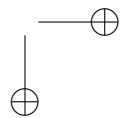
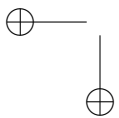
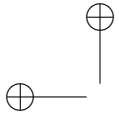


Horace
An Essay and Some Translations



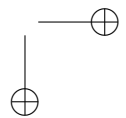
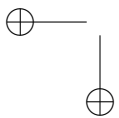


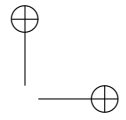
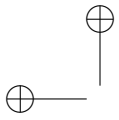


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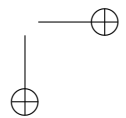
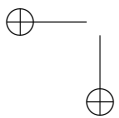
Gilbert F. Cunningham

IWP





2024
First Published, 1935



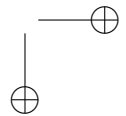
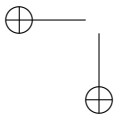


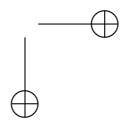
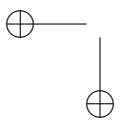
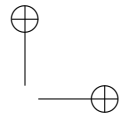
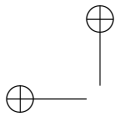
AERE PERENNIUS

*Augusta Romae munera posteris
tu tradidisti non sine gloria,
quos Daunios lambitque campos
Aufidus, et modicum Sabinum.*

*Scandit sacerdos nunc Capitolium
nullus, suprema et virgo diu tacet;
at cuncta viginti superstes
saecula tu moriere nunquam.*

G.F.C.





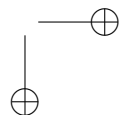
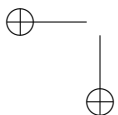


Quintus Horatius Flaccus was born on 8th December in the year of the City 689, which corresponds to 65 B.C. according to the present system of reckoning. The two thousandth anniversary of his birth is therefore properly celebrated in 1936 A.D. which is the Roman year 2689. The apparent discrepancy of one year is due to the omission of the year of the century between the last of the pre-Christian and the first of the Christian era, 1 A.D. following immediately after 1 B.C.

His birthplace was Venusia, a town of Apulia in south-eastern Italy, lying on the Appian Way, the military road from Rome to Brindisi. Inland the country is wild and hilly; the town is dominated by the extinct volcano, Mount Voltur. To the east a wide plain extends to the shores of the Adriatic. From the hills the River Aufidus rushes rapidly down a rocky course to the level land and the sea. The poet's affection for his native district finds frequent expression in the odes, and he takes obvious pleasure in telling that he was born within the sound of noisy Aufidus.

He was of humble origin. His father was a freed-man; at one time he seems to have been a tax-collector, later a small-holder. Horace speaks of him as *macro pauper agello*, the poor owner of a lean farm. Nevertheless, he gave his son the best education which the age could afford, sending him first to Rome and later to Athens. The love and gratitude which Horace felt for his father are aptly expressed in a famous passage (*Satires* I.6), a tribute unsurpassed for sincerity by anything in Roman literature.

Horace was at Athens when the civil disturbances, following the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., plunged the Roman world into war. He became actively engaged in the republican interest on the side of Brutus and Cassius, and fought in the ranks of their army on the disastrous field of Philippi. In one of his odes he laughs at this military adventure, and it is unlikely that he made much of a figure as a soldier. Shortly afterwards he was included in a general pardon; but on his return to Italy



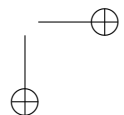
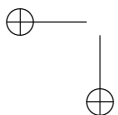


found his patrimony gone, and was dependent on his own efforts for a livelihood. He obtained some kind of clerical employment, and at the same time began to write verses, which in the year 38 B.C. secured his introduction to Maecenas, the minister of Augustus, whose supremacy over the Empire was rapidly being established.

There followed a friendship of thirty years, broken only by death. Maecenas was a notable patron of literature, and he encouraged liberally those whose talent earned his protection. Horace mingled freely in this select circle, which included Virgil, Ovid, Propertius and many other notable writers. From Maecenas he received his most dearly-prized possession: his Sabine farm, situated on the hills near Tibur, where he spent his happiest days. Again and again in his poems he records the love and admiration which he felt for his benefactor. These feelings were reciprocated by Maecenas who, almost with his last breath, dictated this message to the Emperor: *Horatii Flacci ut mei memor esto* (Be mindful of Horace as you would of myself). A few months later Horace himself passed away, on 27th November, 8 B.C., in his fifty-seventh year.

Along with the friendship of Maecenas, the poet had enjoyed the favour of Augustus. He had seen Octavian rise from the stripling who engaged in a doubtful combat with the slayers of his guardian till, having conquered one powerful enemy after another, he became the undisputed ruler of the whole known world. Horace celebrated the Emperor's exploits in noble verse, and dedicated several books to him. A good deal of adulation was expected from any writer to whom the imperial patronage was granted; and while Horace was on friendly terms with Augustus, and doubtless regarded him with genuine reverence and devotion, it is unlikely that there could be any strong sympathy between the poet and one of such cold and suspicious temperament as his master.

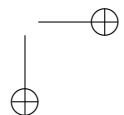
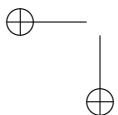
About the year 35 B.C., when he was thirty years of age, Horace gave to the public his first poetical venture: Book I





of the *Satires*, consisting of ten poems in hexameter verse, some with a moral purpose, some in lighter vein, including the delightful description of his journey from Rome to Brindisi in company with Maecenas, Virgil and others. Five years later followed eight more satires, forming Book II in which the humorous note predominates. About the same time he made his first excursion into lyric poetry with seventeen short pieces which he called *Iambi*, and which are now known as the *Epodes*. They range over a variety of themes, and while they contain flashes of wit and fine passages, they are unequal and occasionally tiresome. During the next seven years Horace must have been engaged in the production of his greatest work. The first three books of the *Odes*, containing eighty-eight lyric pieces, were completed about 23 B.C. In these Horace reaches the height of his powers and achievement, and from them he derives his decisive title to immortality. A fourth book of *Odes*, containing fifteen poems, followed some years later, together with twenty-two epistles, mingling philosophy with agreeable digressions on current matters, and showing the early promise of the satires arrived at rich maturity. In the year 17 B.C., by imperial command, Horace wrote the *Carmen Saeculare*, a rhetorical ode in Sapphic stanzas, celebrating the greatness of Rome, for public performance at the Secular Games held by Augustus in that year. To his closing years also belongs the *Ars Poetica*, in which he gives shrewd and practical advice to would-be poets, and summarises the rules of the classical tradition in poetry and drama.

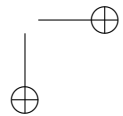
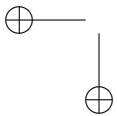
The *Odes* of Horace are unsurpassed in all literature for the stately beauty of their language and the consummate artistry of their construction. Their apparent spontaneity and simplicity are the product of long and inspired labour. Horace is a superb craftsman in words; to read his verses aright is to realise with what industrious pleasure he assembles his materials balances his lines, piecing together the mosaic of syllables and phrases with admirable cunning to form a pattern of astonishing charm.





The Odes abound in lines which are quoted again and again by men of every nation all through the subsequent centuries – “jewels five words long,” the very recollection of which is a delight to the cultured mind. For, in the words of one of his editors, T. E. Page, Horace “has succeeded in saying some common things better perhaps than they will ever be said again.”

If we turn from the style of the Odes to their matter, we find it more difficult to assess their value. A bewildering number of subjects supplies Horace with his themes. There are panegyrics on Augustus and Maecenas; stern condemnations of the faults and follies of the day; careless Bacchanalian rhapsodies extolling the pleasures of wine, dance and song; love lyrics expressing alternately devotion for or indignation against numerous inconstant mistresses; frequent moralising on the brevity of life and the inevitability of death; glimpses of nature in its varying moods; advice or consolation to friends in need of it; and quite unimportant observations on the most trivial of events and objects, all set forth with the same unerring mastery of rhythm and expression. From an examination of these we may glean much interesting information regarding Horace’s character. We may recognise him as one who found his deepest pleasure in the society of faithful friends; one who loved his country, and hated every kind of treachery, effeminacy and hypocrisy which threatened to destroy the old Roman virtue. We find too one who liked a peaceful and simple country life, and preferred the common round of rural duties to the bustle of cities or the roar of crowds; one who loved his native Italian countryside, whether bathed in sunshine or buried in snow. We detect a nature ardent and faithful, blessed with an ample sense of humour, with an abundant capacity for enjoying life, on the whole temperate, but not averse to occasional indulgence in sensual pleasures. We gather the impression of a kindly face with an attractive smile, an unassuming carriage and inconspicuous figure, becoming portly with advancing years, and not over-inclined to exertion. But if we attempt to evolve a connected philosophy from his



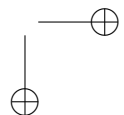
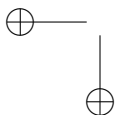


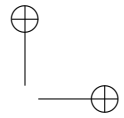
work, or reduce his writings to a formal system, we shall labour in vain.

Horace, like Burns, was far too full of interest and joy in life to be a philosopher in the strict sense; like Burns, too, his logic is full of inconsistencies and contradictions. He could be Stoic or Epicurean as the mood took him, and without apology. With life itself in his possession, his wish is to make the most of it, not to theorise about it. Nor does he seek like Virgil or Milton to interpret history and revelation to mankind; he is content to remind them that life is short and that there is no time like the present.

These poems, though written nearly twenty centuries ago, come to us with remarkable freshness. The Rome of Horace is no city of mythical grandeur; nor are his men and women godlike heroes and heroines. On the contrary they show us how little change the course of ages has wrought in the essentials of human nature; the mainsprings of emotion and the motives of action were the same for the Augustans as they are for us. We have no sense of remoteness in reading Horace, no gulf to bridge as we have with classical tragedy and epic. We can enjoy good fellowship with him to the full.

The metres in which Horace wrote his odes are worthy of special notice. They were not those already in use by Italian writers, but were adapted from the lyric measures of the already ancient Greek poets, with whose work his Athenian education had made him familiar. Greek and Latin verse are both based on quantitative scansion; and Horace keenly desired to reproduce in his own tongue the splendours of the Greek odes. He cites this achievement as his claim to immortality (Book III. Ode 30): *Dicar. . . princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos deduxisse modos*. It is difficult for us, accustomed to an accentual prosody, to appreciate the rhythm of quantitative verse; indeed, we cannot say with certainty just how it was read by the Romans themselves.





Of the one hundred and three odes contained in the four books, thirty-seven are in Alcaic stanzas and twenty-five in Sapphic stanzas, so named after the Greek poet and poetess of Lesbos to whom their invention was attributed. If the italicised syllables are stressed, the following lines by Tennyson give an adequate notion of the rhythm of the Alcaic stanza:

O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies!
O skilled to sing of time and eternity!
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages!

In Horatian Alcaics, however, the fifth syllable of the third line is invariably long, a characteristic which gives the verse added weight.

The powerful lines of Cowper:

Man disavows and deity disowns me

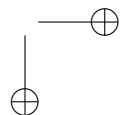
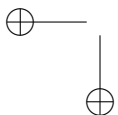
and the well-known parody:

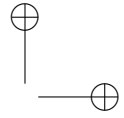
Needy knife-grinder, whither are you going?

are often quoted as English Sapphics, but though they have a close affinity with the original metre, they do not reproduce the scansion accurately. A more exact parallel is found in the following verse from Swinburne, the long syllables being italicised:

All the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,
Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a feather,
Yet with lids shut close and with eyes of iron
Stood and beheld me.

The metres known as *Asclepiad* in various combinations are employed in thirty-four of the odes. Their basis is a foot of four syllables, the *Choriambus*, consisting of *long-short-short-long*. It is really impossible to obtain the effect of this metre in





English; but the following quatrain, using the italicised syllables as a guide, may give some rough notion of the rhythm of the arrangement known as the *Fourth Asclepiad*:

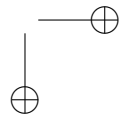
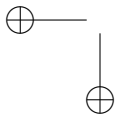
*Tell me, Pyrrha, what youth, sprinkled with perfumes sweet
Is now urging his suit, where in your pleasant cave
You by roses surrounded
Smooth your tresses of golden hair.*

The enumeration given above accounts for ninety-six odes; the remaining seven exhibit six different metres, none of which call for discussion here.

The translation of Horace's odes into other tongues has for centuries both attracted and baffled innumerable writers. There are some marvellously successful attempts, but they are rare. Nor is this surprising, since the charm of the odes depends on the form rather than the matter; and it is extremely difficult to reproduce, within the metrical limits of another language, the concise felicity of the original. Perhaps John Conington's version of *Vixi puellis nuper idoneus* is as good as anything in English: almost exactly literal, and at the same time poetical, it is worthy of quotation in full.

For ladies' love I late was fit,
and good success my warfare blest;
but now my arms, my lyre I quit,
and hang them up to rust or rest.
Here, where arising from the sea
stands Venus, lay the load at last,
links, crowbars and artillery,
threatening all doors that dared be fast.
O Goddess; Cyprus owns thy sway,
and Memphis, far from Thracian snow;
raise high thy lash, and deal me, pray,
that haughty Chloë just one blow.

Among less literal paraphrases, one of the most attractive is Austin Dobson's rendering of *Vitas hinnuleo* in rondel form.





You shun me, Chloë, wild and shy
as some stray fawn that seeks its mother
through trackless woods. If spring-winds sigh
it vainly strives its fears to smother.
Its trembling knees assail each other
when lizards stir the bramble dry;
you shun me, Chloë, wild and shy
as some stray fawn that seeks its mother.
And yet no Libyan lion I,
no ravening thing to rend another;
lay by your tears, your tremors by –
a husband's better than a brother;
nor shun me, Chloë, wild and shy,
as some stray fawn that seeks its mother.

Of the many adaptations of the odes, there is surely none that surpasses in happiness of expression and true reflection of the Horatian spirit this delightful derivative of *Laudabunt alii* by the American Whicher.

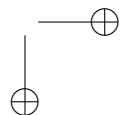
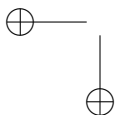
Some people talk about "Noo Yo'k";
of Cleveland others ne'er have done;
they sing galore of Baltimore,
Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington.

Others unasked their wit have tasked
to sound unending praise of Boston;
of bean-vines found for miles around
and crooked streets that I get lost on.

Give me no jar of truck or car,
no city smoke and noise of mills;
rather the slow Connecticut's flow
and sunny orchards on the hills.

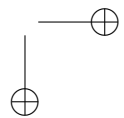
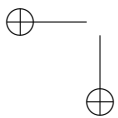
There like the haze of summer days
before the wind flee care and sorrow.
In sure content each day is spent,
unheeding what may come to-morrow.

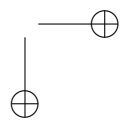
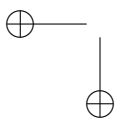
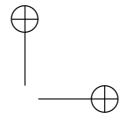
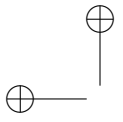
The translations by the writer contained in this volume are the product of leisure moments over a period of years. They are not written on any fixed principle; some are more literal than





others; and the metres used have been selected as the mood dictated. No special merit is claimed for them; but they are printed here in the hope that they will be found not entirely unworthy of their great original, whose lustre the passage of twenty centuries has not dimmed.







BOOK I. ODE 5

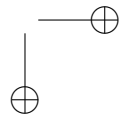
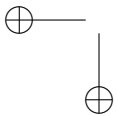
(Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa)

Pyrrha, what slender, scent-besprinkled youth
now in your rose-decked bower with his whole heart
worships you, while your flaxen locks you smooth
with all the sweet simplicity of art?

How often in the days to come shall he
the perjured faith of fickle gods deplore,
poor innocent, when o'er his placid sea
wild billows lashed by sullen tempests roar!

Trustful he revels in your golden beams,
thinking you all unfettered, all his own,
gentle and kind; nor for a moment dreams
that cloudless skies with treacherous storms may frown.

Unhappy victims, dazzled by your rays!
Long since have I adorned with votive sign
the sacred wall, and hung in grateful praise
my dripping garments at the sea-god's shrine.





BOOK I. ODE 9

(*Vides ut alta*)

In glittering white Soracte's peak is decked;
the labouring trees beneath their load of snow
are bowed, and winter's icy breath has checked
the river's ceaseless flow.

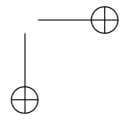
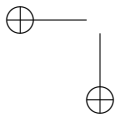
Defy the cold, my Thaliarch; heap up
the hearth with logs, and from our treasured store
the four-year Sabine vintage in each cup
with liberal measure pour.

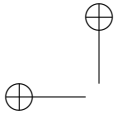
Leave all else to the gods; when they restrain
the winds that war upon the raging deep,
the cypress and the aged ash again
in silent peace shall sleep.

Question not what to-morrow may befall;
whate'er to-day is granted thee by Chance,
reckon as gain; despise not pleasure's call,
spurn not the joyous dance.

While crabbed age mars not thy youthful power,
seek thou by day the field, the manly sport,
and, as night falls, at the appointed hour
to lovers' haunts resort.

There let a happy laugh the maid betray
who, hiding, seeks her love's pursuit to shun,
till from her hand, resisting halt in play,
the envied pledge is won.

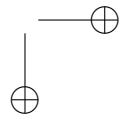
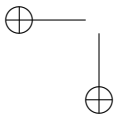


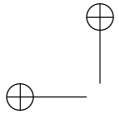


BOOK I. ODE 9

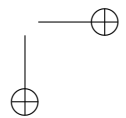
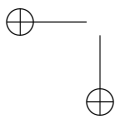
(Vides ut alta)

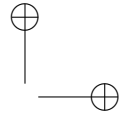
See Soracte's lofty summit circled with a glittering
wreath
white against the azure; while the woods that clothe
the slopes beneath
bow their hoary branches, overweighted with a load
of snow,
and the biting frost has checked the wanton river in
its flow.
Here at least the cold we banish, Thaliarchus, heap-
ing high
pine logs where the cheerful hearth is blazing brightly,
and defy
piercing nature, as in ample draughts from cob-
webbed task we pour
this four-wintered Sabine vintage wherewith Jove
has blessed our store.
Trust in him, for when his might has stilled the
winds that lash the main,
shall the ancient ash and cypress wave their boughs
in peace again.
What shall be to-morrow, ask not; but what Fortune
gives to-day
gather with a grateful heart, and use it gladly while
you may.
Scorn not love nor joyous frolic, while your youth
has strength to spare,
ere the winter of our age lay snowy fingers on your
hair.





Daily let the athletes' course, the manly circus, know
your power,
and when evening's whispers waken, shun not then
the trysting-hour,
but from arm or hand of ambushed maiden, whom
her laugh betrays,
only half resisted, snatch the token which a kiss
repays.

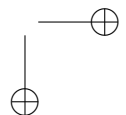
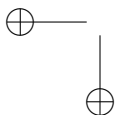




BOOK I. ODE 11

(Tu ne quaeseris)

Question not how or when the gods design
to end your life, Leuconoë, or mine;
nor scan the stars to learn what Jove intends.
Best to accept what comes; whether he sends
many more winters, or if now your last
dashes the impotent surge before its blast
against the rocks that front the Etrurian main,
be wise in ignorance; and while you strain
your wine, since life is short, forbear to seek
more distant prospects – even as we speak
the moments pass – enjoy them while you may,
nor trust too blindly in a future day.





BOOK I. ODE 13

(Cum tu, Lydia, Telephi.)

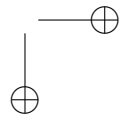
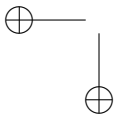
'Tis Telephus, morning, noon and night,
his slender throat and his manly arms:
why, Lydia, you'll drive me distracted quite
the way you dote on the fellow's charms!

My pulses race and my breathing stops,
I pale with passion and blush with shame,
my eyes are filled with resentful drops,
my heart is ablaze with a jealous flame!

He has left his mark on your marble skin,
in a drunken brawl or a mad embrace;
he has branded your lips with the stamp of sin,
and his savage kisses have soiled your face!

Why, Lydia, waste your constancy
on one who pollutes these sacred rites?
Leave him, forget him, and share with me
the nectar of Venus and love's delights!

Thrice happy the pair whose hearts are joined
by a knot which holds so sure and fast,
that tears cannot loosen nor pangs unbind,
but Death alone shall dissolve at last!





BOOK I. ODE 16

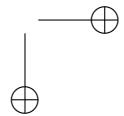
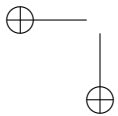
(O matre pulchra filia pulchrior)

Loveliest daughter of a beauteous line,
forgive my late lampoon's scurrility;
burn the vile page to ashes, or consign
its infamous fragments to the wind and sea.
Alas! never did frenzied devotee
such disproportion in his orgies show
as lover seized with anger's lunacy. –
My dear, I did not mean to hurt you so!

Insensate wrath! with point more deadly fine
than Styrian steel; more dreaded far to be
than all-devouring fire of wreck-strewn brine,
or the red bolt of heaven's artillery.
Yet if, as the old fables tell us, we
to every beast some part of nature owe,
'tis the old lion breaking out in me. –
My dear, I did not mean to hurt you so!

Wrath spread the feast and poured the biter wine,
the endless shame of Pelops' progeny;
wrath immolates on warfare's crimson shrine
many fair towns, and drives triumphantly
the arrogant plough-share's last indignity
over their walls; and now wrath's fatal glow
has sent me raving into poesy! –
My dear, I did not mean to hurt you so!

Sweetheart, since I renounce my blasphemy,
let your sweet pity mitigate my woe,
nor force me further to renew my plea:
My dear, I did not mean to hurt you so!





BOOK I. ODE 20

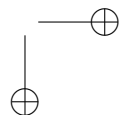
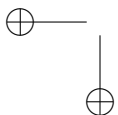
(*Vile potabis*)

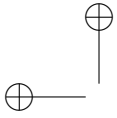
My wine is simple Sabine, like the cup
you'll drink it from, but sealed in Grecian urn
with careful hands, Maecenas, and saved up
to mark the day when, hailing your return,

in thunderous tones the crowded circus spoke
its welcome, and the joyful plaudits ran
from end to end of Tiber's banks, and woke
the slumbering echoes on mount Vatican.

Caecuban liquor, too, may grace my board,*
or wine such as Calenia's presses yield;
but never hope to find my cellar stored
from Formian hillside or Falernian field.

*Reading *tum bibes* with Orelli and Page in preference to the *tu bibes* of the MSS.



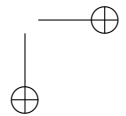
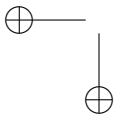


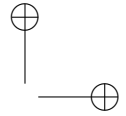
BOOK I. ODE 22

(Integer vitae)

He whose life is upright and untarnished by dishonour's
arts
needs not spear nor bow nor quiver stocked with venom-
pointed darts,
lies his way through parching deserts or inhospitable snows,
or along mysterious shores where fabulous Hydaspes flows.
So when once I wandered careless, deep in Sabine woods
astray,
far beyond my wonted distance, singing of my Lalagé,
lo, a mightier wolf than any in Apulian oak-woods bred
or in Mauretanian wastes, took flight from my defenceless
tread.

Banish me to frozen tracts whose stunted trees are never
kissed
by returning summer's breath, and Jove conceals his face
in mist,
or where life is scorched and withered by the sun-god's
fierce career:
wheresoe'er I be, shall Lalagé's sweet voice and smile be
dear.





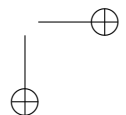
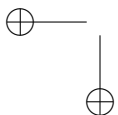
BOOK I. ODE 23

(Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloe)

You shun me, Chloë, like a fawn
whom every sound and sight
sends skurrying to her dam upon
the mountain's pathless height.

Even spring, when his first whispers stir
the leaves, and lizards dart
among the brambles, startles her
weak knees and trembling heart.

Yet am I neither tiger, nor
Gaetolian lion dread –
come, Chloë, leave your mother, for
you're old enough to wed.





BOOK I. ODE 24

(Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus)

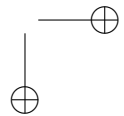
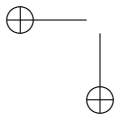
We need not blush, nor check the tears
that flow for one we loved so well,
but let our last sad verses tell
his virtues to the future years.

Quintilius smiling eyes are dim
in endless sleep: when shall we see
Faith, Justice, Truth and Purity
united as they were in him?

His passing many good men mourn;
none miss him, Virgil, more than you;
but even your grief must vainly sue
the gods below for his return.

And though your song may stir the glades
as cunningly as Orpheus' lute,
those lips remain for ever mute
which once are numbered with the shades.

Since then we may not hope to bend
Pluto's inexorable will,
patience can best support an ill
which fate forbids us to amend.





BOOK I. ODE 31

(Quid dedicatum poscit Apollinem vates?)

For what shall be the poet's supplication,
who, to Apollo in his new-built shrine,
pours from the sacred vessel his libation,
the precious first-fruits of his choicest vine?

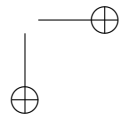
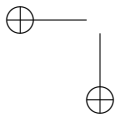
Not for fair flocks on hot Calabrian meadows,
not for Sardinian sheaves in harvest pride,
not Indian gold, nor woodlands in whose shadows
unhurrying Liris stays his tranquil tide.

Let such as Fortune gladdens with her favour
tend their Calenian vineyards' broad domains;
in golden goblets let the merchant savour
the costly liquor which his traffic gains,

whose argosies, braving Atlantic breakers,
return in season to augment his hoard.

Enough for me to till these narrow acres
whose simple fruit supplies my frugal board.

Then grant me health, o Phoebus, to take pleasure
in all these gifts, and, when my strength is past,
bless my declining years with honoured leisure,
and let my lyre be with me to the last.



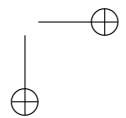
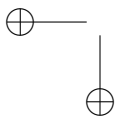


BOOK I. ODE 38

(Persicos odi)

I care not, sirrah, for these Persian shows;
 their flower-twined garlands I decline to don;
no need to search where summer's latest rose
 still lingers on.

Weave simple myrtle only for my wreath,
 which neither will your honest task degrade,
nor yet dishonour me, drinking beneath
 the vine-leaves' shade.





BOOK II. ODE 10

(Rectius vives)

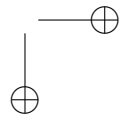
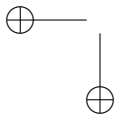
My friend, I venture now to send ye
some lines my jinglin' muse has penned ye,
in hope that they some aid may lend ye
to steer through life,
an' frae some hidden shoals defend ye
when storms are rife.

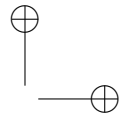
To tempt ower far the distant main
frae sight o' land may be your bane,
but mind, it isn't that alane
is ships' undoin' –
on shore-sunk reefs fu' monie an ane
has come to ruin.

Enow o' riches to be freed
frae daily fear is a' ye need,
for golden hoards o' wealth will breed
the canker care,
while gripin' poverty will lead
but to despair.

When angry blasts o' winter blaw
the highest firs shake maist o' a';
the storm brings down wi' heaviest fa'
the proudest palace;
the thunder rives the peaks in twa'
an' spares the valleys.

The wise man's even-balanced mind
forgets na' fear though Fate is kind,

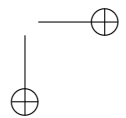
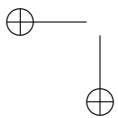




an' when she frowns he aye can find
o' hope a glimmer;
God has for every man designed
winter an' summer.

He says he will not always chide,
an' so the sunshine willna' bide
for lang ahint the clouds that hide
his light awhile;
wi' cheerfu' sang at mornin' tide
ye'll hail his smile.

When furious tempests threaten ill,
then brave them out wi' fearless skill,
but when ower favourin' breezes fill
your swellin' sails,
it's time to reef – there's danger still
when prudence fails.





BOOK II. ODE 14

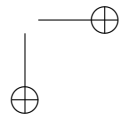
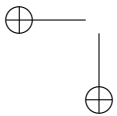
(Eheu fugaces!)

Ah, Postumus, how they evade you,
those years that are lost to you now;
nor your prayers nor your virtue can aid you
to banish their mark from your brow.
Though your bullocks in flocks on his altars
shall daily surrender their breath,
he repents not his purpose, nor falters,
the god of invincible death.

No giant in prowess excelling,
but his mandate at last overthrows,
and commits to the desolate dwelling
which Acheron's windings enclose.
So all whom earth's bounties now quicken
in their turn must embark from that strand,
and cotters and kings must be stricken
by the arrow which none can withstand.

All vainly from warfare's red welter
we flee, and the risks of the deep;
all vainly our bodies we shelter
from the south wind's pestiferous sweep.
We must look on Cocytus' black river,
whose slow-circling waters enchain
the Danaïdes, mourning for ever,
and Sisyphus, toiling in vain.

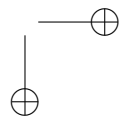
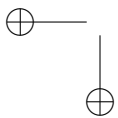
You must leave the bright earth and its splendour,
the treasures and comforts of life;





you must forfeit your home, and the tender
devotion of children and wife;
and out of the groves which you cherish
no tree shall remain to your sway,
save the cypress, whose sad leaves shall flourish
o'er the grave of its lord for a day.

Then a worthier heir shall bestir him
to profit by what you have stored;
nor your bolts nor your bars shall deter him
when he enters to scatter your hoard.
Of your wine-casks, so jealously guarded,
unlocking the generous springs,
he shall dash to the ground, unregarded,
drops fit for the banquets of kings.





BOOK II. ODE 18

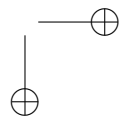
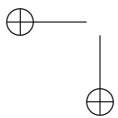
(Non ebur neque aureum)

Neither with ivory nor gold
the ceiling of my dwelling gleams;
nor do Numidian columns hold
the splendid weight of marble beams;
never did Eastern monarch leave
his kingdom for my legacy;
neither do high-born maidens weave
robes of Laconian hue for me.

Yet this I have – an honest name,
and native wit, not ill expressed;
whereby my lowly house can claim
full many a rich and honoured guest.
The gods no further need I crave,
nor my all-powerful friend entreat –
the precious Sabine home he gave
has made my happiness complete.

Moons only wax to wane as fast;
suns only rise to sink in gloom;
and yet, when life is all but past,
unmindful of the yawning tomb,
the miser rears his marble halls,
nor can the shore content his pride;
backward he thrusts with insolent walls
the beating of the Tuscan tide.

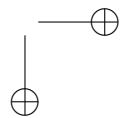
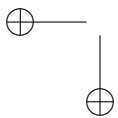
Nay, in his greed he honours not
his tenants' landmarks, but defrauds





and drives them from their native plot
with wife and child and household gods.
Yet no rich palace can extend
so sure a welcome to its lord
as that which, at his destined end,
Orcus' grim dwelling shall afford.

What then? One common earth awaits
pauper and prince; no bribe persuades
the sentinel at Pluto's gates
to free Prometheus from the shades.
Strictly he guards proud Pelops' race;
he too, whether his aid we ask
or ask not, will in time release
each weary labourer from his task.





BOOK III. ODE 1

(Odi profanum vulgus)

Your favouring silence now my purpose chooses;
 banished and spurned be all the impious throng:
in strains unknown before, priest of the Muses,
 to youths and maidens I address my song.

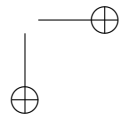
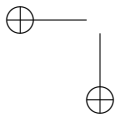
The fear of kings makes earthly hosts compliant,
 but kings themselves in turn are ruled by Jove,
illustrious victor o'er the mightiest giant,
 at whose mere nod the world's foundations move.

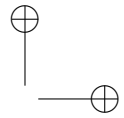
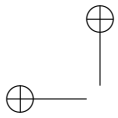
When in the Martian Field the people gathers,
 one candidate may vaunt his broad domain,
another boast a line of mighty fathers,
 a third a life free from dishonour's stain,

a fourth by numerous clients is supported;
 but all to one unvarying law must bow:
in Fate's capacious urn all names are sorted,
 heedless of rich or poor or high or low.

And he who sees the unsheathed sword suspended
 above his guilty head, can ne'er be blest
by any tyrant's feast, however splendid,
 nor lulled by bird's or cither's song to rest.

Yet kindly sleep scorns not the lowly dwelling
 where labouring men from daily toil repose,
nor shady river-banks where, gently swelling,
 through valleys green the murmuring zephyr blows.





He for whose humble wants enough suffices
trembles not at the angry ocean's threats,
when fierce October's constellation rises,
and sunk in savage storms Arcturus sets;

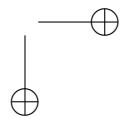
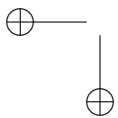
nor mourns his vines by furious hailstorms wasted,
nor fruitless trees, which all his hopes betray,
by springtide floods or winter tempests blasted,
or withered by the dogstar's scorching ray.

On ocean's realm intruding their foundation
of ponderous stones, builders and workmen toil
to pile above the waves a habitation
to house some landlord, weary of the soil.

But dark Dismay and dire Alarm, invading
his loftiest eminence, pursue his course;
black Care is ever of his trireme's lading,
and shares the saddle of his swiftest horse.

Since then we seek in vain unsullied pleasure
from Phrygian marble or from purple fine;
though bright as starry skies, or from the treasure
of Persian perfumes or Falernian wine,

strive not to rear, provoking envious malice
with haughty front, some lordly edifice,
nor yearn to change these happy Sabine valleys
for wealth whose burden far outweighs its bliss.





BOOK III. ODE 2

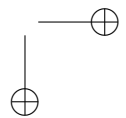
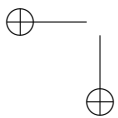
(Augustam amice pauperiem pati)

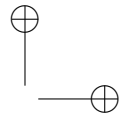
To endure with contentment and patience
the trials of a burdensome lot,
let youth by the sharp ministrations
of warfare's hard usage be taught.
To deeds full of courage and vigour
bred up, with the sky for his roof,
let him drive back the Parthian with rigour
of spear-point and thunder of hoof.

From the walls of some warring chief's city
an enemy queen might descry
such a soldier, and, fainting for pity,
her new-betrothed daughter should sigh:
“Alas, if my loved one, untested
in battle, should challenge his wrath,
who pursues, like a lion molested,
his relentless and slaughter-red path!”

In the cause of the land that we cherish
it is noble and glorious to die;
the recreant likewise shall perish,
though fast and though far he may fly.
The backs of the cowards who shun him
are stricken by Death in their flight,
and vainly they think to outrun him
who turn in dismay from the fight.

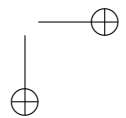
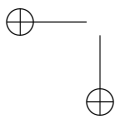
But Virtue's bright dignity shines not
less fair through Adversity's cloud;





her power she receives and resigns not
at the whim of the changeable crowd.
She opens to those that are worthy
the gates of the sky, and her way
outsoars all things common and earthy
in a flight which but few dare essay.

The gods for our reverent silence
will reward us; but never shall he
whose lips to their mysteries do violence
share roof-tree or shipboard with me.
Jove's vengeance on those who deride him
the good with the evil may blast;
and, long though the miscreant avoid him,
lame Justice o'ertakes him at last.





BOOK III. ODE 9

(Donec gratus eram tibi)

“When you had eyes for me alone,
nor yielded to a rival’s kiss,
I would not have exchanged my bliss
for any Eastern monarch’s throne.”

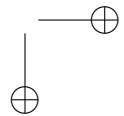
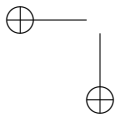
“Before you looked on Chloë’s face,
when all your ardours were for me,
I seemed of equal dignity
with the great Mother of our race.”

“For Chloë now my bosom stirs,
her dulcet lyre, her gentle voice,
and death would be my willing choice
should Fate demand my life for hers.”

“I burn for Thurian Calaïs,
and he returns my passion’s glow;
a double death I’d undergo
should Fate require my life for his.”

“What if old Love should wake once more
to join our souls now torn apart;
if, thrusting Chloë from my heart,
I left for you an open door?”

“Fairer is he than starry sky,
while your light eye and roving will
are fickle as the waves; but still
with you I’d gladly live and die.”





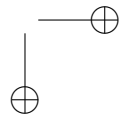
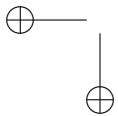
BOOK III. ODE 26

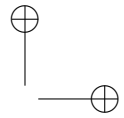
(Vixi puellis nuper idoneus)

I have lived and fought like a gallant lover,
and oft in my time a victor been;
and now am I come, my battles over,
to hang in the shrine of the sea-born queen

my discarded arms, and the lyre that now is
to thrill with the music of war no more;
the torches, crowbars and bow, whose prowess
has borne down many an opposing door.

Where the snows of the northland have never drifted
in Memphis, o Cyprian, they honour thee;
hear my prayer too, and with lash uplifted
deal haughty Chloë one blow for me.





BOOK III. ODE 30

(Exegi monumentum aere perennius)

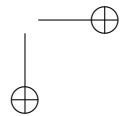
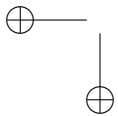
When brass and iron shall to time surrender,
the monument which I have raised shall last;
the pyramids, high piled in regal splendour,
by mine in altitude are far surpassed.

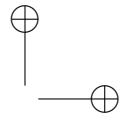
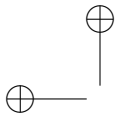
This the corroding shower shall ne'er be able
to overthrow, nor north wind's furious might;
neither continuous years innumerable,
nor age succeeding age in rapid flight.

Not all of me shall die: this rhythmic cadence,
renewed by praise, fresh through our children's time
shall flourish, long as with the silent maidens
the pontiff to the Capitol shall climb.

Nurtured where Aufidus' wild waters tumble,
where Daunus ruled a rural populace,
unblest in streams, I shall be famed, from humble
beginnings risen to a powerful place;

who first brought down the Aeolian poets' graces
to Latin measures – take the victory
which thou hast gained, and freely wreath my tresses
with Delphic laurel, o Melpomene!





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