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On Cicero, *Cato Maior*, § 28

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a provincial government, and that he wrote (fam. 2. 12. 2) to his friend Caelius from Cilicia, *omnis peregrinatio...obscura et sordida est*, but, since he was a man of wide interests, and of great political foresight, and showed a stricter sense of justice toward provincials themselves in his own government of a province, than Roman governors ordinarily showed, he would certainly seem to represent his countrymen fairly in this matter. The indifference which Cicero shows towards provincial affairs is quite in harmony with the attitude of those who secured provincial legislation before his day. Of the two men in previous generations who did most to improve the condition of the provinces, C. Gracchus and Sulla, Gracchus was inspired solely by a partisan motive,

while Sulla's primary purpose was to increase the receipts from taxes and systematise their payment. To the cultivated Roman of the day Gaul, Germany, Asia, or Africa had no importance in and for themselves. They gained their significance only through the influence they might exert on the fortunes of political parties or individuals, or through their value in filling the purse of the state or the governor. As for the attitude of the average citizen toward the provinces, his primary motive was a desire for trade, overpowered now and then by a thirst for revenge, when Roman arms had been defeated or Roman dignity offended.

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ON CICERO, *CATO MAIOR*, § 28.

MR. CHARLES KNAPP's contribution, in the May issue of the *Classical Review*, on this passage was as welcome as it was unexpected. While fully alive to the qualifying force of the *omnino* clause, I must admit that the restricted and literal application of *languescat* had escaped me. Mr. Knapp has successfully shewn that *languescat*, as used in this passage, is compatible with the retention of *splendescit*. There remains, however, a second difficulty—one which presented itself on my first examination of the passage but which, unfortunately, I omitted to specify in my query. Is the retention of *splendescit* compatible with actual fact? As the text stands, Cato maintains that the characteristic (illud) full clear ring or resonance of tone actually (etiam) acquires increased brilliancy in old age. This is not true in regard to 'old age' as we understand the term. It was not so in the case, for instance, of Mr. Bright or of Mr. Gladstone. Is it perhaps true in the Roman conception of the term? According to Varro (*apud* Censorinum) 'senex' was applied to those between the ages of 40 and 60. But that a man of, say, 45 was 'senex' only in name and not in nature, as the Romans themselves understood it, is I think perfectly clear. When Horace (*Sat.* 2, l. vv. 33, 34) speaks of Lucilius as 'senis' it has

been understood that the use of the word was in this case complimentary (Gesner's edition (1826) on this passage: 'Lucilius saeculo senex erat, non aetate: neque enim supergressus est quadragesimum sextum aetatis annum.') Livy, 29, 3 says of Hannibal, then under 50, 'et fama senescere et viribus.' According to the philosophers, 35 or 40–50 constituted the *aetas virilis*; 50–65, *senectus prima*: and, 65—death, *senectus ultima*. Then again, the parenthetical clause *quod equidem . . . annos*, in which Cato refers to his own age (84) at the time of the supposed dialogue, is directly confirmative of the *omnino* clause and would therefore seem opposed to any exception in favour of a young old age. The whole tenor of the dialogue and the express purpose with which it was written (§ 2) lead us to conclude that *senectus* embraces a period commencing not earlier than the 60th year of a man's life. In view of this conception of 'old age' I still find, even after Mr. Knapp's careful commentary, that the passage is unsatisfactory owing to the retention of the one word *splendescit*.

Cicero, *Cato Maior*, § 1. What authority, if any, is there for the general explanation of 'ille vir' as a reference to the poet Ennius?

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