

only to Homer's *Il'iad* ; Lu'can, the author of the *Pharsa'lia*, an epic poem on the civil wars of Rome ; Sta'tius, whose great powers were too little controlled by judgment ; Vale'rius Flac'cus, whose choice of a subject was unfortunate ; and Sil'ius Ita'licus, who was an humble imitator of Virgil.

Q. Had not the Romans several amatory poets ?

A. A great number of the Roman poets devoted themselves to the composition of amatory elegies and other poems, of which love was the subject. The chief were Catul'lus, Tibul'lus, and Proper'tius ; but, above all, O'vid, the most prolific of the Roman poets. The works of the amatory poets are, unfortunately, sometimes disfigured by passages offensive to proper feeling.

Q. Who was the principal lyric poet among the Romans ?

A. The Romans were far inferior to the Greeks in lyrical poetry ; but the Odes of Catul'lus and Ho'-race are held in deserved estimation.

Q. Had the Romans any distinguished epigrammatist ?

A. The Epigrams of Martial are considered the best that any country has produced : his wit, however, too often outruns his discretion ; and his works are, consequently, less popular than they might have been.

Q. In what department of poetry have the Romans succeeded best ?

A. The pastoral poetry of the Romans is that species which has met most general approbation. Virgil, the chief of the epic, is also the best of the pastoral poets. The pastoral poems of Calpur'nus also merit great praise.

Q. Had not the Romans a celebrated writer of fables ?