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Odes and epodes of Horace:
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THE

ODES OF HORACE

TRANSLATED BY

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METHUEN & CO.
36 ESSEX STREET, W.C.
LONDON
1898
INTRODUCTION

On every translator lies the burden of proving that it is possible for him to benefit others besides himself by translation. But if this be conceded, he need not go on to apologise for turning Latin or Greek poetry into English prose. The thing has been done so often—and generally, thanks to the skill of competent scholars, with so little outrage to the public taste—that only excessively squeamish persons will feel a transient shudder at the idea of an unmetrical version of the *Odes* of Horace. It is better to accept the prevailing fashion: not to dwell on the relation of spirit to form: not to consider too closely the probable result when the familiar New Zealander shall render Moore’s Melodies into the polished prose periods of his native Maori.

After all, Horace in prose need not be more obviously inadequate than Horace in verse. Essays in translating him metrically have never yet been
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crowned with any real success: they have not so far accomplished anything, save, indeed—and this is itself a gain—that they demonstrate by actual experiment the peculiar evanescence of a lyric charm which is so intimately bound up with the genius of the poet, perhaps with the Latin language itself, that it cannot survive transplantation. No metrical version of the *Odes* can claim to be more than a frigid travesty: nor is there much likelihood of anything better. These essays will no doubt continue to amuse the leisure of scholarly dilettantists. But the result will be negligible till some really great poet girds himself to the task: and their very magnitude makes great poets too careful of their reputation to attempt a labour where failure is damaging and success, after all, would hardly immortalise. Pending the arrival of some one superior to this consideration, it is better for the present to be less enterprising and not *magna modis tenuare parvis*. Where the humbler aim is merely to convey some idea of the exact meaning and not to attempt a *tour de force*, the translator, if he wishes to be taken seriously, had better keep to prose, which is less repellent to the reader than bad poetry: at least he will not be obscuring the

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correctness of his interpretation by the inferiority of his versification. He may even persuade himself, with a show of reason, that he is doing something to satisfy a felt want. Granted that an exact rendering of the matter, apart from any reproduction of the manner, of a classical author may possess a certain value—there is, perhaps, no Roman who is so liable as Horace to habitual careless misinterpretation. It is not that his general meaning is more difficult than that of others; but it is peculiarly apt to be slurred, just like any common quotation that is at the end of our tongues. Even in these times, when school-boys do not learn him parrot-like by heart as often as they did in the palmy days when the faculty of repeating Horace was essential to a gentleman and scholar—even now no one is so frequently quoted; and the fatal familiarity which quotes him freely is its own worst enemy when required to translate accurately.

Such reflections may serve as unction for the soul of the laborious. It is doubtful whether they will be able to season the *crambe repetita* of ‘Another translation of Horace’.

I have generally followed the text of Baiter and Orelli (1850). Critics with an eye for plagiarism
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will probably discover that here and there I have the honour to be in accord with Dr. Wickham or Mr. Page in the choice of a rendering. I do not think that I have consciously conveyed anything from the commentaries of these scholars, except perhaps in the case of two or three phrases; for which I tender my fullest acknowledgments.
Mæcenas, scion of ancient kings, my protector and my pride beloved! There are who delight to have gathered Olympia’s dust on their chariot, to have grazed the turning point with glowing wheel and won the glorious prize: lords of earth, yea uplifted heaven-high are these: another, if Rome’s fickle throng vie to exalt him with honours thrice conferred: another, if he has stored in his own granary all the grain that is swept from Libya’s threshing floors. Him who loves to hoe his father’s farm no promises of Attalus’ wealth will stir to play the fearful sailor’s part, and plough the Myrtoan sea in Cyprian bark. The merchant, while he dreads south winds battling with Icarian billows, is loud in praise of ease and the fields about his native town: yet anon he refits his battered ships, untaught to brook poverty. One there is who thinks no shame to drain cups of old Massic wine or steal a fraction from the well-filled hours of day, reclined at length now ‘neath green
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arbutus, now by the gentle source of some sacred stream. Many there be that love the camp, the mingled blare of bugle and clarion, and wars that mothers hate. Forgetful of his tender wife, the hunter tarries 'neath frosty skies, whether it be a doe that his faithful hounds have viewed, or a Marsian boar have burst his net's smooth strands. But mine be that ivy crown that decks the brow of wit, and gods above are my peers: be mine cool groves where Nymphs and Satyrs lightly dance, and I am far from the vulgar herd,—if Euterpe's flutes be not dumb and Polyhymnia be not coy to string her Lesbian lyre. For if thou countest me of the company of lyric bards, my exalted head shall strike the stars.

Enough now of snow and dire hail hath the Father hurled on earth: and the bolt shot from his red right hand at the sacred towers hath made our city afraid—yea, hath made the world afraid lest the awful age of Pyrrha should return—Pyrrha who wept to see new sights of fear, what time Proteus drave all his flock to haunt the mountain peaks, and fishes were tangled in tree tops where doves had used to make their home: and frightened does swam on the whelming flood. We have seen tawny Tiber, his waves hurled strongly back from Etruria's shores,
haste to overthrow a king's memorial pile and Vesta's temple: boasting himself the while avenger of the sorrows whereof Ilia too loudly complained, and straying free over his left bank, careless of Jove's displeasure—uxorious stream! Our scanty sons—scanty by their parents' fault—will hear how citizens whetted 'gainst each other that sword which should have slain the Persian foe, and how they met in battle. What god shall the people invoke to save our falling empire? by what prayer shall the holy maidens prevail with Vesta who is deaf to their hymns? To whom shall Jupiter grant the task of purging our crime? Apollo, Prophet! come at length, we pray thee, thy bright shoulders enwreapt in clouds: come, if thine be the choice, 'Eryx' laughing goddess, with Jest and Desire hovering round thee: or thou, if thou hast a thought for the neglected race of thy descendants, our first father, sated with a pastime that thou hast seen, alas! too long,—thou who lovest the war-cry and the polished casque and Marsian foot that fiercely fronts the bloody foe: or thou, kind Maia's son, if 'tis thou who hast transformed on earth thy winged godhead to the guise of a mortal youth, and consentest to be called Cæsar's avenger. Far distant be thy return to the skies, and long mayest thou gladly dwell among the folk of Quirinus! bear with our faults, and may no breeze be over swift to waft thee away:
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here rather, here be pleased with thy proud triumphs, thy titles of Father and Prince: and suffer not the Mede to ride unpunished while thou, Cæsar, holdest sway.

3

So mayest thou be guided by Cyprus’ divine queen and Helen’s brothers, those shining stars: so may the sire of the winds rule thy course, prisoning all save the west alone: O ship, that owest the debt of Virgil to thy keeping entrusted! carry him safe back, I pray, to the Attic shore, and preserve my soul’s half. By oak and triple brass his breast was fenced, who first committed his frail bark to the sea, and feared not the headlong south battling with northern blasts, nor boding Hyades nor raging south-easter—lord of the Adriatic mightiest to swell or still its billows. What instant death did he fear, who saw dry-eyed the monsters of the deep, the swelling waves, and Acroceraunia, crags of evil name? In vain hath heaven’s providence dissevered lands by an ocean barrier, if ‘spite of that our impious ships o’erleap waters where none should venture. Rashness bids men shrink from no risk: blindly they rush on crimes forbidden: ’twas in rashness that Iapetus’ son brought fire by dark deceit to mortals. Once fire was stolen from heaven’s palace wasting disease and a troop of fevers hitherto un-
known swooped down on earth, and inevitable death, slow erewhile and distant, quickened its advent. With wings denied to man Daedalus ventured to tempt the vacant air: sturdy Hercules stemmed the tide of Acheron. Nought is too hard for mortal men: our folly assails heaven itself, nor doth our crime suffer Jove to lay aside his angry thunderbolts.

Keen winter thaws at the pleasant change to spring and the west wind, and engines launch the ships' dry keels: and now nor flock loves its fold nor hind his fire: nor are meads white with hoary frost. Now while the moon hangs high in heaven Cytherean Venus leads the dance: and lovely Graces with their companion Nymphs foot it o'er the ground with changing step, while glowing Vulcan makes the weary Cyclops' smithies to blaze. Now 'tis meet to bind sleek locks with myrtle green or flowers that spring from thawing earth. Now 'tis meet to sacrifice to Faunus in shady groves, whether lamb or kid be the offering of his choice. Pale Death with foot impartial knocks alike at poor men's hovels and royal palaces. Fortunate Sestius! the shortness of life's sum forbids us essay the hope of distant good. Soon, soon shall night and storied shades and Pluto's narrow halls imprison thee: once thou art thither gone, no kingship of the feast shall dice
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assign thee: nor shalt thou marvel at tender Lycidas, whom now all our youth adore, and maidens presently shall coyly woo.

5

Pyrrha! what slender youth in perfumes steeped courts thee 'mid circling roses in thy pleasant bower? for whom dost bind thy yellow locks with simple grace? Alas, how oft shall he weep his outraged troth, his fortune changed, and stand amazed at the waves that rise before the blackening squall—poor credulous novice, who dreams thou wilt ever be his alone and meet for love, all ignorant of thy favour's fickle breeze! Hapless they who see thy beauty and know thee not! But I, as yon temple wall's votive tablet declares, have hung up my dripping raiment as a thank-offering to the god who rules the main.

6

Varius, bird of Homeric note, shall write of thy courage and thy victories over the foe, and all the feats of arms a proud soldiery hath wrought by sea or land 'neath thy control. But I, Agrippa, essay no such flights as these: no, nor the tale of the heavy wrath of Peleus' implacable son, nor cunning Ulysses' wanderings on the sea, nor Pelops' cruel line—too humble I for such high themes: for modesty and the
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Muse that rules my unwarlike lyre forbid me to mar by lack of talent noble Cæsar’s renown and thine. Who can worthily write of Mars sheathed in adamantine mail? who of Meriones black with Trojan dust and Tydeus’ son by Pallas’ aid a match for gods? I, fancy free or aglow with love, and fickle ever—I sing but feasts and battles of maidens who war ‘gainst youths, with nails well pared for the fray.

7

Let others praise famous Rhodes or Mytilene or Ephesus or Corinth’s walls between her two seas, or Thebes renowned for Bacchus, Delphi for Apollo, or Thessaly’s Tempe. There are, whose one task it is to chant the long history of virgin Pallas’ city, and pluck from every spot an olive branch to deck their brows. Many a bard will sing in Juno’s honour of Argos, land of steeds, and rich Mycenæ. For me, I love not sturdy Lacedaemon nor the plain of fertile Larissa so well as the cave of echoing Albunea and headlong Anio’s fall and Tiburnus’ grove and those orchards watered by swift streams. As oft the brightening south wind sweeps clouds from the dark sky, nor is ever big with rain, so do thou, my Plancus, be wise and heedful to end sorrow and life’s toils with mellow wine, whether thou dwellest among the gleaming standards of the camp, or shalt dwell ’mid the dark shades of thy Tibur. Teucer,
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'tis said, when fleeing from Salamis and his sire, entwined his wine-steeped brows with a poplar crown and thus bespake his sorrowing friends: "Whithersoever fortune shall bear us, fortune kinder than my father, thither we will go, my comrades, my companions! Never despair while Teucer leads and Teucer prays for you: for Apollo's true oracle hath promised that a second Salamis hardly discerned from the first shall rise in another land. Brave heroes, comrades of mine oft in worse plight than this, banish your cares with wine to-day: to-morrow we will traverse again the vasty deep."

8

Say, Lydia, by all the gods I entreat thee, why hastest thou to ruin Sybaris by thy love? why hates he the sunny plain where once he brooked 'the dust and heat? Why rides he not as soldier should among his peers, nor rules his Gallic steed's mouth with curbing rein? Why doth he fear to plunge in tawny Tiber? why avoid olive oil more heedfully than viper's blood, nor discolour his arms with weapons, winning fame by hurling oft the quoit and oft the javelin beyond the mark? Why lies he hid, as they say did Thetis the sea-goddess' son on the eve of Troy's doleful days of death, lest manly garb should hurry him to scenes of slaughter and Lycian squadrons?

8
Thou seest how Soracte rises clear, all white with deep snow, nor can the straining woods bear their burden, and streams are stayed by piercing frost. Dispel the cold: heap plenteous logs on the fire: and with more bounteous hand draw four-year-old wine from the twy-èared Sabine jar, thou master of the feast. Leave all else to the gods: soon as they have stilled the winds that battle with the boiling sea, no cypress shakes nor aged ash. Seek not to know what the morrow shall bring: whatever day chance allots thee, count as gain: nor spurn in youth sweet love, nor spurn the dance, ere crabbed age hath marred thy bloom. Now be thine to haunt the Plain, the public squares: to hear soft whispers at twilight's trysted hour,—to hear the silvery tell-tale laughter from the far corner where lurks thy love, and steal some pledge from her arm or unresisting finger.

10

Mercury, Atlas' eloquent grandson, who didst deftly form the rough ways of new-made men by gift of speech and the athlete's graceful art,—thee will I sing, great Jove's and Heaven's messenger, and parent of the hollow lyre, well skilled to hide what-e'er thou wilt in merry theft. Once, while Apollo with terrifying threats bade thee restore the kine
thy boyish prank had craftily driven off, he turned and laughed to find his quiver filched. 'Twas by thy guidance too that wealthy Priam passed the gates of Ilium and 'scaped the ken of Atreus' proud sons and the Thessalian watchfires and the camp of Troy's foes. 'Tis thou that leadest the souls of the just to rest in their blest abodes, and with thy golden wand rulest the phantom throng, loved alike by gods above and gods below.

11

Seek not forbidden knowledge, Leuconoe: ask not what end heaven hath decreed for thee and me, nor probe the secrets of Chaldean numbers. Far better to suffer whate'er befall! whether Jove hath granted us to see more winters, or this be the last, which to-day breaks yon Tyrrhene sea against opposing crags, be wise, strain the wine, and curtail thy distant hopes with thought of life's brief span. E'en while we speak, jealous Time will have been on the wing: enjoy the present, trust the future as little as thou mayest.

12

Clio, what man or hero is it thy choice to celebrate with lyre or shrill flute? what god? Whose name shall sportive Echo repeat on Helicon's shady slopes or on Pindus or cold Hæmus? whence the woods

10
followed free in Orpheus' train—Orpheus the sweet singer, taught by his mother's art to stay rivers' swift currents and flying winds, and charm and lead listening oaks to the tune of his melodious string. What can I sing before the Father's due praises, lord of men and gods, who rules sea and earth and heaven by the changing seasons' law? from whom springs nought that is greater than himself, nor is aught that lives like or near to him: yet next in honour stands Pallas. Nor thee shall I fail to sing, Bacchus bold in battle—nor thee, Virgin goddess, foe to savage beasts—nor thee, Phœbus, dread unerring archer. Alcides too I will hymn, and Leda's sons, victors renowned, the one as horseman, as boxer the other: whose bright star, soon as it shines o'er sailors, makes the stormy surge to flow back from the rocks: winds fall, and clouds fly, and threatening waves at their will sink on the bosom of the deep. Who next shall claim first place in my song? Romulus, or Pompilius' peaceful reign, or Tarquin's tyranny, or Cato's glorious death? Regulus, and the Scauri, and Paullus generously prodigal of life in the hour of Punic victory—all these shall my grateful Muse celebrate in strains sublime: Fabricius too: he, and Curius that trusty soldier of locks unkempt, and Camillus, were all sons of stern poverty and a home that well befitted their ancestral farm. Still rises Marcellus' fame, like a tree's unnoted growth: brighter than
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all shines the Julian star, like the moon among heaven’s lesser fires. Thou son of Saturn, Father and Guardian of mankind, to thy care hath Fate entrusted great Cæsar: reign thou, and be Cæsar thy deputy. He—whether he lead in triumph high conquered Parthians, Latium’s menacing foes, or Seres and Indians, neighbours of the rising sun—

with thee for suzerain shall justly rule the wide world: thy heavy chariot shall shake Olympus: thy vengeful bolts shall be hurled on groves unholy.

Lydia! when thou praisest Telephus’ rosy neck and Telephus’ wax-white arms, then, alas! bitter bile swells within my angry breast. Then doth my reason, then doth my blood quit its place: and the tear that steals adown my cheeks proclaims how I am consumed by slow inward fires. I burn, if the love-distraught youth hath roughly handled thy fair shoulders with drunken outrage, or left the tell-tale mark of his tooth on thy lips. O, if thou wilt be counselled by me, think not that he will be faithful who can do barbarous despite to those sweet kisses wherewith Venus hath mingled the quintessence of her nectar! Thrice happy and more are those who are linked by bonds unbroken, and whom love’s unison sundered by no evil quarrels will release no sooner than their life’s end.
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14

O ship, new tides then will bear thee back to sea! Alas, what dost thou! Make with might and main for the haven: seest thou not, how thy side is stripped of oars, thy mast crippled by the swift south wind, thy yard-arms groan, and without undergirding thy keel can scarce withstand the tyrant sea? thysails are rent—no gods thou hast to invoke in perils new. Though built of Pontic pine, proud daughter of the forest! thou boastest thy lineage and useless name, the cautious sailor puts no trust in his ship’s empty splendour. Unless thou wilt be the sport of winds, beware. But late thou Wert a weary burden to me, who now yearn over thee with anxious care: O, shun the seas that flow between the shining Cyclad isles!

15

As the traitor shepherd was bearing his hostess Helen over the sea in Idæan ships, Nereus laid the swift winds in unwelcome rest, to chant this fell augury: Ill-omened is thy home-coming with a bride whom Grecian armies shall seek to regain, leagued to end thy wedlock and Priam’s ancient dynasty. Alas! what days of toil are in store for steeds and men! what slaughter thou bringest on the Dardan nation! already Pallas is making ready her helm and shield, her chariots and her raging...
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wrath. In vain, proud of Venus’ protection, shalt thou comb thy locks and strike the unwarlike lyre between thy songs that ladies love: in vain shalt thou hide thee in thy bower from the terrible spears and the sharp Cretan arrow, the din of war and Ajax’ swift pursuit: yet shall come in time the fatal day when thy paramour’s tresses shall be smirched in dust. Seest thou not Laertes’ son, deadly foe to thy race? and Nestor of Pylos? They press thee hard, those fearless warriors—Teucer of Salamis, and Sthenelus skilled in fight, and no sluggish charioteer where need is to manage steeds: Meriones too shalt thou learn to know. See, Tydeus’ fierce son, e’en braver than his sire, is wild to find thee: from whom thou, for all the prowess thou boastest to thy love, shalt fly, coward! with panting deep-drawn breath, as flies the stag forgetting his pasture, when he descries a wolf on the valley’s farther slope. Late shall come the doom that Achilles’ wrathful fleet brings on Ilium and her Phrygian matrons: when the tale of winters is complete, your Trojan homes shall perish in Achæan flames.

16

Daughter fairer than thy mother fair! make what end thou wilt of my scurrile lampoons—cast them into the fire or the Adriatic wave. Not Cybele, nor the Dweller of the Pythian shrine, nor Bacchus, nor
the redoubled clash of shrill Corybantic cymbals, inspires the votary with frenzy like to gloomy wrath—wrath that quails not before Noric swords or wrecking billows or fierce fire or e'en the fearful crash of Jove's descending thunder. Prometheus, 'tis said, compelled to add to our primal clay some portion culled from every creature, gave to our breast the raging lion's ire. 'Twas anger that laid Thyestes low in dire destruction: for this, the chiefest cause, have tall cities fallen, and arrogant hosts driven the foeman's plough across their levelled walls. Control thy temper: I too in pleasant youth have felt the glow of passion, and hurried madly into swift satiric verse: now I would fain change bitter for sweet, if but thou wilt take my repentance for hard words, become my friend and give me back thy heart.

Swift Faunus oft changes his pleasant Lucretilis for Lycaeus, and ever wards the summer's fiery heat and the rainy winds from my she-goats. Spouses of their ill-smelling lord, safely they roam this protected grove in quest of shy arbutus and thyme, nor fear green vipers, nor Mars' army of wolves from Hædilia—ay, Tyndaris, whene'er Faunus' sweet pipe echoes about the valleys and the smooth rocks of low-lying Ustica. The gods protect me: they love my piety and my Muse. Here to thy heart's content shall
plenty, rich in the country’s pride, flow for thee from her bounteous horn. Here in my vale’s recess thou shalt shun the dogstar’s heat, and sing to thy Teïan lute of Penelope’s and bright Circe’s yearning for one and the same love: here ’neath the shade thou shalt drain cups of harmless Lesbian wine, nor shall Semele’s Bacchus battle with Mars; nor shalt thou fear lest Cyrus, jealous headstrong wooer, lay rash hands on thee in unequal strife, and rend the garland that decks thy tresses, and thy innocent raiment.

18
Plant no tree, Varus, before the sacred vine about Tibur’s kindly soil and Catilus’ town: for hard is the lot by heaven decreed for those who drink not wine: nor can aught else put carking cares to flight. Who after wine prates of the soldier’s or the poor man’s hardships, and not rather of thee, great Bacchus, and thee, fair Venus? But let none transgress the gifts that the wine-god bestows with temperate hand: take warning by the Centaurs’ deadly strife with the Lapithæ over their wine, and the heaviness of Bacchus’ hand on the Sithonians, what time in greedy haste they distinguish right and wrong only by the narrow dividing line of lust. Bright wearer of the fox-skin! I will lay no rude hand on thy unwilling divinity, nor drag to light those mysteries
that varied leaves conceal. Only silence the wild cymbals and Berecythian horn, parents of blind self-love, and vain-glory raising too high and more her empty head, and Faith prodigal of secrets, more transparent than glass.

19

The tyrant mother of Desire and Theban Semele's son and wanton licence bid me give back my heart to loves I deemed forgotten. I burn for Glycera's bright beauty, of purer sheen than Parian marble: I burn for her malapert charm and that face o'er perilous to behold. Venus hath left her Cyprus to descend to me in fullest might, nor suffers me to sing of trifling themes—Scythians, and Parthian horsemen whose streng'th is to flee. Set here green turf, my slaves, set herbs and incense and a cup of wine two years old: once the victim slain, she will deal with me more mercifully.

20

Thou shalt drink from cups of modest size cheap Sabine wine, which myself stored and sealed within a Greek cask, on that day when the theatre's plaudits greeted thee, Mæcenas, dear untitled friend! so loud that thy native river's banks and merry echo from the Vatican hill gave back thy praises. 'Twill be for thee to quaff Cæcuban and grapes trodden in
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Cales' press: no Falernian vines or Formian hills mix their juices with cups of mine.

21

Ye tender damsels, sing of Diana: sing, ye youths, of the long-locked Cynthian god, and Latona deeply loved by Jove supreme. Praise, maidens, her that loves the streams and woodland leafage waving high on cold Algidus, or in Erymanthus' dark forests or Cragus green: laud as oft, ye men, Tempe, and Delos, Apollo's birthplace, and the shoulders graced by the quiver and his brother's lute. So shall he yield to your prayer and send doleful war and famine dire and pestilence to Persia and Britain, far from our people and Cæsar our prince.

22

Fuscus! he who is pure of life and void of crime needs no Moorish javelins, no bow, no quiver big with poisoned arrows: whether 'tis his intent to fare by Syrtes' boiling tide, or through inhospitable Caucasus, or the lands that are laved by storied Hydaspes. For in the Sabine forest as I sang of my Lalage and roamed free from care beyond my boundary, a wolf fled before me though all unarmed: albeit no huger monster is reared in the wide oakwoods of Daunus' warlike land, nor bred in Juba's country, that arid nurse of lions. Place me in those barren plains
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where no tree feels summer's quickening breath, where heavy clouds and wrathful skies oppress the world: place me where the sun drives his chariot too near and none can make their dwelling: e'en there I'll love my Lalage, sweetly smiling and sweetly speaking.

23

Thou shunnest me, Chloe, like a fawn—a fawn seeking its dam over the lonely hills, with many a vain fear of breeze and woodland: for if spring's harbingers make waving leaves to quiver, or green lizards dart athwart the yielding bramble, heart and knees alike tremble. Nay! I seek not to crush thee, like fierce tiger or Gætulian lion: 'tis high time for thee to wed, and cling no more to thy mother.

24

Why should shame stint our grief for one so dear? begin thou the dirge, Melpomene, gifted by the Father with lyre and clear voice. Eternal sleep, then, lies heavy on Quinctilius! on him, for whom when shall Honour find a peer—Honour and Justice' sister, unたarnished Faith, and なaked Truth? Many are the good who mourn his fall; none, Virgil, more deeply than thou. Thy vain devotion asks back Quinctilius from the gods; 'twas not for this thou didst entrust him to their care. Nay,—if more
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sweetly than Thracian Orpheus thou wert to tune a lute that trees might list, the life would ne’er return to that airy sprite that once, with wand of dread, Mercurius, o’er harsh to ope Destiny’s gates for prayer, hath herded with his dusky band. "Tis hard: but whate’er ‘tis forbidden to amend endurance may lighten.

25

Less oft do wanton youths shake thy closed casements with frequent blows,—no more they wake thee from sleep, and the door cleaves close to its threshold, that door that erst swung right nimbly on its hinge: and less and less thou hearest the plaint, "While I thy lover pass long nights of anguish, canst thou, Lydia, canst thou sleep?" Thy turn shall come: a hag despised, thou shalt weep in some lonely alley for the pride of libertines, while the Thracian wind raves louder in the moonless night, when burning love and lust that oft frenzies mares shall rage in thy fevered heart, and thou shalt complain for that merry youth takes more joy of green ivy and dark myrtle, but withered leaves it sacrifices to Hebrus, winter's comrade.

26

The Muses’ friend, I’ll bid wanton winds bear sorrow and fear away to the Cretan sea, caring not a jot what foemen dread the king of those cold
realms beneath the Bear, what terrors assail Tiridates. Sweet Pierian nymph, who lovest pure fountains, twine sunny flowers, twine a garland for dear Lamia! without thee no praise that I can give may aught avail: 'tis for thee and thy sisters to immortalise him with Lesbian lyre in strains as yet unheard.

27

'Tis Thracians only who use for battle cups that nature made for merriment: away with so barbarous a custom, and keep bloody brawls afar from our temperate revels! Vast is the gulf that parts wine and lights from the Median scimitar: abate, my friends, your impious din, and rest reclined on down-prest elbow. Would you have me too take my share of strong Falernian? then let Opuntian Megilla's brother tell us what arrow hath pierced his heart, happy wretch! Art slow to speak? yet nought else shall bribe me to drink. Whatever beauty be thy queen, thou needst not blush for thy flame—thy fault is still an honourable love. What-e'er thy secret, come, tell it to a safe ear. . . . Ah, poor boy, what a monster hath claimed thee for victim, worthy of a nobler love! What witch, what Thessalian magician's drugs, nay, what god, shall release thee? thou art in the toils of a Chimera's triple shape, whence Pegasus' self shall scarce set thee free.
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28

Archytas! thou didst measure earth and sea and the innumerable sands,—yet now a paltry dole of scanty dust is thy prison by the Matine shore, nor aught it avails thee to have scaled heights of air and sent thy thought around the circling heaven—still doomed to die. All have died: Pelops' sire, the guest of gods, Tithonus translated to the skies, Minos, the sharer of Jove's secret counsels: and Panthus' son dwells in Tartarus, once more to Orcus banished,—ay, though the shield he unfixed witnessed his share in Troy's story, and nought but sinew and skin had he yielded to dark death: e'en he, whom thy judgment deemed no mean teacher of nature and truth. But darkness waits for all alike, and once for all must the path of death be trodden. Of some the Furies make a show for Mars' grim pastime: the greedy sea is mariners' destruction: though mixed multitudes of old and young perish, dread Persephone marks every head that falls.

Me too, the south wind, swift comrade of Orion's sinking star, welmed in Illyrian waves. Grudge not, sailor, a grain of shifting sand to my bones and unburied head: so howsoe'er the East may threat Hesperian seas, mayest thou be safe while Venusia's woods are smitten,—so may rich gains accrue to thee.
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from just Jove, who hath power to give, and Neptune the guardian of sacred Tarentum. Carest thou nought for a crime that will be visited on thy innocent descendants? nay, perchance 'tis thyself that justice' debt and tyrant change may await: vengeance shall follow the prayers that thou leavest unheard, and no atonement shall set thee free. Though thou art in haste, thou needst not long delay: throw three handfuls of dust—then speed thee on!

29

Iccius! dost thou now envy the Arab's rich treasures, and plan fierce war against Sabæa's yet unconquered princes, and forge chains for the dreaded Mede? What foreign maid shall be thy slave, her betrothed spouse slain? What court-bred boy with locks anointed shall be thy cupbearer, once taught to shoot Eastern arrows from his father's bow? Who can deny that headlong rivers may flow back up the mountain steep, and Tiber return to his source, when thou, once of better promise, art fain to change thy diligently gotten store of famed Panætius' books and thy philosophic home for coats of Spanish mail?

30

Venus, Cnidos' and Paphos' queen, quit thy loved Cyprus, and make new abode in the lovely bower of Glycera, who invokes thee with copious offering of
incense. Bring swift with thee thy ardent son, and the loose-girdled Graces, and the Nymphs, and Youth that without thee loses its bravery, and Mercurius too.

31

What asks the bard of Apollo's new-consecrated godhead? what prays he as he pours new wine from the cup? 'tis not Sardinia's rich crops, not warm Calabria's pleasant herds, not India's gold or ivory, nor those fields that crumble in the quiet waters of Liris' silent stream. Let fortune's favourites prune their vines with Cales' knife; let the rich merchant drain from golden cups wines bought with Syrian gains, deeming himself dear to heaven itself in that, thrice, ay, four times he can safely voyage to the Atlantic main. My fare is nought but olives, chicory and light mallows. Grant me, Leto's son! to enjoy my store with health and soundness of mind, I pray: grant that my eld be not basely spent nor lack the lyric song.

32

They bid me sing. Whate'er of sportive song thou and I have idly made in shady groves, to live a year or more, come, my lyre, utter forth a Latin lay,—lyre first tuned by that Lesbian citizen, who, for all his warrior pride, yet amid the clash of arms,
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or what time he had moored his sea-tossed bark to the dripping shore, sang still of Bacchus and the Muses and Venus and the boy who clings to her side, and beauteous Lycus' dusky eyes and dusky hair. Thou pride of Phoebus, thou lyre, a welcome guest at the banquets of supreme Jove, sweet solace of labour! take my greeting whene'er I duly invoke thee.

33

Grieve not, Albius, overmuch at the thought of cruel Glycera, nor ask in piteous elegiac chant why a younger gallant outshines thee in her faithless favour. Fair narrow-browed Lyceoris burns for Cyrus, while Cyrus' heart is all for prudish Pholoe: but sooner shall she-goats mate with Apulian wolves than Pholoe sink to base intrigue. Such is Venus' will: 'tis her pleasure in cruel pastime to link under her brazen yoke forms and minds ill-matched. Myself, when courted by a higher love, sweet Myrtale held fast prisoned—Myrtale a freedwoman, crueler than the Adriatic waves in Calabria's hollow bays.

34

Not oft nor heartily a worshipper of heaven, lost in the lore of a wisdom unwise, I must now 'bout ship and retrace a course abandoned: for Jupiter, albeit 'tis his wont to cleave the clouds with flashing fire, hath now driven through a clear sky his steeds and
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swift chariot, shaking the moveless earth, the straying streams, shaking Styx and loathed Tartarus' dread mansion, and Atlas' mountain boundary. Strong is God to raise the lowly aloft: he weakens the proud and brings to light things unseen: 'tis Fortune's whim to snatch away with wings shrill hurtling the crown that anon she bestows on another head.

35

Goddess, queen of pleasant Antium, whose present power can raise mortal men from lowest depths and plunge proud triumphs in death; to thee the poor husbandman makes his anxious prayer, to thee (for thou art mistress of the sea) the sailor prays who challenges with Bithynian keel the Carpathian main. Thou art the fear of rude Dacians and flying Scythians, of cities and nations and proud Latium, of the mothers of foreign kings, yea of purple-clad tyrants: lest with injurious foot thou hurl to earth the erect pillar, and the thronging mob rally doubters with the cry, 'to arms, to arms!' and shatter a dynasty. Before thee ever goes grim Necessity, bearing in brazen hand her joiners' nails and wedges, nor lacks she stubborn clamp nor molten lead. Hope is thy worshipper and rare Faith crowned with white wool: who refuses not her comradeship, whene'er with changed garb and hostile mien thou quittest the palaces of the great. But the faithless crowd and

26
the harlot forsworn turn their backs: the casks once drained to the dregs, friends vanish, traitors who will not aid to bear the yoke. Mayest thou protect Cæsar on his march against Britain, earth's remotest land, Cæsar and that new levied swarm of warriors who threat the East and the Red Sea! Shame on us for the scars and the crime of fraternal war! Sons of an iron age, no risk have we shunned, no crime left untried: no altars have our warriors spared, never in fear of heaven restrained their sacrilegious hand. O mayest thou reforge on a new anvil our blunted swords, to wield against Massagetæ and Arabs!

With incense and lyric song and bullock's blood duly shed let us sacrifice to Numida's protecting gods, —Numida, who now safe returned from farthest West lavishes many an embrace on his dear comrades, but on none more than on loved Lamia, remembering well how the same master ruled their boyhood, and together they donned manhood's garb. Let this fair day not lack its white mark: stint not to fill the bowl, let not the feet rest from Salian dance: nor let e'en toping Damalis o'ercome Bassus in deep Thracian draughts: let not the feast lack its roses, its parsley evergreen, its short-lived lilies. On Damalis shall all fix their languishing eyes: yet
Damalis shall not be severed from her new lover, but cling more closely than gadding ivy.

37

Fill high the bowl, tread free the measure! now, my comrades, has come that day when we should adorn the gods' sacred cushion with Salian banquets. Erstwhile 'twas a crime to draw Cæcuban wine from ancestral cellars, what time the queen was plotting mad ruin for our Capitol and death for our empire, with her vile disease-stained following, controlling no wild hope and drunk with the delight of success. But her madness abated when scarce one ship escaped the flames, and Cæsar curbed with true terror's sway her spirit frenzied by Mareotic draughts: pressing hard with swift oars on her flight from Italy's coasts—e'en as the hawk chases soft doves, or hunters speed after the hare in snowy Haemonia's plains—that so he might enchain that monstrous birth of destiny: but she, fain for a nobler end, nor womanlike dreaded the sword nor sought with swift-sailing fleet to gain some hidden realm. Nay, she brooked to visit her ruined palace with brow unruffled, and boldly handling the cruel snakes to receive into her blood their deadly poison: death once decreed, her courage rose: for her lofty spirit spurned the thought that fierce Liburnians should see her unqueened majesty led in haughty triumph.
My lad, I hate your Persian splendours: garlands twined with linden delight not me: cease to search where tarries yet the latest rose. I care not that thy diligence add aught to plain myrtle: for myrtle well befits both thee the man and me the master, who drink beneath my vine's enlacing shade.
BOOK II

1

The civil strife that Metellus' consulship began, the war's causes, its faults and forms, and Fortune's sport, and those fatal leagues of the great, and arms stained oft by blood yet unpurged—such is thy theme, a task of risk and hazard: thou treadest fires that sleep 'neath treacherous ashes. For a while let the theatres lack stern tragedy's muse: soon, when thou hast duly told the story of our state, thou shalt don the Athenian buskin and resume thy high employ,—Pollio, thou great champion of wretches accused, bulwark of the senate's counsels! for whom—

the laurel of Dalmatian victory hath won eternal renown. E'en now at thy bidding the bugle and clarion's threatening sound rings in our ears, e'en now the gleam of arms affrights the steed and gazing rider to flight. E'en now methinks I hear the mighty voice of leaders besmirched with glorious dust: I hear the tale of Cato's stubborn heart unconquered 'midst a conquered world. Juno and all Afric's patron deities who had fled the land they
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were helpless to avenge, anon offered their conqueror's posterity in sacrifice to Jugurtha's shade. What plain is not fattened by Latin gore, and hath no tombs to tell the tale of our impious battles, when Medes heard the crash of a falling West? What flood, what streams know not of our doleful wars? what sea hath not Italian slaughter incarnadined? on what shore hath our blood not been shed? But pause, my Muse o'er-rash, nor quit thy jests, nor play the sad Cean singer's part: thou and I beneath Dione's cave must attempt a strain on lighter string.

2

No sheen hath silver while 'tis hid in avaricious earth, Sallustius Crispus, thou hater of metal unburnished by moderate use. Long shall be the life of Proculeius, whose praise it is to have played a father's part to his brothers: him shall deathless fame bear on unfailing wing. A wider empire is his who curbs a covetous heart, than were he to unite Libya and farthest Gades, and rule alone o'er Phœnicia's twain colonies. 'Tis by self-indulgence that dread dropsy grows, nor quenches thirst unless the sickness' root be banished from the veins, and watery languor from the pallid frame. Though Phraates be restored to Cyrus' throne, yet Virtue in no accord with the multitude denies him a place among the truly blest, and teaches the crowd to
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speak no wrongful praise; bestowing on him alone
a crown and royalty unquestioned and the garland
that is his by right, who sees nor turns a longing eye
on high-piled wealth.

3

Ever, preserve a mind well balanced in adversity,
nor less control undue delight in Fortune's smile,
remembering, Dellius, that thou must die: whether
thy life be one long sorrow, or reclined in some
grassy nook thou makest holiday with Falernian of
inmost brand to bless thine ease. Why else do tall
pine and poplar pale love to intertwine their branches'
hospitable shade? why strives yon fleeting current
to speed adown its winding bed? Hither bid wines
be brought and perfumes and the lovely rose's o'er-
short-lived bloom, while fortune and age and the
three sisters' dark threads permit thee. Thou wilt
leave thy bought glades, thy palace, thy park that
tawny Tiber laves; all shalt thou leave, and thine
heir enjoy thy high-heaped riches. Whoe'er thou
art that dwellest awhile beneath the sky, whether
rich and of Inachus' ancient line, or poor and lowly
born, it matters not: alike wilt thou be the victim
of pitiless death. To one bourne we all are driven:
the lot of each will soon or late leap from the urn
wherein 'tis shaken, and set us in the boat that
bears us to endless banishment,
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4

Think no shame to love a serving maid, Phocian Xanthias! Time was when the snow-white charms of Briseis, a slave, moved proud Achilles to love: captive Tecmessa's beauty wrought on her lord Ajax, Telamon's son: Atreus' son amid his triumph glowed for a ravished maid, what time the Eastern squadrons had fallen before their Thessalian conqueror, and Hector's loss made it a lighter task for war-worn Greeks to work Troy's ruin. Who knows but the wealth of thy golden-haired Phyllis' house may make thee proud to wed her? be sure, she mourns for a royal lineage and the cruelty of her father's gods. Ne'er believe that she thou lovest hath come of the rascal rabble, nor that one so true, so scornful of pelf could have blushed for the mother who bore her. Her arms, her face, her neat-turned ankles I praise, but praise unsmitten: suspect not one for whom time hath hasted to accomplish his fortieth year.

5

Not yet can she subdue her neck to bear the yoke, nor share a fellow's task, nor mate with the amorous bull: thy love's heart is yet in the green fields, as the heifer's that allays violent heat in cooling streams, or is fain to sport with calves in some moist willow-bed. Desire no more the unripe grape: soon shall autumn's changing hue empurple the darkening
clusters. Soon will she follow after thee: for proud youth is flying and will add to her those years which it takes from thee: soon will Lalage be forward to crave a spouse, beloved as ne'er was coy Pholoe, or Chloris whose white shoulders gleam as shines the pure moon on nightly waves, or Cnidian Gyges, who were he set amid a bevy of girls were a riddle to perplex strangely e'en sharpest-eyed guests—so flowing his locks, so doubtful his features' sex.

6

Septimius! who with me wouldst visit e'en Gades and the Cantabrian untaught to bear our yoke, and the barbarous Syrtes, where ever seethes the Moorish tide: may Tibur, I pray, that Argive colony, be the abode of my old age—there may I rest, aweary of seas and journeys and wars! But if thence Fate unkind debar me, then will I seek Galæsus' stream beloved by fleecy sheep, and the lands where once Laconian Phalanthus ruled. Sweetliest of all smiles for me that corner of earth: where the honey yields not to Hymettus, and olives vie with green Venafrum: where by Jove's favour springs are long and winters warm, and Aulon, friend to Bacchus' increase, hath no cause to envy Falernian grapes. That spot, those happy hills invite thee and me: there shalt thou duly besprinkle with tears the warm ashes of thy poet friend.
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7

Thou who oft with me led to face deadly risks 'neath Brutus' captaincy,—who hath restored thee to Roman rights, thy country's gods, thy native skies, Pompeius, chiefest of my comrades? with whom full oft o'er the winecup I have shortened the lagging day, my head engarlanded, my locks shining with Syrian ointment. With thee I bore Philippi's swift flight, that day when I cast away my craven shield, what time valour fell and threatening champions bit the base dust. But me swift Mercury wrapt in dense cloud and bare safe through my dreaded foes: thee the wave of war sucked back and whelmed in seething surf. Wherefore now pay to Jove thy votive feast; lay thee down, weary of long wars, beneath my laurels, nor spare the casks reserved for thee. Fill the polished goblets with care-dispelling Massic wine: pour unguents from their wide shells. Whose the task to weave in haste garlands of soft parsley or myrtle? whom shall a lucky throw make master of the feast? wildly as e'er a Thracian will I revel: welcome, misrule, when friends come home!

8

Hadst thou e'er, Barine, known one least penalty for outraged faith, were one blackened tooth, one
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nail to mar thy beauty, I would trust thee. But no! once thou hast invoked judgment on thy traitress head, straightway thou shinest fairer far, and comest forth the cynosure of all our longing youth. 'Tis thy gain, then, to swear falsely by thy mother's buried ashes, and night's silent stars and all the host of heaven, and the gods that know not chill death. At such vows, I say, Venus' self smiles, smile the simple nymphs, and cruel Cupid who ever sharpens his glowing darts on the fatal whetstone. Moreover 'tis for thee that all our youths grow to men, to make fresh slaves for thee: nor do thy elder lovers, for all their threats, ever quit their impious mistress' roof. Mothers and careful sires dread thee, afraid for their stripling sons: poor girls late wedded fear lest thy soft influence should turn their consorts aside.

9

Rain drips not ever from the clouds on the rough fields, nor fitful storms ever vex the Caspian sea, nor in Armenia's bounds lies heavy ice through all the year: Garganus' oak woods are not always tossed by the north winds and her rowans robbed of their leaves: but thou, friend Valgius! art ever harping in mournful strain on Mystes' loss, nor is thy love forgotten when eve's star rises, nor when it pales before the swift sun. Nay! that old man who lived through thrice life's span mourned not all his years for loved
Antilochus: nor did young Troilus' parents and Phrygian sisters weep for him ever. Cease at length from thy soft complainings, and let us rather sing Augustus Caesar's trophies new-won, and cold Niphates,—how Media's river, added to the tale of conquests, rolls his eddies less proudly, and Geloni, cooped within fixed limits, ride o'er their straitened plains.

More rightly wilt thou guide thy life, Licinius, if thou neither darest ever the deep, nor in cautious fear of storms too closely huggeth the dangerous shore. Whoe'er loves the golden mean, hath safety that keeps afar from sordid hovels, and discretion that shuns an envied palace. 'Tis the tall pine that oftenest is tossed by winds: lofty towers fall with heaviest crash; lightnings strike the mountain's peak. The breast well-prepared hopes change in adversity, fears it in prosperity. Jupiter brings back yet anon dispels unlovely winters. Think not, if now 'tis ill with thee, that so 'twill be hereafter: full oft Apollo takes his lyre and wakes the Muse to song, nor always bends his bow. In perilous times show a bold courageous front: 'twill be wisdom to reef the sail when swollen by too favouring winds.

Ask not, Quintius Hirpinus! what warlike Cantabrian and Scythian design beyond Hadria's inter-
venering waves: nor make anxious provision for life that needs so little. Back flies beardless youth and grace: withered age chases away wanton loves and easy sleep. Spring's flowers cannot always keep their bloom, nor shines the ruddy moon with countenance unchanged: why then thy mind in strife unequal with eternal questionings? Rather beneath tall plane or yonder pine carelessly reclined, our hoary hair perfumed with roses, anointed with Assyrian nard, quaff we the wine-cup: Bacchus chases carking cares afar. What slave shall haste to allay our cups of glowing Falernian with yon running wave? Who shall beguile fair Lyde from her secluded home? Quick, bid her haste to come with her ivory lute, her hair neatly braided in a knot such as Sparta's daughters use.

12

The long wars of fierce Numantia, dread Hannibal and Sicilian seas empurpled with Punic blood—these themes thou wouldst not wish wedded to the lyre's soft strains: no, nor the story of cruel Lapithæ or drunken Hylæus or those earth-born youths o'ercome by Hercules' hand, whose perilous assault made old Saturn's bright palace to quake for fear: better in prose shalt thou, Mæcenas, recount the tale of Cæsar's battles, and threatening kings led with bowed neck along our streets. But me the Muse
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hath bidden to tell of thy lady Licymnia's sweet song, her eyes bright gleaming and her breast true to warm mutual love: of her, still graceful, whether she tread a measure in the dance, or vie in jest, or link arms in sport with maidens bright on the holy day of Diana's thronged festival. Wouldst thou barter one curl of Licymnia's hair for all that rich Achæmenes possessed, for fertile Phrygia's Mygodonian wealth or Arabia's full treasure-houses? while she turns aside or with lightly-moving cruelty denies her neck to thy glowing kisses, which she loves e'en more than her suitor to have stolen, and at whiles is forward to snatch.

13

Whoe'er first planted thee, 'twas on an unlucky day; sacrilegious was the hand that reared thee, O tree, to bring destruction on posterity and evil name on our village. He, I well may guess, was one that throttled his own father and sprinkled his inmost chamber with blood of guest nightly done to death: from no Colchian poisons, from no horror on earth did he shrink, who set in my land thy guilty wood, to fall one day on thy innocent master's head. From hour to hour no man's care can rightly warn him what perils he should shun: the Punic sailor dreads the Bosphorus, nor fears lest hidden fates await him elsewhere: the soldier fears the Parthian's
arrows and swift flight, the Parthian dreads chains and a Roman prison: yet 'tis death's unlooked-for might that ever seizes on mankind. How near was I to seeing dark Proserpina's realm, and Æacus' judgment-seat and those blest souls that dwell apart, and Sappho on Æolian strings complaining of her country's maids, and thee, Alcæus! striking with golden quill the fuller note of seaman's, exile's, soldier's hard plight! Both sing amid the wondering shades songs that call for holy silence: but with more eager ear the thronging crowd drinks in the tale of battles and tyrants banished. What wonder? when 'neath the spell of such strains the hundred-headed monster droops his dark ears, and e'en the snakes have rest that twine amid the Furies' hair: nay, e'en Prometheus' and Pelops' sire are cozened by the sweet sound to forget their toils: nor cares Orion to chase the lion or the timid lynx.

14

Postumus, Postumus, the flying years, alas! glide on, nor shall piety delay wrinkles and hasting eld and unconquered death,—no, my friend, not if every day thou shouldst offer three hundred bulls to appease tearless Pluto, who enchains Geryon's triple bulk and Tityus with that gloomy wave which all we who live by earth's bounty must traverse, be we kings or poor husbandmen. 'Tis vain to shun bloody
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war and the hoarse Adriatic's breaking surf: vain to guard against autumn's unhealthy south winds: still must we behold black Cocytus' dull meandering stream, and Danaus' accursed kin, and Sisyphus, Æolus' son, doomed to an eternity of toil. Thy lands, thy house, thy loved wife,—all must thou leave: nor of all yon trees that thou tendest shall any save the hated cypress follow their short-lived lord. Thy worthier heir shall drain the Cæcuban thou guardest with an hundred keys, and stain thy floors with royal wine that e'en priestly banquets cannot match.

15

Soon will palaces leave but few acres for the plough; everywhere waters will stretch before our view wider than the Lucrine lake, and the mateless plane will dispossess the elm: and beds of violet and myrtle and all odorous plants will scatter their scents about those olive groves that yielded rich increase to a former lord: and laurel boughs dense-twined will bar the fiery shafts. Not thus did Romulus' and bearded Cato's ensample and our forefathers' rule enjoin. With them the man was poor, the state was rich: no colonnade spanned by private measure faced the shady north; law suffered no man to contemn chance-dug sods, and bade the public purse adorn town and temple with newly-hewn stone.
For rest prays the sailor caught on the wide Ægean; what time dark clouds have hidden the moon, nor stars shine clear to guide the mariner: rest is the prayer of war-maddened Thracian and quiver-decked Mede,—rest, Grosphus, that nor gems nor gold can buy. For no treasures, no consul's lictor can chase away the mind's sad disorders, and cares that hover about richly ceiled halls. Full well he lives at little cost, whose father's salt-cellar shines on his humble board: nor fear, nor base desire robs him of light slumbers. Why aims our valour so high in life's brief span? Why change we our homes for lands warmed by another sun? What exile from his country hath e'er fled from himself as well? Sickly care climbs brazen-beaked ships, nor is outpaced by squadrons of horse,—swifter than stags, swifter than the east wind that drives the clouds. Enjoy the present hour: think not on that which lies beyond, and temper sorrows with careless smile: there is no bliss unmixed with ill. Swift death took great Achilles for its prey: Tithonus pined in long old age: and to me perchance shall hours bring what to thee they deny. Around thee low a hundred herds of Sicilian kine: thine are whinnying mares, fit to draw the chariot: thou art clad in wool twice stained by Afric's purple. To me hath Fate
The odes of Horace fulfilled her promise, granting me the delicate spirit of Grecian song, and contempt of the envious crowd.

17

Why break my heart with thy complaints? 'tis not heaven's pleasure nor mine that thou, Mæcenas, should die before me, thou chiefest pride and pillar of my fortunes! Oh, if some forestalling force carry thee away, why tarry I here bereft of half my being, loved as erst no longer, poor crippled survivor? Nay, that day shall lay us both low. No faithless oath have I sworn: lead but the way, and we will go,—ay, go together, prepared to face the last of all journeys. Nor fiery Chimæra's breath, nor hundred-handed Gyges re-risen shall sever me from thee: such the will of mighty Justice and the Fates. Whatever sign govern my life, whether Balance or dread Scorpion rule with more potent influence my natal hour, or Capricorn, tyrant of the western wave,—'tis past belief how my star and thine consent. Thee did the tutelage of Jove's opposing planet save from cruel Saturn, and stayed the wings of flying Fate, what time the glad sound of a people's plaudits rang thrice in our theatre: me had a tree falling on my skull done to death, had not Faunus, saviour of the sons of Mercury, turned the blow with strong right hand. Do thou be sure to offer victims due, and build a votive shrine: but I will slay a lowly lamb.

43
Within my house shines no ivory, no golden ceiling: no pillars hewn in farthest Africa bear weighty blocks of Hymettus' marble: no Attalus' palace have I, a stranger heir, inherited; no high-born client dames have I, to weave me Laconian purple raiment. But truth is mine, and a rich vein of wit: poor am I, yet sought by the wealthy: I weary heaven for nought beyond, nor entreat my powerful friend for larger bounties, blest enow in my Sabine farm alone. Day treads hard on day, and new moons haste to wane: yet thou on the eve of death biddest hirelings hew thee marble; heedless of the grave thou buldest thy palaces, and strivest to thrust farther out the shore of that sea that roars on Baiae's coast, deeming the mainland too little wealth. Nay, thy greed is ever uprooting thy neighbours' landmarks and o'erleaping thy clients' boundaries: out are driven man and wife, carrying in their bosom their fathers' gods and children meanly clad. Yet no hall awaits the wealthy lord more surely than greedy Orcus' destined bourne. Why strive against that law? Alike for prince and poor man the grave yawns wide: nor could gold bribe Orcus' minion to bring subtle Prometheus back to life. 'Tis he who prisons proud Tantalus and Tantalus' race: 'tis he who sought or unsought by prayer comes to free the poor whose toils are done.
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19

Bacchus I have seen—believe it, ye future ages!—teaching song amid the far-off crags, and the pupil Nymphs and ears erect of goatfoot satyrs. Was hael! my heart yet throbs with late-felt fear and gladness wild—Bacchus is my bosom's lord. Spare me, great god of wine, dread wielder of the terrible thyrsus, spare! 'Tis mine to sing of the tameless Thyiades, to tell of springs of wine, of full rivers of milk, of honey flowing from hollow trunks: mine to sing thy blest consort's glories exalted to the stars, Pentheus' palace destroyed by no gentle hand, and Thracian Lycurgus' fall. Thou tamest rivers and eastern seas: thou in thy revels on the lonely hills bindest the locks of Bistonia's dames with harmless viper-knots: thou, when the Giants' impious crew was scaling thy sire's kingdom through the steep sky, didst hurl back Rhætus—thou, with lion's claws and dreadful fangs: albeit, held fitter for dance and jest and sport, thou wert deemed unmeet for battle: yet thy bearing was still the same in peace and war alike. Thee and thy fair golden horn Cerberus saw, nor harmed thee, but gently moved his tail, and at thy parting licked with his mouth's three tongues thy feet and thy legs.

20

A bard transformed, I'll rise aloft through the clear air on strong unwonted wing, nor tarry longer
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on earth: I'll soar above envy and the cities of men. Poverty's son, thy chosen friend, dear Mæcenas,—I shall not die nor be imprisoned by the Stygian wave. Rougher and more shrunken grows the skin upon my legs, and my body's upper part changes to a swan's white shape, and glossy feathers spring from finger and shoulder. Soon shall I be a bird of song, and swifter of flight than Dædalus-begotten Icarus behold the shores of groaning Bosphorus, and Gætulian Syrtes, and the plains beyond the north wind. Me shall the Colchian learn to know, and the Dacian who dissembles his dread of Marsian cohorts, ay, the lettered Spaniard and he that drinks of the Rhone. Be no dirge heard beside my empty bier, no unsightly mourning, no plaint: hush the loud wail and forbear the useless honour of a tomb.
BOOK III

1

I hate and shun the profane crowd: speak no ill-omened word! the Muses' priest, I sing to youths and maidens songs before unheard. Dread kings bear sway o'er their own flocks: o'er kings themselves rules Jove, renowned conqueror of Giants, whose frown moves the world. One may range his trees in furrows o'er wider acres than his neighbour: one may come to the hustings with nobler birth, one with life and name more stainless, one with longer train of clients: yet Necessity's equal law takes high and low alike: no name but is shaken in that vast urn. For him above whose impious neck a drawn sword hangs, no care shall give Sicilian feasts a sweet savour, no music of bird or lyre recall his sleep. Gentle sleep spurns not the rustic's humble cot, nor shady banks, nor Tempe's Zephyr-fanned woods. Who craves but what suffices recks nought of stormy seas, nor the fierce assaults of Bear-ward's setting or rising Goat: nought of hail-smitten vineyards and faithless farms, where orchards blame now the rains, now the parching seasons, now the unkind winters.
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Fishes feel their seas straitened by masonry dropt in the deep: here many a builder sinks his blocks,—slaves at his side and their lord, a scouter of the land. But Fear and Threat climb high as that lord: black care quits not the brazen-beaked trireme, and sits behind the horseman. Then if nor Phrygian marble nor star-bright purple attire nor vines Falernian and Eastern perfume can allay sorrow, why should I plan a lofty hall with novel splendour and envy-stirring doors? why barter for more troublous wealth my Sabine vale?

2

Let every youth, hardened by the keen soldier's life, learn to bear with welcome pinching poverty, and harry the proud Parthian with horse and dreaded spear, and pass days of danger 'neath the open sky. Him may some warring tyrant's queen behold from our foemen's walls, or maiden tall, and sigh 'Alack!' lest her royal love, unused to war, provoke the lion whom one touch angers—who rushes in gory wrath through paths of carnage. Dear and honoured in his death who dies for his country: death follows hard after the fier too, nor spares the heels and craven back of unwarlike youth. Virtue, that knows no base defeat, shines with untarnished glories, nor wins nor loses her pride of place at the fickle people's airy will. Virtue, opening
heaven's gate to those that merit immortality, ventures on unpermitted paths, and spurns with soaring wing the vulgar throng, the sodden ground. Faithful silence too hath its sure reward: ne'er shall he who reveals Ceres' sacred mystery sit 'neath my roof tree nor loose with me the fragile bark: full oft hath neglected Jove doomed righteous and polluted alike: Vengeance may halt, yet seldom fails to dog the criminal's way.

3

The just and firmly-purposed man no fury of citizens urgent for wrong, no menacing tyrant's frown can shake from his stubborn resolve,—no, nor the south wind, stormy sovereign of Hadria's unquiet sea, nor the great might of thundering Jove: though a world in ruins roll down upon his head, unaf- frighted he will meet the shock. Thus Pollux and thus errant Hercules strove upward and gained the starry heights; 'twixt whom reclines Augustus and quaffs nectar with ruddy lips. Thus was thy guerdon won, great Bacchus: for this, thy tigers bore thee, their wild necks straining at the yoke: thus was Quirinus carried by Mars' steeds far from Acheron's stream, what time Juno had spoken her welcome word to the gods in council:—Troy, Troy hath fallen, doomed to ruin by that fated and unrighteous judge and his stranger mistress,—people and lying
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ruler alike destined to sate my vengeance and chaste Minerva’s, since the day when Laomedon cheated the gods of their promised wage. Now shines no more in beauty that Laconian adulteress’ infamous guest, and Priam’s house forsworn no more by Hector’s might hurls back the valiant Achæans; and the war that our feuds lengthened hath sunk to rest. Henceforth for Mars’ sake I’ll forego my bitter wrath, my hatred of that grandson whom Troy’s priestess bore: him will I suffer to enter our bright abodes, to drain the nectar’s flow and be numbered among the gods’ untroubled company. Let but wide seas rage ’twixt Ilion and Rome, and the exiled race may rule in bliss where’er they will: let the herd trample Priam’s and Paris’ grave and wild beasts hide their whelps unchecked,—so may the Capitol stand in glory, and conquered Medes bow to proud Rome’s potent will. Far and wide may the terror of her name extend, to the farthest shores, here where the Midland sea parts Europe from the African, there where swelling Nile waters his fields, —stronger to spurn gold hidden,—and so best placed beneath the concealing earth,—than to mould it to human needs with sacrilegious hand. Whatever limits bound the world her arms shall reach, eager to learn where fires hold revel, where clouds and dripping rains prevail. Yet with this charge I grant Rome’s warlike sons their destiny, that never o'er-

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dutiful and o’er-trustful of their fortune they plan to rebuild the dwellings of ancestral Troy. Troy's new birth evil omens shall herald: her tale of woe shall be retold, and I, Jove's spouse and sister, will lead her conquering foes. Thrice should Phœbus build her walls of brass, thrice my Argives should raze it, thrice the captive wife should wail for husband and son.—No task is this for my sportive lyre; Muse, whither strayest? quit thy rash pratings of converse divine, and degrade not high themes to thy lowly strain.

4

Descend from heaven, royal Calliope, and let thy flute begin a long-drawn lay,—or, if thou wilt, thy clear voice, or Phœbus' stringed lyre. Hear ye the sound, or am I fooled by some sweet madness? Methinks I hear, methinks I stray through sacred groves, haunts of pleasant airs and pleasant waters. Myself in childhood, on Apulian Vultur, beyond the threshold of Apulia that nursed me, weary of play and fain to sleep, was covered with fresh leaves by storied doves: whereat all might marvel, who dwell in high Acherontia's nest, and Bantia's glades, and low Forentum's fertile fields—how safe I slept from deadly vipers and bears, how gathered leaves of sacred bay and myrtle hid me, a babe of courage heaven-inspired. Yours, yours am I, ye Muses:
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whether I rise to my Sabine heights, or choose to
dwell in cool Præneste or by Tibur’s slopes or Baiæ’s
waters. A welcome guest among your founts and
dances, I was not done to death by Philippi’s rout
nor that accursed tree, nor Palinurus’ Sicilian wave.
Where’er ye are with me, readily will I sail the
raging Bosphorus or journey through parching Assyrian
sands: I will view unscathed inhospitable Britain,
and the Concanian who delights in horse’s blood—
the quivered Gelonian and the Scythian stream.
‘Tis you who bid proud Cæsar rest in your Pierian
cave, whene’er, his war-worn cohorts brought home
to their cities, he seeks to end his toils: ‘tis you, kind
Powers, who grant and joy to grant gentle wisdom.
Well we know, how he quelled with falling thunder-
bolt the impious Titans and their monstrous crew,—
he, who orders the moveless earth, the windy sea, and
rules with sole and equal sway cities and the realm
of gloom and gods and mortal turmoil. Mightily
had Jove been affrighted by those grim champions,
proud in their strength of arm, and the brothers
who strove to pile Pelion on shady Olympus. But
Typhoeus and strong Mimas, and Porphyrian’s menac-
ing bulk, Rhoëtus and Enceladus, rash hurler of
trunks uprooted—what might they all avail, rushing
‘gainst Pallas’ clashing shield? Here stood eager
Vulcanus, here queenly Juno, and here, his shoulders
ever bearing the bow, he who laves in Castalia’s

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pure dew his flowing locks, ruler of Lycian thickets and his native forest—Delos' and Patara's Apollo. Force void of counsel falls by its own bulk: force law-guided heaven too leads to victory: heaven hates the strength that meditates blackest crime. Witness my rede, Gyas of the hundred hands, and Orion, chaste Diana's fabled assailant, slain by the virgin's arrow! Hurled down upon her monstrous sons, Earth mourns their fall, and wails for her offspring cast down by thunderbolts to Orcus wan: nor can swift fire eat through Ætna's incumbent mass, nor is passionate Tityus' liver deserted by the winged gaoler of his sin: three hundred chains bind lustful Pirithous fast.

5

Ever we believe that Jove, lord of thunder, rules in heaven: Augustus shall be deemed a present god, when Britons and dreaded Persians are brought beneath our sway. Could Crassus' soldier basely wed a foreign wife?—shame for our senate and our degenerate age!—could Marsian and Apulian grow old in the armies of a Median king, forgetful of the Roman name and dress, our sacred shields and immortal Vesta's shrine, while Jove's temple and Rome yet stood? 'Twas this that Regulus' foreboding mind had feared, when he spoke against degrading terms of peace, and drew from such example a presage of ruin for
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generations yet unborn, if the captive youth should not unpitied perish. I have seen,—he said,—our standards hung in Punic shrines and armour stripped from our unresisting soldiery: I have seen free Romans' arms bound behind their backs, while city gates stood open and fields were tilled which once our hosts had wasted. Tell me not that the ransomed soldier will return with keener mettle! ye add but mischief to disgrace: never doth dyed wool regain its lost hue, nor will true valour once fallen be restored to the heart depraved. Doth the hind turn to bay when freed from the entangling net? then and only then will he be brave who hath trusted him to a perfidious foe: then will he repair the war and trample Carthage anew, the coward who hath felt thongs bind his arms and quailed at death. Such as he know not life's true source and blend peace with war. Shame upon him! mighty is Carthage and high exalted above a base and ruined Italy!—'Tis said he put aside his chaste wife's embrace and his little children, as a man degraded, and grimly fixed his manly eyes on earth: till the unchanging counsel that he gave confirmed the wavering senate, and he hasted away among his weeping friends, a noble exile. Right well he knew what tortures awaited him among his foes: yet he thrust aside the kinsfolk who barred his way and the throngs that stayed his return, e'en as though he had heard and judged his
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clients' tedious suits and were faring to Venafrum's fields or Spartan Tarentum.

6

Roman! an undeserving victim, thou shalt pay for thy forefathers' fault, till thou hast restored the gods' temples and falling shrines and their statues befouled with black smoke. Thy sovereignty rests on thy obedience to heaven's will: with heaven still is the beginning, with heaven the end. Oblivion of the gods hath brought many an evil on sorrowing Italy. Already hath Monæses and Pacorus' soldiery crushed our attack, 'neath no good auspices delivered: and smiles in triumph to see his scanty store of bracelets enriched by Roman booty. Our city, faction's prey, hath well-nigh been destroyed by the dreaded Ethiop seaman, and the Dacian more skilled to aim the flying arrow. 'Twas generations fruitful of crime that first polluted wedlock, race and home: hence sprang a flood of calamity to whelm our country and our people. The maiden grown delights to learn Ionian dances, and is formed by all the arts: e'en now all her desire is to plan unchaste loves: soon while her husband drinks she seeks younger paramours, nor is nice to choose on whom she shall bestow her darkling, unpermitted favours: no, at her lover's open hest she rises with her spouse's full consent, be it some base mercer who claims her
or captain of a Spanish bark, paying dear for her disgrace. From no such parents sprang the warriors who dyed the sea with Punic blood, and smote Pyrrhus and great Antiochus and dread Hannibal: no, the manly brood they were of soldier yeomen, trained to turn the sod with Sabine spade, and carry fagots cut at a stern mother's bidding, 'what time the sun shifted the mountain shadows, and lightened weary oxen of their yokes, bringing with parting car the welcome hour of eve. Where hath time's mischief not wrought decay? our fathers, worse in their generation than our grandsires, begat us their viler progeny, soon to leave an offspring yet more vicious.

7

Why weep, Asterie, for him whom early spring's brightening zephyrs shall restore to thee,—Gyges, thy constant lover? for he, by south winds driven to Oricum after the Goat-star's stormy rising, slumbers not but weeps the livelong winter's night. Yet his lorn hostess' messenger brings word that Chloe sighs, that sad Chloe burns but for thy love— tempting him with a thousand cunning wiles: tells, how trusting Proetus' traitress wife moved him by false charges to hasten chaste Bellerophon's death: tells, how Peleus was well-nigh done to death, because his virtue shunned Magnesian Hippolyte: and hints with guile such tales as teach inconstancy. 'Tis all
in vain: he still is true, and words like these fall on ears deafer than Icarian crags. But thou,—take heed lest thy neighbour Enipeus please thee too well: albeit none is seen to guide the steed more skilfully o'er the Campus' sward, nor any swims so swift adown the Tuscan channel. Close thy doors in the gloaming, nor turn thine eyes to the street at the flute's plaintive note: and be still unyielding though oft he call thee cruel.

8

What I, unwedded, have to do on the Kalends of March,—what mean these flowers and yon pot of incense and the coals that lie on the fresh-cut sod,—dost marvel, learned in the lore of either tongue? 'tis because I vowed to Bacchus a toothsome feast and a snow-white goat, for my hairbreadth escape from death by a falling tree. On this my annual holiday shall the pitch-bound cork be drawn from that jar that first drank in the smoke 'neath Tullus' consulship. Quaff, Mæcenas, a hundred cups to thy friend's deliverance: let wakeful lamps burn till morn: afar be all riot and quarrel. Forget thy statesman's cares for the city: Dacian Cotiso's host hath fallen; the Median foe is torn by suicidal strife. Tardy chains have bound in slavery the Cantabrian, Spain's ancient enemy: e'en now the Scythians un-bend their bow and are minded to flee from our
plains. Care not for the people's troubles, forget thy rank, thy counsels over-cautious: take joyfully the present hour's gift and quit all serious tasks.

9

While I was dear to thee, and no happier rival clasped thy fair neck, Persia's king was ne'er so blest as I.

While thou loyedst none better than me, and no Chloe was prized above Lydia, then rang the world with Lydia's name: Roman Ilia was ne'er so famous as I.

Now Thracian Chloe is my queen, sweet songstress, deft mistress of the lyre: for whom I will not fear to die, so fate spare her life and let her live.

For Calais, son of Thurian Ornytus, I burn with love requited: for whom I'll brook a double death, so fate spare the youth and let him live.

How if our ancient love return and link our severed hearts with brazen yoke? if Chloe's yellow locks are forgotten and banished Lydia welcomed back again?

Though he is fairer than a star, and thou lighter than cork and more passionate than curst Adria's wave, with thee I'd love to live, with thee I'd gladly die.
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10

Lyce! didst thou drink of distant Tanais, wedded to a savage lord, e'en so for pity thou ne'er wouldst suffer me to lie before thy doors in thy cold native blasts. Hearst thou how thy gate rattles to the winds, how they roar among the trees of thy fair court? canst feel how the sky's clear influence freezes the fallen snow? Abate that pride which Venus hates, lest wheel and rope whirl all thy labour away. Daughter of a Tuscan sire, thou art no Penelope, to spurn thy suitors. O if no gift nor prayer, nor lover's pallor streaked with violet hue, nor thy husband's passion for a Pierian wench, can move thee,—yet spare thy suppliants, hard as stubborn oak, cruel as Moorish snakes! not for ever will my bones endure thy stony threshold and the rains of heaven.

11

Mercury,—for 'twas taught by thee that Amphion moved stones with song,—and thou, O tuneful shell, skilled to sound the music of thy seven strings: once void of voice and charm, now a welcome guest in temples and in rich men's halls: sing a strain where-to Lyde may ope her stubborn ears, Lyde who now disports her gaily like a mare of three years in pastures wide and shuns a touch, unwedded yet and
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still unripe for an eager mate. Thou canst lead tigers and woods in thy train, and stay swift rivers: thy soothing voice o’ercame e’en the dread hall’s gate-ward, Cerberus: albeit his Fury head be embattled by a hundred snakes and foul breath and slaver flow from his three-tongued jaws. Nay, e’en Ixion and Tityos smiled sore against their will: the urn stood dry a moment, while thy sweet song charmed Danaus’ daughters. Tell Lyde the fate of those damsels’ crime and storied penalty, the water flowing ever through the bottom of the emptied cask, and all the tardy doom that awaits crime e’en beneath the earth: impious—ay, for what worse could they have dared?—impious was their deed, who brooked to slay their spouses with cruel knife! One alone of all, worthy of the nuptial torch, did nobly cheat her perjured sire, a damsels of renown that shall not die: for ‘Rise,’ she said to the youth her husband, ‘rise, lest a hand thou fearest not send thee to endless sleep: escape the father and the wicked sisters of thy bride, who now, ah me! are mangling each her several prey, like lionesses that have chanced on bullocks: but I, less cruel than they, will not stab thee nor bar thy flight. Let my sire load me with cruel chains, for that in mercy I spared my hapless spouse: let his fleet bear me away an exile e’en to Numidia’s farthest lands. Go whither foot or breeze may waft thee, while
night and love befriend thee: go and good luck attend thy way: and carve on some tomb a plaintive line in memory of me.’

12

Unhappy girls, who cannot give love his way, nor drown their woes in sweet wine,—or cower for fear of the lash of an uncle’s tongue! Thee, Neobule, Cytherea’s winged son robs of thy wool-basket: stolen away are thy threads and thy care for household works, all for the beauty of Liparæan Hebrus, who, soon as his anointed shoulders are laved in Tiber’s stream, is a cavalier more skilled than Bellerophon’s self, nor yields the victory to feeble fist or foot: a marksman sure to hurl his javelin ’mong the driven herd of deer that fly across the open, and swift to meet the boar as he sallies from his lair in the deep thicket.

13

Fount of Bandusia, brighter than glass, worthy of sweet wine, ay and flowers! to-morrow shall a kid be offered thee, whose brow is big with earliest horns, promise of love and battle: all in vain: for the sportive flock’s scion shall dye with red blood thy current cool. Untouched thou art by burning Dog-star’s fiercest hour: welcome coolness thou dost give to oxen weary of the plough, and wandering
flocks. Thou too shalt have a place 'mong storied 
springs, when I sing the oak that crowns those 
beetling crags whence leap thy babbling waters.

14

People of Rome! Cæsar, whom we lately heard 
to have sought like Hercules the laurel crown that 
death can buy, Cæsar returns home victorious from the 
Spanish shore. Let the Lady faithful to her wedded 
love come forth with offering of sacrifice due, and our 
renowned chief's sister, and, decked with suppliant 
fillet, the mothers of wives and warriors late saved 
from ill. Youths and wedded girls, abstain from all 
il-omened words! On this my true holiday shall 
black cares be banished: nor civil strife nor forceful 
death will I fear while Cæsar rules the world. Go, 
lad, fetch perfumes and garlands, and a cask withal 
that remembers the Marsian war, if e'er a jar hath 
'scaped the eye of roving Spartacus. Bid clear-voiced 
Næra too haste to knot her perfumed locks: but 
should her vile porter bar the way, then e'en return. 
With whitening hair the temper cools that once was 
all for strife and heady quarrel: I had not brooked 
the slight in my hot youth, when Plancus was our 
consul.

15

Wife of needy Ibycus! 'tis high time for thee to 
end thy evil ways, thy ill-famed toils: nigh thou art
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to the ready grave, and shouldst cease to sport among maidens, darkening as with a cloud those bright stars. What graces Pholoe well, Chloris, beseems not thee: meeter 'tis for thy daughter to storm the doors of youth, like Thyiad frenzied by the cymbal's beat. She, for love of Nothus, sports like wanton gazelle: thou art past thy prime: thy place is among the fleeces shorn near famed Luceria, not harps nor roses' purple bloom, nor casks drained to the lees.

16

Imprisoned Danae had been protected enow 'gainst nightly suitors by her brazen tower with doors of oak and surly watchdogs to be her sentinels, had not Jupiter and Venus mocked Acrisius, timid guardian of the hidden maid: knowing right well that safe and easy the road would be once the god was changed to gold. Gold will find a way through banded guards, and split rocks more mightily than the lightning's stroke: 'twas gain that plunged the Argive seer's house in headlong ruin: with bribes the Macedonian brake city gates asunder and mined the power of rival kings: bribes ensnare rough ship-captains. With growing wealth comes care and hunger for increase. Wisely, Mæcenas, pride of untitled knights! have I ever shrunk from raising my head aloft for all to see. Heaven's bounty still

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follows self-denial: naked, I cast my lot with those that covet nought, and desert the banner of the hosts of wealth: prouder in my lordship of what the world contemns, than in the fame of storing in my granaries all the harvests that hardy Apulians win—so were I 'mong blessings still unblest. Mine is but a stream of clear water, a few acres of woodland and the sure promise of a crop, yet little knows the lordly ruler of fertile Africa how far less happy is his lot than mine: albeit no Calabrian bees store honey for me, nor have I wine that mellows in Formian jar, nor rich fleeces that grow in Gallic pastures, yet hated poverty is far from me, nor, should I crave for more, wouldst thou refuse to grant. Better shall I add somewhat to my scant estates by limiting my desires than by joining Alyattes' realm to Phrygia's plains. Ask much, much shalt thou lack; happy he, to whom heaven hath granted sufficiency with sparing hand.

Ælius, old Lamus' noble scion,—for since 'tis said that the Lamiae's ancient stock derives its name from him, and all their line in history's mindful page, be sure thy lineage is traced to him who first, they say, ruled with wide sway the walls of Formiae and Liris' stream that washes Marica's shore:—to-morrow shall the swooping eastern blast strew the wood with thick
falling leaves and the strand with useless seaweed, 'unless the many-wintered crow be no true prophet of rain. While thou mayst, pile the dry logs; tomorrow shalt thou glad thy heart with wine and a porker two months old, thou and thy household freed from its tasks.

18

Faunus, lover of flying Nymphs! through my borders, my sunny fields, kindly come and kindly go, nor harm my little younglings,—if a kid is still offered thee in the year's fulness, nor doth the bowl, Venus' mate, lack its brimming wine, and the ancient altar steams with clouds of incense. All the flock sports in the grassy field, when thou seest December's Nones return; idle folk and unyoked oxen keep holiday in the meadows: the wolf roams among the fearless lambs: woodland leaves spread thy carpet: on the rascal earth with triple beat the ditcher merrily dances.

19

The tale of years 'twixt Inachus and Codrus who feared not to die for his country: the line of Æacus and the battles fought 'neath sacred Ilion's walls—of these thou talkest; but never a word to show what price shall buy a cask of Chian, who shall heat the bath, whose the house and what the hour which quits me of the wintry chill. Quick, a cup to the
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new moon, a cup to the midnight hour, a cup to Murena's augurship! with three or nine full measures our goblets are mixed. Thrice three measures for the rapt singer who loves the Muses' uneven number: yet more than three to taste the naked sister Graces forbid, in fear of quarrel. 'Tis the hour of madness: why is the Berecynthian flute unheard? why hang the pipe and lyre silent? No stingy hands for me: strew roses: let envious Lycus hear our mad revelling, ay and that fair neighbour so ill-matched with old Lycus. Beauteous thick-haired Telephus, fair as eve's clear star, to thee hastes Rhode, thy proper mate: I burn for my Glycera with love's slow-wasting flame.

20

Seest not, Pyrrhus, how dangerous it is to rob a Gaetulian lioness of her whelps? soon shalt thou, a craven ravisher, fly the hard-fought strife, when through youths' opposing ranks she comes to claim Nearchus' beauty, and battle royal shall judge whether to thee or her fall the greater prize. Meantime, while thou makest ready thy swift arrows, and she whets her terrible teeth, he stands umpire of the fray with naked foot upon the palm, while breezes fan his shoulders whereon his perfumed locks are flowing—in mien like Nireus or many-fountained Ida's stolen darling.
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21

My gentle wine-jar, born with me in Manlius' consulship! whether thou movest to plaint or jest, or quarrel or passionate love, or easy sleep,—whatever end those Massic grapes may serve which thou guardest, worthy to be broached on a lucky day, descend now from thy place, since 'tis Corvinus' will to set forth mellower wines. Though steeped in philosophic converse, he will never be so stern as to despise thee: 'tis said that e'en ancient Cato's virtue oft took fire from wine. Thy gentle spur quickens wit's wonted sloth: thy merry draughts lift darkness from the cares and secret questionings of the wise: thou bringest back hope to anxious hearts, thou givest spirit and strength to the poor man, who when he hath drunk from thee fears no crowned king's wrath, no soldier's arms. Bacchus and Venus, if she come in kindness, and the Grace's close-linked sisterhood, and late-burning lamps shall prolong thy revels, while Phœbus' return chases the stars away.

22

Maiden protectress of hills and groves, who hearest the thrice-uttered prayer of travailing girls, and savest them from death, goddess of triple shape! may thy pine o'ershadow my dwelling, whereto in joy with each returning year I may offer blood of a boar whose tusk is ripe for side-long thrust.

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23

Lift heavenwards palms outstretched, O peasant Phidyle, at the new moon's birth: with incense and with timely produce and a greedy sow's blood appease thy household gods: so shall thy fruitful vine escape the south wind's baneful breath, nor mildew blight thy crop, nor the sickly season of fruit harm thy dear younglings. The victim destined to stain with its life-blood the priestly axe grazes on snowy Algidus 'mid woods of oak and ilex, or fattens in Alba's pastures: crown thou thy little gods with rosemary and myrtle sprigs, nor strive to move them with slaughtered sheep. If the hand that touches the altar be innocent, no costliest victim hath a more potent charm to aid thee win thy Penates' favour than holy meal and crackling salt.

24

Though thou be richer than the virgin treasures of Arabia and wealthy India, though thy masonry fill the Etruscan and the Apulian sea,—if dread Necessity plant her adamantine nails in the buildings' summit, thou shalt not free thy heart from fear, nor thy head from the snares of death. Better live those Scythians of the steppes, whose custom 'tis to draw on wains their roving homes: better the frozen Getæ, whose undivided acres bear corn for the common good, and each man tills his land but for a year,
and bequeaths to a like successor the burden of his finished toil. There guiltless dames harm not their motherless step-children, there no dowried wife rules her spouse, nor listens to gay paramours. Their ample dowry is their parents' virtue, and chastity inviolate that owns a single lord: sin is forbidden, or its wage is death. O whoe'er will end unnatural slaughter and civic fury, if he would have his statues entitled Father of Cities, let him dare to curb un­ruly licence, so winning posterity's praise: since now—shame that I should say it!—our jealous hearts hate living virtue, and mourn it when lost to sight. What avail sad complaints, if no penalty checks transgression? what profit empty laws that custom violates, if regions fenced by fervent heat and realms of frozen snow, neighbours to the north wind, bar not the trader's path, if sailor's cunning vanquishes the terrors of the seas, and the deep reproach of poverty bids us leave nought undone and unendured, shunning the steep path of virtue? To the Capitol —thus shall we win the shouting crowd's plaudits— or to the nearest sea with our gems and jewels and useless gold, chiefest cause of all evil, if we truly repent of crime! We must erase the graven characters of evil desire, and shape with sterner arts the over-tender mind. The high-born youth is untaught to sit a horse, and fears to hunt; more skill he has in play, whether you bid him toy with Grecian hoops
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or dice by law forbidden: while his perjured sire
cheats the partner of his fortunes and his guest, and
hastes to amass money for an unworthy heir. Ay,-
wealth grows past control: yet is the measure never
full, and something still is lacking.

25
Whither dost hurry me, Bacchus, possesst by thee?
to what groves, what caverns does thy new-found
inspiration swiftly drive me? where the grot that
shall hear me plan how best to set great Cæsar's
 glory among the stars and 'mid Jove's councillors?
A notable theme and new shall be mine, by other
lips as yet unsung. E'en as on the heights stands
in amaze the sleepless Bacchant, viewing Hebrus
and snow-clad Thrace and Rhodope trodden by
savage feet, so wind I my way marvelling by river-
bank and lonely wood. Ruler of the Naiads and
Bacchants strong to bend tall ash trees with might
of hand! no lowly strain, no mortal utterance shall
be mine. Sweet is his peril, king of the wine-jar!
who follows the god that wreathes his brows with
vine-leaf green.

26
Late was I meet for ladies' love, nor were my
triumphs few: now I hang my arms, my lute whose
wars are done, on yonder wall, whereby the left side
of sea-born Venus' statue is guarded. Here, here
set my bright torch, my crowbar, my bow once

70
perilous to the opposing door of love. Goddess, queen of blest Cyprus and Memphis that ever lacks Thracian snow, let proud Chloe feel one smart from thy up-lifted lash.

27

The boding owl's repeated note, the pregnant bitch, the brown wolf running from Lanuvium's lea, the vixen with her cubs,—these be the omens to guide the wicked on their way: and may the snake bar their journey, frightening their cobs with arrow-like dart athwart the path: but I, keen-eyed diviner for her sake for whom I fear, or ever the bird that presages coming rain fly back to his stagnant marshes, will pray the crow to croak an auspicious omen from the sun's rising. Be happy, Galatea, where'er thou wilt; live and forget not me: and thee may no unlucky sight of woodpecker or errant raven forbid to go. But thou seest amid what storms Orion trembles to his setting. Well I know the terrors of Adria's dark gulf, the dangers of the clearing western wind. May it be for the wives and children of our foes to know the blind stirrings of the rising east, the black sea's roaring and the waves that lash the shuddering shore. 'Twas thus Europe trusted her snowy form to the treacherous bull, and paled amid her rash emprise to see the monster-teeming main, the snares encompassing her way. But lately had she eagerly plucked meadow flowers, weaving for the nymphs
their garland due: now by night's dim radiance
nought she saw save stars and waves. Soon as she
touched Crete, mighty mistress of an hundred cities,
—'My father!' she cried, 'O forfeited name of
daughter, O duty vanquished by madness! whence,
whither have I come? One death is too light
penalty for maiden's sin. Is it waking that I mourn
my base deed, or am I the guiltless dupe of some
vain imaged dream sent from the ivory gate? Was
it better to traverse wide seas, or pluck fresh flowers?
Were that infamous steer given back to me now in my
wrath, I'd strive to cut and rend the horns of the lately
loved monster. Shameless, I left my father's home:
shameless still, I shrink from death. Ye gods,
who'e'er of you hears me pray, suffer me to wander
naked among lions! Ere my fair cheeks be loathly
and wasted, ere the tender prey be sapless, I'd fain
be food for tigers while beauteous still. Base Europe,
thou hearst thine absent father's bidding: "Why
delay to die? Yon ash will serve thee; thy girdle
—'tis well it hath followed thee—will make a halter
to wring thy neck. Or if thou'rt fain for crags and
stones, sharp ministers of death, haste, trust thee to
the swift storm-wind; unless thou wouldst liefer
card wool with slaves—thou, a king's daughter—a
concubine, serving a foreign mistress.'" But as she
wept Venus stood smiling by, and her son with bow
unbent. Soon, when enow she had mocked her,
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‘Thou must end,’ she said, ‘thy wrath and angry plaints, when that hateful bull brings thee his horns to rend. Thou knowest not that thou art wife to Jove: still thy sobs, learn to bear calmly thy high fortune: half the world shall bear thy name.’

28

What can I better do on Neptune’s festal day? Bring with speed, Lyde, the Cæcuban from its recess, and storm the fastness of wisdom. Thou seest the sun sinking from mid heaven, yet as though the hasting day were standing still, thou wilt not pull down from my store that loitering jar that bears the date of Bibulus’ consulship. In turn we’ll sing of Neptune and the Nereid’s sea-green tresses: thou to thy hollow lute shalt chant Latona’s praise and swift Cynthia’s arrows: of her our hymn’s close shall be who rules Cnidos and the gleaming Cyclad isles and visits Paphos in swan-drawn chariot: nor shall Night lack her due tribute of a song.

29

Descendant of Etruscan kings! long have I kept for thee, Mæcenas, the mellow wine of a cask yet unbroached, with roses’ bloom and unguent expressed for thy locks. Cast all delays aside: gaze not always at watery Tibur and Æsulæ’s slopes and the hill of Telegonus, his father’s slayer. Leave thy cloying wealth, thy palace nigh the lofty clouds: cease to
admire the smoke, the riches, the noise of wealthy Rome. Rich men oft love change: trim suppers 'neath the humble roof-tree of the poor, with no purple tapestries, have smoothed many an anxious brow. Now does Andromeda's bright father display his hidden fires, now 'tis the fierce hour of Procyon and the mad lion's star: with the sun's course, days of drought return: now the weary shepherd with his fainting flock seeks shade and stream and rough Silvanus' thicket, nor are the still banks fanned by wandering winds. Thou plannest how best our state may stand, and questionest in anxious care for our city what dangers loom from farthest east and Cyrus' Bactrian realm and Tanais' disunited tribes. Yet heaven's wisdom shrouds the future's outcome in darkness, and smiles that mortal man should vex his soul unduly. Take thou calm thought for the present hour: all else is like a rushing river, that now glides peacefully between his banks down to the Etruscan sea, now whirls water-worn stones and trunks uprooted and herds and homes together, while hills and neighbouring woods re-echo as the fierce spate troubles the peace of tributary streams. Happy will he live and master of his fate who each day can say: I have lived; to-morrow let the Father possess the sky with dark clouds or sunlight clear: yet shall he not make the past of none effect, nor change and undo that which the flying hour hath
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once borne away. Cruelty-loving Fortune, unceasing in her tyrant sport, bestows at will her shifting favours, kind now to me, now to another. I bless her while she stays: if she shake her swift wings for flight, I surrender her gifts and wrap myself in my own virtue, and take honest undowered poverty for my mate. 'Tis not my part, if the mast groan before southern storms, to fall a-muttering piteous prayers, and drive a bargain of vows with heaven, that so my Cyprian and Tyrian wares may not enrich the greedy sea. Then, safe in a two-oared skiff, shall I be wafted through the Ægean's commotion by the breeze, and Pollux with his twin brother.

30

I have built me a memorial more lasting than brass, higher than royal pyramid's pile: that no wasting rain, no unruly north wind may destroy, nor the uncounted course of years and flight of time. Not all of me shall die, no scanty part of my being shall 'scape the deity of death: still shall I grow, still quickened by after fame, while priest and silent maid shall climb the Capitol. 'Twill be told by headstrong Aufidus' roaring tide and in the unwatered lands where Daunus ruled his rustic folk, how I rose from lowliness to fame as he who first set to Italian measures Æolian song. Claim, my Muse, thy due pride of place, and with goodwill set on my locks a garland of Delphic bay.
BOOK IV

1

Dost wage war once more, Venus, after so long a truce? Prithee, spare me! I am not such as I was 'neath gentle Cinara's rule. Cease then, cruel mother of dear Desires! to bridle one whom some fifty years make less docile to thy soft behests: go whither the pleading prayers of youth invite thee. More fitly shalt thou go wafted by lustrous swans with all thy rout to Paullus Maximus' home, if thou wouldst burn a willing heart. For noble is the youth and fair, no silent champion of trembling prisoners,—a hundred arts are his, and far shall he bear thy standard: and whene'er he smiles in triumph o'er some bounteous rival's gifts, he will set thee in marble 'neath a citron roof by Alba's lake. There shalt thou breathe clouds of incense, there shall the mingling strain of lyre and Berecyntian flute and pipe delight thee: there twice a day shall boys and tender virgins in thy divinity's honour tread with white feet the triple Salian measure. No more for me are youth and maid, nor fond hope of mutual love: not mine to vie in draughts of wine nor crown my brow with fresh
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flowers. But why, Ligurinus, ah! why flows the
tear ever and anon adown my cheeks? why as I
speak sinks my fluent tongue to unseemly silence?
In dreams of night I hold thee clasped, I follow thy
swift flight, O hard of heart! across the grassy Mar-
tian plain and through the fleeting flood.

2

Julus! whoe'er is fain to vie with Pindar, flies with wax-bound wings of Dædalus' workmanship and will but give his name to the glassy sea. Like some down-rushing mountain stream that rain hath swollen beyond its wonted banks, so mightily rolls and surges on the deep music of Pindar's song; still meriting Apollo's laurel, whether he sweep new-made words adown the bold dithyrambic tide of his lawless verse: or sing of gods and kings the sons of gods, by whose hand justice slew the Centaurs and dread fiery Chimæra: or grant a boon of song more precious than a hundred statues to boxer or horseman whom some Elean victory brings home in more than mortal glory: or wail the youth reft from his weeping consort, and raise heaven-high and save from dark death his strength, his courage, his golden virtues. Strong is the breeze that bears that Dircaean swan, Antonius! as oft as he soars into the lofty regions of the clouds. I, like the Matine bee that toilfully gathers its pleasant store of thyme about watery Tibur's groves
and banks,—a humble singer, I mould my laboured strain. Thou, a poet of stronger note, shalt sing of Cæsar, what time, adorned with well-won laurel, he leads the proud Sygambri up the sacred hill: Cæsar, than whom no greater, better boon hath fate and heaven's bounty bestowed on earth or shall bestow, though the ancient age of gold return. Thou shalt sing the days of gladness when the city holds high festival for brave Augustus' prayer-won return and the forum is void of strife. Then, if words of mine may merit hearing, shall my best notes swell the strain, and I'll sing 'O beauteous, blessed day!' happy in Cæsar's return. And thee, O Triumph, as on thou goest, a people's voice shall hail and hail again, with offering of incense to the gracious gods. Thy debt ten bulls and as many kine shall pay: mine a tender calf, new-weaned from his mother, who grows to youth 'mid bounteous pastures for my vows' fulfilment: bearing on his brow the likeness of the moon's bright crescent at her third rising, save for his snow-white marks all else of tawny hue.

3

For him on whose birth thou hast looked, Melpomene, with kindly eye, no Isthmian struggle shall win the boxer's fame: no swift steed shall bear him in Achaean car to victory, nor warlike prowess show him to the Capitol, laurel-crowned conqueror trium-
phant o'er the swelling threats of kings: nay, but
the streams that lave fertile Tibur and the groves' dense foliage shall mould the lyric singer to win renown. Imperial Rome's sons deign to grant me a place in the loved company of the poets; and less and less am I gnawed by envy's tooth. Muse that guidest the golden shell's sweet note, that canst if thou wilt bestow e'en on dumb fishes the swan's melody! 'tis all of thy bounty that passers-by point to me as the minstrel of the Roman lyre: the breath of poesy, the gift to please, if please I can, — 'tis all from thee.

4

Like that winged servant of his thunder, whom the king of gods made sovereign of wandering birds, his faith once proved on golden-haired Ganymede,—as by youth and native strength impelled the eagle yet untried in toil erst left his nest, while winds of spring in the clear heaven trained his timid wings to unwonted flights, till soon with swoop impetuous he wars with sheep-folds, or fain for feast and fight confronts his fierce serpent foe: as the hind on pastures rich intent espies the lion new-weaned from his tawny mother's teat, soon to perish by his unfleshed tooth: so have the Vindelici beheld Drusus waging war beneath the Raetian heights:—whence comes that immemorial custom which arms them with Amazonian axe, I have not asked: nor is it
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granted to know all things:—howe'er that be, their hordes victorious far and wide, now quelled by youthful wisdom, have learnt the power of mind and temper duly nurtured 'neath an auspicious roof, of Augustus' fatherly spirit to Nero's young sons. Valour and virtue breed valour: steers and steeds show their sires' worth, nor are timid doves begotten of proud eagles: but teaching quickens native vigour, and training in right fortifies the breast: should manners grow corrupt, e'en generous minds are stained by fault. Thy debt, O Rome, to the Neros Metaurus' stream attests and Hasdrubal's rout and that bright dawn that chased away Latium's night; that first smiling day of victory since the dread African began to ride through Italian towns, like fire in pines or eastern wind upon Sicilian waves. Since then victorious toil brought still new greatness to Rome's arms, and in the shrines wasted by the impious Punic invader their gods stood once more erect: and at last said treacherous Hannibal: We are as stags, a prey to ravening wolves: yet reverse our part and chase those whom to baffle and escape were a glorious triumph. That race whose courage bore from Troy's ashes over the tossing Tuscan sea their worship, their sons and aged sires to Ausonia's cities,—like ilex lopped by ruthless axes 'mid Algidus' rich forests of foliage dark, in loss, in slaughter, they draw strength and courage from the very stroke of
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steel. Never Hercules, maddened by defeat, saw his Hydra foe more fully repair its wounded strength: no more wondrous growth sprang from soil of Colchis or Echion's Thebes. Plunge Rome in the deep, and fairer she arises: wrestle with her, and 'mid plaudits loud she will hurl the unchecked victor to earth and fight battles whereof women shall speak. No more proud messages shall I send to Carthage: fallen, fallen is all our hope and the fortune of our name with Hannibal slain. Nought shall Claudian hands fail to accomplish, hands that Jove's kindly divinity protects and wise counsels guide through the sharp stress of war.

5

Scion of kindly gods, noble guardian of Romulus' race, too long hast thou been absent: fulfil thy promise of a speedy return, given to the senate's sacred council. Bring light again to thy country, good prince: for soon as the people see the spring-like brightness of thy face, pleasanter is the passing day, fairer shines each sun. As a mother desires her son, whom the south wind's envious blast keeps for longer than a year's space far from his home beloved beyond the breadth of the Carpathian main, as she entreats his coming with vow and omen and prayer, nor turns her eyes from the curving shore, 'e'en so, smitten by loyal yearning, his country longs for
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Cæsar’s return. In safety oxen roam the fields: those fields Ceres and benign Prosperity blesses: sailors flit o’er a peaceful sea, Honour shuns all blame; chaste are our homes and unpolluted by vice: law and custom have vanquished shameful crime, children like her lord are the mother’s pride, punishment follows hard on transgression. Who need fear Parthian or frozen Scythian or rough Germany’s offspring, when Cæsar is safe? why think on fierce Iberia’s wars? No man now but sees the day’s close on his own hills, and mates the vine with widowed trees: then merrily goes he to the wine-cup and invokes thy divinity at the feast’s renewal: to thee he offers constant prayer and wine poured from the bowl, and worships thee among his household gods, as Greece forgets not Castor and mighty Hercules. Long holiday, good prince, mayest thou grant to Hesperia! so say we in each fresh morning’s sober hour, so say we at our revels when the sun hath sunk beneath the Ocean.

6

Great god, who didst visit a boastful tongue on Niobe’s brood, who smotest lustful Tityus and Phthian Achilles, well-nigh vanquisher of lofty Troy: no match in arms for thee though mightier than all the rest, albeit Thetis, the sea’s daughter, sent her son to wield the dread battle-spear and shake the Dardan
towers. But he, like pine smitten by the axe's edge or cypress struck down by eastern blast, fell to earth in giant bulk and bowed his neck in Trojan dust. Never had he, imprisoned in the horse that aped Minerva's offering, deceived the Trojans on their ill-timed holiday and the merry dancers of Priam's court: but cruel in victory fairly won, O horrid deed! had burnt in Achæan flames the children yet untaught to speak, e'en babes hidden in their mothers' womb, had not the father of the gods, won by loved Venus' plea and thine, granted to Æneas' fortunes a city reared 'neath happier auspices. Minstrel who didst teach clear-voiced Thalia,—Phoebus, who lavest thy locks in Xanthus' stream, defend the pride of my Italian Muse, beardless god of city streets! 'Tis Phoebus, Phoebus, who hath given me the breath, the art of song, the poet's name. Noble maidens and sons of sires renowned, wards of the Delian goddess whose bow stays the flight of lynx and stag, mark well the Lesbian measure and my finger's beat, duly singing of Latona's son, singing the crescent fires of the Queen of Night, who blesses harvest and swiftly speeds the circling months. Wedded, O maid, thou shalt say: 'Twas I, what time the age brought round its festal days, who chanted a song that heaven approved, apt to learn Horace the singer's strain.
Fled are the snows, and now the fields once more are clad with grass, the trees with leaves: with the varying year the lessening streams flow between their banks: the sister Graces three in naked beauty venture forth with the Nymphs to lead the dance. Hope nought immortal—so warns the year and the hour that speeds the sunny day. Cold turns to mildness at the west wind’s breath: summer routs spring, itself to perish soon as fruitful autumn spreads his store, and ere long sluggish winter comes again. Yet swift moons repair what skies have wasted: but we, when we have followed reverend Æneas and wealthy Tullus and Ancus to their lowly bourne, are nought but dust and shadow. Who can tell if heaven above shall add a morrow to this day’s sum of life? All that thou givest for thine own heart’s delight shall ‘scape the heir’s greedy clutch. Once thou hast fallen and Minos passed high judgment on thee, nor lineage, Torquatus, nor eloquence, nor piety shall restore thee: for from the shades of death Diana frees not her chaste Hippolytus, nor can Theseus break oblivion’s bonds from off his loved Pirithous.

Readily, Censorinus! would I bestow cups and precious bronzes on my friends,—tripods too, prizes
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of Greek prowess,—nor shouldst thou win the meanest of my gifts, were I but wealthy in the works of Parrhasius’ or Scopas’ art—the last in marble, the first in melting tints, skilled to portray mortal or god. But such wealth have I not, nor is thine a state or temper that craves dainty gifts. Songs are thy joy: songs I can bestow and set true price on my gift. Not all the tokens by the State engraved on marble—tokens whereby true leaders regain breath and life in death—not Hannibal’s swift flight and the quelling of his threats, not the flames of impious Carthage trumpet more loudly than the Calabrian Muse his praise who returned with a title won from vanquished Africa: nor, if the poet’s page say nught of thy well-doing, canst thou earn a guerdon. Where were Ilia’s and Mavors’ son, if envious silence barred Romulus’ feats from fame? ’Tis the might and the applauding tongue of potent poesy that rescues Æacus from Stygian waves and makes him a hallowed denizen of the happy isles. ’Tis the Muse that forbids the man who merits praise to die: ’tis the Muse who raises him to the blest above. Thus is unresting Hercules a guest at Jove’s coveted feast; the Tyn-дарid twins are bright stars to save from the depths the battered barks: Bacchus, his brow bedecked with vine-leaves green, brings prayers to fair fulfilment.
Deem not that death will overtake the verse which I, a child of far-sounding Aufidus’ banks, make by arts aforetime undivulged, fit mate for lyric strings: though Μæonian Homer hold his pride of place, yet is not Pindar’s nor Ceos’ Muse forgotten, nor Alcæus’ challenge nor Stesichorus’ exalted song: nor hath time erased Anacreon’s sportive lay: there love yet breathes, and yet lives in the lyre’s keeping the Æolian girl’s passion. Others beside Laconian Helen have been fired with love and wonder by a paramour’s glossy locks, his embroidered raiment and royal pomp and retinue: others ere Teucer aimed arrows from Cydonian bow: other Troys have been besieged: not giant Idomeneus or Sthenelus alone fought fights that poesy should have sung: not proud Hector, not brave Deiphobus first faced the hard battle-shock for children and chaste wives. Many the brave who lived ere Agamemnon: but all are buried in eternal night, unwept, unknown, for lack of a sacred singer. Small is the space that severs buried sloth from hidden worth. My page, Lollius! shall not mutely leave thee unhonoured, or suffer envious oblivion unrebuked to devour thy many toils. Thou hast a soul wise in affairs, upright in hours of success and danger, a soul to punish greedy fraud and shun money’s all-compelling charm, a soul to make thee consul not one
year alone, but at whatsoever time it plays the honest judge's part, sets Honour above interest, refuses with lofty scorn the bribes of guilt, and carries its triumphant standards through the opposing hosts. The lord of wide possessions merits not truly the name of blest: more rightly is the title his alone who knows how wisely to use heaven's gifts and bear grim penury, and dreads crime worse than death: fearing not to perish for friends beloved or fatherland.

10

Thou that art still so cruel and so rich in Venus' bounty, when unhoped-for down shall come to spite thy pride, and those locks have fallen that now float o'er thy shoulders, and the colour that now is brighter than red roses' bloom shall change and turn Ligurimus' beauty to hairy roughness—then, ah me! thou'lt say, whene'er the mirror reflects thy altered face: why had I not in boyhood my manhood's mood, or why doth not my temper of to-day restore the freshness to my cheeks?

11

A cask I have of Alban wine passing its ninth year: in my garden, Phyllis! is parsley for twining garlands; and store of ivy too, that binds thy hair and decks thy beauty: my house laughs with sheen of silver: my altar crowned with holy herbs longs for
the sprinkling blood of a slain lamb. All my household speeds the work, boys and girls together hurry to and fro: busy flames whirl eddies of dusky smoke. Yet know what joys invite thee—'tis the Ides that thou must keep, dividing day of sea-born Venus' April: a day for me of merited observance, well-nigh more sacred than my own natal hour, for from this dawn my loved Mæcenas counts his years' increasing tale. Telephus, whom thou courtest, is no fit mate for thee: a girl rich and wanton hath forestalled thee, and holds him bound in pleasant fetters. Phaethon's fiery fate checks covetous hopes, and winged Pegasus' scorn of his earthly rider Bellerophon warns by dread example to seek what is thy due, and shun an unequal match by deeming too ambitious desires a crime. Come then, thou last of my loves—for no other woman shall hereafter touch my heart—learn the strain thy dear voice must sing: thy song shall lessen my dark cares.

Now sails are sped by spring's companions, the Thracian airs that calm the sea: now are the meadows frozen no more, nor roar the rivers swollen with winter's snow. With piteous wail for Itys the sad bird builds her nest—eternal shame to Cecrops' house for the ill vengeance she wreaked on kings' savage desires. Keepers of fat sheep pipe their
songs amid the tender grass, to that god's delight
who loves the flock and Arcadia's dark hills. 'Tis
the season, Virgilius, that brings thirst: but if thou
longest to drain the juice of Cales' grape, thou client
of high-born youth, thou must earn thy wine by
nard. One little box of nard shall tempt forth the
cask that now lies in Sulpicius' cellar, bounteous
giver of new hopes, potent to drown bitter cares.
To these delights if thou hastest come quick with
thy price: 'tis no plan of mine that thou shouldst
swill my cups for nought, as in a rich man's wealthy
house. Nay, away with thy delays and thy zeal for
gain: remember the dark funeral fire while thou
mayest and let folly awhile mar thy counsels: at
fitting seasons, unwisdom for me!

13

Lyce, the gods have heard, have heard my prayer:
thou growest old, yet wilt still seem beautiful, and
thinkest not shame to sport and drink, and, flown
with wine, thou courtest lagging Love with quaver-
ing song. But Love keeps vigil on the fair cheeks
of blooming Chia, skilled in minstrelsy. Rudely he
flies past withered oaks, and shuns thee disfigured as
thou art by blackened teeth and wrinkles and snowy
hair. Nor Coan purple robes nor glittering gems can
restore to thee those times which fleeting days have
writ in calendars that all may read. Whither is fled
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thy loveliness, ah me, whither thy colour? whither thy graceful movements? what hast thou of hers, of hers, whose breath was love, who stole away my heart,—that famed beauty, mistress of all delightful arts, happy heiress of Cinara’s sway? But the fates that shortened Cinara’s tale of years keep Lyce living as long as some aged crow, that glowing youths may laugh aloud at the ashes of her burnt-out torch.

14

What worthy boon of honour, Augustus! by senate or by people granted, may bid thy virtues live for ever inscribed on stone or history’s page, thou greatest of all princes where’er the sun shines on lands inhabited by man? whose warlike powers the Vindelici erewhile unbroken to Latin rule have lately learnt. For with thy soldiery, brave Drusus more than once o’erthrew the restless Genauni and swift Breuni and the castles crowning their Alps’ tremendous height: soon Nero’s elder son by the stern shock of battle routed the dreadful Rætians ’neath heaven’s favouring auspices,—a wondrous sight to all who marked his bearing in the fray, how he dashed to destruction those breasts vowed to a freeman’s death: well-nigh as eastern winds harass the tameless wave when the Pleiad band shine through torn clouds, so vehemently he charged the hostile squadrons and rode his chafing steed through
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encompassing fires. So rolls bull-like Aufidus through Apulian Daunus' realm, when in wrath he plans to drown in deluge dread the tilled fields, as Claudius with giant charge bore down the savages' mailed ranks and strewed the ground with the swathe of their first and rearmost lines, an unseathed conqueror. Thine was his army, thine the counsel and thine the favouring gods. For fifteen years from that day when suppliant Alexandria opened to thee her harbours and her empty palace, Fortune still smiling gave thine arms another victory, and added this glory, this coveted triumph to the lustre of thy past campaigns. Thy rule the erewhile untamed Cantabrian reveres, the Mede, the Indian, and the flying Scythian, thou present guardian of Italy and imperial Rome. Thy name is heard by Nile's stream flowing from his hidden source, by Danube and swift Tigris, by that monster-haunted Ocean that roars on Britain's distant shore, by death-defying Gaul and rude Iberia: the slaughter-loving Sygambri lay down their arms and worship thee.

15

Phoebus, when I fain would sing of battles and conquered cities, forbade me with his lyre's chiding note to sail my tiny skiff over the Tyrrhenian sea. Thy age, Cæsar! hath brought abundance back to our fields and restored to Roman Jove the standards torn from Par-

91
victor in war, clement to the conquered foe! For
now the Mede fears our armies' conquests by land
and sea, our Alban axes: now the Scythians, late so
proud, and Indians await our word.

Now Faith, Peace, Glory, and ancient Honour and
neglected Virtue dare to return: and Plenty, blest
with full horn, appears once more. May prophetic
Phœbus, graced with shining bow, loved by the
Muses nine, Phœbus whose healing art relieves the
suffering frame,—may he, if with friendly eye he
looks on the Palatine towers, give yet five happy
years and days of growing blessedness to Rome and
Latium: and may Diana, dweller on Aventine and
Algidus, hear the fifteen men's entreaty and turn a
friendly ear to the prayers of youth! So home re-
turns our choir skilled to sing Phœbus' and Diana's
praise, with sure and certain hope that thus Jove
wills and all the host of heaven.
EPODES

1

Thou goest, my friend Mæcenas! in light Liburnian galleys among tall ships' bulwarks, prepared to brave all Cæsar's dangers at thy proper risk. What of me, whose life were pleasant if thou survivest, but hateful shouldst thou fall? shall I obey and abide in ease—an ease that is not dear with thee not there to share it—or shall I face this stress with courage such as beseems no craven? Ay, I will face it, and bravely follow thee o'er Alpine heights and inhospitable Caucasus or to the West's most distant bay. Dost ask how shall I aid thee with toil of mine, who am but weak and unwarlike? Less as thy comrade shall I know that dread which absent hearts more keenly feel: e'en as the mother bird by her unfledged nestlings fears more the serpent's stealthy approach when she leaves them, albeit her presence could bring them no better aid. Right willingly will I serve this and all campaigns, in hope to win thy favour: not that more oxen may be yoked to my straining ploughs, or my flocks driven
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to Calabria's from Lucania's pastures ere days of fervent heat, nor that my marble palace may stand anigh the Circean walls of lofty Tusculum. Enough and more have I received from thy bounty: nor greedy miser nor loose spendthrift am I, to hoard in earth or squander wealth.

2

Happy he who, far from business, tills like mankind of old his father's farm with oxen of his own, and has nought to do with usury; whom no fierce trumpet calls to arms, who needs not to dread the angry sea, and shuns the Forum and the proud thresholds of his greater townsmen. Therefore he weds tall poplars to his vines' full-grown boughs, or views the lowing herds that stray in winding vales, and pruning with his knife barren branches engrafts a richer stock, or stores in unstained jars honey drawn from the comb, or shears his helpless sheep: anon when autumn graced with ripe apples looks out o'er the countryside, how gladly he plucks his home-grown pears and grapes that vie with purple, a gift for thee, Priapus, and thee, reverend Silvanus, guardian of boundaries! Now lies he at will beneath some ilex old, now 'mid the clinging grass. Softly the while flow rivers 'twixt their lofty banks, birds in the woods complain, springs pour their babbling waters down, a spell to court light slumbers. But when the
Thunderer's wintry season musters its rains and
snows, then from this side and that his pack drives
fierce boars into the opposing barrier, or on smooth
poles he stretches his meshy nets to snare the greedy
thrushes, and in his noose catches the wished-for
prize of timid hare and migrant crane. 'Mid sports
like these who will not forget the troublous cares of
love? For if a chaste consort do her helpful share
for house and loved children, like to a Sabine dame
or sun-browned wife of some lithe Apulian, let her
pile ancient logs on the sacred hearth to greet her
weary lord's return, and penning the fruitful flock in
woven hurdles drain their swollen udders, and drawing
the year's wine from its sweetened cask prepare an
unbought feast: not Lucrine oysters shall please me
more, not turbot nor the daintiest fish that the
storm's thunder on eastern waves drives to our coasts:
no African fowl, no Ionian heath-cock be more
grateful to my palate than olives pluckt from their
trees' richest boughs or meadow-loving sorrel and
mallows that relieve sickness' burden, or lamb slain
at the Boundary-god's feast or kid snatched from the
wolf's jaws. At such a feast how sweet to see the
sheep haste home from pasture, to see the toiling
oxen drag with weary neck the inverted share, and
the swarming home-born slaves of a wealthy lord sit
round the shining household gods!—so spake the
usurer Alfius, minded straightway to turn farmer, and
THE ODÉS OF HORACE

called in all his money on the Ides—then sought to lend it out at the next Kalends.

3

Whoe'er with impious hand hath strangled an aged parent, his fare be garlic, deadlier than hemlock. Hardy is your maw, ye harvesters! by what poison am I inly tortured? have I unawares eaten of herbs steeped in viper's blood? hath Canidia's hand meddled with the baneful feast? Medea, what time she gazed in wonder at the chief whose beauty shone transcendent 'mong his Argonaut following, with this anointed Jason ere he yoked the unwonted bulls: with this she drugged the gifts that avenged her on his mistress, then fled upborne by dragons winged. No seasons' heat so potent ever brooded o'er thirsty Apulia: not more fiery the gift that burnt and clung on Hercules' toiling shoulders. O, if ever thou art fain for such fare, my merry Mæcenas! then, I pray, may thy love put out a hand to check thy kiss, and shun thy embrace!

4

Enmity is betwixt thee and me, as Nature's law hath set it between wolves and lambs,—wretch, with thy sides scarred by Spain's rope-ends, thy legs by hard fetters! Stalk purse-proud as thou wilt, fortune changes not birth. Seest thou, as thou trailest thy six ells' length of toga along the sacred way, how every passer-by turns to gaze with anger uncon-
cealed? Yonder he goes who, once torn by the hangman's lash till e'en the crier called 'Hold, enough!' now tills his thousand-acred Falernian farm and haunts the Appian way with his steeds, and sits in the glory of his knighthood on the foremost seats, in scorn of Otho's law! How can we send the heavy bulk of so many beaked ships 'gainst robbers and bands of slaves, when he, ay, he is tribune in our armies?

5
'O, by all gods that reign in heaven over earth and men, what means this wild assault? why glare ye all so grimly on me alone? By thy children I implore thee, if ever truly came Lucina in answer to thy prayer to aid thy travail,—by this unavailing purple garb,—by Jove's impending wrath against thy deeds,—why lookst thou on me with such eyes as a stepmother or wild beast wounded?' With such plaints uttered from trembling lips the boy stood stripped of all adornment, a childish form such as might move the horrid breasts of Thrace: with that Canidia, her head's dishevelled locks entwined with dwarfish vipers, bids burn in magic fires wild fig trees dug from graves, funereal cypress, a nightly screech-owl's feather and its eggs besmeared with a foul frog's blood, such herbs as grow in Iolcus and Iberia's poison-teeming soil, and bones snatched from the jaws of a hungry bitch. Sagana busily the while besprinkled all the house with Avernus' waters, her
rough hair bristling like sea-urchin or boar at speed. Veia, by no ill conscience checked, upturned the ground with hard spade, panting over her toil, where the buried boy should watch the meal twice and thrice in the long day pass before his dying eyes, his head projecting in such wise as the swimmer's chin floats on the water's face: that so his drained marrow and dry liver might make a charm for love, when once his eyes had closed, fixed on the forbidden food. Folia of Ariminum, a man in lust, there played her part—so 'twas believed by idle ears in Neapolis and every neighbour town—she whose magic spell can charm away the stars and draw the moon from heaven. Thereat cruel Canidia gnawing with blackened tooth her uncut thumb-nail,—said what, what left unsaid?—'Ye faithful watchers of my deeds,' quoth she, 'Night and Diana, who rulest the silent scene of our secret rites, now, now lend your aid, now turn against the houses of our foes your wrath and influence divine! while wild creatures hidden in the dreadful woods repose in slumber sweet, may the Subura's dogs bark at that aged libertine, laughing-stock to all, besmeared with unguents such as ne'er could art of mine more perfectly contrive.—What hath chanced? why have barbarian Medea's dread poisons lost their power? 'twas with these that ere her flight she was avenged on that proud mistress, great Creon's daughter, what time the robe she gave,
steeped in foul pollution, consumed in fire the new-wed bride. Yet no herb, no root hath 'scaped my eye in its forbidding hiding-place. So sleeps he on a couch drugged to oblivion of every light o' love.—Aha! 'tis some more cunning enchanter's spell hath set him free to roam! Then shall no common draught, O Varus, doomed to sorrow deep! be brewed to speed thee back to me, nor is it Marsian spell that shall regain thy heart: a stronger charm I'll devise, a drug more potent I'll mix to quell thy pride; and sky shall be whelmed in sea with earth above it stretched, ere thou shalt fail to burn with love for me as burns asphalt in dusky fire!' At this the boy sought no more to move their impious intent with softening words; but doubting what theme to take for speech he uttered such prayer as Thyestes made: 'Your drugs may change the great laws of right and wrong: vengeance they cannot change: my curse shall still pursue you: that dread imprecation no victim may purge away. Nay, when at your bidding I shall have yielded up my life, my angry ghost by night shall haunt you, my shadowy form shall assail your faces with hooked talons, such power have spirits,—and close sitting by your troubled breasts I'll fright you from sleep. Foul hags! the gathering crowd from every street shall pelt you with stones: anon shall your unburied limbs be rent by wolves and carrion birds: nor shall my parents, in whose life, alas! I perish, fail to mark the sight.'
Why dost assail harmless strangers—dog, too craven to face a wolf? rather, if thou darest, utter against me thy empty threats, and challenge my revengeful tooth. For like Molossian or tawny Laconian hound, the shepherd's sturdy friend, I'll chase with ear erect through the deep snow whatever quarry flies before me: but thou, when thy dreadful barks have filled the wood, turnest to sniff the morsel at thy feet. Beware, beware: the horns I raise are ready to wage fiercest war against the bad: like am I to the scorned suitor of faithless Lycambe's daughter, or Bupalus' relentless foe. Or think you that when assailed by deadly teeth I'll tamely weep in boyish wise?

Whither, ah whither rush your impious feet? why grasp your hands those sheathed swords? hath not enough of Latin blood been shed on plain and wave—not that the Roman should burn the proud towers of some jealous Carthage, nor that the untamed Briton should go in chains adown the Sacred Way, but that Parthia's prayer should be granted and this city perish by her own right hand? -Not wolves nor lions have e'er been wont to rage against their kind. Is it blind madness that drives you on, or some force more potent? Is it crime? Oh, answer! Silent they stand: wan pallor blanches their cheeks, their stricken hearts are all dismay. 'Tis so: Rome's
sons are pursued by bitter fates, by the crime of a brother's murder, since Remus' innocent blood flowed to earth, a curse to his descendants.

9

When, O blest Mæcenas! shall I in joy at Cæsar's victory drink with thee beneath thy lofty roof—as Jove hath granted—the Cæcuban reserved for festal banquet, while Dorian lyre and Phrygian flutes make harmonious music? as late we drank, when that Neptune-born leader fled before us from the sea and left his ships in flames, he who threatened our city with the chains wherefrom his friendship had freed his traitor slaves. The Roman soldier, alas!—a future age will ne'er believe it—is made a woman's slave: for her he bears stakes and arms, and brooks to serve 'neath wrinkled eunuchs, while among an army's standards mosquito-curtains flaunt their shame in daylight. In wrath at this, two thousand Gauls turned aside their horses' heads singing of Cæsar's praise, and the hostile barks fled leftwards driven to the haven's shelter. Triumph! why tarry thy golden chariots, thy oxen yet unyoked? Triumph! less great than ours was the leader whom thou broughtest from Jugurtha's war: less great was Africa's victor whose tomb his valour made 'mid ruins of Carthage. Vanquished by land and sea, our foe hath changed to gloomier hue his mantle's purple. Either he'll make 'gainst adverse winds for proud Crete's hundred
THE ODES OF HORACE

cities, or else he seeks the Syrtes ever by the south wind vext, or is the sport of varying tides. Bring hither, boy! more ample cups, and Chian or Lesbian wines: or measure out Cæcuban, to stay the draughts we've quaffed: 'tis joy to drown in Bacchus' sweet gifts our care and fear for Cæsar's fortunes.

10

With evil omens the ship quits her moorings, whereon sails stinking Mævius: may the south-easter take good heed to lash her either side with rough billows! may the black east bear her tackle and shattered oars about the upheaved sea: may the north wind rise in might as when on mountain heights he cracks the trembling ilex: no friendly star appear in the black night of sad Orion's setting; let no more peaceful seas bear Mævius than bore the band of Grecian conquerors when Pallas turned her wrath from Ilium in flames to Ajax' impious ship! What toils await thy crew, what yellow pallor shall be thine, how loud thy wonted unmanly wailings and prayers to angry Jove, when the Ionian gulf roaring in answer to the moist southern gale shall rend thy keel! and if thou liest on the curving shore, a dainty morsel for the gulls, I'll sacrifice to the storm-gods a lustful goat and an ewe-lamb.

11

Pettius! I care no more as erst to scribble verses: Love hath smitten me with heavy hand,—Love who
13

Rude storms have gathered the clouds, in rain and snow the sky descends: now sea and forest roar 'neath the Thracian north: my friends, let us snatch
THE ODES OF HORACE

the present occasion, and while 'tis fitting and our knees are fresh and strong, let wrinkles of eld be smoothed from our brows. Bring forth the grape trodden in Torquatus' consulship, my natal year! speak not of aught else: perchance shall heaven's kind change stablish once more our fortunes. Now 'tis the hour to steep us in eastern nard and banish cursed cares with Mercurius' lyre: e'en as the famed Centaur sang to his mighty pupil:—Unconquered mortal son of Thetis divine! For thee Assaracus' country waits, cloven by cold Scamander's narrow stream and smooth-sliding Simois—whence hath the Fates' unalterable web barred thy return, nor shalt thou sail home o'er thy mother's blue waves. There do thou lighten all thy ills with wine and song, sweet solaces of ugly sorrow.

14

Why hath languid sloth steeped all my being in oblivion, as though with thirsty throat I had drunk of cups that bring Lethean sleep? True-hearted Mæcenas, ask me no more thy torturing question: 'tis heaven, 'tis heaven that forbids me pen the last page of those iambic strains I promised thee long since. E'en so, they say, Anacreon of Teos glowed for Samian Bathyllus, and oft told his sad love on hollow shell with measure flowing free. Thyself thou knowest the fire of hapless love: and if passion for
THE ODES OF HORACE

no fairer dame kindled the flames of besieged Ilion,
rejoice in thy fortune: she that I pine for is a light
o’ love, nor favours me alone.

15

'Twas night and in the clear sky the moon shone
'mid the lesser lights, when thou, so soon to outrage
the majesty of high heaven, didst swear devotion to
me, thy soft arms more closely clinging than ivy
embraces tall ilex: that, while wolves were foes to
flocks, while Orion, foe to sailors, should vex the
wintry sea, while Apollo’s flowing locks should wave
in the breeze, we still should live in mutual love.
Dearly, Neæra, shalt thou rue my firm intent! for if
thy Horace hath aught of manhood in him, he will
not brook that thou shouldst grant to a rival thy fre-
quent favours: in wrath he’ll seek some heart like
his, nor shall thy beauty, if detested once, prevail
against his constancy when pain is fixed within his
breast. And thou, whoe’er thou art, more fortunate
than I, who dost triumph by my calamity! though
thou be rich in flocks and acres broad, though Pacto-
lus pour for thee its gold, though thou know the
secrets of transformed Pythagoras and excel Nireus
in beauty,—thou’lt mourn, alas! to see her love
bestowed elsewhere: then ’twill be my turn to
laugh.
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16

A second age is already wasting in civil wars, and Rome's own might is her ruin: that state, which Marsian neighbours could not destroy nor threatening Porsena's Etruscan bands, nor Capua's rival valour nor keen Spartacus nor Allobrogians, revolution's faithless friends, nor fierce Germany's blue-eyed warriors could tame, nor Hannibal, name of horror to our ancestors—by the impious generation of her accursed sons shall she be brought to ruin, and her soil once more posses by wild beasts. Barbarian conquerors, alas! shall tread her ashes and ride o'er her city with loud trampling hooves, and scatter in arrogant pride, O horrid deed to see! the bones of Romulus now sheltered from wind and sun. Ask ye—your better part, or all—how best to rid you of your sorrows? let no counsel prevail o'er this, to go—as fled with solemn oaths Phocæa's citizens, leaving their lands and native homes, their temples for boars and greedy wolves to dwell in—to go where'er our feet shall bear us, whithersoe'er the south or wanton African wind shall invite. Shall it be so? or hath any better counsel? why then delay with favouring omen to embark? But be this our oath:—When stones shall rise from watery depths and float, then be return no more forbidden: nor let us refuse to turn our sails homewards again, when Padus washes Matine peaks, or Apenninus' height plunges in the
sea, and linked by strange love in monstrous union
tigers shall mate with deer, doves with kites, when
trustful herds fear not tawny lions, and goats grown
smooth haunt the salt seas. Bound by such vows
and by all else that may bar our dear return, let us
away, or all our city or those nobler than the sense-
less herd: let cowardice and despair slumber still on
its ill-omened couch! But you, who are men, banish
all womanly wailings, and fly past Etruria’s shores.
Wandering Ocean’s circling stream invites us: there
let us seek those fields, those happy fields, those isles
of plenty, where earth untilled yearly bears her corn,
and still unpruned teems the vine, nor ever fails the
olive-branch to bud, and the dark fig still adorns its
parent stem, where honey flows from hollow ilex, and
light leaps the babbling brook from high hills. There
unbidden come she-goats to the pail, willingly brings
the herd its swollen udders home: no bears at eve
roar round the fold, nor swells high the ground with
viper broods. And more sights shall greet our
marvelling eyes: how ne’er the fields are bared by
copious showers from the watery east, nor are the
generous seeds parched in the arid tilth, sun and rain
alike tempered by heaven’s great king. Hither ne’er
did Argo’s sailors guide their bark, ne’er did Colchis’
shameless daughter tread these shores: no Sidonian
crews e’er turned hither their yards, nor Ulysses’
toil-worn following. No sickness hurts the flock, no
star parches the herd with violent heat. These lands did Jove reserve for the pious, when he suffered bronze to mar the years of gold—of bronze, then iron he forged the ages, wherefrom the pious, trusting my presage, may yet in safety flee.

17

I yield, I yield to potent science, and implore thee by Proserpina's realm, by Diana's godhead implacable, and by thy books of charms that have power to unfix and call the stars from heaven,—cease at length, Candida, thy magic invocations, and suffer, O suffer thy swift wheel to spin back again! Telephus prevailed with Nereus' grandson, 'gainst whom he had proudly arrayed his bands of Mysians, 'gainst whom he had hurled his sharp darts. Troy's matrons anointed murderous Hector's corse, though given a prey to wild birds and dogs, what time the hapless king had left his city and fallen, alas! at stubborn Achilles' feet. Ulysses' weary oarsmen doffed at Circe's will their hard bristly hides: then sense and voice returned and each countenance regained its former grace. Enough and more than enough have I been punished by thee, thou love of sailor and hawker! youth and its modest blush have fled me, who am nought but bone clad with sallow skin: thy unguents have whitened my locks: no ease gives me rest from toil: night follows day, day night, yet no breath relieves my straining breast. Therefore thou conquerest—in sorrow I needs
must own what I denied, that Sabine charms can shake the heart, and Marsian spells split the aching head. What wilt thou more? O sea, O earth, I burn more fiercely than Hercules besmeared with Nessus’ dark blood, than that Sicilian flame which strongly blazes in fiery Ætna: thou lowest, a very crucible of Colchian poisons, till my dry dust shall be the sport of insulting winds. What end, what recompense still awaits me? Only speak: I’ll faithfully pay the penalty ordained, I’ll readily make atonement, whether thou demand an hundred steers, or wouldst have my lying lute sing thy praises: how thy chastity, thy virtue shall make thee move, a golden constellation, amid the stars. Castor and great Castor’s brother suffered prayer to overcome their ire ‘gainst Helen’s maligner, and restored to the singer his eyesight rest. So do thou, for thou canst, save me from madness,—thou who ne’er wert disgraced by thy father’s vile estate, who wert ne’er a hag skilled to scatter the ashes of the nine days dead among the tombs of the poor. Thy breast is kind, thy hands are clean: thy womb hath truly borne a son: true are thy signs of travail whene’er thou risest in strength from child-bed.

Why makest thou prayer to ears unhearing? not deafer to the naked sailor’s entreaty are the rocks that stormy Neptune smites with rising spray. That thou shouldst reveal and mock Cotytto’s rites, the worship
of unchecked Desire! thyself the high priest of our
Esquiline witchcraft, shouldst blaze my name about
the town, yet go unscathed! what then availed it
that I enriched Pelignian hags, and mixed a quicker,
deadlier draught? but a more lingering fate awaits
thee than thou hopest: poor wretch, thou must live
thy unwished-for life, and live for this—that still
thou mayest serve as victim of new sufferings.
Faithless Pelops’ sire Tantalus longs for rest, ever
lacking the generous feast: Prometheus longs for
rest, fettered to his winged torturer: Sisyphus longs
to set his stone upon the mountain’s top: but Jove’s
laws forbid it. Thou shalt be fain now to leap from
lofty towers, now to stab thy breast with Noric
sword, and all in vain, of thy gloom and weary
sorrow, shalt with the halter circle thy throat. Then
will I ride my foe’s shoulders, and my pride shall
spurn the earth. I who can handle waxen images,
as thine own curious eyes have seen, whose invoca-
tions can draw the moon from heaven, can raise the
dead from out their ashes, can mix the draughts
that bring desire—should I lament that issues of my
art can nought avail to injure thee?
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