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Hieronymus Balbus in Paris

ERASMUS, writing¹ in his latter years in complaint of some of the enemies who were harassing him, recalls a reminiscence of Paris University as it was about the time of his first arrival there in 1494, when there was a band of malicious persons who delighted to set the men of letters quarrelling with one another. Among the early productions of the Paris press are some records of these literary bickerings, which throw an interesting light on the condition of the university at the time, and on the character of a remarkable person, Hieronymus Balbus, who was embroiled first with William Tardif, a French humanist and teacher of rhetoric, and afterwards with Faustus Andrelinus of Forli, a countryman of his own and, like himself, a candidate for fame and employment in the Paris lecture-rooms.

Balbus was a Venetian of undistinguished origin. His father belonged to the Accelini, his mother to the Balbi, families of which Balbus's unknown apologist, J. M.,² can find nothing better to say than that it matters not whether they were old or new. His father died when Balbus was young, and his maternal grandfather adopted the boy, who consequently assumed the name of Balbus instead of Accelinus. His age is uncertain; in 1487 he was mocked by his enemies for describing himself as *adolescentulus* in the preface to his first book of epigrams, published probably in 1486. But, as he defiantly repeats the word in 1487 in replying to the charges brought against him, the propriety of the term was

¹ Ep. 1135, xxv. 23.

² 'Adversus Faustum . . . pro . . . Hieronymo Balbo defensio.' *V. infra*, pp. 418 seq.

evidently debatable, and his birth may therefore be assigned conjecturally to somewhere about 1460. Of his life before he came to Paris little is known. His first book of verses contains poems addressed to Venetians, and also an epitaph on Pino Ordelaifi, lord of Forli, who died on 10 Feb. 1480,³ a connexion which suggests that he may have made the acquaintance of Faustus⁴ before they met in Paris.

The books on which our knowledge of Balbus's doings in Paris principally depends are in two sets. The first of these, written in 1487 and dealing with the quarrel with Tardif, consists of three books—an 'Antibalbica'⁵ written by Tardif to refute calumnies uttered against him by Balbus; the 'Rhetor Gloriosus,' Balbus's reply, written within a few months of the attack; and a second 'Antibalbica,' replying to the 'Rhetor,' presumably within a short time, while the controversy was still hot. The dates are determined by the 'Rhetor,' which describes in its argument one of the characters in the dialogue as going to congratulate Peter Coard or de Couthard on his appointment as royal advocate. Coard received this office in 1487,⁶ in succession to a man who vacated it in June of that year. The 'Rhetor' may therefore be assigned to the last months of 1487, 'Antibalbica' I to the summer of that year, and 'Antibalbica' II to the end of 1487 or the beginning of 1488.⁷ 'Antibalbica' I cannot well be earlier than the date here given, for Tardif speaks of himself as *biennio mutus* towards Balbus; and, as will be seen below, their acquaintance probably began in 1485. The second group contains two books, an eclogue by Faustus, 'De fuga Balbi,' first published by F. Baligault, with a commendatory letter from Gaguin, then the leading man of letters in Paris, dated 16 Sept. 1494.⁸ This is replied to by J. M., an unknown pupil of Balbus, with a 'Defence of Balbus,' written in 1495,⁹ by which time Balbus had

³ I have been unable to substantiate this date, which is given by Marchesi, *Vitae Virorum Illustrum Foroliviensium*, p. 376. He quotes as authorities J. Ph. Forestus Bergomensis, *Supplementum Chronicarum*, and H. Rubeus, *Historiae Ravennates*, neither of whom names the month, nor makes it clear whether 1480 or 1489 is meant.

⁴ I use this name rather than his surname Andrelinus, because it was invariably used by his contemporaries.

⁵ The British Museum possesses a copy which I believe to be unique. Knod (*Aus der Bibliothek des Beatus Rhenanus*, p. 90), while desirous of an earlier edition of the *Antibalbica*, states that no copy is known. Geiger also (*Vierteljahrschrift für Kultur und Litteratur der Renaissance*, i. 23) knows of no copy.

⁶ F. Aubert, *Hist. du Parlement de Paris*, i. 393.

⁷ These dates, which are three or four years earlier than those assigned by Knod, Mr. R. Proctor has kindly confirmed for me on typographical grounds. Geiger (*Vierteljahrschrift*, i. 21-2) is quite confused about this episode.

⁸ Later editions, including one by Baligault, have 1496; but the first reads unmistakably 'MCCCC nonagesimo quarto.' It is worthy of note that an edition of *Antibalbica* is printed by Ant. Caillaut, 21 July 1495, contains an abbreviated form of the eclogue, with a prose introduction that does not appear elsewhere, and without the letter from Gaguin, which most later editions contain.

⁹ J. M. says that Faustus's visit to Toulouse (in 1491, *v. infra*, p. 426) took place 'abhinc annos quattuor.'

been two years away from Paris. These writings are, of course, purely controversial, and a spirit of reckless calumny runs through them. But while their value as evidence is thus weakened there is a presumption in favour of the truth of statements which might have been contradicted by the adversary, but were not.

Before coming to Paris Balbus was a teacher at Padua. His departure thence is described by Faustus as a flight to escape being burnt, but it seems hardly likely that, if there had been any serious charge against him in Padua, he could have escaped the consequences, at any rate of ignominy, by a flight to Paris; for his position there must soon have been known in Italy. Probably he was attracted to Paris by the prospect of employment. Tardif says that he left Italy against his parents' wishes and reached Paris in destitution, because he had gambled away his money at Lyons—a mere calumny possibly, but Balbus did not deny it, and, in spite of the inaccuracy about Balbus's parents, Tardif was in a position to know something about him, as they seem at first to have been intimate.

Balbus's arrival in Paris can be dated almost with precision. J. M. tells us that he spent seven years there. It will be seen later that he was in Paris after Faustus's return from Toulouse in 1492, so that his arrival cannot be placed earlier than 1485. On the other hand it must have been before 14 March 1486;¹⁰ for on that day *quidam poeta nomine Hieronymus Balbus* asked the university to appoint a committee to examine errors in Tardif's grammar, which he was ready to demonstrate. The description here given of Balbus suggests that he was not yet well known in Paris; but the evidence of his intimacy with Tardif shows that he must have been there for some months already, for this public attack on Tardif must surely have brought their friendship, such as it was, to an end. In 'Antibalbica' 1, written in the summer of 1487, Tardif states that Balbus had eaten meat in the last two Lents, as many people in Paris knew, a date which probably marks the limits of his acquaintance with Balbus. On these grounds, therefore, Balbus's arrival may be placed in the summer of 1485.

Tardif was then holding a considerable position in the university. He had been teaching already in 1473,¹¹ when Reuchlin visited Paris. He had published a grammar, which, from Balbus's attack upon it, was probably much used; a *Compendium of Rhetoric*, dedicated to Charles VIII as dauphin, and therefore before 1483; an edition of Solinus's 'Polyhistor'; and a translation of

¹⁰ Bulaeus, *Hist. Univ. Paris*, v. 770. This date has been copied as 1485 by Knod, Aschbach (*Gesch. der Wiener Universität*), and Geiger (*Vierteljahrschrift*), overlooking the patent fact that Bulaeus begins his years at Easter. Budinsky (*Gesch. der Univ. Paris*) makes the necessary correction.

¹¹ Reuchlin to John Faber Stapulensis, 31 Aug. 1513, in *Illustrium Virorum Epistolae ad . . . Reuchlin*. Hagenau, 1519.

Aesop's fables, also addressed to Charles VIII, to whom he was at some time before 1495¹² appointed *domesticus lector*. His birth is placed by the biographers about 1440, but Balbus describes him in the 'Rhetor,' possibly with malice, as *senio confectus*.

At first their acquaintance was pleasant, and Balbus soon dedicated to Tardif a volume of verse with a complimentary preface. No copy of this is known, and there is reason to suppose that it was only circulated in manuscript, for Balbus a year later dedicated the same collection of verse, with an almost identical preface, to William de Rochefort, chancellor of France, a thing he would hardly have ventured to do if the former book had been in print. Tardif too in 'Antibalbica' I, in stating that the book was first dedicated to himself, quotes the preface in full, doubtless in order that people might compare it with the new one to the chancellor. Balbus made other friends at this period. Among his epigrams is one to Gaguin, who went on an embassy to Rome early in 1486, deploring their separation; another in a later volume to Aegidius Delf, the gentle theologian, when rector of Paris University, between 16 Dec. 1486 and 24 March 1487; and various verses to the brothers Charles and John Fernandus of Bruges, who had some reputation in letters, and were both musicians¹³ to the king. Charles, who in his later years at least was blind, was of a kindly and attractive disposition, and enjoyed the friendship of most of the leading men in Paris at that time. A number of works are attributed to him, among which is a volume of 'elegant epistles,' the first of their kind published at Paris, containing three to Balbus. He was rector of Paris University just about the time of Balbus's advent (10 Oct.-16 Dec. 1485), and in that way perhaps came to know the young Italian adventurer. From the beginning he received Balbus into his house and continued to show him kindness, even after Balbus's quarrelsome nature had alienated most of his early friends. It was at Charles Fernandus's instigation also that Faustus afterwards published his elegies in 1494.

The first sign of the quarrel with Tardif is the application to the university made on 14 March 1486. What the causes were is nowhere stated; it is possible, however, that a feeling of national antagonism between the old-established French teacher and the young upstart Italian led to a rupture. The charge of unnatural crime, for instance, made by Tardif in 'Antibalbica' I is accentuated by the assertion that France had previously been free from the stain of such practices. Balbus proceeded to make friends for himself to support him in the contest. The epigrams were

¹² Ep. Geraudus de monte aureo to John Trithemius, in Caillaut's *Antibalbica*, in which Trithemius's account of Balbus in his *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Basle, 1494) is contradicted.

¹³ Charles is so called in the title of his *Epistolae*. John in his *Hore dive Crucis*.

printed, as has been said, with the dedication to the chancellor of France. No copy of this edition is known;¹⁴ but we can derive a good deal of information about it from 'Antibalbica' I, in which forty-seven of its epigrams are criticised, as also the dedication and an epistle to Gaguin, in which Balbus replies to a suggestion of Gaguin that his witticisms should be published. The British Museum has two copies of a volume of his epigrams printed at Leipzig in 1490 and 1500, according to the dates in the catalogue. Both contain the preface to Rochefort and more than a hundred epigrams, including the forty-seven criticised by Tardif; and the 1500 edition has also the letter to Gaguin. In both is found an epigram (no. 31) in which Gaguin urges Balbus to publish a poem about a *rhetor ineptus*, who *herentes tardius ire docet*, an unmistakable allusion to Tardif, the author of the rhetorical compendium. No. 32 is Balbus's reply, written in the same tone as the appended letter, though there are no verbal resemblances. No. 32 is quoted by Tardif, but not no. 31; and it seems likely that we have here an indication of what is in itself most probable, that there were other poems in the book besides those quoted in 'Antibalbica' I; for in a collection of epigrams, many of which are short and jejune, there must have been some in which even criticism, confined, as Tardif's was, to points of grammar and morals, would find nothing to cavil at. If this is so, we may conjecture with some reason that the Leipzig editions are reprints of the first Paris edition, with perhaps a few insertions; for the later one has, I believe, two poems which are not in the former.

Besides this book Balbus also published an edition of the 'Grammatici Veteres, Diomedes, Phocas, et Donatus,' dedicated to John Guillard, secretary to the king. The preface is criticised in 'Antibalbica' I, and therefore belongs to this period; and we may probably trace in it an allusion to Tardif among the modern barbarous grammarians who *primorum elementorum adhuc ignari et vix in triviis recepti sacrilego tamen conatu quedam deliramenta edere ac circumferre non verentur*. No personal information is to be gathered from the book, except that Balbus was preparing to lecture on Latin and Greek grammar, and that he had been consulted by Guillard on a course of study to be adopted.

The progress of the quarrel is related by Tardif, and Balbus makes no attempt to contradict his narrative. After a long course of Balbus's detraction Tardif's pupils sent a protest to the Venetian ambassador in Paris, Hieronymus Georgius. Balbus was induced to apologise, as a Lenten penance;¹⁵ and somewhere about Easter (15 April) 1487, as we may conclude, he solemnly

¹⁴ Unless the volume of epigrams mentioned by Knod at Schlettstadt is the Paris edition. From his description it seems to correspond to the first Leipzig edition.

¹⁵ 'Pascalis penitencia.'

begged pardon of Tardif with bare head and on bended knee, in the Dominican church, in presence of some of Tardif's friends, and promised never to attack Tardif again. But there was evidently no sincerity in the apology, or else the habit of sneering at Tardif was too strong; for the very next day two of the friends mentioned, Benedict Montenatus and Francis Flemandus, went, no doubt expressly, to hear Balbus lecture in the Franciscan schools, and were astounded to find him more virulent than ever. So Tardif wrote his first '*Antibalbica*,' composed in three days, and published it at the suggestion of the leading men in the university. It begins with an undertaking to show Balbus to be *erroneus, heresis suspectus, perfidus, periurus, carnivorax quadragesimarius, scandalosus, famosus*, and his writings *barbara, incongrua, falsa, heretica*. These various charges are dealt with at no great length, for the book has only fourteen leaves, and most of it is taken up with the correction of mistakes in Balbus's writings and the censure of the lascivious epigrams, of which there were not a few, Tardif of course taking the opportunity to make a display of his own learning. Balbus was again brought to his knees. He induced the archbishop of Vienne, Angelus Cato, to intercede for him; and a second time, in the presence of a notary, Penchenatus, and laying his hands in the archbishop's, he made apology and swore never again to injure Tardif.

The affair seems to have made it necessary for Balbus to give up teaching for a while; and he set himself to compose an elaborate satire, which while not actually abusing Tardif should by sarcasm and irony make him appear ridiculous. This book, named the '*Rhetor Gloriosus*,' with a reference to Plautus's '*Miles*,' was dedicated to Guy de Rochefort, brother of the chancellor, and is cast into the form of a dialogue with three characters. Charles Fernandus comes in to congratulate Peter Coard on his new appointment as royal advocate. Knowing his friendship for Balbus, Coard asks whether it is because of malicious attacks upon him that Balbus has given up lecturing, and is told that Balbus pays no heed to malice, but is desirous of leisure to study metaphysics. This leads to a discussion of Tardif, the author of the attacks, who opportunely comes upon the scene, hastening to the law courts, where he has a case. He is persuaded to sit down and read a copy of the invective against Balbus, which he carries about in his pocket, Fernandus undertaking to defend Balbus and Coard to be judge. The first '*Antibalbica*' is then cited in numerous extracts, regularly arranged, which Fernandus proceeds to attack. The grave moral charges and the grammatical corrections which Tardif substantiates are passed over without notice, and Balbus confines himself to maintaining through Fernandus's mouth the correctness of many of the points of spelling and grammar attacked. The

show of erudition quite surpasses Tardif's, the most remote authors being quoted in illustration; so that this literary duel, though in some respects intolerably dull, is of interest in indicating the extent of the early Renaissance learning in France. A specimen of dialogue will show the way in which Tardif is treated.

Coard. Iusne [*i.e.* 'law'] aliquando prelibasti?

Tardif. Immo frequenter absorpsi . . . in culina sepe.

Throughout Balbus contrives very skilfully to make fun of his adversary, and at one point in the conversation Tardif even allows himself to be persuaded that an abusive epigram attacked in 'Antibalbica' I was really meant to praise instead of mocking him. The 'Rhetor' covers fifty-five leaves, and it is not till quite at the end that Balbus reveals how cleverly he has been seen sailing close to the wind, lampooning Tardif in a book that could be described as an apology. In the last few pages the tone changes, and the book ends with a letter from Balbus to Ambrose de Cambray, chancellor of Paris, which, after explaining that Tardif's attack had been instigated by malicious enemies, winds up with a solemn protestation that none of his own writings, either previously or in the 'Rhetor,' were to be interpreted prejudicially to Tardif, and with another undertaking that he would never again write against him.

Such an unexpected conclusion was not likely to carry conviction, though the letter of Balbus's promise had been fulfilled. Tardif was naturally indignant and insisted on another recantation. It is a striking indication of the interest taken at the time in this paltry quarrel that the witnesses to this new engagement were men of the highest position—Ambrose de Cambray, protonotary of the Roman see, master in ordinary of pleas of the crown, chancellor of Paris; Hieronymus Georgius, the Venetian ambassador, and John Stella, Venetian secretary; Charles Guillard, a councillor of the parliament of Paris, and Peter Coard, royal advocate. All this is set forth at length with righteous indignation in the second 'Antibalbica,' which must have been published very soon after the 'Rhetor;' for Tardif in his state of mind was not likely to leave his adversary long unanswered. Out of thirty printed leaves only seven are given to further protests against Balbus and criticisms of the 'Rhetor,' the remainder being occupied with a reprint of 'Antibalbica' I, amplified by fresh comments and more grammatical examples; but the book is tedious and no flashes of wit relieve it, as in the 'Rhetor.'

There the quarrel ended. Tardif had triumphed for respectability, but in learning he had been entirely worsted by his clever and volatile antagonist; and Balbus was not much affected by having made a few enemies, when he had had so fine an opportunity to win glory as a scholar. To his friends he passed off the affair with Martial's jest that his life was cleaner than his poems,

and then proceeded at once to publish another book, an edition of the 'Somnium Scipionis,' followed by a poem, 'De laudibus bellicis regis Pannonie.' The subject was one likely to be popular—namely, the defeat of the Turks under Yakub, and their expulsion from Croatia by John Corvinus, son of Mathias Corvinus, king of Hungary, which took place in 1487. The date of the book can be fixed closely; for in the spring of 1488 Yakub gained a crushing victory over John Corvinus, after which the publication of the poem would hardly have been auspicious. An indication of Balbus's reputation at this period is to be found in some letters¹⁶ that passed between Erasmus, then a canon regular at Steyn, near Gouda, and his friend Cornelius Girardus, of Gouda, who was probably at Hieronymiana Vallis, a monastery near Leyden. Cornelius describes Balbus as having spent twenty-five years¹⁷ in studying poetry in Italy and at Paris, praises him as the only modern poet to follow in the steps of the ancients, and compares him to Ovid for tuneful song and lax morals. The poetry of northern Europe was indeed at a low ebb if Balbus's verses could find their way, probably in manuscript, to obscure Dutch monasteries as the best of their time.

On 5 Sept. 1489 Balbus was admitted, together with Faustus Andrelinus and Cornelius Vitellius, who had recently been recalled from England by Charles VIII, *ad lectiones publicas in arte humanitatis legendas*.¹⁸ The conjunction of the first two names is interesting, since it was with Faustus that Balbus's second quarrel took place. And this time he met his match.

Publius Faustus Andrelinus was born at Forli about the year 1462.¹⁹ He was educated at Bologna under Filelfo,²⁰ and afterwards under Pomponius Laetus at Rome. There on 20 April 1488²¹ the laurel wreath was awarded to him for his youthful poems, entitled 'Amores' or 'Livia,' in which his passion for a Bolognese girl of that name was celebrated with some grace but little reticence. Not long after this he entered the service of Louis Gonzaga, bishop of Mantua, with whom he remained as his

¹⁶ *Erasmi Epistolae*, app. 411, 419, 414; only the first letter is in the London edition, xxxi. 17. They may be dated between 1486 and 1490.

¹⁷ This is possibly an indication of Balbus's age; it can hardly be correct.

¹⁸ Bulaeus (v. 792) quotes the name as Joannes Balbus; but in his account of Hieronymus Balbus (v. 882) he refers the notice to him without comment, his authority in each case being the same, viz. the 'Acta Germanicae nationis.' There is no other trace of any Joannes Balbus at this time in Paris.

¹⁹ John Cordiger Alemanus, in a letter appended to the edition of Faustus's *Livia*, published by Marchant on 1 Oct. 1490, states that Faustus 'nondum secundum et vigesimum annum agebat' when he received the laurel.

²⁰ J. M. *adv. Faustum* calls Filelfo Faustus's 'preceptor.' For Faustus at Bologna cf. his *Livia* and *Elegies*.

²¹ Jac. da Volterra in Muratori, xxiii. 185. The year date is confirmed by the mention that the event took place on a Sunday.

*ostensore*²² for four years.²³ In the autumn of 1488 he left Mantua for Paris, bearing with him a letter from the bishop to Gilbert, comte-dauphin of Auvergne, dated 22 Sept. 1488, and after perhaps a short stay with Count Gilbert²⁴ made his way to the capital. J. M. states that he came in the train of some person of evil reputation and clad in a red cloak; but nothing further is known of his arrival in Paris, except that it was presumably some little time before 5 Sept. 1489, for there is no evidence to show that any special interest obtained his appointment for him at once.

For the quarrel between Balbus and Faustus we have again to rely largely upon controversial writings. Their position probably engendered rivalry between them, but it is not clear how soon this began. The *corvus* mentioned in 'Livia,' iv. 1, as crushed by Faustus is to be referred not to Balbus, but to Faustus's predecessor in his appointment. Faustus himself attributes²⁵ the beginning of the quarrel to a slander uttered by Balbus after the publication of 'Livia' on 1 Oct. 1490. Balbus apparently wrote to Italy that Faustus had been burned for heresy, whereat Faustus's parents were greatly alarmed, and Faustus had to send his servant, Brunorus Bulgarus, of Forli, to Italy to assure them that he was alive and well. This incident is said to have occurred in the winter, which accords well with the date of the 'Livia.'

In Sept. 1491 Faustus left Paris to try his fortune at Toulouse or Poitiers. The reason of his going is not clear. To judge from John Cordiger's enthusiastic advocacy of him in the 'Livia,' he seems to have been a successful teacher. Livy and Suetonius are mentioned as interpreted by him, books which lay outside the ordinary courses; and a long list of his compositions is enumerated, the 'Elegies' being destined for the press immediately after the 'Livia.' Faustus himself says²⁶ that life in Paris was dry and full of thorns, and that there was little for him to do. J. M. mentions a public decree of the university prohibiting Faustus from lecturing, which Balbus got reversed for him; and also states that the quarrel began before the journey to Toulouse, and that it was only through Balbus's kindness and influence that Faustus got work when he returned. We may conclude therefore that Faustus had good reason for leaving Paris. The date of his departure is important, and rests upon his statement²⁷ that it took place two years after he began to profess the art of oratory and poetry at Paris. The time of year is very carefully described. It was in the autumn, when the wine was made and the leaves still on the trees. The heat of summer was gone, but the mud and rain of

²² Tiraboschi, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, vi. 1173. ²³ *Fausti Eclogae*, i.

²⁴ One of Faustus's *Elegies* (i. 6) is dedicated to him. ²⁵ *Eleg.* iii. 8.

²⁶ Argument to *Eleg.* ii. 8. 'Eo libentius discedendum esse persuadet, quo aridum et spinosum Parisiensem agrum ita excoluerit ut universa Gallia eo fertiliorem habeat neminem.'

²⁷ Argument to *Eleg.* ii. 8.

winter were not yet. Scorpio was still stretching his arms across the sky,²⁸ and Sagittarius coming on. From these indications the departure for Toulouse can be placed in September. It plainly cannot be earlier than 1490; but that year will not do, both because of the improbability that Faustus should have left Paris at the time of so important a venture as the first publication of the 'Livia,' and also because of the episodes narrated above as following the 'Livia.' It is to be referred, therefore, to 1491, than which it cannot possibly be later; and this is confirmed by the similarity of the language²⁹ in which he refers to his first election to teach the art of oratory and poetry in Paris (obviously the appointment of 5 Sept. 1489) and to his abandoning the post two years later.

The venture was not successful. No money was to be made, and Faustus returned to Paris, probably in the spring of 1492, having visited both Toulouse and Poitiers. J. M. states that Faustus was stoned at the latter place after his third lecture, a calumny³⁰ which would have lost some of its point if Faustus had been long away from Paris. In a letter of Gaguin's³¹ dated 25 April Faustus is described as having returned to Paris after being *multos menses* at Toulouse. This expression would admit of the date 1492 for the letter, and therefore of Faustus's return in the spring; though 1493 is also possible, as there is nothing to show how long Faustus had been back when the letter was written. But his return cannot be put later than September 1492, for Gaguin would probably have described him then as being absent for a year.

After his return his relations with Balbus grew more hostile, and charges and counter-charges were rife. Gaguin in his commendatory letter about the 'De fuga Balbi' scoffs at Balbus for venturing to lecture on Proclus's 'Sphere;' J. M. on the other hand declares that when Faustus lectured on the same subject his notes were stolen entirely from Balbus. Unacknowledged borrowings are freely imputed. J. M. accuses Faustus of having designed to publish the eclogues of Calpurnius, which were not known at the time in Paris, as his own, had not Cornelius Vitellius prevented him, presumably by discovering the real authorship. If the story is true³² the episode is perhaps to be attributed to the years 1489-91, as there is reason to suppose that Vitellius had returned to Oxford by

²⁸ I presume the evening sky to be meant, as that is the time by which the unscientific observer judges the positions of the stars. Scorpio is to be seen in the evening sky between May and September.

²⁹ Compare the Arguments to *Livia*, iv. 1, and *Eleg.* ii. 8.

³⁰ Faustus scouts it as absurd in a preface to his *Bucolica*, dedicated to Peter Coard, after 1497. Geiger (*ubi supra*) questions whether Faustus ever carried out his intention of going to Toulouse, but this preface and Gaguin's letter amply substantiate it.

³¹ Gaguin's *Epistola* 65, to Bernard Andreas, who was contemplating leaving England and returning to his native Toulouse. Gaguin dissuades him on the ground of Faustus's failure.

³² In the preface to Coard prefixed to the *Bucolica* Faustus denies it vigorously.

1492. There is no trace of any edition of Calpurnius in Paris at this time; so that the publication, if contemplated, does not seem to have been carried out. Faustus, on the other hand, accuses Balbus of having published some of the poems of Cleophilus and Tito Strozzi as his own in the first book that he published in Paris. This statement I have been unable to verify; but Balbus's book of 'Elegies,' published without date, but described by J. M. as his last book before he left Paris, contains some direct quotations from Strozzi's 'Erotica,' of course unacknowledged.

Balbus's departure from Paris seems to have been taken in haste. Faustus says that he was accused of unnatural crime and only escaped burning by a hurried flight to England. J. M.'s account of it is that he had determined to return to Italy, and was on the point of doing so when some Italians trumped up a charge against him before a larceny judge, in order to asperse his reputation before he went; that Balbus was anxious to stay and clear himself, but his friends advised him, as he had already decided to go, not to expose himself to an unpleasant business, and that he accordingly withdrew and went to England, the Low Countries,³³ Germany, and Bohemia.

Balbus appears in the matriculation register³⁴ of Vienna University in the summer of 1493, so that his departure from Paris cannot well have been later than the spring of 1493. Very possibly it was in the end of 1492, a date that agrees well with the seven years in Paris assigned to him by J. M., for his journey was anything but direct, and, as the matriculation register describes him as sent by the prince (Maximilian), Balbus must have had time to ingratiate himself in high quarters. After he had been about a year at Vienna Balbus published a book of epigrams, on 1 Aug. 1494, consisting largely of those previously printed in Paris, many of which were addressed to new patrons without any alterations except in the headings. It was possibly this piece of sharp practice that decided Faustus to publish his 'De fuga Balbi,' which for two years he had kept to himself.³⁵ Gaguin's commendatory letter is dated 16 Sept. 1494, and the printing took place in January 1495,³⁶ as is shown by the facts that J. M.'s 'Defensio' was written as soon as Faustus put his calumnies into print, and that it appeared in 1495, calculating four years from Faustus's visit to Toulouse. The 'Defensio' answers the eclogue as it was published by Baligault, with a prefatory letter from Faustus to Gaguin,³⁷ not, as Caillaut

³³ 'Theutonia.' I am not sure what is intended by this. It is evidently to be distinguished from Germania.

³⁴ Aschbach, ii. 52.

³⁵ 'Biennio hanc, ut dictitas, distulisti editionem' (J. M.) I cannot trace the original statement by Faustus.

³⁶ Gaguin's *Epistola* 61, to Arnold Bostius, dated 30 Jan. 'Faustus totus in Balbum rapitur: in quem eglogam his proximis noctibus lucubravit et nunc imprimendam curat indicto nomine "de Balbi fuga."'

³⁷ Cf. 'Ab epistola ad aeglogam me conferam.'

published it in 'Antibalbica' II, with a prose introduction but no letter. With the publication of the 'Defensio' the matter practically ends. Faustus took no notice of it till he republished his own poem on Balbus in a volume of eclogues, which must have appeared after July 1497, for it is dedicated to Peter Coard, then first president of the parliament of Paris, an office to which he attained on the date mentioned.

Balbus appears frequently in the university records³⁸ at Vienna from 1493 to 1499, so that Trithemius's³⁹ statement that he was still living in Paris in 1494 cannot be true. In 1495 the university was closed because of the plague, and Aschbach supposes that Balbus returned to Paris and then had the final struggle with Faustus. Quite apart from the considerations adduced above this is in the highest degree improbable, for in the writings of that time there is no trace of any return of Balbus to Paris after he had once left. From the fact that J. M. in 1495 speaks of Balbus as having gone to Bohemia I am inclined to suggest that he then paid a visit to Prague; for it was to Prague that he turned in 1499 when he had made Vienna too hot for himself.

After this his movements become very uncertain for a time.⁴⁰ Aschbach mentions manuscript letters of Balbus at Vienna, which with those printed by De Retzer⁴¹ will perhaps throw light on the subject. He appears ten or twelve years later as tutor to the young Prince Louis of Bohemia, as an energetic provost of Pressburg, as a most eloquent and polished diplomatist, and finally as bishop of Gurck. The contrast between the quarrelsome and loose-lived poet and the brilliant prelate was so great that even one of his contemporaries⁴² was uncertain whether they could be the same person; but just at the period when he reappears, to us, as an ambassador he is mentioned, by men who must have known his fame at Paris, as possibly the author of such satires as the 'Julius Exclusus' and the 'Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum'; so that there is no ground for questioning the identification.

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³⁸ Aschbach, ii.

³⁹ *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Basle, 1494). It is strange to find Balbus ranked as an ecclesiastical writer on the strength of the *Rhetor Gloriosus*, the only book of his that Trithemius had seen.

⁴⁰ Budinsky, *Gesch. Univ. Paris*, traces him quite wrongly to Freiburg in 1507, as lecturing on the newly discovered poem of Ligurinus, confusing him with the well-known jurist Hieronymus Baldung.

⁴¹ *Balbi opera omnia*, ed. J. de Retzer, 1791.

⁴² Symphorian Champerius, in an attack on some statements made by Balbus in an oration delivered at Charles V's coronation in 1530, says: 'Hieronymum Balbum . . . aliquando Parisiis vidimus ac audivimus, modo sit Foroliviensis ille, contra Tardivum et Faustum disserentem.' I take 'Foroliviensis' to be a mistake of Champerius, confusing Balbus's birthplace with Faustus's in his memory.