus de causis instituisse uidentur quod neque in uulgum disciplinam efferri uelint neque*' etc., where the Imperfect would seem more natural, it seems better to suppose that, whereas Caesar felt that *uellet(-ent)* should be limited to relations with the Aorist (for *B.G.* I. 47. 1 comes in a Secondary Sequence already established), he did not feel the same about *uelit(-int)*. And the reason perhaps was this, *velim* is by form an optative; and as such it may have retained some traces of the freer undetermined use which we find in ancient Latin and the earlier usage of the parallel Greek optatives.

In *B.G.* I. 44. 4 *a*'s '*experiri uelint*' and '*si pace uti uelint*'¹ is diplomatically preferable to the '*uellet*' and '*si pacem mallent*' of *β*. Whether in *B.G.* VI. 9. 7 we should read '*si uelit dari, pollicentur*' with *β*, or '*si uellet, dare pollicentur*' with *α* has been disputed. But the balance of considerations, which we have pointed out, inclines to the former reading.

§ 8.—*Manuscript Discrepancies.*

To some of these no one acquainted with the habits of Latin scribes will attach the slightest importance. Such are the variants *possit, possint*: *posset, possent* at *B.G.* I. 17. 1, V. 46. 4, VII. 5. 2, 20. 5, 10, and at I. 17. 3 the editors do well to accept Hotman's *possint* for the MS. *possent*. In a few cases the variation is greater. The *β* family has the Secondary Tense in I. 40. 7, 44. 12 and II. 4. 2 already dealt with. In II. 4. 4 '*pollicitus esset*' *β* seems less natural than '*pollicitus sit*' *α*. On the other hand in III. 8. 4 *β* has '*malint*' against *α*'s '*mallent*,' in VI. 9. 7 '*uelit*' against *α*'s '*uellet*' and in VII. 66. 7 '*perequitarit*' against *α*'s '*perequitasset*.' In VII. 66. 4 *β* and one MS. of the *α* family have rightly

¹ In the quotation on p. 210 the reading given is *α*'s; but the comma is misplaced.

'*adorirentur*,' the rest vary between *adorientur* and *adoriantur*. In V. 29. 6 β has 'si nihil *sit*—*consentiat*' and α '*esset*—*consentiret*.' If we must choose between α and β here, β 's readings are preferable. But I conjecture that their disagreement means that both have preserved and both corrupted part of the truth and that Caesar wrote 'si nihil *esset* durius nullo cum periculo ad proximam legionem peruenturos: si Gallia omnis cum Germanis *consentiat*, unam esse in celeritate positam salutem.' For Titurius desires to insist on the last—the dangerous alternative. This releases the Imperfect in the next section 'Cottae atque eorum qui *dissentirent* (O.R. *dissentiunt*).' *I. 47. 1 seemingly has already been given as the only case where *uellet* follows a *H.P.*, and so β 's *misit* may be right, cf. *I. 26. 6, and *mittit* have come from *42. 1. On the other hand *uellet* may simply have followed the sequence of '*coeptae essent*,' which may be a Pluperfect of Emphasis. The character of the evidence is not such as to warrant us in changing Primary Tenses to Secondary where the MSS. give no variant, as Meusel does, for example, at I. 34. 3 and 43. 7.

§ 9.—General Observations.

The foregoing review does not profess to have provided a simple and unerring answer to the question: 'Would Caesar in a given context have used a Primary or a Secondary Tense?' It contents itself with having traced the considerations by which in the main his choice would be, whether consciously or unconsciously, determined. Whenever there is still admitted fluctuation in the usage of a language or in other words whenever the associations of syntactical forms have not stiffened into a rigid convention, it is natural to suppose that the writer chooses the form most expressive of his meaning. This is true, but only partially true. For there is another factor—the factor of sound and in particular of *rhythm*—which, as at this time of day need hardly be shown at length, is apt to override the purely syntactical considerations, and

which, though it can receive but a bare mention here, must by no means be passed over, as it may well afford an explanation of the residual peculiarities in the tense sequences of Oratio Obliqua in Caesar.

In conclusion it seems advisable to note an inadequate or rather erroneous conception of the Oratio Obliqua, to which the current terminology, which in the above discussion it has been impossible wholly to discard, lends only too much support. Expressions like 'the conversion of Oratio Recta into Oratio Obliqua,' or 'the retention of the Tenses of the Recta' have a certain practical convenience, it is true, but no historical justification. The Oratio Recta and Oratio Obliqua are in their origins perfectly distinct. The connexion and correspondence which the mind perceives between them are the effects of usage and association. It is therefore inexact to call a form in O. Obliqua the 'equivalent' of a form in O. Recta, nor is it quite exact even to speak of them as 'corresponding.' For some expressions of O. Recta there is no 'equivalent' in O. Obliqua, and there are expressions in O. Obliqua, the 'equivalent' of which in O. Recta it is impossible to determine. And even in cases where the agreement in usage is sufficient to excuse the term, a comparison of the 'equivalents' may reveal their original diversity. Thus the ordinary expressions of a prohibition are in O. Recta *noli* with the Infinitive or *ne* with the Perfect Subjunctive, but in O. Obliqua *ne* with the Imperfect or the Present. And though for the sake of fixing our own thoughts we may say that in e.g. *B.G.* IV. 7. 4 '*uel sibi agros attribuant uel patiantur eos tenere quos armis possederint*' the tense of the *attribuite* and *patimini* of the Recta are 'retained,' it is more accurate to say that the *attribuant* and *patiantur* of an Oratio Obliqua of the present time (*iubeo*, *iubes*, *iubet*, *attribuant*) are used in an Oratio Obliqua of the past.

J. P. POSTGATE.

NOTE ON PLINY, *EPP.* III. 6, IX. 39.

THESE two letters are of some interest as throwing light on Pliny's method in editing his correspondence for publication.¹

¹ See Mommsen, in *Hermes* iii. (1869), pp. 31, 32.

In iii. 6, he requests a friend to have a base made, of whatever kind of marble he shall choose, for a certain statuette; he fails however to state the desired dimensions of the