Latīna

Cotīdiāna

"Everyday Latin"
Foreword

Latin is, without doubt, one of the most useful subjects ever taught in any school besides the English language. One does not realize how important it is until he has studied it some. Latin is very prevalent in our everyday language and especially so in such professions as medicine, pharmacy and law. Just for comparison, and to show what a great debt we owe to the ancient Romans, the statistics show that approximately of the 20,000 words which you will most frequently meet in your English reading, 10,400 are of Latin origin, 5,400 came from Anglo-Saxon, and the remainder, 2,200 from Greek. Thus you see that over half of our commonly used English words are derived from Latin.

There are three forms of Latin words in our English. They are (1) Latin words that are still Latin and of which fact we are conscious; (2) Latin words that have retained their original form but have become so much a part of our language that we are unconscious of their being Latin; and (3), words that are derived from Latin but which have changed their forms. The following pages will give examples of each.

Robert Chisholm.

2
All of our months are of Latin derivation. 

"January" is from Januarys, which in turn derived from Janus, the god of doorways and of beginnings in general. 

"February" is from Februa, derived from a word meaning to purify, since this month was the time for purification. 

"March" is from Martius, derived from Mars, the god of war. 

"April" is from Aprils, the derivation of which is uncertain. It may be derived from "aperire," to open, as the earth begins to "open" in the spring. 

"May" is from Maia, derived from Maia, the mother of Mercury. 

"June" is from Junius, the name of a famous Roman family. 

"July" is from Julys, the name which Julius Caesar
The twelve signs of the Zodiac are all of Latin derivation. Above is the complete chart.
EGAD, I WISH YOU DONKEYS WOULD NOT DISTRACT ME! I AM BRUSHING UP FOR A NEW YEAR SPEECH TO THE JOLLY JUNKET CLUB! HMP-KAFF! BY THE WAY, DID YOU KNOW JANUARY IS NAMED FOR JANUS, ROMAN GOD WITH TWO FACES? JANUS WAS THE GOD OF DOORS, BECAUSE A DOOR LOOKS TWO WAYS—HOW'S THIS FOR A START—"MY DEAR FRIENDS, AS WE PAUSE ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW WAR-RUMPH!!"

IF THAT JOLLY JUNKET CLUB IS THE SAME SWARM OF SIGNAL-NOSES I KNOW, YOU'LL WAKE UP WITH MORE HEADS THAN A KEG OF NAILS!

JANUS MUST HAVE BEEN THE GOD OF PEDESTRIANS, TOO—LOOK BOTH WAYS OR COME TO WITH AN ARMFUL OF FRONT BUMPERS.

INTRODUCTION TO AN ORATION=

Major Hoople has the right idea there.

Looie does have one book connected with law. It is the Latin "Habeas Corpus" and it means "You may have the body." It is a writ to bring a prisoner into court before a judge to inquire into the charge of his imprisonment and with a view to protecting the rights of personal liberty.
This is what we would call a real 'tandem' bicycle ride. "Tandem" is a Latin word meaning "at last" or "finally." It was originally a tophoric term meaning "at length." Instead of sides by sides, it referred to horse harness "at length."
Both undergraduates and alumnae members of Panhellenic at the Nebraska schools feel the action of Alpha Delta Theta does not indicate any failure to "make the grade," but is simply a reflection of the trend toward larger, centralized groups in all organizations.

Roman Debauchery Scenes

During the last days of Rome, debauchery and vulgarity among the wealthier class prevailed and scenes such as these were very common.

Alumnae comes from the Latin infinitive "alere" which means "to nourish." Alumnae means women graduates because of the Latin feminine ending "ae."

"Villa" is a Latin word meaning country house. The villas of the rich were beautiful mansions, usually on the seashore.

STOP TODAY
For Our Special N. Y. Table D'Hote
SOUTHERN PLANTATION
FRIED CHICKEN DINNER 65c
from Cocktail to Dessert
ITALIAN VILLA, Air Cooled
4423 DODGE ST.
STEAKS & CHICKENS
FISH DINNER
65c and Up.
This may be taking an awful risk but it's very good Latin. The Latin motto which you see at the top of this page happens to be the famous "E pluribus unum," the motto of the United States of America. It means "one from many." It indicates that the United States is united into one strong nation out of many separate states. This motto appears on all U.S. money.

**Smiles**

A student was called upon to give a written translation of the verse below:

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Isabille, Here's go.
Fortibus es in aro.
Noces, Mari Thebi trux
Vallis in em paz a dux.
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After long effort, the student came forth with the following. It is not surprising that the instructor read it to the class:

"I say, Billie here's a go,
Forty buses in a row.
"No," says Mary, "they be trucks.
"What is in 'em?" "Packs o' ducks."

This is what you might call a pretty free translation. The only translation found for this little ditty that made much sense was the one given above. (See page 26).
The British ultimatum was that a "state of war" would exist between Britain and Germany at 11 a.m. (4 a.m., C.S.T.) unless Germany agreed before that time to suspend action against Poland and withdraw her forces immediately.

Thus the state of war actually started at 11 a.m.

It will mean more than 12 million men under arms, it may mean the most widespread death and destruction in all history; it will mean billions of dollars to feed the guns; just preparation for war has cost the world a billion and a half dollars a month.

Ultimatum comes from the Latin word "ultima" meaning "final or last. Thus ultimatum means "last proposition."

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War News Stuns Students At Pax Romana Congress

"Pax Romana" are two Latin words meaning Roman peace. The headline means "War News Stuns Students At Roman Peace Congress."

"Corpus Delicti" is a Latin law term meaning the "body of the crime." In the law terms of today, it means proof or fact essential to establish a crime.
Roman Step

Italian papers referred for the first time last week to the *passe romano* or Roman step, said it is done "by keeping the leg rigid and striking the foot violently against the ground."

This is what geese and German soldiers do. Last week in Rome it was done by 2,000 Black Shirts before Il Duce. The active Dictator became so elated that he jumped down from the reviewing stand, placed himself and his entire staff at the head of the 2,000 Black Shirts, led them swiftly in the *passe romano* clear across the parade ground.

Barrymore Still Ad Libs

"Ad lib" is a Latin abbreviation for "ad libitum", meaning "as one pleases or wishes". This clipping means that John Barrymore still does as he pleases on the stage and does not follow rules or etiquette of acting.

Excerpt in appearance, the transparent little water flea called *Daphnia magna* is a good deal like a human being.

"Magna" is a Latin adjective, meaning big, large, great, etc. (*Inter alia*, etc. stands for "et alia", Latin phrase meaning "and the rest").

Flanders, A.D. 1915

...the muddiest road to Paris.

A.D. is the abbreviation for the Latin "anno Domini", which means "in the year of our Lord".

This Latin noun almost preserves its original spelling. It is derived from the Latin word "*ira*", meaning anger.
"My words are health," says the writer of Proverbs. "I wish above all things that thou mayst . . . be in health even as thy soul prospereth." wrote John the Beloved, in his third letter to the new, beginning Christians. Saint Paul, addressing himself to the people of Corinth, that oldest of cities in the Greek state that gave us Mors sana in corpore sano as a rule of life, reminds them that the bodies they prize so highly are rightly prized because they are the temples of God and gifts from him. Then he strikes a note we sometimes forget. The body a gift, freely given but, like the talents, to be accounted for in its use. God asks not only, What have you done with your mind's talents, and those of your spirit? but, What have you made of the body I have given you?

This motto of the Y.M.C.A. may have come from Greece, but it is still a Latin Motto meaning "A sound mind in a sound body."

This model young woman, Jane Dahlman (Smith College '33, earn laurels), is the daughter of Lawyer Louis A. Dahlman of Milwaukee.

"Nolo docere" means "I do not wish to teach." (Docere is another infinitive meaning "to teach.")

SHORT STORIES.

Sampson: "I'm strong for you, kid."
David: "The bigger they are, the harder they fall."
Nero: "Hot stuff! Keep the home-fires burning."
Cleopatra: "You're an easy Mark Antony."
Helen: "So this is Paris!"
Noah: "It floats!"
Methuselah: "The first hundred years are the hardest."—Montreal Star.

New, one of the later emperors of Rome, was said to have fiddled while Rome burned. Cleopatra, the famous Egyptian queen, fell in love with Mark Antony, a famous Roman.
Croesus was one of the mightiest and richest kings ever to reign over Lydia and he was also the last, reigning from 560 B.C. to 546 B.C. "Rich as Croesus" is a familiar term used to denote fabulous wealth. He got his wealth from mining gold and from levies upon the people.

This shows the general principle of the catapult.
This picture may be of the Romans or it may not, but it shows a striking example of the kind of courage shown in many times in the days of the Romans. It shows the same courage as Horatius showed when he was defending the bridge alone.
In the foreground are the remains of the rostrum where Marc Antony made his famous funeral oration over the body of Caesar. Sheep and bull, shown carved in bas-relief, are symbols of pagan sacrifice. Center is the eight-columned Temple of Saturn, built for use as a public treasury in 498 B.C. and restored in the fourth century A.D. Left is the last building to be placed in the forum, the Phocas column erected in 608 A.D. by the Byzantine emperor of that name.

The Italian government has thrown a lot of light on the nation's ancient ruins lately.

For the first time in their two thousand-year history, temples and arches of the old forum, political and commercial center of imperial Rome, were illuminated by batteries of giant flood lights as a feature of the twentieth anniversary of Italian fascism March 26.

The result was a never-to-be-forgotten spectacle. Bathed in light and shadow, these historic landmarks which saw the life and death of Caesar dropped their cloaks of crumbling age and for a few hours reflected the splendor of the age of emperors.

A month later, a system of one hundred fifty thousand candlepower arc lights gave artificial daylight to the city of Pompei, which was destroyed by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 A.D.
Best preserved of Roman triumphal arches is that of Constantine, completed in 312 A.D. to commemorate the battle of Saxa Rubra, by which triumph of Christianity was assured.
A section of the world-famous ruins of Pompeii under modern arc lights, cleverly concealed.

HISTORY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
No. 2—The Trombone

Of all wind instruments, the trombone has perhaps been least modified in form. It was originally known as the sackbut, and is characterized by its sliding tubes. The earliest form of slide trumpet was the Roman buccina. Several improvements transformed the buccina into the sackbut: the addition of the slide and bending or folding the extending portion of the tube to make it less unwieldy.
Rome’s most famous landmark, the Coliseum, is seen in the background illuminated from the Temple of Venus, whose columns rise at the left. Real name of the Coliseum is “Flavian Amphitheater.” Started by Emperor Vespasian, completed by his son Titus in 80 A.D., it remains today one of the architectural wonders of the world. It could seat fifty thousand spectators and recent excavations revealed 32 elevators used for bringing wild animals up to the arena to fight gladiators. Emperor Hadrian built the Temple of Venus in 135 A.D.

This picture shows the typical Roman soldier but without the plumes on his helmet.

Initiation

The word initiation comes from the Latin word initium, which means beginning. Hence the present meaning.
This is another picture of a typical Roman soldier, such as shown on page 19.

21 They say unto him, Cæsar’s. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.

Caesar needs no explanation of who he was. This passage is taken from the Bible.
In times of ancient Rome a few girls went to school, but not many compared to the boys. The pupils were taught to write on wax covered tablets, using a stylus to scratch the marks on the wax. In later life they more often wrote on the form of paper known as "papyrus."

Roman woman holding tablet and stylus.

When the boys grew to manhood, their knowledge of writing helped them in many ways, not only for letter-writing but also to perform duties in public office. Some became "censors," and assistants to censors. In this work there was much writing to be done. From time to time, the censors went to work on a "census."

The word "census" came from the Latin language, and means "estimate."

A Roman censor did not go from house to house to learn facts. He waited in a public place, and an order was sent out for people to come to him. We may picture him seated in a large chair, with rolls of papyrus before him for use in taking down notes. When people came to him, he asked them questions and their answers were written down.

We might suppose that many persons might not appear before the censor, and it is quite likely that some were missed. The Romans, however, had a strong system of law. When people were ordered to go to a certain place most of them were quick about it.

Going back to the year which we call 220 B.C., we find a total of 270 thousand Roman citizens. That number did not include women and children. Counting all members of the family, there probably were about 1,250,000 persons in the families of the Roman citizens at that time.

Population usually climbs as time goes on, but the next Roman census showed a drop in number of citizens. The new census, 16 years later, showed only 214 thousand of them.

The reason is found in Roman history. Between the years named, the Romans had fought long and hard against the armies of Carthage. They had won the war, but had lost a vast number of men. Not all people in Italy were classed as Roman citizens. Hundreds of thousands were slaves, and a great number of others were farmers who had not been made citizens.

In the time of Julius Caesar, many Gauls in northern Italy and in Gaul (modern France) became Roman citizens. This led quite a number of them to name their sons "Julius," as a mark of friendship toward Caesar.
The word *juvenile* comes from the Latin word *juvenis*, which means "young man." Incidentally, Leander is quite a young man.

**Captain Lauds 'Restraint' of Flint's Crew**

The word *lauds*, which means praise, comes from the Latin *laudis*, which also means praise.

**SOMETHING TO CHEW ON**

Radishes were first used, not as an article of food, but as missiles by political critics. Roman citizens delighted in hurling them in the Forum, the public-debating place in Rome, at speakers whom they disliked.

I still prefer to eat mine! (It would be fun though.)
Bob Taylor would like to forget all about his moments among the Romans. But Sam Goldwyn wouldn't dream of giving up the screen test of which the above is a sample.

Yes, it really is Robert Taylor!

Instead of having Latin today, my dears, teacher will read you "The 17 Murders in Bloody Gulch"—it's more fun!

Duce Turns Crank, New Machine Gets Iron Out of Sand

Rome, March 30 GP—Premier Mussolini today tried out a new invention designed to extract iron ore from sea sand.

The duce turned the crank of the machine which swallows sand and separates iron-bearing particles by a system of magnets.

She is "one in a million".

The title Duce is a derivative of the Latin word dux which means leader. Duce means "the leader."
Every football game turns up, at least one man—so I hear—who will take his place along with the legendary immortal heroes.

This seems to be a queer place for Horatius to be but I guess he feels at home.

**SOMETHING TO CHEW ON**

A Roman emperor won his freedom from the Goths with a ransom of 3,000 pounds of pepper, worth more than gold in ancient times. It was expensive because it had to be brought overland from the Malabar coast of India, and a retailer with a stock of it was fixed for life.

"Ain't that jumpin' to sneeze at?"

*The word Communism comes from the Latin Commune meaning Common. Hence the present meaning.*
This proves that one can find Latin in almost everything. Here it is on even a cigarette package. In case you don't see it, the Latin is *In Hoc Signo Vinces* which means "In this sign you will conquer," referring to the picture of the two lions. The other Latin phrase is *Per Aspera Ad Astra* which means "To the stars through bolts and bars."
The Latin students among our readers, most of them, recognized the following verse for the thing we intended: just another joke! (reprinted from issue of November 18, 1939).

A student was called upon to give a written translation of the verse below:

"I say, Billie, here's a go,  
Forty buses in a row.  
"No," says Mary, "they be trucks."  
"What is in 'em?" "Packs o' ducks.""

But for the sake of the many others who are still trying by brute force to make it make sense, and to restrain those others who are, we suspect, circulating columns upon their long-suffering teachers of Latin in their local high schools because satisfactory translations haven't been forthcoming, we are hereby openly broadcasting the awful truth: The original verse was not presented in these columns as a gem of purest ray serene culled from the treasure trove of classical literature that is our ancient heritage; it is, in fact, a synthetic hodgepodge of genuine Latin words and Latinized nonsense deliberately arranged so as to get a smile when read aloud phonetically. No, I didn't invent it; but if it was a crime to repeat it, please don't give me away to the F.B.I.

This article explains why I could not translate the same Latin verse found on page 9.

Camera, the word which we have given the little box which takes photographs, comes from the Latin words, **camera obscura**, which mean a darkened room.

Among a younger group, Hitler Youth was simultaneously spreading respect for the Spartan characteristics.

Simultaneously comes from the Latin word simul which means "at the same time".
Lucius paled the lot contemptuously.
"By Jupiter!" His voice was disgusted.
"This would be poor loot for beggars!"
"What do you expect?" asked Gaius, leaning over his shoulder. "That thieves should be clad in kings' raincoat?"
Lucius regarded a soiled, striped garment critically. "The coat's not bad. It belonged to the fellow on the left, the one who cursed so loudly. I'll throw you for it, Gaius. What say? Want to cast with us, Janius?"
"No, thanks. I have my share already."
The room seemed suddenly stifling, and Janius moved to the courtyard entrance, glad for the feeling of fresh coolness on his flushed face.

These names are the typical names of Romano. There were only about twenty names that were common with Roman men and boys.

The Fraternity-Sorority Problem

Fraternity and Sorority both come from Latin. Fraternity comes from frater meaning "brother" while sorority comes from soror meaning "sister."

When, at last, I reached the hole, I took out, one by one, the five brown-splotted blue-green eggs from their deep basket of sticks lined with cow hair. I put them in the cotton-filled box I had tied around my neck and, with much grunting, I was slowly hauled back to my starting point. Standing on terra firma once more, I was able to look with much pleasure upon a beautiful set of five eggs of the American raven, which are now in my collection. The guide's tactful comment was: "One of the easiest takes of raven I've ever saw!"
The Latin phrase *non compos mentis* means "not of sound mind" or the like. It is used often in connection with law.

**Seek Clues in Child's Death**

Emmettburg, Ia., Mar. 19. (P)—Authorities hope an inquest scheduled for today will throw light on the circumstances surrounding the shooting of nine-year-old Bernard Mundus at the farm of his parents near here Sunday. A post mortem conducted yesterday by Coroner R. J. Brink disclosed the bullet that killed the boy pierced both lungs and the heart.

A post mortem is a Latin phrase meaning an examination of a body after death. The real meaning is "after death."

The term verb meant originally word in Latin, and we find the same root in verbal, verbisage and verbosae. In the early days of language, names and actions were not separated as they are now. One word probably stood for both, and so the Latin *verbum* signified perhaps the word, the indispensable word. Later the word took to itself a variety of endings and changes in spelling that indicated two important matters: who or what performed the action, and the time at which it was performed.

The Roman calendar, introduced by Romulus in 738 B.C., divided the year into 10 months, comprising 304 days.

**Good Thoughts**

**Inspiration**

No man was ever great without divine inspiration.—Cicero.

Cicero was a very famous Roman orator and statesman. He not only spoke Latin but also Greek very well.

Mark Antony once gave a dinner for Cleopatra, and she praised it so highly that he ordered an entire city be given to the cook.

*Mark Antony was one of the most famous Romans. He delivered the famous funeral address at Cæsar's funeral.*
The Altar of Peace was decreed by the Roman Senate, July 4, 13 B.C., as a symbol of Pax Romana, which had been established by Emperor Augustus. The Latin name was "Ara Pacis Augustae." The altar stood within an enclosing wall of white marble about 19 feet high, about 38 feet east and west, and 35 feet north and south. It was decorated with carvings of fruit, garlands of flowers, processions of magistrates, the imperial family, and others.

If you slam the front door behind you and leave the key inside, you should do as the Romans did. Charles Courtney, ace locksmith of New York, explained the system to us. He owns a reproduction of a huge Roman lock and key, dug up at Pompeii. The lock, two feet square, weighs about fifty pounds; the ten-pound iron key is nearly two feet long. The Roman method, which sounds pretty complicated, was to chain a slave just outside the front door. The key was chained to the slave. When the house owner came home, the slave let him in. If a marauder appeared while the master was out, the slave bopped him on the head with the key. Mr. Courtney says the Romans called their door slaves janitores — whence, of course, our modern word "janitor."
I AM AN OPTIMIST

The word "optimist" comes from the Latin word optimus meaning "very good" or "best." From this comes the meaning of optimist.

In history, for instance, we learn about the decay of Rome, Babylonia, and Egypt—all the past civilizations which have waned. And those of us who are acute enough can draw conclusions about the likeness of the fate of other civilizations and the doom that awaits our own.

Our history books stop there. We are left with the cynical conclusion, "Eadem, sed Aliter."

A painting in water colors?

"Aquarelle" is the name for such a work of art, though it is seldom used, even by water-colorists (or aquarellists). "Aquarelle," which is a water color painting, comes from the Latin aqua, meaning water. Hence an aquarelle is a water color painting.
And that, my fine-feathered friend, should be a stumper for you. Yours in part, JOHN KIERAN.

P. S. I forgot to strew Latin quotations along the line to make it look learned. Pick from among the following and sprinkle ad lib.: Nitor in adversum; Sic semper tyrannis; Labor omnia vincit; Carpe diem; Ne plus ultra; Sic vox non nobis; and E pluribus unum.
Vale, J. K.

John Kieran, the famous walking encyclopedia, is a very good Latin student and has added these Latin subtitles for the reason he gives. The meanings are as follows: Nitor in adversum — "I strive against opposition": Sic semper tyrannis — "Ever thus to tyrants": Labor omnia vincit — "Perseverance overcomes everything": Carpe diem — "Enjoy the present day": Ne plus ultra — "Nothing further": Sic vos non nobis — "Thus do ye, but not for yourselves": E pluribus unum — "One from many": Fast but not least is Vale meaning "goodbye."


This Latin phrase means "A case already decided" and is often used in law.

This is a picture of the Great Seal of the United States of America and which shows use of Latin. This appears on all dollar bills.
Discipline of The Methodist Church.

This is the product of the Uniting Conference of 1939—a guide for every preacher and informed member of the new Church. Merely as an historical volume it should be possessed and studied by all young people and adults of united Methodism.

The Latin phrase vade mecum means “Go with me” and a Vade mecum would mean something that was needed quite a bit.

Miserere (miz-ərē-ə), p. 22-E. The 51st psalm; also the musical setting for it. From the beginning of the Latin version of the psalm, Miserere mei, Deus, “Have mercy on me, O God!”

This Latin sentence is explained after itself. It is used in religious services where Latin is used as the language.

I had five years of Greek and more of Latin. I knew a lot about a few things. More than five years of Latin is quite a bit and quite enough.

Saved by the Salver

When you’re handed something on a salver, or tray, don’t be too certain if it is safe to eat. Our word “salver” comes into English through the Spanish salva from the Latin salvas, “safe.” Spanish nobles who were afraid that their food or drink may have been poisoned gave one of their servants the thankless task of tasting everything before it was served to the guests at table; that is, unless the host intended to do a little poisoning of his own. This tasting was referred to as salva and in time the word “salva” came to refer to the tray on which the food was served. The word as “salver” in this sense came into English to mean tray.
A good secretary is a confidant who knows how to keep a secret. Our word "secretary" comes to us from the Latin secretarius, who was originally a "keeper of secrets, a confidant." This latter word, in turn, came from the Latin secretum, a secret.

Men may do some sordid things for money, but the word originated in the temple of a goddess. Part of the temple devoted to Juno Moneta, Juno the Warner, was given over to the coining of money. From this fact, metal coins came to be known as "money." When the Romans invaded the British Isles they took their customs and institutions with them, and the Anglo-Saxons used the name of Juno Moneta to indicate the place where they coined their money. The Anglo-Saxons, however, called the place a myner, from which we get our word "mint." So, though they sound vastly different, our words "money" and "mint" are derived from the same word.

When we speak of something being crude, we mean that it is raw, unfinished. And that is also what the ancients understood by the term. The word crude is derived from the Latin crudes, raw, uncooked.

When the cashier of your local bank "decamps" with a suitcase full of crisp money he is simply following an old military custom. The word "decamp," which was originally used to describe troops, comes from the Latin de campus, from the field.

A English is a tongue which makes "little ones out of big ones" (we mean words). Our little word "alms" comes through the Anglo-Saxon ælmyse from the Latin elemosyna. The original Latin polysyllabic root still survives, however, in our English "elemosynary," charitable.
If you use the word "gewgaw" for a showy trinket you're talking baby-talk. Our English word comes from the French jou-jou, "toy," a baby word formed from jouer, to play. That word in turn comes from the Latin jucare, to play.

The carnation which adorns the buttonhole of the debonair man-about-town takes its name from the fact that the flower was originally flesh-colored. The word "carnation" is derived from the Latin cera, carnis, "flesh."

"Trivial" came into modern English from the Latin by way of Modern French, preserving the French spelling, without distortion of the Latin meaning of trivium, "belonging to the place where three roads meet," hence common, and in a sense vulgar. By no means known to philology can "trivial" be made to assume another meaning.

Nowadays little Johnny swipes jam from the pantry. There was a time when he could take nothing but bread. Our word "pantry" comes from the Latin panis, "bread." The pantry was the place where bread was kept.

Our word "nostrum," which from meaning a quack medicine has come also to mean any pet scheme for remedying a political evil, is derived from the habit medieval quacks had of referring to their specifics as nostrums, from the Latin nostrum, ours. The quack inferred that his remedy was unknown to the rest of the world.