

& Bellum ciuile

p. 213 ((Re Caesar's Bellum Gallicum)) The style is like nothing else in Latin, save the imitations of it in the continuations to be dealt with presently. If it is to be called anything but Caesarian, it is Attic in tendency, and its peculiarities of diction are very many<sup>78</sup>; it is unfortunate that most young students of Latin are introduced to it early and thus get the mistaken impression that it is normal writing<sup>p.214</sup> of that time. That it is good Latin we have Cicero's assurance,<sup>79</sup> to leave out of account that of every later critic who deals with it; but nothing more unlike Cicero's own style, even at its plainest, could well be imagined; it differs from his simplicity more than the most characteristic parts of Jane Austen differ from Addison.

p. 383 We do, on the other hand, know the name of the author of the Ilias Latina, which is not a translation of the Iliad but a sort of compendium of it. . . .<sup>p.384</sup> one MS. has preserved his full name, BAEBIVS ITALICVS . .

p. 384 Both date and authorship are uncertain in the case of the Aetna, a poem which for some extraordinary reason was ascribed to Vergil as early as the time of Suetonius; anything more unlike his style can hardly be imagined. It was for a while fashionable to assign it to Lucilius, the friend of Seneca, but there is no sufficient proof of his having written it.

These are the ascertained facts. 1 The poem was written before the eruption of Vesuvius (79), for it says that the region between Naples and Cuma~~e~~, though it must once have been volcanic, has long been inactive(frigidus, 432). 2. Style, metre and language, though all somewhat peculiar and original, are of the Silver Age. 3. It does not resemble the work of any other poet between 14 and 79. 4. Seneca, epp. 79, 5, says he is sure Lucilius will not be able to resist the temptation of describing Aetna in his poem, for although Vergil had done so(Aen., iii, 571-87), Ovid had also attempted it (Met. v, 352-8), and Cornelius Severus (p.343; no doubt it was in his poem on the Sicilian War, and there is no ground for supposing, as some unknown humanist and after him Scaliger did, that the Aetna is his work) described it yet again. That Lucilius dealt with Sicily and was interested in science is clear from the many passages of Seneca. Therefore he may be the author, but there is no reason for saying positively that he is.

But whoever the author was, he was not a contemptible poet.

<sup>412</sup>  
p. 412 While no one now seriously doubts that Tacitus wrote this excellent work((i.e. Dialogus de oratoribus)), there is no absolutely cogent argument in favour of his authorship. That the style is very different from that of the historical works is irrelevant; it differs in matters of rhythm and sentence-structure, of which the author would be conscious and which he could change at will. The vocabulary, the grammar and the flashes of epigram are all Tacitean.