

Latin

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To Mr. H. Bailey

(who has to have recourse to Greek lambics when
he wants to remember the value of π)

I nunc, O Baili, Parnassum et desere rupem;
Dic sacra Pieridum deteriora quadris!
Subsidium hoc ad vos, quamquam leve, fertur ab hymnis
Quos dat vox Sophocli (non in utroque probrumst?) ¹

¹ "Will you dare any longer, Bailey, to turn your back on Parnassus
hill telling
us that the sacred rites of the Muses are less important than
constructing squares?
Here is aid brought to you, thought it be but slight, by poetry, and
poetry couched
in the language of Sophocles-there is a double thust at your
vanity!" ²

[² The author, by request, made this translation many years later.]

By Ronald Knox

Math. Magpie, p. 287