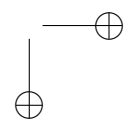
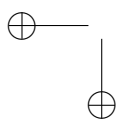
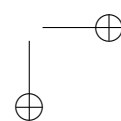
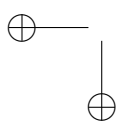
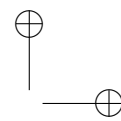
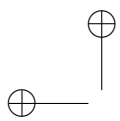
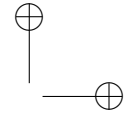
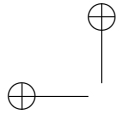


An Ode of Horace
Book II, Ode III



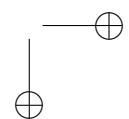
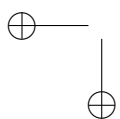


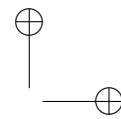
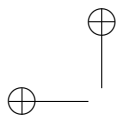


An Ode of Horace
Book II, Ode III

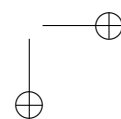
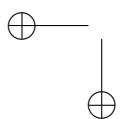
Translated by Robert Louis Stevenson

IWP





2024
First Published, 1916

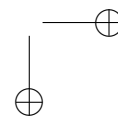
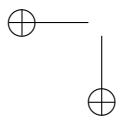




A FOREWORD

It is a far cry from Quintus Horatius Flaccus to Robert Louis Stevenson, from the popular lyricist who was educated in Athens to the popular novelist whose schooldays were passed in the Modern Athens. Yet the lover of far-fetched contrasts might well discourse upon the points there were in common between two agreeable writers separated by nearly two thousand years. Sir Theodore Martin, indeed, has indulged in a less convincing contrast between Horace and Burns.* But all that needs to be said here is that Stevenson loved Horace as most men of cultivated and spritely mind have done, and it should prove no small satisfaction to the few possessors of this little book that it will introduce them for the first time to the one effort of R. L. S. to render an Ode of Horace into English. These three experiments of Stevenson's upon one of the most captivating of the famous odes should not fail to give pleasure, even though they fall short of other efforts in the same direction. Stevenson never propounded a theory of the hundred best books,

*Even the most illuminating of our students of Horace, the late Professor Sellar, finds some analogy between the father of the poet and "the peasant fathers of two men of genius in modern times – Burns and Carlyle": as if there could be any analogy, with Burns at least, when Horace's father, although a freedman, was able to give his son the most lordly education obtainable by a young Roman – some years of study at Athens.





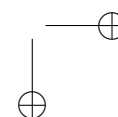
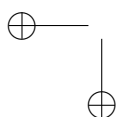
but he did once make a note of his ten favourite authors, and we see that Horace was one of these:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Montaigne's <i>Essays</i> | 6. Burns's <i>Works</i> |
| 2. Horace's <i>Odes</i> | 7. Tristram Shandy |
| 3. Pepys, his <i>Diary</i> | 8. Heine |
| 4. Shakespeare | 9. Keats |
| 5. Hazlitt's <i>Table Talk</i> | 10. Fielding |

The only other reference to Stevenson's love for Horace that we find in his biography is that while at Davos a young Church of England parson, who knew him but slightly, was roused one morning about six o'clock by a message that Stevenson wanted to see him immediately. Knowing how ill his friend was, he threw on his clothes and rushed to Stevenson's room, only to see a haggard face gazing from the bedclothes and to hear an agonized voice say, "For God's sake, —, have you got a Horace?" The particular ode selected by Stevenson for experiment is one of the most famous, embodying as it does the gospel of Lucretius and of Omar Kháyyám — that life is sweet but it is passing, let us gather rosebuds while we may, but not forget that the grave is the end of all.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and — sans End!

Would that we knew more of Dellius to whom the ode is dedicated. All we do know of him is that he was nicknamed *Desultor bellorum civillium* because he so quickly changed sides during the civil wars, *desultor* being a circus-rider who leaps from one horse to another.





The ode has all Horace's genius for concentration; take, for example, a well-known annotator's comment on the words *interiore nota Falerni* – “with an inner brand of Falernian”; *interiore* because the oldest wine would be in the farthest corners of the cellar, *nota* because the *amphorae* were branded with the name of the consuls of the year; Falernian, from the *Falernus ager* in Campania, was a noted vintage of a “heady,” “fiery” character.*

“No classical author,” says Sir Stephen de Vere, “is so difficult of translation as Horace,” and no Latin author certainly has had so great a variety of translators. Here is Sir Stephen de Vere's own translation of some of the lines:

Bring thither wine and rich perfume,
And the loved rose's short-lived bloom,
While wealth is thine, and youthful years,
And pause as yet the fatal Sisters' shears.

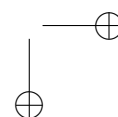
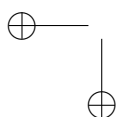
One day thy stately halls, thy dear-bought woods,
Thy villa bathed by Tiber's yellow floods,
Shall see their loving master's face no more; –
And lavish heirs shall waste his high-heaped store.†

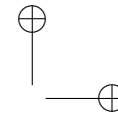
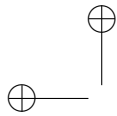
One translator, A. L. Taylor, has rendered certain verses thus:

Lo, how the lofty pine extends its branches wide,
How the white poplar loves to join its grateful shade:
With windings fair and sweet the babbling waters glide,
The things of beauty call; oh, hearken unafraid.

* *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*, With Notes by T. E. Page, A. Palmer and A. S. Wilkins. 1910.

† *Odes and Epodes of Horace*, Translated by Sir Stephen de Vere, 1893.





Yes, bring the gleaming wine, the fragrant pertume shed,
Bring roses, ah, so fair but of so short a space! –
Ere youth and love be past and ere the Sisters' dread
Sever the thread of doom and part thee from thy place.*

and here are two verses of Mr. Gladstone's translation:

Why do tall pine and poplar white
To weave their friendly shade delight?
This flitting stream, why hath it sped
So headlong down its wandering bed?

Bring wine, bring perfumes, bring fresh flowers
Of roses, all too brief their hours!
While purse, and age, and Sisters Three
Permit, though dark their threads may be.†

Of this particular poem Professor R. Y. Tyrrell writes:

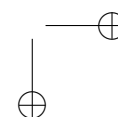
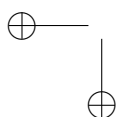
In one of the prettiest of the odes we read how the heavy and gloomy pine, and the light poplar in the wind, love with their wedded boughs to make a friendly shade, while the prattling brook frets in its haste down its winding channel. But why this pretty picture? To remind us that, though now Nature smiles on us, death will soon be on us all, both high and low. Peace of mind is to be gained neither by seeking rural scenes nor by crossing wide seas. Man carries happiness and unhappiness with him wherever he goes, and cannot fly from himself though he leaves his fatherland far behind him.‡

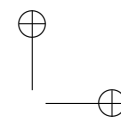
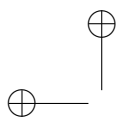
“It is for his Odes that Horace claims immortality,”
writes William Young Sellar, “and it is to them that he

* *The Odes of Horace*, Translated into English verse by A. L. Taylor, 1914.

† *The Odes of Horace and the Carmen Saeculare*. Translated into English by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., 1894.

‡ *Lectures in Latin Poetry*, by R. Y. Tyrrell.

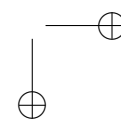
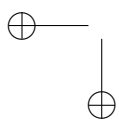


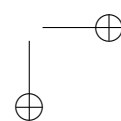
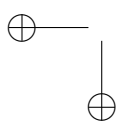
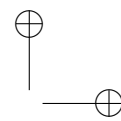
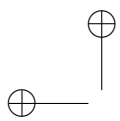


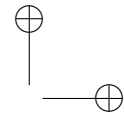
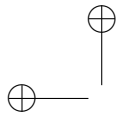
chiefly owes it." They proclaim him as one of the greatest of lyrical poets, and small wonder that writers of our nation as diverse as Hooker and Chesterfield, Gibbon and Wordsworth, have held him supremely dear. There is something peculiarly attractive in thus bringing him into association with a more modern but much-beloved author of our own land who made the homestead of Vailima almost as well known to literary enthusiasts as is the famous Sabine Farm.

CLEMENT SHORTER

March 6, 1916.







AD Q. DELIUM

Aequam memento rebus in arduis
servare mentem, non secus in bonis
ab insolenti temperatam
laetitia, moriture Delli,

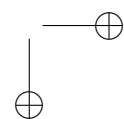
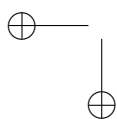
Seu maestus omni tempore vixeris
seu te in remoto gramine per dies
festos reclinatum bearis
interiore nota Falerni.

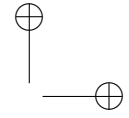
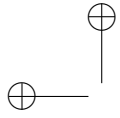
Quo pinus ingens albaque populus
umbram hospitem consociare amant
ramis? Quid obliquo laborat
lympha fugax trepidare rivo?

Huc vina et unguenta et nimium brevis
flores amoenae ferre iube rosae,
dum res et aetas et sororum
fila trium patiuntur atra.

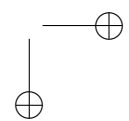
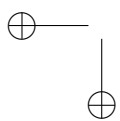
Cedes coemptis saltibus et domo
villaque flavos quam Tiberis lavit,
cedes et exstructis in altum
divitiis potietur heres.

Divesne prisco natus ab Inacho
nil interest an pauper et infima
de gente sub divo moreris,
victima nil miserantis Orci.





Omnes eodem cogimur, omnium
versatur urna serius ocuis
sors exitura et nos in aeternum
exsilium inpositura cumbae.

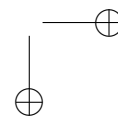
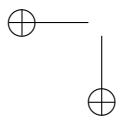


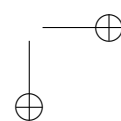
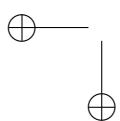
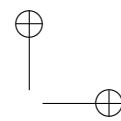
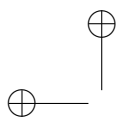


TO QUINTUS DELIUS

(*Translation*)

Remember, Dellius, in adversity always to maintain a sedate mind; and in prosperity a moderation free from all excess of joy: for you must die, whether you lead a melancholy life, or regale yourself on festival days with a glass of the best Falernian *wine*, reclining at your ease on the verdant bank, *where* the stately pine and tall poplar seem to take pleasure in forming a hospitable shade by interweaving their branches, and where a purling stream hastens its course along a winding channel. While your affairs, your age, and your health allow, hither order wines, odours, and the blooming rose's short-lived flowers, to be brought; for you must one day leave your beautiful groves which cost you so dear, your fine house *in Rome*, and your charming country-seat on the brink of the pleasant Tiber; you shall leave them, and your *gaping* heir shall enjoy the riches you have amassed. Whether rich, and descended from the ancient family of Inachus; or poor, and born so very mean, that you lie in the fields, it matters not; *you must fall* a sacrifice to Pluto. We are all hurried to the same place; and out of the urn, which is in continual motion, shall come, sooner or later, the fatal lot, that will force us into the bark which wafts us over to our eternal abode.



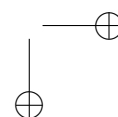
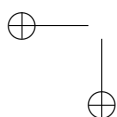




I

(Ordinary ten syllable blank verse)

Where the high pine and the white poplar mix,
With twining bows, their hospitable shade,
And bright streams flee between the crooked banks,
Bid them bring wines, and unguents rich, and flowers;
While age, and wealth and the black, fateful threads
Of the three sisters join to suffer you.
For soon you leave your purchased groves, and home,
Your villa, which the yellow Tiber laves;
And heirs will seize upon the hoarded gold.



Book II — Cde III.

I

(ordinary ten syllable blank verse).

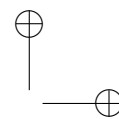
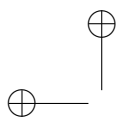
Where the high pine and the white poplar mix,
With twining boughs, their hospitable shade,
And bright streams flee between the crooked banks,
Bid them bring pines, and vineyards rich, and flowers;
While age and death and the black, fateful threads
Of the three sisters join to suffer you.
Far soon you leave your purchased groves, and home,
Your valley, which the yellow Siber leaves,
And heirs will seize upon the hoarded gold.

II.

(Iambic feet: 8 syllable rhymed verse).

Where mix the pine and poplar white,
With boughs, their hospitable shade,
And here the gleaming water flees.
In crooked banks adown the glade.
Ah! there command thy slaves to bring
The jars of pines that pass the hours

(The Original Manuscript of R. L. S.)

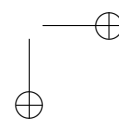
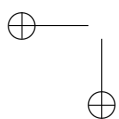


II

(Iambic feet: 8 syllable rhymed verse)

Where mix the pine and poplar white,
 With boughs, their hospitable shade,
And where the gleaming water flees
 In crooked banks adown the glade.
Ah! *there* command thy slaves to bring
 The jars of wine that pass the hours
And unguents rich to smear the hair
And scented roses' short-lived flowers,

*Too poor to go on with,
I was so hampered with the rhyme.*



And unguents rich to smear the hair
 And scented roses' short-lived flowers
 Too poor to go on with.
 I was so hampered with the rhyme
 III.

- - | - u u | - u u | - u

When the pine and the shivering poplar
 Come to join with their branches their shadows;
 When through glimmering rills, the water,
 Glist'ring clear, hurries, in narrower, towards a stream
 Thither command them carry the wine jars —
 Wine jars full of the juice of Jalernum (?) —
 Unguents, Roses to kind in our phyllets,
 Bid your slaves carry down to the margin.
 Now, we glory in youth and in riches:
 Now, the sisters are merciful toward us.
 Soon, our Fortune shall turn from us coldly:
 Soon, we leave our groves and our houses,
 Soon, our gardens by yellow alel Sibar;
 While our gold that we hoarded so closely
 Gladly sieges the joyful succubus.

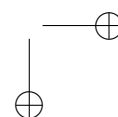
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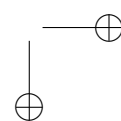
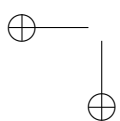
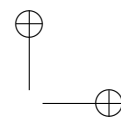
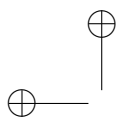


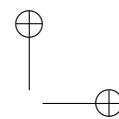
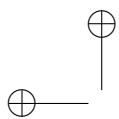
III

(— ˘ | — ˘ ˘ | — ˘ ˘ | — ˘)

Where the pine and the shivering poplar
Love to join with their branches their shadow;
Where through glimmering valleys, the water,
Glass-clear, hurries, in murmur, toward ocean —
Thither command them carry the wine jars —
Wine jars full of the juice of *Falernum* (?) —
Unguent, roses to bind in our chaplets,
Bid your slaves carry down to the margin.
Now, we glory in youth and in riches:
Now, the sisters are merciful toward us.
Soon, our fortune shall turn from us coldly:
Soon, we leave our groves and our houses,
Soon, our gardens by yellow old Tiber;
While our gold that we hoarded so closely
Gladly seizes the joyful successor.







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