

But even when we let these modern hexameters go, as Greek, and rely hold them fast in their proper character of Longfellowian, or Feltonian, or Frog-pondian, we must still condemn them as having been committed in a radical misconception of the philosophy of verse. The spondee, as I observed, is the *theme* of the Greek line. Most of the ancient hexameters *begin* with spondees, for the reason that the spondee *is* the theme; and the ear is filled with it as with a burden. Now the Feltonian dactyls have, in the *same* way, dactyls for the theme, and most of them begin with dactyls—which is all very proper if not very Greek,—but, unhappily, the one point at which they *are* very Greek is that point, precisely, at which they should be nothing but Feltonian. They always *close* with what is meant for a spondee. To be consistently silly, they should die off in a dactyl.

That a truly Greek hexameter *cannot*, however, be readily composed in English, is a proposition which I am by no means inclined to admit. I think I could manage the point myself. For example:

Do tell! | when may we | hope to make | men of sense |  
 out of the | Pundits |  
 Born and brought | up with their | snouts deep | down in  
 the | mud of the | Frog-pond? |  
 Why ask? | who ever | yet saw | money made | out of a |  
 fat old |  
 Jew, or | downright | upright | nutmegs | out of a | pine-  
 knot? |

The proper spondee predominance is here preserved. Some of the dactyls are not so good as I could wish—but, upon the whole, the rhythm is very decent—to say nothing of its excellent sense.