

*Carmentis*,—phrases in which he would not supply an accusative. But the quantity of the *a* in *mea* seems fatal to his view.

Priscian thinks of *mea* in *mea refert* as ablative, and would supply *in re*, making the full construction *mea in re refert* equivalent in meaning to *in mea utilitate refert*. In this he is followed by Valla, but Sanctius denies that *mea in re* can have this meaning; and Vossius, who thinks with Priscian that *mea* is ablative, prefers to supply *causa* or *gratia*. Later supporters of the view that *mea* is ablative—such as Reisig, Krueger and Schmalz—recognize that in the first syllable of *refert* the *e* is long, and that it is properly written as two words, *re fert*; and from the analogy of the Plautine phrase, *e re mea* “to my advantage,” they explain *mea refert* as for *e mea re fert*, “it bears to my advantage.” This explanation, which is the one now usually adopted, while it is a possible one, has no support from the ancients, and affords no explanation for the constructions in *refert viventi* or *ad me refert* quoted above.

A third explanation given by the Romans, and the oldest of all, is that found in Festus' Compendium of Verrius Flaccus' work, “*De Significatu Verborum*,” where we read (p. 282 M.) “*Refert cum dicimus, errare nos ait Verrius; esse enim rectum refert, — dativo scilicet, non ablativo casu; sed esse jam usu possessum.*” That is to say, in the phrase *mea re fert*, Verrius thinks *mea re* primarily a dative and equivalent to *mea rei*, but acknowledges that the words in question are—*jam usu possessum*—generally acknowledged to be ablatives, on account of their form, the identity of which with the ablative is obvious, while into their real and primary nature few pause to inquire. But Verrius was one of the few men who make it their business to inquire into the real nature of such phrases, and of all Romans who engaged in such investigations, his authority best deserves our attention. He lived in the reign of Augustus, who appointed him tutor to his grandsons, Gaius and Lucius Cæsar; and from the epitomes of his work, “*De Significatu Verborum*,” made by Festus and Paulus Diaconus, we can see that it was an exhaustive dictionary of Archaic Latin, made at a time when materials were best available for such a work. Gerard Vossius feels the weight of his authority, and is willing to acknowledge that *refert* may be for *rei fert*, being probably influenced by Cæsar's statement that the proper and usual endings of the dative singular in the fourth and fifth declensions is not *ui* and *ei*, as given in the compendia of later grammarians, and as written by later scribes, but *u* and *e*. But *mea*, Vossius thinks, cannot be the dative, and for this reason he rejects Verrius' explanation. But, in the light of the testimony afforded by older Latin inscriptions, Vossius' reason for rejecting this explanation becomes, it seems to me, our strongest reason for accepting it. In the first volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* we find eleven instances of undoubted datives of the first declension ending, not in *ae*, but in *a*, as for example in *Fortuna dedi* or *matre matuta dono dedro*. W. M. Lindsay, in a paper in the *Classical Review* of December last, recognizes in old Latin two forms of the dative singular for *a* stems, represented by *Fortunai* and *Fortuna*, both derived from the primary *Fortuna + ai*, but for the differentiation of which he cannot account. So we find for *o* stems two forms of the dative in old Latin, *populoi* and *populo*, both derived from the primary *populo + ai*; but here it is the shortened form that has held the field. *Mea re* is, then, if we accept the testimony of Cæsar, and of the oldest inscriptions, as good a dative as *mea rei*; and *mea re fert* is, according to our oldest authority, equivalent to *mea rei fert*, “it bears to the advantage of my affair”; which is precisely the explanation of the meaning of the phrase now generally accepted, but attained without resorting to the Jesuit's trick of the ellipsis, and presenting us with a noteworthy confirmation of the latest view with regard to the form of the dative in Archaic Latin. This explanation seems to me, moreover, to be confirmed by some of the parallel constructions that are in use for *mea*, the ablative so-called. Horace, as we have seen, wrote *re fert viventi*, using an undoubted dative. As far back as Plautus we find, used as a substitute for the dative, the preposition *ad* with the accusative, which takes its place in the Romance languages. And it is