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FROM MY DIARY

I'm still unwell, after an unbelievable 9 weeks of sitting around at home with a headache. But finally I seem to be improving. None of the pills and potions prescribed by my GP has had any effect, but time seems to be the cure. I'm waiting for a scan, but the doctor thinks that it won't show anything.

Meanwhile I've been rereading the epigrams of Martial, in the old Loeb edition with facing Latin. I do prefer the stately translations of a century ago to modern attempts.

I notice that the eye is always drawn to the epigrams that are not translated, and instead given in some elderly Italian version which is hardly more comprehensible than Latin. You inevitably find yourself attempting to understand the syntax.

The books could not present the obscene matter at that date, for that was illegal. But was there a subtle ulterior motive here? Print the Latin, and then rely on the frustration of teenage boys as a way to teach them Latin grammar and syntax? For the best way to learn any language is always to have something in that language that you wish to read!
