The Satires, Epistles, and Art of Poetry of Horace

by Horace

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SATIRES, EPISTLES, AND ART OF POETRY OF HORACE ***

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THE SATIRES, EPISTLES, AND ART OF POETRY OF HORACE

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE BY JOHN CONINGTON, M.A. CORPUS PROFESSOR OF LATIN IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

TO

THE REV. W. H. THOMPSON, D.D. MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, ETC. ETC. ETC. IN GRATITUDE FOR MANY KINDNESSES RECEIVED FROM HIM AND OTHER CAMBRIDGE FRIENDS, AND IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE COMPLIMENT PAID BY CAMBRIDGE TO OXFORD IN THE APPOINTMENT OF THE OXFORD LATIN PROFESSOR AS ONE OF THE ELECTORS TO HER LATIN CHAIR.

PREFACE.

In venturing to follow up my translation of the Odes of Horace by a version of the Satires and Epistles, I feel that I am in no way entitled to refer to the former as a justification of my boldness in undertaking the latter. Both classes of works are doubtless explicable as products of the same original genius: but they differ so widely in many of their characteristics, that success in rendering the one, though greater than any which I can hope to have attained, would afford no presumption that the translator would be found to have the least aptitude for the other. As a matter of fact, while the Odes still continue to invite translation after translation, the Satires and Epistles, popular as they were among translators and imitators a hundred

years ago, have scarcely been attempted at all since that great revolution in literary taste which was effected during the last ten years of the last century and the first ten years of the present. Byron's Hints from Horace, Mr. Howes' forgotten but highly meritorious version of the Satires and Epistles, to which I hope to return before long, and a few experiments by Mr. Theodore Martin, published in the notes to his translation of the Odes and elsewhere, constitute perhaps the whole recent stock of which a new translator may be expected to take account. In one sense this is encouraging: in another dispiriting. The field is not pre-occupied: but the reason is, that general opinion has pronounced its cultivation unprofitable and hopeless.

No doubt, apart from fluctuations in the taste of the reading public, there are special reasons why a version of this portion of Horace's works should be a difficult, perhaps an impracticable undertaking. It would not be easy to maintain that a Roman satirist was incapable of adequate representation in English in the face of such an instance to the contrary as Gifford's Juvenal, probably, take it all in all, the very best version of a classic in the language. But though Juvenal has many passages which sufficiently remind us of Horace, some of them light and playful, others level and almost flat, these do not form the staple of his Satires: there are passages of dignified declamation and passionate invective which suffer less in translation, and which may be so rendered as to leave a lasting impression of pleasure upon the mind of the reader. Like Horace, he has an abundance of local and temporary allusions, in dealing with which the most successful translator is the one who fails least: unlike Horace, when he quits the local and the temporary, he generally quits also the language of persiflage, and abandons himself unrestrainedly to feeling. Persiflage, I suppose, even in ordinary life, is much less easy to practise with perfect success than a graver and less artificial mode of speaking, though, perhaps for that very reason, it is apt to be more sought after: the persiflage of a writer of another nation and of a past age is of necessity peculiarly difficult to realize and reproduce. Nothing is so variable as the standard of taste in a matter like this: even on the minor question,

what expressions may and what may not be tolerated in good society, probably no two persons think exactly alike: and when we come to inquire not simply what is admissible but what is excellent, and still more, what is characteristic of a particular type of mind, we must expect to meet with still less unanimity of judgment. The wits of the Restoration answered the question very differently from the way in which it would be answered now; even Pope and his contemporaries would not be accepted as quite infallible arbiters of social and colloquial refinement in an age like the present. Whether Horace is grave or gay in his familiar writings, his charm depends almost wholly on his manner: a modern who attempts to reproduce him runs an imminent risk first of losing all charm whatever, secondly of missing completely that individuality of attractiveness which makes the charm of Horace unlike the charm of any one else.

Without however enlarging further on the peculiar difficulty of the task, I will proceed to say a few words on some of the special questions which a translator of the Satires and Epistles has to encounter, and the way in which, as it appears to me, he may best deal with them. These questions, I need hardly say, mainly resolve themselves into the metre and the style. With regard to the metre, I have myself but little doubt that the measure in which Horace may best be represented is the heroic as I suppose we must call it, of ten syllables. The one competing measure of course is the Hudibrastic octosyllabic. This latter metre is not without considerable authority in its favour. Two translators, Smart and Boscawen, have rendered the whole, or nearly the whole of these poems in that and no other way: Francis occasionally adopts it, though he generally uses the longer measure: Swift and Pope, as every one knows, employ it in three or four of their imitations: Cowper, in his original poems perhaps the greatest master we have of the Horatian style, translates the only two satires he has attempted in the shorter form: Mr. Martin uses it as often as he uses the heroic: perhaps Mr. Howes is the only translator since Creech who employs the heroic throughout. Some of my readers may possibly wonder why I in

particular, having rendered the AEneid in a measure which, whatever its vivacity, may be thought deficient in dignity, should turn round and repudiate it in a case where vivacity, not dignity, happens to be the point desired. I can only say that it is precisely the colloquial nature of the metre which makes me stand in doubt of it for my present purpose. Using it in the case of Virgil, I was sure to be reminded of the need of guarding against its abuse: using it in the case of Horace, I should be constantly in danger of regarding the abuse as the law of the measure. Horace is scarcely less remarkable for his terseness than for his ease: the tendency of the octosyllabic metre in its colloquial form is to become slipshod, interminable, in a word unclassical. Again, few of those who use it apply it consistently to all Horace's hexameter poems: most make a distinction, applying it to some and not to others. In point of fact, however, it does not seem that any such distinction can be made. Horace's lightest Satires or Epistles have generally something grave about them: his gravest have more than one light passage. To draw a metrical line in the English where none is drawn in the Latin appears to me objectionable ipso facto where it can reasonably be avoided. That it can be avoided in the present case does not really admit of a doubt. The English heroic couplet, managed as Cowper has managed it, is surely quite equal to representing all the various changes of mood and temper which find their embodiment successively in the Horatian hexameter. Cowper's more serious poems contain more of deep and sustained gravity than is to be found in any similar production of Horace: while on the other hand there are few things in Horace so easy and sprightly as the Epistle to Joseph Hill, nothing perhaps so absolutely prosaic as the Colubriad and the verses to Mrs. Newton. There is also an advantage in rendering the Satires of Horace in the metre which may be called the recognized metre of English satire, and as such has always been employed (with one very partial and grotesque exception) by the translators of Juvenal. Lastly, I may be allowed to say that, while very distrustful of my powers of managing the graver heroic, where so many great masters have gone before me, I felt less diffidence in

attempting the lower and more colloquial form of the measure, as not requiring the same command of rhythm, and not exposing a writer to the same amount of invidious comparison with his predecessors.

In what I have said I have implied that Cowper is the right model for the English heroic as applied to a translation of Horace: and this on the whole I believe to be the case. Horace's characteristics, as I remarked just now, are ease and terseness, and both these Cowper possesses, ease in metre, and ease and terseness in style. Pope, on the other hand, who in some respects would seem the better representative of Horace, is less easy both in style and metre, while his terseness is what Horace's terseness is not, trimness and antithetical smartness. Still, while making Cowper my pattern as a general rule, I have attempted from time to time to borrow a grace from Pope, even, when the original gave me no warrant for the appropriation. If Cowper's verse could be written by Cowper, it would probably leave nothing to be desired in a translation of this kind: handled by an inferior workman, it is in danger of becoming flat, pointless, and insipid: and Horace has many passages which, if not flat, pointless, or insipid in themselves, are painfully liable to become so in the hands of a translator. I have accordingly on various occasions aimed at epigram and pungency when there was nothing epigrammatic or pungent in the Latin, in full confidence that any trifling additions which may be made in this way to the general sum of liveliness will be far more than compensated by the heavy outgoings which must of necessity be the lot of every translator, and more particularly of myself. [Footnote: Cowper himself has some remarks bearing on this point: "That is epigrammatic and witty in Latin which would be perfectly insipid in English; and a translator of Bourne would frequently find himself obliged to supply what is called the turn, which is in fact the most difficult and the most expensive part of the whole composition, and could not perhaps, in many instances, be done with any tolerable success. If a Latin poem is neat, elegant and musical, it is enough; but English readers are not so easily satisfied. To quote myself, you will find, in comparing the

Jackdaw with the original, that I was obliged to sharpen a point which, though smart enough in the Latin, would in English have appeared as plain and as blunt as the tag of a lace." —Letter to Unwin, May 23, 1781 (Southey's Cowper, ed. 1836, vol. iv. p. 97).] All translation, as has been pointed out over and over again, must proceed more or less on the principle of compensation; a translator who is conscious of having lost ground in one place is not to blame if he tries to recover it in another, so that he does not consciously depart from what he believes to be the spirit of the original: the question he has to ask himself is not so much whether he has conformed to the requirements of this or that line, most important as such conformity is where it can be realized without a sacrifice of higher things, as whether he has conformed to the requirements of the whole sentence, or even of the whole paragraph; whether the general effect produced by all the combined elements in the English lines answers in any degree to that produced by the Latin. Often and often, while engaged on this translation, I have been reminded of Johnson's words in his Life of Dryden: "It is not by comparing line with line that the merit of works is to be estimated, but by their general effects and ultimate result. It is easy to note a weak line and write one more vigorous in its place, to find a happiness of expression in the original and transplant it by force into the version; but what is given to the parts may be subducted from the whole, and the reader may be weary, though the critic may commend. That book is good in vain which the reader throws away." [Footnote: Compare his parallel between Pitt's and Dryden's Aeneid in his Life of Pitt.] I will only add that if these remarks are true of translation in general, they apply with special force to the translation of an original like the present, where the Latin is nothing if it is not idiomatic, and the English in consequence, if it is to be anything, must be idiomatic also.

There is yet something more to be said on the question of style. The exact mode of representing Horace's persiflage is, as I have intimated already, not an easy thing to determine. The translators of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for the most

part made their author either vulgar or flat, sometimes both. Probably no better rule can be laid down for the translator of the present day, than that he should try to follow the ordinary language of good society, wavering and uncertain as that standard is. I do not mean so much the language of the better sort of light literature as the language of conversation and of familiar letter-writing. Even some of the idiomatic blemishes of conversation may perhaps, in such a work, be venial, if not laudable. I have not always sought to be a minute purist even on points of grammar. Cowper, rather singularly, appears from his practice to proscribe colloquial abbreviations in poetry, though they were, I suppose, at least as usual in his time as in ours, and are used by Pope in his lighter works with little scruple. I have adopted them freely through nearly the whole of my version, though of course there are some passages where they could not be properly employed. Gifford says in the Essay on the Roman Satirists prefixed to his Juvenal that the general character of his translation will be found to be plainness: and if I do not misunderstand what he means by the term, it exactly represents the quality which I have endeavoured to attain myself. As a general rule, where a rendering presented itself to me which in dealing with another author I should welcome as poetical, I hare deliberately rejected it, and cast about instead for something which, without being feeble or slipshod, should have an idiomatic prosaic ring. Where Horace evidently means to rise, I have attempted to rise too: but through the greater part of this work I have been anxious, to use his own expression, to creep along the ground. No doubt there is danger in all this, the danger of triviality, pertness, and occasional vulgarity. Gifford's own work was attacked on its first appearance by a reviewer of the day precisely on those grounds: and though he seems to have made a vehement reply to his assailant, the changes which he made in his second edition showed that the censure was not without its effect. Still, where it is almost impossible to walk quite straight, the walker will reconcile himself to incidental deviations, and will even consider, where a slip is inevitable, on which side of the line it is better that the slip

should take place.

A patent difficulty of course is to know what to do with local and temporary customs, allusions, proverbs, &c., which enter, I need not say, far more largely into satire or comedy than into any other form of writing. Here it is that the imitator has the advantage of the translator: a certain parallelism between his own time and the time of the author he imitates is postulated in the fact of his imitating at all, and if he is a dexterous writer, like Pope or Johnson, he is sure to be able to introduce a number of small equivalents, some of them perhaps actual improvements on the original, while he is at liberty to throw into the shade those points of which he despairs of being able to make anything. A translator has three courses open to him, to translate more or less verbally, so as to run the risk of being unintelligible to a reader unacquainted with the original, to generalize what is special, and to borrow something of the imitator's licence, introducing a modern speciality in place of an ancient. Here, as I have found on other occasions of the kind, to be allowed a choice of evils is itself a matter for self- congratulation. To be shut up entirely to one or other of these resources would be a serious misfortune: to be able to employ them (should it seem advisable) successively is no inconsiderable relief. The last of the three no doubt requires to be used very sparingly indeed, or one great object of translating a classic, the laying open of ancient life and thought to a modern reader, will be wantonly sacrificed. No one now-a-days would dream of going as far in this direction as Dryden and some of the translators of his period, talking e.g. about "the new Lord Mayor" and "the Louvre of the sky." But there are occasionally minor points—very minor ones, I admit—where a modern equivalent is allowable, if not absolutely necessary. Without transforming bodily a Roman caena into an English dinner, one may sometimes effect with advantage a trifling change in the less important dishes: a boar must not appear as a baron of beef, but a scarus may perhaps be turned, as I have turned it, into a sardine. In money again it would surely be needless pedantry in the translator of a satirist to talk of sestertia rather than

pounds. I fear I have not always been at the pains to make the English sum even roughly equivalent to the Roman, but have from time to time introduced a particular English sum arbitrarily, if it appeared to suit the context or even the metre. Thus, where Philip gives or lends Mena fourteen sestertia that he may buy a farm, I have not startled the modern agricultural reader by talking about a hundred and twenty pounds, but have ventured to turn the sestertia into so many hundreds. On the whole, however, while I certainly cannot recommend any one to try to distil Latin antiquities from my translation as they are sometimes distilled from the original, I hope that I have not been unfaithful to the antique spirit, but have reflected with sufficient accuracy the broad features of Roman life.

Taken altogether, this translation will be found less close to the original than those with which I have formerly troubled the public. The considerations pointed out in the last paragraph will to a great extent account for this: generally too I may say that where the main characteristic of the original is perfect ease, the translator, if he is to be easy also, will be obliged to take considerable latitude. I trust however that I shall be found in most cases not to have translated irrespectively of the Latin, but to have borne it in mind even while departing from it most widely. I have studied the various commentators with some care, and hope that my version may not be without its use in turn as a sort of free commentary. I have omitted two entire satires and several passages from others. Some of them no one would wish to see translated: some, though capable of being rendered without offence a hundred or even fifty years ago, could hardly be so rendered now. Where I have not translated I have not in general cared to paraphrase, but have been silent altogether. I have in short given so much of my author as a well-judging reader would wish to dwell on in reading the original, and no more.

I have made acquaintance with such of the previous translations as I did not already know, though it seemed best to avoid consulting them in any passage till I had translated it myself. The few places in which I have been consciously indebted to

others have been mentioned in the notes. Besides these, there are many other coincidences in expression and rhyme which might be detected by any one sharing my taste for that kind of reading, probably one or two in each poem: but as I believe them to be mere coincidences, I have not been at pains either to avoid them or to call attention to them. The only one of my predecessors in translating all the poems contained in this volume whom I need mention particularly is Mr. Howes. His book was published posthumously in 1845; but though it is stated in the preface to want the author's last corrections, a good deal of it must have been written long before, as the translation of the Satires is announced as nearly half finished in the introduction to a translation of Persius by the same author published in 1809, and some specimens given in the notes to that volume correspond almost exactly with the passages as they finally appear. The translation of Persius is a work of decided ability, but, in common I am inclined to think with all the other translations, fails to give an adequate notion of the characteristics of that very peculiar writer. The translation of the Horatian poems, on the other hand, seems to me on the whole undoubtedly successful, though, for whatever reason, its merits do not appear to have been recognized by the public. It is unequal, and it is too prolix: but when it is good, which is not seldom, it is very good, unforced, idiomatic, and felicitous. In one of its features, the habit of supplying connecting links to Horace's not unfrequently disconnected thoughts, perhaps I should have done wisely to follow it more than I have done: but the matter is one where a line must be drawn, and I am not without apprehension as it is that the scholar will sometimes blame me for introducing what the general reader at any rate may thank me for. I should be glad if any notice which I may be fortunate enough to attract should go beyond my own work, and extend to a predecessor who, if he had published a few years earlier, when translations were of more account, could scarcely have failed to rank high among the cultivators of this branch of literature.

BOOK I.

SATIRE I.

QUI FIT, MAECENAS.

How comes it, say, Maecenas, if you can, That none will live like a contented man Where choice or chance directs, but each must praise The folk who pass through life by other ways? "Those lucky merchants!" cries the soldier stout, When years of toil have well-nigh worn him out: What says the merchant, tossing o'er the brine? "Yon soldier's lot is happier, sure, than mine: One short, sharp shock, and presto! all is done: Death in an instant comes, or victory's won." The lawyer lauds the farmer, when a knock Disturbs his sleep at crowing of the cock: The farmer, dragged to town on business, swears That only citizens are free from cares. I need not run through all: so long the list, Fabius himself would weary and desist: So take in brief my meaning: just suppose Some God should come, and with their wishes close: "See, here am I, come down of my mere grace To right you: soldier, take the merchant's place! You, counsellor, the farmer's! go your way, One here, one there! None stirring? all say nay? How now? you won't be happy when you may." Now, after this, would Jove be aught to blame If with both cheeks he burst into a flame, And vowed, when next they pray, they shall not find His temper easy, or his ear inclined?

Well, not to treat things lightly (though, for me, Why truth may not be gay, I cannot see: Just as, we know, judicious teachers coax With sugar-plum or cake their little folks To learn their alphabet):—still, we will try A graver tone, and lay our joking by. The man that with his plough subdues the land, The soldier stout, the vintner sly and bland, The venturous sons of ocean, all declare That with one view the toils of life they bear, When age has come, and labour has amassed Enough to live on, to retire at last: E'en so the ant (for no bad pattern she), That tiny type of giant industry, Drags grain by grain, and adds it to the sum Of her full heap, foreseeing cold to

come: Yet she, when winter turns the year to chill, Stirs not an inch beyond her mounded hill, But lives upon her savings: you, more bold, Ne'er quit your gain for fiercest heat or cold: Fire, ocean, sword, defying all, you strive To make yourself the richest man alive. Yet where's the profit, if you hide by stealth In pit or cavern your enormous wealth? "Why, once break in upon it, friend, you know, And, dwindling piece by piece, the whole will go." But, if 'tis still unbroken, what delight Can all that treasure give to mortal wight? Say, you've a million quarters on your floor: Your stomach is like mine: it holds no more: Just as the slave who 'neath the bread-bag sweats No larger ration than his fellows gets. What matters it to reasonable men Whether they plough a hundred fields or ten? "But there's a pleasure, spite of all you say, In a large heap from which to take away." If both contain the modicum we lack, Why should your barn be better than my sack? You want a draught of water: a mere urn, Perchance a goblet, well would serve your turn: You say, "The stream looks scanty at its head; I'll take my quantum where 'tis broad instead." But what befalls the wight who yearns for more Than Nature bids him? down the waters pour, And whelm him, bank and all; while he whose greed Is kept in check, proportioned to his need, He neither draws his water mixed with mud, Nor leaves his life behind him in the flood.

But there's a class of persons, led astray By false desires, and this is what they say: "You cannot have enough: what you possess, That makes your value, be it more or less." What answer would you make to such as these? Why, let them hug their misery if they please, Like the Athenian miser, who was wont To meet men's curses with a hero's front: "Folks hiss me," said he, "but myself I clap When I tell o'er my treasures on my lap." So Tantalus catches at the waves that fly His thirsty palate—Laughing, are you? why? Change but the name, of you the tale is told: You sleep, mouth open, on your hoarded gold; Gold that you treat as sacred, dare not use, In fact, that charms you as a picture does. Come, will you hear what wealth can fairly do? 'Twill buy you bread, and vegetables too, And wine, a good pint measure:

add to this Such needful things as flesh and blood would miss. But to go mad with watching, nights and days To stand in dread of thieves, fires, runaways Who filch and fly,—in these if wealth consist, Let me rank lowest on the paupers' list.

"But if you suffer from a chill attack, Or other chance should lay you on your back, You then have one who'll sit by your bed-side, Will see the needful remedies applied, And call in a physician, to restore Your health, and give you to your friends once more." Nor wife nor son desires your welfare: all Detest you, neighbours, gossips, great and small. What marvel if, when wealth's your one concern, None offers you the love you never earn? Nay, would you win the kinsmen Nature sends Made ready to your hand, and keep them friends, 'Twere but lost labour, as if one should train A donkey for the course by bit and rein.

Make then an end of getting: know, the more Your wealth, the less the risk of being poor; And, having gained the object of your quest, Begin to slack your efforts and take rest; Nor act like one Ummidius (never fear, The tale is short, and 'tis the last you'll hear), So rich, his gold he by the peck would tell, So mean, the slave that served him dressed as well; E'en to his dying day he went in dread Of perishing for simple want of bread, Till a brave damsel, of Tyndarid line The true descendant, clove him down the chine.

"What? would you have me live like some we know, Maenius or Nomentanus?" There you go! Still in extremes! in bidding you forsake A miser's ways, I say not, Be a rake. 'Twixt Tanais and Visellius' sire-in-law A step there is, and broader than a straw. Yes, there's a mean in morals: life has lines, To north or south of which all virtue pines.

Now to resume our subject: why, I say, Should each man act the miser in his way, Still discontented with his natural lot, Still praising those who have what he has not? Why should he waste with very spite, to see His neighbour has a milkier cow than he, Ne'er think how much he's richer than the mass, But always strive this man or

that to pass? In such a contest, speed we as we may, There's some one wealthier ever in the way. So from their base when vying chariots pour, Each driver presses on the car before, Wastes not a thought on rivals overpast, But leaves them to lag on among the last. Hence comes it that the man is rarely seen Who owns that his a happy life has been, And, thankful for past blessings, with good will Retires, like one who has enjoyed his fill. Enough: you'll think I've rifled the scrutore Of blind Crispinus, if I prose on more.

SATIRE III.

OMNIBUS HOC VITIUM.

All singers have a fault: if asked to use Their talent among friends, they never choose; Unask'd, they ne'er leave off. Just such a one Tigellius was, Sardinia's famous son. Caesar, who could have forced him to obey, By his sire's friendship and his own might pray, Yet not draw forth a note: then, if the whim Took him, he'd troll a Bacchanalian hymn, From top to bottom of the tetrachord, Till the last course was set upon the board. One mass of inconsistence, oft he'd fly As if the foe were following in full cry, While oft he'd stalk with a majestic gait, Like Juno's priest in ceremonial-state. Now, he would keep two hundred serving-men, And now, a bare establishment of ten. Of kings and tetrarchs with an equal's air He'd talk: next day he'd breathe the hermit's prayer: "A table with three legs, a shell to hold My salt, and clothes, though coarse, to keep out cold." Yet give this man, so frugal, so content, A thousand, in a week 'twould all be spent. All night he would sit up, all day would snore: So strange a jumble ne'er was seen before.

"Hold!" some one cries, "have you no failings?" Yes; Failings enough, but different, maybe less. One day when Maenius happened to attack Novius the usurer behind his back, "Do you not know yourself?" said one, "or think That if you play the stranger, we shall wink?" "Not know myself!" he answered, "you say true: I do not: so I take a

stranger's due." Self-love like this is knavish and absurd, And well deserves a damnatory word. You glance at your own faults; your eyes are blear: You eye your neighbour's; straightway you see clear, Like hawk or basilisk: your neighbours pry Into your frailties with as keen an eye. A man is passionate, perhaps misplaced In social circles of fastidious taste; His ill-trimmed beard, his dress of uncouth style, His shoes ill-fitting, may provoke a smile: But he's the soul of virtue; but he's kind; But that coarse body hides a mighty mind. Now, having scanned his breast, inspect your own, And see if there no failings have been sown By Nature or by habit, as the fern Springs in neglected fields, for men to burn.

True love, we know, is blind: defects that blight The loved one's charms escape the lover's sight, Nay, pass for beauties, as Balbinus glows With admiration of his Hagna's nose. Ah, if in friendship we e'en did the same, And virtue cloaked the error with her name! Come, let us learn how friends at friends should look By a leaf taken from a father's book. Has the dear child a squint? at home he's classed With Venus' self; "her eyes have just that cast:" Is he a dwarf like Sisyphus? his sire Calls him "sweet pet," and would not have him higher, Gives Varus' name to knock-kneed boys, and dubs His club-foot youngster Scaurus, king of clubs. E'en so let us our neighbours' frailties scan: A friend is close; call him a careful man: Another's vain and fond of boasting; say, He talks in an engaging, friendly way: A third is a barbarian, rude and free; Straightforward and courageous let him be: A fourth is apt to break into a flame; An ardent spirit—make we that his name. This is the sovereign recipe, be sure, To win men's hearts, and having won, secure.

But WE put virtue down to vice's score, And foul the vessel that was clean before: See, here's a modest man, who ranks too low In his own judgment; him we nickname slow: Another, ever on his guard, takes care No enemy shall catch him unaware, (Small wonder, truly, in a world like this, Beset with dogs that growl and snakes that hiss); We turn his merit to a fault, and style His prudence mere disguise, his caution guile. Or take some honest soul, who, full of glee, Breaks on a patron's

solitude, like me, Finds his Maecenas book in hand or dumb, And pokes him with remarks, the first that come; We cry "He lacks e'en common tact." Alas! What hasty laws against ourselves we pass! For none is born without his faults: the best But bears a lighter wallet than the rest. A man of genial nature, as is fair, My virtues with my vices will compare, And, as with good or bad he fills the scale, Lean to the better side, should that prevail: So, when he seeks my friendship, I will trim The wavering balance in my turn for him. He that has fears his blotches may offend Speaks gently of the pimples of his friend: For reciprocity exacts her dues, And they that need excuse must needs excuse.

Now, since resentment, spite of all we do, Will haunt us fools, and other vices too, Why should not reason use her own just sense, And square her punishments to each offence? Suppose a slave, as he removes the dish, Licks the warm gravy or remains of fish, Should his vexed master gibbet the poor lad, He'd be a second Labeo, STARING mad. Now take another instance, and remark A case of madness, grosser and more stark. A friend has crossed you:—'tis a slight affair; Not to forgive it writes you down a bear:— You hate the man and his acquaintance fly, As Ruso's debtors hide from Ruso's eye; Poor victims, doomed, when that black pay-day's come, Unless by hook or crook they raise the sum, To stretch their necks, like captives to the knife, And listen to dull histories for dear life. Say, he has drunk too much, or smashed some ware, Evander's once, inestimably rare, Or stretched before me, in his zeal to dine, To snatch a chicken I had meant for mine; What then? is that a reason he should seem Less pleasant, less deserving my esteem? How could I treat him worse, were he to thieve, Betray a secret, or a trust deceive?

Your men of words, who rate all crimes alike, Collapse and founder, when on fact they strike: Sense, custom, all, cry out against the thing, And high expedience, right's perennial spring. When men first crept from out earth's womb, like worms, Dumb speechless creatures, with scarce human forms, With nails or doubled fists they used to fight For acorns or for sleeping-holes at night; Clubs followed next; at

last to arms they came, Which growing practice taught them how to frame, Till words and names were found, wherewith to mould The sounds they uttered, and their thoughts unfold; Thenceforth they left off fighting, and began To build them cities, guarding man from man, And set up laws as barriers against strife That threatened person, property, or wife. 'Twas fear of wrong gave birth to right, you'll find, If you but search the records of mankind. Nature knows good and evil, joy and grief, But just and unjust are beyond her brief: Nor can philosophy, though finely spun, By stress of logic prove the two things one, To strip your neighbour's garden of a flower And rob a shrine at midnight's solemn hour. A rule is needed, to apportion pain, Nor let you scourge when you should only cane. For that you're likely to be overmild, And treat a ruffian like a naughty child, Of this there seems small danger, when you say That theft's as bad as robbery in its way, And vow all villains, great and small, shall swing From the same tree, if men will make you king.

But tell me, Stoic, if the wise, you teach, Is king, Adonis, cobbler, all and each, Why wish for what you've got? "Tou fail to see What great Chrysippus means by that," says he. "What though the wise ne'er shoe nor slipper made, The wise is still a brother of the trade. Just as Hennogenes, when silent, still Remains a singer of consummate skill, As sly Alfenius, when he had let drop His implements of art and shut up shop, Was still a barber, so the wise is best In every craft, a king's among the rest." Hail to your majesty! yet, ne'ertheless, Rude boys are pulling at your beard, I guess; And now, unless your cudgel keeps them off, The mob begins to hustle, push, and scoff; You, all forlorn, attempt to stand at bay, And roar till your imperial lungs give way. Well, so we part: each takes his separate path: You make your progress to your farthing bath, A king, with ne'er a follower in your train, Except Crispinus, that distempered brain; While I find pleasant friends to screen me, when I chance to err, like other foolish men; Bearing and borne with, so the change we ring, More blest as private folks than you as king.

SATIRE IV.

EUPOLIS ATQUE CRATINUS.

Cratinus, Aristophanes, and all The elder comic poets, great and small, If e'er a worthy in those ancient times Deserved peculiar notice for his crimes, Adulterer, cut-throat, ne'er-do-well, or thief, Portrayed him without fear in strong relief. From these, as lineal heir, Lucilius springs, The same in all points save the tune he sings, A shrewd keen satirist, yet somewhat hard And rugged, if you view him as a bard. For this was his mistake: he liked to stand, One leg before him, leaning on one hand, Pour forth two hundred verses in an hour, And think such readiness a proof of power. When like a torrent he bore down, you'd find He left a load of refuse still behind: Fluent, yet indolent, he would rebel Against the toil of writing, writing WELL, Not writing MUCH; for that I grant you. See, Here comes Crispinus, wants to bet with me, And offers odds: "A meeting, if you please: Take we our tablets each, you those, I these: Name place, and time, and umpires: let us try Who can compose the faster, you or I." Thank Heaven, that formed me of unfertile mind, My speech not copious, and my thoughts confined! But you, be like the bellows, if you choose, Still puffing, puffing, till the metal fuse, And vent your windy nothings with a sound That makes the depth they come from seem profound.

Happy is Fannius, with immortals classed, His bust and bookcase canonized at last, While, as for me, none reads the things I write. Loath as I am in public to recite, Knowing that satire finds small favour, since Most men want whipping, and who want it, wince. Choose from the crowd a casual wight, 'tis seen He's place-hunter or miser, vain or mean: One raves of others' wives: one stands agaze At silver dishes: bronze is Albius' craze: Another barters goods the whole world o'er, From distant east to furthest western shore, Driving along like dust-cloud through the air To increase his capital or not impair: These, one and all, the clink of metre fly, And look on poets with a dragon's eye. "Beware! he's vicious: so he gains his end, A

selfish laugh, he will not spare a friend: Whate'er he scrawls, the mean malignant rogue Is all alive to get it into vogue: Give him a handle, and your tale is known To every giggling boy and maundering crone." A weighty accusation! now, permit Some few brief words, and I will answer it: First, be it understood, I make no claim To rank with those who bear a poet's name: 'Tis not enough to turn out lines complete, Each with its proper quantum of five feet; Colloquial verse a man may write like me, But (trust an author)'tis not poetry. No; keep that name for genius, for a soul Of Heaven's own fire, for words that grandly roll. Hence some have questioned if the Muse we call The Comic Muse be really one at all: Her subject ne'er aspires, her style ne'er glows, And, save that she talks metre, she talks prose. "Aye, but the angry father shakes the stage, When on his graceless son he pours his rage, Who, smitten with the mistress of the hour, Rejects a well-born wife with ample dower, Gets drunk, and (worst of all) in public sight Keels with a blazing flambeau while 'tis light." Well, could Pomponius' sire to life return, Think you he'd rate his son in tones less stern? So then 'tis not sufficient to combine Well-chosen words in a well-ordered line, When, take away the rhythm, the self-same words Would suit an angry father off the boards. Strip what I write, or what Lucilius wrote, Of cadence and succession, time and note, Reverse the order, put those words behind That went before, no poetry you'll find: But break up this, "When Battle's brazen door Blood-boltered Discord from its fastenings tore," 'Tis Orpheus mangled by the Maenads: still The bard remains, unlimb him as you will.

Enough of this: some other time we'll see If Satire is or is not poetry: Today I take the question, if 'tis just That men like you should view it with distrust. Sulcius and Caprius promenade in force, Each with his papers, virulently hoarse, Bugbears to robbers both: but he that's true And decent-living may defy the two. Say, you're first cousin to that goodly pair Caelius and Birrius, and their foibles share: No Sulcius nor yet Caprius here you see In your unworthy servant: why fear ME? No books of mine on stall or counter stand, To tempt Tigellius' or some clammier hand, Nor read

I save to friends, and that when pressed, Not to chance auditor or casual guest. Others are less fastidious: some will air Their last production in the public square: Some choose the bathroom, for the walls all round Make the voice sweeter and improve the sound: Weak brains, to whom the question ne'er occurred If what they do be vain, ill-timed, absurd. "But you give pain: your habit is to bite," Rejoins the foe, "of sot deliberate spite." Who broached that slander? of the men I know, With whom I live, have any told you so? He who maligns an absent friend's fair fame, Who says no word for him when others blame, Who courts a reckless laugh by random hits, Just for the sake of ranking among wits, Who feigns what he ne'er saw, a secret blabs, Beware him, Roman! that man steals or stabs! Oft you may see three couches, four on each, Where all are wincing under one man's speech, All, save the host: his turn too comes at last, When wine lets loose the humour shame held fast: And you, who hate malignity, can see Nought here but pleasant talk, well-bred and free. I, if I chance in laughing vein to note Rufillus' civet and Gargonius' goat, Must I be toad or scorpion? Look at home: Suppose Petillius' theft, the talk of Rome, Named in your presence, mark how yon defend In your accustomed strain your absent friend: "Petillius? yes, I know him well: in truth We have been friends, companions, e'en from youth: A thousand times he's served me, and I joy That he can walk the streets without annoy: Yet 'tis a puzzle, I confess, to me How from that same affair he got off free." Here is the poison-bag of malice, here The gall of fell detraction, pure and sheer: And these, I'swear, if man such pledge may give, My pen and heart shall keep from, while I live.

But if I still seem personal and bold, Perhaps you'll pardon, when my story's told. When my good father taught me to be good, Scarecrows he took of living flesh and blood. Thus, if he warned me not to spend but spare The moderate means I owe to his wise care, 'Twas, "See the life that son of Albius leads! Observe that Barrus, vilest of ill weeds! Plain beacons these for heedless youth, whose taste Might lead them else a fair estate to waste:" If lawless love were what he bade me shun, "Avoid

Scetanius' slough," his words would run: "Wise men," he'd add, "the reasons will explain Why you should follow this, from that refrain: For me, if I can train you in the ways Trod by the worthy folks of earlier days, And, while you need direction, keep your name And life unspotted, I've attained my aim: When riper years have seasoned brain and limb, You'll drop your corks, and like a Triton swim." 'Twas thus he formed my boyhood: if he sought To make me do some action that I ought, "You see your warrant there," he'd say, and clench His word with some grave member of the bench: So too with things forbidden: "can you doubt The deed's a deed an honest man should scout, When, just for this same matter, these and those, Like open drains, are stinking 'neath your nose?" Sick gluttons of a next-door funeral hear, And learn self-mastery in the school of fear: And so a neighbour's scandal many a time Has kept young minds from running into crime.

Thus I grew up, unstained by serious ill, Though venial faults, I grant you, haunt me still: Yet items I could name retrenched e'en there By time, plain speaking, individual care; For, when I chance to stroll or lounge alone, I'm not without a Mentor of my own: "This course were better: that might help to mend My daily life, improve me as a friend: There some one showed ill-breeding: can I say I might not fall into the like one day?" So with closed lips I ruminate, and then In leisure moments play with ink and pen: For that's an instance, I must needs avow, Of those small faults I hinted at just now: Grant it your prompt indulgence, or a throng Of poets shall come up, some hundred strong, And by mere numbers, in your own despite, Force you, like Jews, to be our proselyte.

SATIRE V.

EGRESSUM MAGNA.

Leaving great Rome, my journey I begin, And reach Aricia, where a moderate inn (With me was Heliodorus, who knows more Of rhetoric than e'er did Greek before):

Next Appii Forum, filled, e'en, nigh to choke, With knavish publicans and boatmen folk. This portion of our route, which most get through At one good stretch, we chose to split in two, Taking it leisurely: for those who go The Appian road are jolted less when slow. I find the water villanous, decline My stomach's overtures, refuse to dine, And sit and sit with temper less than sweet Watching my fellow-travellers while they eat. Now Night prepared o'er all the earth to spread Her veil, and light the stars up overhead: Boatmen and slaves a slanging-match begin: "Ho! put in here! What! take three hundred in? You'll swamp us all:" so, while our fares we pay, And the mule's tied, a whole hour slips away. No hope of sleep: the tenants of the marsh, Hoarse frogs and shrill mosquitos, sing so harsh, While passenger and boatman chant the praise Of their true-loves in amoebean lays, Each fairly drunk: the passenger at last Tires of the game, and soon his eyes are fast: Then to a stone his mule the boatman moors, Leaves her to pasture, lays him down, and snores. And now 'twas near the dawning of the day, When 'tis discovered that we make no way: Out leaps a hair-brained fellow and attacks With a stout cudgel mule's and boatman's backs: And so at length, thanks to this vigorous friend, By ten o'clock we reach our boating's end. Tired with the voyage, face and hands we lave In pure Feronia's hospitable wave. We take some food, then creep three miles or so To Anxur, built on cliffs that gleam like snow; There rest awhile, for there our mates were due, Maecenas and Cocceius, good and true, Sent on a weighty business, to compose A feud, and make them friends who late were foes. I seize on the occasion, and apply A touch of ointment to an ailing eye. Meanwhile Maecenas with Cocceius came, And Capito, whose errand was the same, A man of men, accomplished and refined, Who knew, as few have known, Antonius' mind. Along by Fundi next we take our way For all its praetor sought to make us stay, Not without laughter at the foolish soul, His senatorial stripe and pan of coal. Then at Mamurra's city we pull up, Lodge with Murena, with Fonteius sup. Next morn the sun arises, O how sweet! At Sinnessa we with Plotius meet, Varius and Virgil; men than whom on earth I

know none dearer, none of purer worth. O what a hand-shaking! while sense abides, A friend to me is worth the world besides. Campania's border-bridge next day we crossed, There housed and victualled at the public cost. The next, we turn off early from the road At Capua, and the mules lay down their load; There, while Maecenas goes to fives, we creep, Virgil and I, to bed, and so to sleep: For, though the game's a pleasant one to play, Weak stomachs and weak eyes are in the way. Then to Cocceius' country-house we come, Beyond the Caudian inns, a sumptuous home. Now, Muse, recount the memorable fight 'Twixt valiant Messius and Sarmentus wight, And tell me first from what proud lineage sprung The champions joined in battle, tongue with tongue. From Oscan blood great Messius' sires derive: Sarmentus has a mistress yet alive. Such was their parentage: they meet in force: Sarmentus starts: "You're just like a wild horse." We burst into a laugh. The other said, "Well, here's a horse's trick:" and tossed his head. "O, were your horn yet growing, how your foe Would rue it, sure, when maimed you threaten so!" Sarmentus cries: for Messius' brow was marred By a deep wound, which left it foully scarred. Then, joking still at his grim countenance, He begged him just to dance the Cyclop dance: No buskin, mask, nor other aid of art Would be required to make him look his part. Messius had much to answer: "Was his chain Suspended duly in the Lares' fane? Though now a notary, he might yet be seized And given up to his mistress, if she pleased. Nay, more," he asked, "why had he run away, When e'en a single pound of corn a day Had filled a maw so slender?" So we spent Our time at table, to our high content.

Then on to Beneventum, where our host, As some lean thrushes he essayed to roast, Was all but burnt: for up the chimney came The blaze, and well nigh set the house on flame: The guests and servants snatch the meat, and fall Upon the fire with buckets, one and all. Next rise to view Apulia's well-known heights, Which keen Atabulus so sorely bites: And there perchance we might be wandering yet, But shelter in Trivicum's town we get, Where green damp branches in the fireplace

spread Make our poor eyes to water in our head. Then four and twenty miles, a good long way, Our coaches take us, in a town to stay Whose name no art can squeeze into a line, Though otherwise 'tis easy to define: For water there, the cheapest thing on earth, Is sold for money: but the bread is worth A fancy price, and travellers who know Their business take it with them when they go: For at Canusium, town of Diomed, The drink's as bad, and grits are in the bread. Here to our sorrow Varius takes his leave, And, grieved himself, compels his friends to grieve. Fatigued, we come to Rubi: for the way Was long, and rain had made it sodden clay. Next day, with better weather, o'er worse ground We get to Barium's town, where fish abound. Then Gnatia, built in water-nymphs' despite, Made us cut jokes and laugh, as well we might, Listening to tales of incense, wondrous feat, That melts in temples without fire to heat. Tell the crazed Jews such miracles as these! I hold the gods live lives of careless ease, And, if a wonder happens, don't assume 'Tis sent in anger from the upstairs room. Last comes Brundusium: there the lines I penned, The leagues I travelled, find alike their end.

SATIRE VI.

NON QUIA, MAECENAS.

What if, Maecenas, none, though ne'er so blue His Tusco-Lydian blood, surpasses you? What if your grandfathers, on either hand, Father's and mother's, were in high command? Not therefore do you curl the lip of scorn At nobodies, like me, of freedman born: Far other rule is yours, of rank or birth To raise no question, so there be but worth, Convinced, and truly too, that wights unknown, Ere Servius' rise set freedmen on the throne, Despite their ancestors, not seldom came To high employment, honours, and fair fame, While great Laevinus, scion of the race That pulled down Tarquin from his pride of place, Has ne'er been valued at a poor half-crown E'en in the eyes of that wise judge, the town, That muddy source of

dignity, which sees No virtue but in busts and lineal trees.

Well, but for us; what thoughts should ours be, say, Removed from vulgar judgments miles away? Grant that Laevinus yet would be preferred To low-born Decius by the common herd, That censor Appius, just because I came From freedman's loins, would obelize my name— And serve me right; for 'twas my restless pride Kept me from sleeping in my own poor hide. But Glory, like a conqueror, drags behind Her glittering car the souls of all mankind; Nor less the lowly than the noble feels The onward roll of those victorious wheels. Come, tell me, Tillius, have you cause to thank The stars that gave you power, restored you rank? Ill-will, scarce audible in low estate, Gives tongue, and opens loudly, now you're great. Poor fools! they take the stripe, draw on the shoe, And hear folks asking, "Who's that fellow? who?" Just as a man with Barrus's disease, His one sole care a lady's eye to please, Whene'er he walks abroad, sets on the fair To con him over, leg, face, teeth, and hair; So he that undertakes to hold in charge Town, country, temples, all the realm at large, Gives all the world a title to enquire The antecedents of his dam or sire. "What? you to twist men's necks or scourge them, you, The son of Syrus, Dama, none knows who?" "Aye, but I sit before my colleague; he Ranks with my worthy father, not with me." And think you, on the strength of this, to rise A Paullus or Messala in our eyes? Talk of your colleague! he's a man of parts: Suppose three funerals jostle with ten carts All in the forum, still you'll hear his voice Through horn and clarion: that commends our choice.

Now on myself, the freedman's son, I touch, The freedman's son, by all contemned as such, Once, when a legion followed my command, Now, when Maecenas takes me by the hand. But this and that are different: some stern judge My military rank with cause might grudge, But not your friendship, studious as you've been To choose good men, not pushing, base, or mean. In truth, to luck I care not to pretend, For 'twas not luck that mark'd me for your friend: Virgil at first, that faithful heart and true, And Varius after, named my name to you. Brought to your presence,

stammeringly I told (For modesty forbade me to be bold) No vaunting tale of ancestry of pride, Of good broad acres and sleek nags to ride, But simple truth: a few brief words you say, As is your wont, and wish me a good day. Then, nine months after, graciously you send, Desire my company, and hail me friend. O, 'tis no common fortune, when one earns A friend's regard, who man from man discerns, Not by mere accident of lofty birth But by unsullied life, and inborn worth!

Yet, if my nature, otherwise correct, But with some few and trifling faults is flecked, Just as a spot or mole might be to blame Upon some body else of comely frame, If none can call me miserly and mean Or tax my life with practices unclean, If I have lived unstained and unreproved (Forgive self-praise), if loving and beloved, I owe it to my father, who, though poor, Passed by the village school at his own door, The school where great tall urchins in a row, Sons of great tall centurions, used to go, With slate and satchel on their backs, to pay Their monthly quota punctual to the day, And took his boy to Rome, to learn the arts Which knight or senator to HIS imparts. Whoe'er had seen me, neat and more than neat, With slaves behind me, in the crowded street, Had surely thought a fortune fair and large, Two generations old, sustained the charge. Himself the true tried guardian of his son, Whene'er I went to class, he still made one. Why lengthen out the tale? he kept me chaste, Which is the crown of virtue, undisgraced In deed and name: he feared not lest one day The world should talk of money thrown away, If after all I plied some trade for hire, Like him, a tax-collector, or a crier: Nor had I murmured: as it is, the score Of gratitude and praise is all the more. No: while my head's unturned, I ne'er shall need To blush for that dear father, or to plead As men oft plead, 'tis Nature's fault, not mine, I came not of a better, worthier line. Not thus I speak, not thus I feel: the plea Might serve another, but 'twere base in me. Should Fate this moment bid me to go back O'er all my length of years, my life retrack To its first hour, and pick out such descent As man might wish for e'en to pride's content, I should rest satisfied with mine, nor choose New parents, decked with senatorial shoes, Mad, most would think me, sane,

as you'll allow, To waive a load ne'er thrust on me till now. More gear 'twould make me get without delay, More bows there'd be to make, more calls to pay, A friend or two must still be at my side, That all alone I might not drive or ride, More nags would want their corn, more grooms their meat, And waggons must be bought, to save their feet. Now on my bobtailed mule I jog at ease, As far as e'en Tarentum, if I please, A wallet for my things behind me tied, Which galls his crupper, as I gall his side, And no one rates my meanness, as they rate Yours, noble Tillius, when you ride in state On the Tiburtine road, five slaves EN SUITE, Wineholder and et-ceteras all complete.

'Tis thus my life is happier, man of pride, Than yours and that of half the world beside. When the whim leads, I saunter forth alone, Ask how are herbs, and what is flour a stone, Lounge through the Circus with its crowd of liars, Or in the Forum, when the sun retires, Talk to a soothsayer, then go home to seek My frugal meal of fritter, vetch, and leek: Three youngsters serve the food: a slab of white Contains two cups, one ladle, clean and bright: Next, a cheap basin ranges on the shelf, With jug and saucer of Campanian delf: Then off to bed, where I can close my eyes Not thinking how with morning I must rise And face grim Marsyas, who is known to swear Young Novius' looks are what he cannot bear. I lie a-bed till ten: then stroll a bit, Or read or write, if in a silent fit, And rub myself with oil, not taken whence Natta takes his, at some poor lamp's expense. So to the field and ball; but when the sun Bids me go bathe, the field and ball I shun: Then eat a temperate luncheon, just to stay A sinking stomach till the close of day, Kill time in-doors, and so forth. Here you see A careless life, from stir and striving free, Happier (O be that flattering unction mine!) Than if three quaestors figured in my line.

SATIRE VII.

PROSCRIPTI REGIS RUPILI.

How mongrel Persius managed to outsting That pungent proscript, foul Rupilius King, Is known, I take it, to each wight that drops Oil on bleared eyes, or lolls in barbers' shops.

Persius was rich, a man of great affairs, Steeped to the lips in monetary cares Down at Clazomenae: and some dispute 'Twixt him and King had festered to a suit. Tough, pushing, loud was he, with power of hate To beat e'en King's; so pestilent his prate, That Barrus and Sisenna you would find Left in the running leagues and leagues behind. Well, to return to King: they quickly see They can't agree except to disagree: For 'tis a rule, that wrath is short or long Just as the combatants are weak or strong: 'Twixt Hector and Aeacides the strife Was truceless, mortal, could but end with life, For this plain reason, that in either wight The tide of valour glowed at its full height; Whereas, if two poor cravens chance to jar, Or if an ill-matched couple meet in war, Like Diomede and Glaucus, straight the worse Gives in, and presents are exchanged of course.

Well, in the days when Brutus held command, With praetor's rank, o'er Asia's wealthy land, Persius and King engage, a goodly pair, Like Bithus matched with Bacchius to a hair. Keen as sharp steel, before the court they go, Bach in himself as good as a whole show.

Persius begins: amid the general laugh He praises Brutus, praises Brutus' staff, Brutus, the healthful sun of Asia's sphere, His staff, the minor stars that bless the year, All, save poor King; a dog-star he, the sign To farmers inauspicious and malign: So roaring on he went, like wintry flood, Where axes seldom come to thin the wood.

Then, as he thundered, King, Praeneste-bred, Hurled vineyard slang in handfuls at his head, A tough grape-gatherer, whom the passer-by Could ne'er put down, with all his cuckoo cry.

Sluiced with Italian vinegar, the Greek At length vociferates, "Brutus, let me speak!

You are our great king-killer: why delay To kill this King? I vow 'tis in your way."

SATIRE IX.

IBAM FORTE VIA SACRA.

Long the Sacred Road I strolled one day, Deep in some bagatelle (you know my way), When up comes one whose name I scarcely knew— "The dearest of dear fellows! how d'ye do?" He grasped my hand—"Well, thanks: the same to you." Then, as he still kept walking by my side, To cut things short, "You've no commands?" I cried. "Nay, you should know me: I'm a man of lore." "Sir, I'm your humble servant all the more." All in a fret to make him let me go, I now walk fast, now loiter and walk slow, Now whisper to my servant, while the sweat Ran down so fast, my very feet were wet. "O had I but a temper worth the name, Like yours, Bolanus!" inly I exclaim, While he keeps running on at a hand-trot, About the town, the streets, I know not what. Finding I made no answer, "Ah! I see, Tou 're at a strait to rid yourself of me; But 'tis no use: I'm a tenacious friend, And mean to hold you till your journey's end," "No need to take you such a round: I go To visit an acquaintance you don't know: Poor man! he's ailing at his lodging, far Beyond the bridge, where Caesar's gardens are." "O, never mind: I've nothing else to do, And want a walk, so I'll step on with you."

Down go my ears, in donkey-fashion, straight; You've seen them do it, when their load's too great. "If I mistake not," he begins, "you'll find Viscus not more, nor Varius, to yoar mind: There's not a man can turn a verse so soon, Or dance so nimbly when he hears a tune: While, as for singing—ah! my forte is there: Tigellius' self might envy me, I'll swear."

He paused for breath: I falteringly strike in: "Have you a mother? have you kith or kin To whom your life is precious?" "Not a soul: My line's extinct: I have interred the whole." O happy they! (so into thought I fell) After life's endless babble they

sleep well: My turn is next: dispatch me: for the weird Has come to pass which I so long have feared, The fatal weird a Sabine beldame sung, All in my nursery days, when life was young: "No sword nor poison e'er shall take him off, Nor gout, nor pleurisy, nor racking cough: A babbling tongue shall kill him: let him fly All talkers, as he wishes not to die."

We got to Vesta's temple, and the sun Told us a quarter of the day was done. It chanced he had a suit, and was bound fast Either to make appearance or be cast. "Step here a moment, if you love me." "Nay; I know no law: 'twould hurt my health to stay: And then, my call." "I'm doubting what to do, Whether to give my lawsuit up or you. "Me, pray!" "I will not." On he strides again: I follow, unresisting, in his train.

"How stand you with Maecenas?" he began: "He picks his friends with care; a shrewd wise man: In fact, I take it, one could hardly name A head so cool in life's exciting game. 'Twould be a good deed done, if you could throw Your servant in his way; I mean, you know, Just to play second: in a month, I'll swear, You'd make an end of every rival there." "O, you mistake: we don't live there in league: I know no house more sacred from intrigue: I'm never distanced in my friend's good grace By wealth or talent: each man finds his place." "A miracle! if 'twere not told by you, I scarce should credit it." "And yet 'tis true." "Ah, well, you double my desire to rise To special favour with a man so wise." "You've but to wish it: 'twill be your own fault, If, with your nerve, you win not by assault: He can be won: that puts him on his guard, And so the first approach is always hard." "No fear of me, sir: a judicious bribe Will work a wonder with the menial tribe: Say, I'm refused admittance for to-day; I'll watch my time; I'll meet him in the way, Escort him, dog him. In this world of ours The path to what we want ne'er runs on flowers."

'Mid all this prate there met us, as it fell, Aristius, my good friend, who knew him well. We stop: inquiries and replies go round: "Where do you hail from?" "Whither

are you bound?" There as he stood, impassive as a clod, I pull at his limp arms, frown, wink, and nod, To urge him to release me. With a smile He feigns stupidity: I burn with bile. "Something there was you said you wished to tell To me in private." "Ay, I mind it well; But not just now: 'tis a Jews' fast to-day: Affront a sect so touchy! nay, friend, nay." "Faith, I've no scruples." "Ah! but I've a few: I'm weak, you know, and do as others do: Some other time: excuse me." Wretched me! That ever man so black a sun should see! Off goes the rogue, and leaves me in despair, Tied to the altar, with the knife in air: When, by rare chance, the plaintiff in the suit Knocks up against us: "Whither now, you brute?" He roars like thunder: then to me: "You'll stand My witness, sir?" "My ear's at your command." Off to the court he drags him: shouts succeed: A mob collects: thank Phoebus, I am freed.

SATIRE X.

NEMPE INCOMPOSITO.

Yes, I did say that, view him as a bard, Lucilius is unrhythmic, rugged, hard. Lives there a partisan so weak of brain As to join issue on a fact so plain? But that he had a gift of biting wit, In the same page I hastened to admit. Now understand me: that's a point confessed; But he who grants it grants not all the rest: For, were a bard a bard because he's smart, Laberius' mimes were products of high art. 'Tis not enough to make your reader's face Wear a broad grin, though that too has its place: Terseness there wants, to make the thought ring clear, Nor with a crowd of words confuse the ear: There wants a plastic style, now grave, now light, Now such as bard or orator would write, And now the language of a well-bred man, Who masks his strength, and says not all he can: And pleasantry will often cut clean through Hard knots that gravity would scarce undo. On this the old comedians rested: hence They're still the models of all men of sense, Despite Tigellius and his ape, whose song Is Calvus and Catullus all day long.

"But surely that's a merit quite unique, His gift of mixing Latin up with Greek," Unique, you lags in learning? what? a knack Caught by Pitholeon with his hybrid clack? "Nay, but the mixture gives the style more grace, As Chian, plus Falernian, has more race." Come, tell me truly: is this rule applied To verse-making by you, and nought beside, Or would you practise it, when called to plead For poor Petillius, at his direst need? Forsooth, you choose that moment, to disown Your old forefathers, Latin to the bone, And while great Pedius and Corvinus strain Against you in pure Latin lungs and brain, Like double-tongued Canusian, try to speak A piebald speech, half native and half Greek!

Once when, though born on this side of the sea, I tried my hand at Attic poetry, Quirinus warned me, rising to my view An hour past midnight, just when dreams are true: "Seek you the throng of Grecian bards to swell? Take sticks into a forest just as well." So, while Alpinus spills his Memnon's blood, Or gives his Rhine a headpiece of brown mud, I toy with trifles such as this, unmeet At Tarpa's grave tribunal to compete, Or, mouthed by well-graced actors, be the rage Of mobs, and hold possession of the stage.

No hand can match Fundanius at a piece Where slave and mistress clip an old man's fleece: Pollio in buskins chants the deeds of kings: Varius outsoars us all on Homer's wings: The Muse that loves the woodland and the farm To Virgil lends her gayest, tenderest charm. For me, this walk of satire, vainly tried By Atacinus and some few beside, Best suits my gait: yet readily I yield To him who first set footstep on that field, Nor meanly seek to rob him of the bay That shows so comely on his locks of grey.

Well, but I called him muddy, said you'd find More sand than gold in what he leaves behind. And you, sir Critic, does your finer sense In Homer mark no matter for offence? Or e'en Lucilius, our good-natured friend, Sees he in Accius nought he fain would mend? Does he not laugh at Ennius' halting verse, Yet own himself no better,

if not worse? And what should hinder me, as I peruse Lucilius' works, from asking, if I choose, If fate or chance forbade him to attain A smoother measure, a more finished strain, Than he (you'll let me fancy such a man) Who, anxious only to make sense and scan, Pours forth two hundred verses ere he sups, Two hundred more, on rising from his cups? Like to Etruscan Cassius' stream of song, Which flowed, men say, so copious and so strong That, when he died, his kinsfolk simply laid His works in order, and his pyre was made. No; grant Lucilius arch, engaging, gay; Grant him the smoothest writer of his day; Lay stress upon the fact that he'd to seek In his own mind what others find in Greek; Grant all you please, in turn you must allow, Had fate postponed his life from then to now, He'd prune redundancies, apply the file To each excrescence that deforms his style, Oft in the pangs of labour scratch his head, And bite his nails, and bite them, till they bled. Oh yes! believe me, you must draw your pen Not once nor twice but o'er and o'er again Through what you've written, if you would entice The man that reads you once to read you twice, Not making popular applause your cue, But looking to fit audience, although few. Say, would you rather have the things you scrawl Doled out by pedants for their boys to drawl? Not I: like hissed Arbuscula, I slight Your hooting mobs, if I can please a knight.

Shall bug Pantilius vex me? shall I choke Because Demetrius needs must have his joke Behind my back, and Fannius, when he dines With dear Tigellius, vilifies my lines? Maecenas, Virgil, Varius, if I please In my poor writings these and such as these, If Plotius, Valgius, Fuscus will commend, And good Octavius, I've achieved my end. You, noble Pollio (let your friend disclaim All thought of flattery when he names your name), Messala and his brother, Servius too, And Bibulus, and Furnius kind and true, With others whom, despite their sense and wit And friendly hearts, I purposely omit; Such I would have my critics; men to gain Whose smiles were pleasure, to forego them pain, Demetrius and Tigellius, off! go pule To the bare benches of your ladies' school!

Hallo there, youngster! take my book, you rogue, And write this in, by way of

epilogue.

BOOK II.

SATIRE I.

SUNT QUIBUS IN SATIRA. HORACE. TREBATIUS.

HORACE.

Some think in satire I'm too keen, and press The spirit of invective to excess: Some call my verses nerveless: once begin, A thousand such per day a man might spin. Trebatius, pray advise me.

T. Wipe your pen.

H. What, never write a single line again?

T. That's what I mean.

H. 'Twould suit me, I protest, Exactly: but at nights I get no rest.

T. First rub yourself three times with oil all o'er, Then swim the Tiber through from shore to shore, Taking good care, as night draws on, to steep Your brain in liquor: then you'll have your sleep. Or, if you still have such an itch to write, Sing of some moving incident of fight; Sing of great Caasar's victories: a bard Who works at that is sure to win reward.

H. Would that I could, my worthy sire! but skill And vigour lack, how great soe'er the will. Not every one can paint in epic strain The lances bristling on the embattled plain, Tell how the Gauls by broken javelins bleed, Or sing the Parthian tumbling from his steed.

T. But you can draw him just and brave, you know, As sage Lucilius did for Scipio.

H. Trust me for that: my devoir I will pay, Whene'er occasion comes to point the way. Save at fit times, no words of mine can find A way through Cassar's ear to Cassar's mind: A mettled horse, if awkwardly you stroke, Kicks out on all sides, and

your leg is broke.

T. Better do this than gall with keen lampoon Cassius the rake and Maenius the buffoon, When each one, though with withers yet unwrung, Fears for himself, and hates your bitter tongue.

H. What shall I do? Milonius, when the wine Mounts to his head, and doubled lustres shine, Falls dancing; horses are what Castor loves; His twin yolk-fellow glories in the gloves: Count all the folks in all the world, you'll find A separate fancy for each separate mind. To drill reluctant words into a line, This was Lucilius' hobby, and 'tis mine. Good man, he was our better: yet he took Such pride in nought as in his darling book: That was his friend, to whom he would confide The secret thoughts he hid from all beside, And, whether Fortune used him well or ill, Thither for sympathy he turned him still: So there, as in a votive tablet penned, You see the veteran's life from end to end.

His footsteps now I follow as I may, Lucanian or Apulian, who shall say? For we Venusians live upon the line Just where Lucania and Apulia join, Planted,'tis said, there in the Samnites' place, To guard for Rome the intermediate space, Lest these or those some day should make a raid In time of war, and Roman soil invade.

But this poor implement of mine, my pen, Shall ne'er assault one soul of living men: Like a sheathed sword, I'll carry it about, Just to protect my life when I go out, A weapon I shall never care to draw, While my good neighbours keep within the law. O grant, dread Father, grant my steel may rust! Grant that no foe may play at cut and thrust With my peace-loving self! but should one seek To quarrel with me, yon shall hear him shriek: Don't say I gave no warning: up and down He shall be trolled and chorused through the town.

Cervius attacks his foes with writ and rule: Albutius' henbane is Canidia's tool: How threatens Turius? if he e'er should judge A. cause of yours, he'll bear you an ill grudge. Each has his natural weapon, you'll agree, If you will work the problem out

with me: Wolves use their tooth against you, bulls their horn;

Why, but that each is to the manner born? Take worthy Scaeva now, the spendthrift heir, And trust his long-lived mother to his care; He'll lift no hand against her. No, forsooth! Wolves do not use their heel, nor bulls their tooth: But deadly hemlock, mingled in the bowl With honey, will take off the poor old soul. Well, to be brief: whether old age await My years, or Death e'en now be at the gate, Wealthy or poor, at home or banished, still, Whate'er my life's complexion, write I will.

T. Poor child! your life is hanging on a thread: Some noble friend one day will freeze you dead.

H. What? when Lucilius first with dauntless brow Addressed him to his task, as I do now, And from each hypocrite stripped off the skin He flaunted to the world, though foul within, Did Laelius, or the chief who took his name Prom conquered Carthage, grudge him his fair game?

Felt they for Lupus or Metellus, when Whole floods of satire drenched the wretched men? He took no count of persons: man by man He scourged the proudest chiefs of each proud clan, Nor spared delinquents of a humbler birth, Kind but to worth and to the friends of worth. And yet, when Scipio brave and Laelius sage Stepped down awhile like actors from the stage, They would unbend with him, and laugh and joke While his pot boiled, like other simple folk. Well, rate me at my lowest, far below Lucilius' rank and talent, yet e'en so Envy herself shall own that to the end I lived with men of mark as friend with friend, And, when she fain on living flesh and bone Would try her teeth, shall close them on a stone; That is, if grave Trebatius will concur—

T. I don't quite see; I cannot well demur; Yet you had best be cautioned, lest you draw Some mischief down from ignorance of law; If a man writes ill verses out of spite 'Gainst A or B, the sufferer may indict.

H. Ill verses? ay, I grant you: but suppose Caesar should think them good (and

Caesar knows); Suppose the man you bark at has a name For every vice, while yours is free from blame.

T. O, then a laugh will cut the matter short: The case breaks down, defendant leaves the court.

SATIRE II.

QUAE VIRTUS ET QUANTA.

The art of frugal living, and its worth, To-day, my friends, Ofellus shall set forth ('Twas he that taught me it, a shrewd clear wit, Though country-spun, and for the schools unfit): Lend me your ears:—but not where meats and wine In costly service on the table shine, When the vain eye is dazzled, and the mind Recoils from truth, to idle shows resigned: No: let us talk on empty stomachs. Why? Well, if you'd have me tell you, I will try.

The judge who soils his fingers by a gift Is scarce the man a doubtful case to sift. Say that you're fairly wearied with the course, Following a hare, or breaking in a horse, Or, if, for Roman exercise too weak, You turn for your amusement to the Greek, You play at ball, and find the healthy strain Of emulation mitigates the pain, Or hurl the quoit, till toil has purged all taint Of squeamishness, and left you dry and faint; Sniff, if you can, at common food, and spurn All drink but honey mingled with Falern. The butler has gone out: the stormy sea Preserves its fishes safe from you and me: No matter: salt ad libitum, with bread Will soothe the Cerberus of our maws instead. What gives you appetite? 'tis not the meat Contains the relish: 'tis in you that eat. Get condiments by work: for when the skin Is pale and bloated from disease within, Not golden plover, oyster, nor sardine, Can make the edge of dulled enjoyment keen. Yet there's one prejudice I sorely doubt If force of reason ever will root out: Oft as a peacock's set before you, still Prefer it to a fowl you must and will, Because (as if that mattered when we dine!) The bird is costly, and its tail's so fine.

What? do you eat the feathers? when'tis drest And sent to table, does it still look best? While, as to flesh, the two are on a par: Yes, you're the dupe of mere outside, you are. You see that pike: what is it tells you straight Where those wide jaws first opened for the bait, In sea or river? 'twixt the bridges twain, Or at the mouth where Tiber joins the main? A three-pound mullet you must needs admire, And yet you know 'tis never served entire. The size attracts you: well then, why dislike The selfsame quality when found in pike? Why, but to fly in Nature's face for spite. Because she made these heavy those weigh light? O, when the stomach's pricked by hunger's stings, We seldom hear of scorn for common things!

"Great fishes on great dishes! how I gloat Upon the sight!" exclaims some harpy-throat. Blow strongly, blow, good Auster, and ferment The glutton's dainties, and increase their scent! And yet, without such aid, they find the flesh Of boar and turbot nauseous, e'en though fresh, When, gorged to sick repletion, they request Onions or radishes to give them zest. Nay, e'en at royal banquets poor men's fare Yet lingers: eggs and olives still are there. When, years ago, Gallonius entertained His friends with sturgeon, an ill name he gained. Were turbots then less common in the seas? No: but good living waxes by degrees. Safe was the turbot, safe the stork's young brood, Until a praetor taught us they were good. So now, should some potential voice proclaim That roasted cormorants are delicious game, The youth of Rome (there's nothing too absurd For their weak heads) will take him at his word.

But here Ofellus draws a line, between A life that's frugal and a life that's mean: For 'tis in vain that luxury you shun, If straight on avarice your bark you run. Avidienus—you may know him—who Was always call'd the Dog, and rightly too, On olives five-year-old is wont to dine, And, till 'tis sour, will never broach his wine: Oft as, attired for feasting, blithe and gay, He keeps some birthday, wedding, holiday, From his big horn he sprinkles drop by drop Oil on the cabbages himself:—you'd stop Your nose to smell it:—vinegar, I own, He gives you without stint, and that alone. Well, betwixt these, what should a wise man do? Which should

he copy, think you, of the two? 'Tis Scylla and Charybdis, rock and gulf: On this side howls the dog, on that the wolf. A man that's neat in table, as in dress, Errs not by meanness, yet avoids excess; Nor, like Albucius, when he plays the host, Storms at his slaves, while giving each his post; Nor, like poor Naevius, carelessly offends By serving greasy water to his friends.

Now listen for a space, while I declare The good results that spring from frugal fare. IMPRIMIS, health: for 'tis not hard to see How various meats are like to disagree, If you remember with how light a weight Your last plain meal upon your stomach sate: Now, when you've taken toll of every dish, Have mingled roast with boiled and fowl with fish, The mass of dainties, turbulent and crude, Engenders bile, and stirs intestine feud. Observe your guests, how ghastly pale their looks When they've discussed some mystery of your cook's: Ay, and the body, clogged with the excess Of yesterday, drags down the mind no less, And fastens to the ground in living death That fiery particle of heaven's own breath. Another takes brief supper, seeks repair From kindly sleep, then rises light as air: Not that sometimes he will not cross the line, And, just for once, luxuriously dine, When feasts come round with the revolving year, Or his shrunk frame suggests more generous cheer: Then too, when age draws on and life is slack, He has reserves on which he can fall back: But what have you in store when strength shall fail, You, who forestall your goods when young and hale?

A rancid boar our fathers used to praise: What? had they then no noses in those days? No: but they wished their friends to have the treat When tainted rather than themselves when sweet. O had I lived in that brave time of old, When men were heroes, and the age was gold!

Come now, you set some store by good repute: In truth, its voice is softer than a lute: Then know, great fishes on great dishes still Produce great scandal, let alone the bill. Think too of angry uncles, friends grown rude, Nay, your own self with

your own self at feud And longing for a rope to end your pain: But ropes cost twopence; so you long in vain. "O, talk," you say, "to Trausius: though severe, Such truths as these are just what HE should hear: But I have untold property, that brings A yearly sum, sufficient for three kings." Untold indeed! then can you not expend Your superflux on some diviner end? Why does one good man want while you abound? Why are Jove's temples tumbling to the ground? O selfish! what? devote no modicum To your dear country from so vast a sum? Ay, you're the man: the world will go your way…. O how your foes will laugh at you one day! Take measure of the future: which will feel More confidence in self, come woe, come weal, He that, like you, by long indulgence plants In body and in mind a thousand wants, Or he who, wise and frugal, lays in stores In view of war ere war is at the doors?

But, should you doubt what good Ofellus says, When young I knew him, in his wealthier days: Then, when his means were fair, he spent and spared Nor more nor less than now, when they're impaired. Still, in the field once his, but now assigned To an intruding veteran, you may find, His sons and beasts about him, the good sire, A sturdy farmer, working on for hire. "I ne'er exceeded"—so you'll hear him say—"Herbs and smoked gammon on a working day; But if at last a friend I entertained, Or there dropped in some neighbour while it rained, I got no fish from town to grace my board, But dined off kid and chicken like a lord: Raisins and nuts the second course supplied, With a split fig, first doubled and then dried: Then each against the other, with a fine To do the chairman's work, we drank our wine, And draughts to Ceres, so she'd top the ground With good tall ears, our frets and worries drowned Let Fortune brew fresh tempests, if she please, How much can she knock off from joys like these! Have you or I, young fellows, looked more lean Since this new holder came upon the scene? Holder, I say, for tenancy's the most That he, or I, or any man can boast: Now he has driven us out: but him no less His own extravagance may dispossess Or slippery lawsuit: in the last resort A livelier heir will cut his tenure short. Ofellus' name it bore, the field we plough, A few years back: it bears

Umbrenus' now: None has it as a fixture, fast and firm, But he or I may hold it for a term. Then live like men of courage, and oppose Stout hearts to this and each ill wind that blows."

SATIRE III.

SIC RARO SCRIBIS. DAMASIPPUS. HORACE.

DAMASIPPUS.

So seldom do you write, we scarcely hear Your tablets called for four times in the year: And even then, as fast as you compose, You quarrel with the thing, and out it goes, Vexed that, in spite of bottle and of bed, You turn out nothing worthy to be read. How is it all to end? Here you've come down, Avoiding a December spent in town: Your brains are clear: begin, and charm our ears With something worth your boasting.—Nought appears. You blame your pens, and the poor wall, accurst From birth by gods and poets, comes off worst. Yet you looked bold, and talked of what you'd do, Could you lie snug for one free day or two. What boot Menander, Plato, and the rest You carried down from town to stock your nest? Think you by turning lazy to exempt Your life from envy? No, you'll earn contempt. Then stop your ears to sloth's enchanting voice, Or give up your best hopes: there lies your choice.

H. Good Damasippus, may the immortals grant, For your sage counsel, the one thing you want, A barber! but pray tell me how yon came To know so well what scarce is known to fame?

D. Why, ever since my hapless all went down 'Neath the mid arch, I go about the town, And make my neighbours' matters my sole care, Seeing my own are damaged past repair. Once I was anxious on a bronze to light Where Sisyphus had washed his feet at night; Each work of art I criticized and classed, Called this ill chiselled, that too roughly cast; Prized that at fifty thousand: then I knew To buy at profit grounds and houses too, With a sure instinct: till the whole town o'er "The pet of Mercury"

was the name I bore.

H. I know your case, and am surprised to see So clear a cure of such a malady.

D, Ay, but my old complaint (though strange, 'tis true) Was banished from my system by a new: Just as diseases of the side or head My to the stomach or the chest instead, Like your lethargic patient, when he tears Himself from bed, and at the doctor squares.

H. Spare me but that, I'll trust you.

D. Don't be blind; You're mad yourself, and so are all mankind, If truth is in Stertinius, from whose speech I learned the precious lessons that I teach, What time he bade me grow a wise man's beard, And sent me from the bridge, consoled and cheered. For once, when, bankrupt and forlorn, I stood With muffled head, just plunging in the flood, "Don't do yourself a mischief," so he cried In friendly tones, appearing at my side: "'Tis all false shame: you fear to be thought mad, Not knowing that the world are just as bad. What constitutes a madman? if 'tis shown The marks are found in you and you alone, Trust me, I'll add no word to thwart your plan, But leave you free to perish like a man. The wight who drives through life with bandaged eyes, Ignorant of truth and credulous of lies, He in the judgment of Chrysippus' school And the whole porch is tabled as a fool. Monarchs and people, every rank and age, That sweeping clause includes,—except the sage.

"Now listen while I show you, how the rest Who call you madman, are themselves possessed. Just as in woods, when travellers step aside From the true path for want of some good guide, This to the right, that to the left hand strays, And all are wrong, but wrong in different ways, So, though you're mad, yet he who banters you Is not more wise, but wears his pigtail too. One class of fools sees reason for alarm In trivial matters, innocent of harm: Stroll in the open plain, you'll hear them talk Of fires, rocks, torrents, that obstruct their walk: Another, unlike these, but not more sane, Takes fires and torrents for the open plain: Let mother, sister, father, wife

combined Cry 'There's a pitfall! there's a rock! pray mind!' They'll hear no more than drunken Fufius, he Who slept the part of queen Ilione, While Catienus, shouting in his ear, Roared like a Stentor, 'Hearken, mother dear!'

"Well, now, I'll prove the mass of humankind Have judgments just as jaundiced, just as blind. That Damasippus shows himself insane By buying ancient statues, all think plain: But he that lends him money, is he free From the same charge? 'O, surely.' Let us see. I bid you take a sum you won't return: You take it: is this madness, I would learn? Were it not greater madness to renounce The prey that Mercury puts within your pounce? Secure him with ten bonds; a hundred; nay, Clap on a thousand; still he'll slip away, This Protean scoundrel: drag him into court, You'll only find yourself the more his sport: He'll laugh till scarce you'd think his jaws his own, And turn to boar or bird, to tree or stone. If prudence in affairs denotes men sane And bungling argues a disordered brain, The man who lends the cash is far more fond Than you, who at his bidding sign the bond.

"Now give attention and your gowns refold, Who thirst for fame, grow yellow after gold, Victims to luxury, superstition blind, Or other ailment natural to the mind: Come close to me and listen, while I teach That you're a pack of madmen, all and each.

"Of all the hellebore that nature breeds, The largest share by far the miser needs: In fact, I know not but Anticyra's juice Was all intended for his single use. When old Staberius died, his heirs engraved Upon his monument the sum he'd saved: For, had they failed to do it, they were tied A hundred pair of fencers to provide, A feast at Arrius' pleasure, not too cheap, And corn, as much as Afric's farmers reap. 'I may be right, I may be wrong,' said he, 'Who cares? 'tis not for you to lecture me.' Well, one who knew Staberius would suppose He was a man that looked beyond his nose: Why did he wish, then, that his funeral stone Should make the sum he left behind him known? Why, while he lived, he dreaded nothing more Than that great sin, the

sin of being poor, And, had he left one farthing less in purse, The man, as man, had thought himself the worse: For all things human and divine, renown, Honour, and worth at money's shrine bow down: And he who has made money, fool or knave, Becomes that moment noble, just, and brave. A sage, you ask me? yes, a sage, a king, Whate'er he chooses; briefly, everything. So good Staberius hoped each extra pound His virtue saved would to his praise redound. Now look at Aristippus, who, in haste To make his journey through the Libyan waste, Bade the stout slaves who bore his treasure throw Their load away, because it made them slow. Which was more mad? Excuse me: 'twill not do To shut one question up by opening two.

"If one buys fiddles, hoards them up when bought, Though music's study ne'er engaged his thought, One lasts and awls, unversed in cobbler's craft, One sails for ships, not knowing fore from aft, You'd call them mad: but tell me, if you please, How that man's case is different from these, Who, as he gets it, stows away his gain, And thinks to touch a farthing were profane? Yet if a man beside a huge corn-heap Lies watching with a cudgel, ne'er asleep, And dares not touch one grain, but makes his meat Of bitter leaves, as though he found them sweet: If, with a thousand wine-casks—call the hoard A million rather—in his cellars stored, He drinks sharp vinegar: nay, if, when nigh A century old, on straw he yet will lie, While in his chest rich coverlets, the prey Of moth and canker, moulder and decay, Few men can see much madness in his whim, Because the mass of mortals ail like him.

"O heaven-abandoned wretch! is all this care To save your stores for some degenerate heir, A son, or e'en a freedman, who will pour All down his throttle, ere a year is o'er? You fear to come to want yourself, you say? Come, calculate how small the loss per day, If henceforth to your cabbage you allow And your own head the oil you grudge them now. If anything's sufficient, why forswear, Embezzle, swindle, pilfer everywhere? Can you be sane? suppose you choose to throw Stones at the crowd, as by your door they go, Or at the slaves, your chattels, every lad And every girl will hoot yon down as mad: When with a rope you kill your wife, with bane

Your aged mother, are you right in brain? Why not? Orestes did it with the blade, And 'twas in Argos that the scene was laid. Think you that madness only then begun To seize him, when the impious deed was done, And not that Furies spurred him on, before The sword grew purple with a parent's gore? Nay, from the time they reckon him insane, He did no deed of which you could complain: No stroke this madman at Electra aims Or Pylades: he only calls them names, Fury or other monster, in the style Which people use when stirred by tragic bile.

"Opimius, who, with gold and silver store Lodged in his coffers, ne'ertheless was poor (The man would drink from earthen nipperkin Flat wine on working-days, on feast-days thin), Once fell into a lethargy so deep That his next heir supposed it more than sleep, And entering on possession at his ease, Went round the coffers and applied the keys. The doctor had a conscience and a head: He had a table moved beside the bed, Poured out a money-bag, and bade men come And ring the coin and reckon o'er the sum: Then, lifting up his patient, he began: 'That heir of yours is plundering you, good man. 'What? while I live?' 'You wish to live? then take The necessary steps: be wide awake.' 'What steps d'ye mean?' 'Your strength will soon run short, Unless your stomach have some strong support. Come, rouse yourself: take this ptisane of rice.' 'The price?' 'A trifle.' 'I will know the price.' 'Eight-pence.' 'O dear! what matters it if I Die by disease or robbery? still I die.' "'Who then is sane?' He that's no fool, in troth. 'Then what's a miser?' Fool and madman both. 'Well, if a man's no miser, is he sane That moment?' No. 'Why, Stoic?' I'll explain. The stomach here is sound as any bell, Craterus may say: then is the patient well? May he get up? Why no; there still are pains That need attention in the side or reins. You're not forsworn nor miserly: go kill A porker to the gods who ward off ill. You're headlong and ambitious: take a trip To Madman's Island by the next swift ship. For where's the difference, down the rabble's throat To pour your gold, or never spend a groat?

Servius Oppidius, so the story runs, Rich for his time, bequeathed to his two sons

Two good-sized farms, and calling to his bed The hopeful youths, in faltering accents said: 'E'er since I saw you, Aulus, give away Your nuts and taws, or squander them at play, While you, Tiberius, careful and morose, Would count them over, hide them, keep them close, I've feared lest both should err in different ways, And one have Cassius', one Cicuta's craze. So now I beg you by the household powers Who guard, and still shall guard, this roof of ours, That you diminish not, nor you augment What I and nature fix for your content. To bar ambition too, I lay an oath Of heaviest weight upon the souls of both; Should either be an aedile, or, still worse, A praetor, let him feel a father's curse. What? would you wish to lavish my bequest In vetches, beech-nuts, lupines and the rest, You, that in public you may strut, or stand All bronze, when stripped of money, stripped of land; You, that Agrippa's plaudits you may win, A sneaking fox in a brave lion's skin?'

"What moves you, Agamemnon, thus to fling Great Ajax to the dogs? 'I am a king.' And I a subject: therefore I forbear More questions. 'Right; for what I will is fair: Yet, if there be who fancy me unjust, I give my conduct up to be discussed.' Mightiest of mighty kings, may proud success And safe return your conquering army bless! May I ask questions then, and shortly speak When you have answered? 'Take the leave you seek.' Then why should Ajax, though so oft renowned For patriot service, rot above the ground, Your bravest next Achilles, just that Troy And envious Priam may the scene enjoy, Beholding him, through whom their children came To feed the dogs, himself cast out to shame? 'A flock the madman slew, and cried that he Had killed my brother, Ithacus, and me.' Well, when you offered in a heifer's stead Your child, and strewed salt meal upon her head, Then were you sane, I ask you? 'Why not sane?' Why, what did Ajax when the flock was slain? He did no violence to his wife or child: He cursed the Atridae, true; his words were wild; But against Teucer ne'er a hand he raised, Nor e'en Ulysses: yet you call him crazed. 'But I, of purpose, soothed the gods with blood, To gain our fleet free passage o'er the flood.' Blood! ay, your own, you madman. 'Nay, not so: My own, I grant it: but a

madman's, no.'

"He that sees things amiss, his mind distraught By guilty deeds, a madman will be thought; And, so the path of reason once be missed, Who cares if rage or folly gave the twist? When Ajax falls with fury on the fold, He shows himself a madman, let us hold: When you, of purpose, do a crime to gain A meed of empty glory, are you sane? The heart that air-blown vanities dilate, Will medicine say 'tis in its normal state? Suppose a man in public chose to ride With a white lambkin nestling at his side, Called it his daughter, had it richly clothed, And did his best to get it well betrothed, The law would call him madman, and the care Of him and of his goods would pass elsewhere. You offer up your daughter for a lamb; And are you rational? Don't say, I am. No; when a man's a fool, he's then insane: The man that's guilty, he's a maniac plain: The dupe of bubble glory, war's grim queen Has dinned away his senses, clear and clean.

"Cassius and luxury! hunt that game with me; For spendthrifts are insane, the world shall see. Soon as the youngster had received at last The thousand talents that his sire amassed, He sent round word to all the sharking clan, Perfumer, fowler, fruiterer, fisherman, Velabrum's refuse, Tuscan Alley's scum, To come to him. next morning. Well, they come. First speaks the pimp: 'Whatever I or these Possess, is yours: command it when you please.' Now hear his answer, and admire the mind That thus could speak, so generous and so kind. 'You sleep in Umbrian snow-fields, booted o'er The hips, that I may banquet on a boar; You scour the sea for fish in winter's cold, And I do nought; I don't deserve this gold: Here, take it; you a hundred, you as much, But you, the spokesman, thrice that sum shall touch.'

"AEsopus' son took from his lady dear A splendid pearl that glittered in her ear, Then melted it in vinegar, and quaffed (Such was his boast) a thousand at a draught: How say you? had the act been more insane To fling it in a river or a drain?

"Arrius' two sons, twin brothers, of a piece In vice, perverseness, folly, and caprice,

Would lunch off nightingales: well, what's their mark? Shall it be chalk or charcoal, white or dark?

"To ride a stick, to build a paper house, Play odd and even, harness mouse and mouse, If a grown man professed to find delight In things like these, you'd call him mad outright. "Well now, should reason force you to admit That love is just as childish, every whit; To own that whimpering at your mistress' door Is e'en as weak as building on the floor; Say, will you put conviction into act, And, like young Polemo, at once retract; Take off the signs and trappings of disease, Your leg-bands, tippets, furs, and muffatees, As he slipped off his chaplets, when the word Of sober wisdom all his being stirred?

"Give a cross child an apple: 'Take it, pet:' He sulks and will not: hold it back, he'll fret. Just so the shut-out lover, who debates And parleys near the door he vows he hates, In doubt, when sent for, to go back or no, Though, if not sent for, he'd be sure to go. 'She calls me: ought I to obey her call, Or end this long infliction once for all? The door was shut:'tis open: ah, that door! Go back? I won't, however she implore.' So he. Now listen while the slave replies, And say if of the two he's not more wise: 'Sir, if a thing is senseless, to bring sense To bear upon it is a mere pretence; Now love is such a thing, the more's the shame; First war, then peace, 'tis never twice the same, For ever heaving, like a sea in storm, And taking every hour some different form. You think to fix it? why, the job's as bad As if you tried by reason to be mad.'

"When you pick apple-pips, and try to hit The ceiling with them, are you sound of wit? "When with your withered lips you bill and coo, Is he that builds card-houses worse than you? Then, too, the blood that's spilt by fond desires, The swords that men will use to poke their fires! When Marius killed his mistress t'other day And broke his neck, was he demented, say? Or would you call him criminal instead, And stigmatize his heart to save his head, Following the common fallacy, which founds A different meaning upon different sounds?

"There was an aged freedman, who would run From shrine to shrine at rising of the sun, Sober and purified for prayer, and cry 'Save me, me only! sure I need not die; Heaven can do all things:' ay, the man was sane In ears and eyes: but how about his brain? Why, that his master, if not bent to plead Before a court, could scarce have guaranteed. Him and all such Chrysippus would assign To mad Menenius' most prolific line.

"'Almighty Jove, who giv'st and tak'st away The pains we mortals suffer, hear me pray!' (So cries the mother of a child whose cold, Or ague rather, now is five months old) 'Cure my poor boy, and he shall stand all bare In Tiber, on thy fast, in morning air.' So if, by chance or treatment, the attack Should pass away, the wretch will bring it back, And give the child his death: 'tis madness clear; But what produced it? superstitious fear."

Such were the arms Stertinius, next in sense To the seven sages, gave me for defence. Now he that calls me mad gets paid in kind, And told to feel the pigtail stuck behind.

H. Good Stoic, may you mend your loss, and sell All your enormous bargains twice as well. But pray, since folly's various, just explain What type is mine? for I believe I'm sane.

D. What? is Agave conscious that she's mad When she holds up the head of her poor lad?

H. I own I'm foolish—truth must have her will— Nay, mad: but tell me, what's my form of ill?

D. I'll tell you. First, you build, which means you try To ape great men, yourself some two feet high, And yet you laugh to see poor Turbo fight, When he looks big and strains beyond his height. What? if Maecenas does a thing, must you, His weaker every way, attempt it too? A calf set foot on some young frogs, they say, Once when the mother chanced to be away: One 'scapes, and tells his dam with

bated breath How a huge beast had crushed the rest to death: "How big?" quoth she: "is this as big?" and here She swelled her body out. "No, nothing near." Then, seeing her still fain to puff and puff, "You'll burst," gays he, "before you're large enough." Methinks the story fits you. Now then, throw Your verses in, like oil to feed the glow. If ever poet yet was sane, no doubt, You may put in your plea, but not without. Your dreadful temper—

H. Hold.

D. The sums you spend Beyond your income—

H. Mind yourself, my friend.

D. And then, those thousand flames no power can cool.

H. O mighty senior, spare a junior fool!

SATIRE IV.

UNDE ET QUO CATIUS? HORACE. CATIUS.

HORACE.

Ho, Catius! whence and whither?

C. Not to-day: I cannot stop to talk: I must away To set down words of wisdom, which surpass The Athenian sage and deep Pythagoras.

H. Faith, I did ill at such an awkward time To cross your path; but you'll forgive the crime: If you've lost aught, you'll get it back ere long By nature or by art; in both you're strong.

C. Ah, 'twas a task to keep the whole in mind, For style and matter were alike refined.

H. But who was lecturer? tell me whence he came.

C. I give the precepts, but suppress the name.

The oblong eggs by connoisseurs are placed Above the round for whiteness and for taste: Procure them for your table without fail, For they're more fleshy, and their yolk is male. The cabbage of dry fields is sweeter found Than the weak growth of washed-out garden ground. Should some chance guest surprise you late at night, For fear the new-killed fowl prove tough to bite, Plunge it while living in Falernian lees, And then 'twill be as tender as you please. Mushrooms that grow in meadows are far best; You can't be too suspicious of the rest. He that would pass through summer without hurt Should eat a plate of mulberries for dessert, But mind to pluck them in the morning hour, Before the mid-day sun exerts its power.

Aufidius used Falernian, rich and strong, To mingle with his honey: he did wrong: For when the veins are empty, 'tis not well To pour in fiery drinks to make them swell: Mild gentle draughts will better do their part In nourishing the cockles of the heart. In costive cases, limpets from the shell Are a cheap way the evil to dispel, With groundling sorrel: but white Coan neat You'll want to make the recipe complete. For catching shell-fish the new moon's the time, But there's a difference between clime and clime; Baiae is good, but to the Lucrine yields; Circeii ranks as best for oyster-fields; Misenum's cape with urchins is supplied; Flat bivalve mussels are Tarentum's pride.

Let no man fancy he knows how to dine Till he has learnt how taste and taste combine. 'Tis not enough to sweep your fish away From the dear stall, and chuckle as you pay, Not knowing which want sauce, and which when broiled Will tempt a guest whose appetite is spoiled.

The man who hates wild boars that eat like tame Gets his from Umbria, genuine mast-fed game: For the Laurentian beast, that makes its fat Off sedge and reeds, is flavourless and flat. The flesh of roes that feed upon the vine Is not to be relied on when you dine. With those who know what parts of hare are best You'll find the wings are mostly in request. Fishes and fowls, their nature and their age, Have oft

employed the attention of the sage; But how to solve the problem ne'er was known By mortal palate previous to my own.

There are whose whole invention is confined To novel sweets: that shows a narrow mind; As if you wished your wines to be first-rate, But cared not with what oil your fish you ate. Put Massic wine to stand 'neath a clear sky All night, away the heady fumes will fly, Purged by cool air: if 'tis through linen strained, You spoil the flavour, and there's nothing gained. Who mix Surrentine with Falernian dregs Clear off the sediment with pigeons' eggs: The yolk goes down; all foreign matters sink Therewith, and leave the beverage fit to drink. 'Tis best with roasted shrimps and Afric snails To rouse your drinker when his vigour fails: Not lettuce; lettuce after wine ne'er lies Still in the stomach, but is sure to rise: The appetite, disordered and distressed, Wants ham and sausage to restore its zest; Nay, craves for peppered viands and what not, Fetched from some greasy cookshop steaming hot.

There are two kinds of sauce; and I may say That each is worth attention in its way. Sweet oil's the staple of the first; but wine Should be thrown in, and strong Byzantine brine. Now take this compound, pickle, wine, and oil, Mix it with herbs chopped small, then make it boil, Put saffron in, and add, when cool, the juice Venafrum's choicest olive-yards produce. In taste Tiburtian apples count as worse Than Picene; in appearance, the reverse. For pots, Venucule grapes the best may suit: For drying, Albans are your safer fruit. 'Twas I who first, authorities declare, Served grapes with apples, lees with caviare, White pepper with black salt, and had them set Before each diner as his private whet.

'Tis gross to squander hundreds upon fish, Yet pen them cooked within too small a dish. So too it turns the stomach, if there sticks Dirt to the bowl wherein your wine you mix; Or if the servant, who behind you stands, Has fouled the beaker with his greasy hands. Brooms, dish-cloths, saw-dust, what a mite they cost! Neglect them though, your reputation's lost. What? sweep with dirty broom a floor inlaid, Spread

unwashed cloths o'er tapestry and brocade, Forgetting, sure, the less such things entail Of care and cost, the more the shame to fail, Worse than fall short in luxuries, which one sees At no man's table but your rich grandees'?

H. Catius, I beg, by all that binds a friend, Let me go with you, when you next attend; For though you've every detail at command, There's something must be lost at second hand. Then the man's look, his manner—these may seem Mere things of course, perhaps, in your esteem, So privileged as you are: for me, I feel An inborn thirst, a more than common zeal, Up to the distant river-head to mount, And quaff these precious waters at their fount.

SATIRE V.

HOC QUOQUE, TIRESIA. ULYSSES. TIRESIAS.

ULYSSES

Now, good Tiresias, add one favour more To those your kindness has vouchsafed before, And tell me by what ways I may redeem My broken fortunes—You're amused, 'twould seem.

T. You get safe home, you see your native isle, And yet it craves for more, that heart of guile!

U. O source of truth unerring, you're aware, I reach my home impoverished and stripped bare (So you predict), and find nor bit nor sup, My flocks all slaughtered and my wines drunk up: Yet family and worth, without the staff Of wealth to lean on, are the veriest draff.

T. Since, in plain terms, 'tis poverty you fear, And riches are your aim, attend and hear. Suppose a thrush or other dainty placed At your disposal, for your private taste, Speed it to some great house, all gems and gold, Where means are ample, and their master old: Your choicest apples, ripe and full of juice, And whatsoe'er your

garden may produce, Before they're offered at the Lares' shrine, Give them to your rich friend, as more divine: Be he a branded slave, forsworn, distained With brother's blood, in short, a rogue ingrained, Yet walk, if asked, beside him when you meet, And (pray mind this) between him and the street.

U. What, give a slave the wall? in happier days, At Troy, for instance, these were not my ways: Then with the best I matched myself.

T. Indeed? I'm sorry: then you'll always be in need.

U. Well, well, my heart shall bear it; 'tis inured To dire adventure, and has worse endured. Go on, most worthy augur, and unfold The arts whereby to pile up heaps of gold.

T. Well, I have told you, and I tell you still: Lay steady siege to a rich dotard's will; Nor, should a fish or two gnaw round the bait, And 'scape the hook, lose heart and give up straight. A suit at law comes on: suppose you find One party's old and childless, never mind Though law with him's a weapon to oppress An upright neighbour, take his part no less: But spurn the juster cause and purer life, If burdened with a child or teeming wife. "Good Quintus," say, or "Publius" (nought endears A speaker more than this to slavish ears), "Your worth has raised you up a friend at court; I know the law, and can a cause support; I'd sooner lose an eye than aught should hurt, In purse or name, a man of your desert: Just leave the whole to me: I'll do my best To make you no man's victim, no man's jest." Bid him go home and nurse himself, while you Act as his counsel and his agent too; Hold on unflinching, never bate a jot, Be it for wet or dry, for cold or hot, Though "Sirius split dumb statues up," or though Fat Furius "spatter the bleak Alps with snow." "What steady nerve!" some bystander will cry, Nudging a friend; "what zeal! what energy! What rare devotion!" ay, the game goes well; In flow the tunnies, and your fish-ponds swell. Another plan: suppose a man of wealth Has but one son, and that in weakly health; Creep round the father, lest the court you pay To childless

widowers your game betray, That he may put you second, and, in case The poor youth die, insert you in his place, And so you get the whole: a throw like this, Discreetly hazarded, will seldom miss. If offered by your friend his will to read, Decline it with a "Thank you! no, indeed!" Yet steal a side-long glance as you decline At the first parchment and the second line, Just to discover if he leaves you heir All by yourself, or others have a share. A constable turned notary oft will cheat Your raven of the cheese he thought to eat; And sly Nasica will become, you'll see, Coranus' joke, but not his legatee.

U. What? are you mad, or do you mean to balk My thirst for knowledge by this riddling talk?

T. O Laertiades! what I foreshow To mortals, either will take place or no; For 'tis the voice of Phoebus from his shrine That speaks in me and makes my words divine.

U. Forgive my vehemence, and kindly state The meaning of the fable you narrate.

T. When he, the Parthian's dread, whose blood comes down E'en from Aeneas' veins, shall win renown By land and sea, a marriage shall betide Between Coranus, wight of courage tried, And old Nasica's daughter, tall and large, Whose sire owes sums he never will discharge. The duteous son-in-law his will presents, And begs the sire to study its contents: At length Nasica, having long demurred, Takes it and reads it through without a word; And when the whole is done, perceives in fine That he and his are simply left—to whine.

Suppose some freedman, or some crafty dame Rules an old driveller, you may join their game: Say all that's good of them to him, that they, When your back's turned, the like of you may say This plan has merits; but 'tis better far To take the fort itself, and end the war.

A shrewd old crone at Thebes (the fact occurred When I was old) was thus by will interred: Her corpse was oiled all over, and her heir Bore it to burial on his shoulders bare: He'd stuck to her while living; so she said She'd give him, if she could, the slip

when dead. Be cautious in attack; observe the mean, And neither be too lukewarm, nor too keen. Much talk annoys the testy and morose, But 'tis not well to be reserved and close. Act Davus in the drama: droop your head, And use the gestures of a man in dread. Be all attention: if the wind is brisk, Say, "Wrap that precious head up! run no risk!" Push shouldering through a crowd, the way to clear Before him; when he maunders, prick your ear. He craves for praise; administer the puff Till, lifting up both hands, he cries "Enough." But when, rewarded and released, at last You gain the end of all your service past, And, not in dreams but soberly awake, Hear "One full quarter let Ulysses take," Say, once or twice, "And is good Dama dead? Where shall I find his like for heart and head?" If possible, shed tears: at least conceal The tell-tale smiles that speak the joy you feel. Then, for the funeral: with your hands untied, Beware of erring upon meanness' side: No; let your friend be handsomely interred, And let the neighbourhood give you its good word. Should one of your co-heirs be old, and vexed With an inveterate cough, approach him next: A house or lands he'd purchase that belong To your estate: they're his for an old song. But Proserpine commands me; I must fly; Her will is law; I wish you health; good-bye.

SATIRE VI.

HOC ERAT IN VOTIS.

This used to be my wish: a bit of land, A house and garden with a spring at hand, And just a little wood. The gods have crowned My humble vows; I prosper and abound: Nor ask I more, kind Mercury, save that thou Wouldst give me still the goods thou giv'st me now: If crime has ne'er increased them, nor excess And want of thrift are like to make them less; If I ne'er pray like this, "O might that nook Which spoils my field be mine by hook or crook! O for a stroke of luck like his, who found A crock of silver, turning up the ground, And, thanks to good Alcides, farmed as buyer The very land where he had slaved for hire!" If what I have contents me, hear

my prayer: Still let me feel thy tutelary care, And let my sheep, my pastures, this and that, My all, in fact, (except my brains,) be fat.

Now, lodged in my hill-castle, can I choose Companion fitter than my homely Muse? Here no town duties vex, no plague-winds blow, Nor Autumn, friend to graveyards, works me woe. Sire of the morning (do I call thee right, Or hear'st thou Janus' name with more delight?) Who introducest, so the gods ordain, Life's various tasks, inaugurate my strain. At Rome to bail I'm summoned. "Do your part," Thou bidd'st me; "quick, lest others get the start." So, whether Boreas roars, or winter's snow Clips short the day, to court I needs must go. I give the fatal pledge, distinct and loud, Then pushing, struggling, battle with the crowd. "Now, madman!" clamours some one, not without A threat or two, "just mind what you're about: What? you must knock down all that's in your way, Because you're posting to Maecenas, eh?" This pleases me, I own; but when I get To black Esquiliae, trouble waits me yet: For other people's matters in a swarm Buzz round my head and take my ears by storm. "Sir, Roscius would be glad if you'd arrange By eight a. m. to be with him on 'Change." "Quintus, the scribes entreat you to attend A meeting of importance, as their friend." "Just get Maecenas' seal attached to these." "I'll try." "O, you can do it, if you please." Seven years, or rather eight, have well-nigh passed Since with Maecenas' friends I first was classed, To this extent, that, driving through the street, He'd stop his car and offer me a seat, Or make such chance remarks as "What's o'clock?" "Will Syria's champion beat the Thracian cock?" "These morning frosts are apt to be severe;" Just chit-chat, suited to a leaky ear. Since that auspicious date, each day and hour Has placed me more and more in envy's power: "He joined his play, sat next him at the games: A child of Fortune!" all the world exclaims. From the high rostra a report comes down, And like a chilly fog, pervades the town: Each man I meet accosts me "Is it so? You live so near the gods, you're sure to know: That news about the Dacians? have you heard No secret tidings?" "Not a single word." "O yes! you love to banter us poor folk." "Nay, if I've heard a tittle,

may I choke!" "Will Caesar grant his veterans their estates In Italy, or t'other side of the straits?" I swear that I know nothing, and am dumb: They think me deep, miraculously mum. And so my day between my fingers slips, While fond regrets keep rising to my lips: O my dear homestead in the country! when Shall I behold your pleasant face again; And, studying now, now dozing and at ease, Imbibe forgetfulness of all this tease? O when, Pythagoras, shall thy brother bean, With pork and cabbage, on my board be seen? O happy nights and suppers half divine, When, at the home-gods' altar, I and mine Enjoy a frugal meal, and leave the treat Unfinished for my merry slaves to eat! Not bound by mad-cap rules, but free to choose Big cups or small, each follows his own views: You toss your wine off boldly, if you please, Or gently sip, and mellow by degrees. We talk of—not our neighbour's house or field, Nor the last feat of Lepos, the light-heeled— But matters which to know concerns us more, Which none but at his peril can ignore; Whether 'tis wealth or virtue makes men blest, What leads to friendship, worth or interest, In what the good consists, and what the end And chief of goods, on which the rest depend: While neighbour Cervius, with his rustic wit, Tells old wives' tales, this case or that to hit. Should some one be unwise enough to praise Arellius' toilsome wealth, he straightway says: "One day a country mouse in his poor home Received an ancient friend, a mouse from Rome: The host, though close and careful, to a guest Could open still: so now he did his best. He spares not oats or vetches: in his chaps Raisins he brings and nibbled bacon-scraps, Hoping by varied dainties to entice His town-bred guest, so delicate and nice, Who condescended graciously to touch Thing after thing, but never would take much, While he, the owner of the mansion, sate On threshed-out straw, and spelt and darnels ate. At length the townsman cries: "I wonder how You can live here, friend, on this hill's rough brow: Take my advice, and leave these ups and downs, This hill and dale, for humankind and towns. Come now, go home with me: remember, all Who live on earth are mortal, great and small: Then take, good sir, your pleasure while you may; With life so short, 'twere wrong

to lose a day." This reasoning made the rustic's head turn round; Forth from his hole he issues with a bound, And they two make together for their mark, In hopes to reach the city during dark. The midnight sky was bending over all, When they set foot within a stately hall, Where couches of wrought ivory had been spread With gorgeous coverlets of Tyrian red, And viands piled up high in baskets lay, The relics of a feast of yesterday. The townsman does the honours, lays his guest At ease upon a couch with crimson dressed, Then nimbly moves in character of host, And offers in succession boiled and roast; Nay, like a well-trained slave, each wish prevents, And tastes before the tit-bits he presents. The guest, rejoicing in his altered fare, Assumes in turn a genial diner's air, When hark! a sudden banging of the door: Each from his couch is tumbled on the floor: Half dead, they scurry round the room, poor things, While the whole house with barking mastiffs rings. Then says the rustic: "It may do for you, This life, but I don't like it; so adieu: Give me my hole, secure from all alarms, I'll prove that tares and vetches still have charms."

SATIRE VII.

JAMDUDUM AUSCULTO. DAVUS. HORACE.

DAVUS.

I've listened long, and fain a word would say, But, as a slave, I dare not.

H. Davus, eh?

D. Yes, Davus, true and faithful, good enough, But not too good to be of lasting stuff.

H. Well, take December's licence: I'll not balk Our fathers' good intentions: have your talk.

D. Some men there are take pleasure in what's ill Persistently, and do it with a will: The greater part keep wavering to and fro, And now all right, and now all wrong

they go. Prisons, we all remember, oft would wear Three rings at once, then show his finger bare; First he'd be senator, then knight, and then In an hour's time a senator again; Flit from a palace to a crib so mean, A decent freedman scarce would there be seen; Now with Athenian wits he'd make his home, Now live with scamps and profligates at Rome; Born in a luckless hour, when every face Vertumnus wears was pulling a grimace. Shark Volanerius tried to disappoint The gout that left his fingers ne'er a joint By hiring some one at so much per day To shake the dicebox while he sat at play; Consistent in his faults, so less a goose Than your poor wretch who shifts from fast to loose.

H. For whom d'ye mean this twaddle, tell me now, You hang-dog?

D. Why, for you.

H. Good varlet, how?

D. You praise the life that people lived of old, When Rome was frugal and the age was gold, And yet, if on a sudden forced to dwell With men like those, you'd strenuously rebel, Either because you don't believe at heart That what you bawl for is the happier part, Or that you can't act out what you avow, But stand with one foot sticking in the slough. At Rome you hanker for your country home; Once in the country, there's no place like Rome. If not asked out to supper, then you bless The stars that let you eat your quiet mess, Vow that engagements are mere clogs, and think You're happy that you've no one's wine to drink. But should Maecenas, somewhat late, invite His favourite bard to come by candle-light, "Bring me the oil this instant! is there none Hears me?" you scream, and in a trice are gone: While Milvius and his brother beasts of prey, With curses best not quoted, walk away. Yet what says Milvius? "Honest truth to tell, I turn my nose up at a kitchen's smell; I'm guided by my stomach; call me weak, Coward, tavern-spunger, still by book you'll speak. But who are you to treat me to your raps? You're just as bad as I, nay worse perhaps, Though you've a cloak of decent words, forsooth, To throw at pleasure o'er

the ugly truth." What if at last a greater fool you're found Than I, the slave you bought for twenty pound? Nay, nay, don't scare me with that threatening eye: Unclench your fist and lay your anger by, While I retail the lessons which of late The porter taught me at Crispinus' gate.

You're no adulterer:—nor a thief am I, When I see plate and wisely pass it by: But take away the danger, in a trice Nature unbridled plunges into vice. What? you to be my master, who obey More persons, nay, more things than words can say, Whom not the praetor's wand, though four times waved, Could make less tyrant-ridden, less enslaved? Press home the matter further: how d'ye call The thrall who's servant to another thrall? An understrapper, say; the name will do; Or fellow-servant: such am I to you: For you, whose work I do, do others' work, And move as dolls move when their wires we jerk.

Who then is free? The sage, who keeps in check His baser self, who lives at his own beck, Whom neither poverty nor dungeon drear Nor death itself can ever put in fear, Who can reject life's goods, resist desire, Strong, firmly braced, and in himself entire, A hard smooth ball that gives you ne'er a grip, 'Gainst whom when Fortune runs, she's sure to trip. Such are the marks of freedom: look them through, And tell me, is there one belongs to you? Your mistress begs for money, plagues you sore, Ducks you with water, drives you from her door, Then calls you back: break the vile bondage; cry "I'm free, I'm free."—Alas, you cannot. Why? There's one within you, armed with spur and stick, Who turns and drives you, howsoe'er you kick.

On one of Pausias' masterworks you pore, As you were crazy: what does Davus more, Standing agape and straining knees and eyes At some rude sketch of fencers for a prize, Where, drawn in charcoal or red ochre, just As if alive, they parry and they thrust? Davus gets called a loiterer and a scamp, You (save the mark!) a critic of high stamp. If hot sweet-cakes should tempt me, I am naught: Do you say no to dainties as you ought? Am I worse trounced than you when I obey My stomach?

true, my back is made to pay: But when you let rich tit-bits pass your lip That cost no trifle, do you 'scape the whip? Indulging to excess, you loathe your meat, And the bloat trunk betrays the gouty feet.

The lad's a rogue who goes by night to chop A stolen flesh-brush at a fruiterer's shop: The man who sells a farm to buy good fare, Is there no slavery to the stomach there?

Then too you cannot spend an hour alone; No company's more hateful than your own; You dodge and give yourself the slip; you seek In bed or in your cups from care to sneak: In vain: the black dog follows you, and hangs Close on your flying skirts with hungry fangs.

H. Where's there a stone?

D. Who wants it?

H. Or a pike?

D. Mere raving this, or verse-making belike.

H. Unless you're off at once, you'll join the eight Who do their digging down at my estate.

SATIRE VIII.

UT NASIDIENI. HORACE. FUNDANIUS.

HORACE.

That rich Nasidienus—let me hear How yesterday you relished his good cheer: For when I tried to get you, I was told You'd been there since the day was six hours old.

F. O, 'twas the finest treat.

H. Inform me, pray, What first was served your hunger to allay.

F. First a Lucanian boar; 'twas captured wild (So the host told us) when the wind

was mild; Around it, turnips, lettuce, radishes, By way of whet, with brine and Coan lees. Then, when the board, a maple one, was cleared, A high-girt slave with purple cloth appeared And rubbed and wiped it clean: another boy Removed the scraps, and all that might annoy: "While dark Hydaspes, like an Attic maid Who carries Ceres' basket, grave and staid, Came in with Caecuban, and, close behind, Alcon with Chian, which had ne'er been brined. Then said our host: "If Alban you'd prefer, Maecenas, or Falern, we have them, Sir."

H. What sorry riches! but I fail to glean Who else was present at so rare a scene.

F. Myself at top, then Viscus, and below Was Varius: after us came Balatro, Vibidius also, present at the treat Unasked, as members of Maecenas' suite. Porcius and Nomentanus last, and he, Our host, who lay betwixt them, made the three: Porcius the undermost, a witty droll, Who makes you laugh by swallowing cheesecakes whole: While Nomentanus' specialty was this, To point things out that vulgar eyes might miss; For fish and fowl, in fact whate'er was placed Before us, had, we found, a novel taste, As one experiment sufficed to show, Made on a flounder and a turbot's roe. Then, turning the discourse to fruit, he treats Of the right time for gathering honey-sweets; Plucked when the moon's on wane, it seems they're red; For further details see the fountain-head. When thus to Balatro Vibidius: "Fie! Let's drink him out, or unrevenged we die; Here, bigger cups." Our entertainer's cheek Turned deadly white, as thus he heard him speak; For of the nuisances that can befall A man like him, your toper's worst of all, Because, you know, hot wines do double wrong; They dull the palate, and they edge the tongue. On go Vibidius and his mate, and tilt Whole flagons into cups Allifae-built: We follow suit: the host's two friends alone Forbore to treat the wine-flask as their own.

A lamprey now appears, a sprawling fish, With shrimps about it swimming in the dish. Whereon our host remarks: "This fish was caught While pregnant: after spawning it is naught. We make our sauce with oil, of the best strain Venafrum

yields, and caviare from Spain, Pour in Italian wine, five years in tun, While yet 'tis boiling; when the boiling's done, Chian suits best of all; white pepper add, And vinegar, from Lesbian wine turned bad. Rockets and elecampanes with this mess To boil, is my invention, I profess: To put sea-urchins in, unwashed as caught, 'Stead of made pickle, was Curtillus' thought."

Meantime the curtains o'er the table spread Came tumbling in a heap from overhead, Dragging withal black dust in whirlwinds, more Than Boreas raises on Campania's floor: We, when the shock is over, smile to see The danger less than we had feared 'twould be, And breathe again. Poor Rufus drooped his head And wept so sore, you'd think his son was dead: And things seemed hastening to a tragic end, But Nomentanus thus consoled his friend: "O Fortune, cruellest of heavenly powers, Why make such game of this poor life of ours?" Varius his napkin to his mouth applied, A laugh to stifle, or at least to hide: But Balatro, with his perpetual sneer, Cries, "Such is life, capricious and severe, And hence it comes that merit never gains A meed of praise proportioned to its pains. What gross injustice! just that I may get A handsome dinner, you must fume and fret, See that the bread's not burned, the sauce not spoiled, The servants in their places, curled and oiled. Then too the risks; the tapestry, as of late, May fall; a stumbling groom may break a plate. But gifts, concealed by sunshine, are displayed In hosts, as in commanders, by the shade." Rufus returned, "Heaven speed things to your mind! Sure ne'er was guest so friendly and so kind;" Then takes his slippers. Head to head draws near, And each man's lips are at his neighbour's ear.

H. 'Tis better than a play: but please report What further things occurred to make you sport.

F. Well, while Vibidius takes the slaves to task, Enquiring if the tumble broke the flask, And Balatro keeps starting some pretence For mirth, that we may laugh without offence, With altered brow returns our sumptuous friend, Resolved, what

chance has damaged, art shall mend. More servants follow, staggering 'neath the load Of a huge dish where limbs of crane were stowed, Salted and floured; a goose's liver, crammed To twice its bulk, so close the figs were jammed; And wings of hares dressed separate, better so Than eaten with the back, as gourmands know. Then blackbirds with their breasts all burnt to coal, And pigeons without rumps, not served up whole, Dainties, no doubt, but then there came a speech About the laws and properties of each; At last the feeder and the food we quit, Taking revenge by tasting ne'er a bit, As if Canidia's mouth had breathed an air Of viperous poison on the whole affair.

THE EPISTLES.

BOOK I.

I. To Maecenas.

PRIMA DICTE MIHI.

Theme of my earliest Muse in days long past, Theme that shall be hereafter of my last, Why summon back, Maecenas, to the list Your worn-out swordsman, pensioned and dismissed? My age, my mind, no longer are the same As when I first was 'prenticed to the game. Veianius fastens to Alcides' gate His arms, then nestles in his snug estate: Think you once more upon the arena's marge He'd care to stand and supplicate discharge? No: I've a Mentor who, not once nor twice, Breathes in my well-rinsed ear his sound advice, "Give rest in time to that old horse, for fear At last he founder 'mid the general jeer." So now I bid my idle songs adieu, And turn my thoughts to what is right and true; I search and search, and when I find, I lay The wisdom up against a rainy day.

But what's my sect? you ask me; I must be A member sure of some fraternity: Why no; I've taken no man's shilling; none Of all your fathers owns me for his son; Just where the weather drives me, I invite Myself to take up quarters for the night. Now,

all alert, I cope with life's rough main, A loyal follower in true virtue's train: Anon, to Aristippus' camp I flit, And say, the world's for me, not I for it.

Long as the night to him whose love is gone, Long as the day to slaves that must work on, Slow as the year to the impatient ward Who finds a mother's tutelage too hard, So long, so slow the moments that prevent The execution of my high intent, Of studying truths that rich and poor concern, Which young and old are lost unless they learn. Well, if I cannot be a student, yet There's good in spelling at the alphabet. Your eyes will never see like Lynceus'; still You rub them with an ointment when they're ill: You cannot hope for Glyco's stalwart frame, Yet you'd avoid the gout that makes you lame. Some point of moral progress each may gain, Though to aspire beyond it should prove vain.

Say, is your bosom fevered with the fire Of sordid avarice or unchecked desire? Know, there are spells will help you to allay The pain, and put good part of it away. You're bloated by ambition? take advice; Yon book will ease you if you read it thrice. Run through the list of faults; whate'er you be, Coward, pickthank, spitfire, drunkard, debauchee, Submit to culture patiently, you'll find Her charms can humanize the rudest mind.

To fly from vice is virtue: to be free From foolishness is wisdom's first degree. Think of some ill you feel a real disgrace, The loss of money or the loss of place; To keep yourself from these, how keen the strain! How dire the sweat of body and of brain! Through tropic heat, o'er rocks and seas you run To furthest India, poverty to shun, Yet scorn the sage who offers you release From vagrant wishes that disturb your peace. Take some provincial pugilist, who gains A paltry cross-way prize for all his pains; Place on his brow Olympia's chaplet, earned Without a struggle, would the gift be spurned?

Gold counts for more than silver, all men hold: Why doubt that virtue counts for more than gold? "Seek money first, good friends, and virtue next," Each Janus

lectures on the well-worn text; Lads learn it for their lessons; grey-haired men, Like schoolboys, drawl the sing-song o'er again. You lack, say, some six thousand of the rate The law has settled as a knight's estate; Though soul, tongue, morals, credit, all the while Are yours, you reckon with the rank and file. But mark those children at their play; they sing, "Deal fairly, youngster, and we'll crown you king." Be this your wall of brass, your coat of mail, A guileless heart, a cheek no crime turns pale.

"Which is the better teacher, tell me, pray, The law of Roscius, or the children's lay That crowns fair dealing, by Camillus trolled, And manly Curius, in the days of old; The voice that says, "Make money, money, man; Well, if so be,—if not, which way you can," That from a nearer distance you may gaze At honest Pupius' all too moving plays; Or that which bids you meet with dauntless brow, The frowns of Fortune, aye, and shows you how?

Suppose the world of Rome accosts me thus: "You walk where we walk; why not think with us, Be ours for better or for worse, pursue The things we love, the things we hate eschew?" I answer as sly Reynard answered, when The ailing lion asked him to his den: "I'm frightened at those footsteps: every track Leads to your home, but ne'er a one leads back." Nay, you're a perfect Hydra: who shall choose Which view to follow out of all your views? Some farm the taxes; some delight to see Their money grow by usury, like a tree; Some bait a widow-trap with fruits and cakes, And net old men, to stock their private lakes. But grant that folks have different hobbies; say, Does one man ride one hobby one whole day? "Baiae's the place!" cries Croesus: all is haste; The lake, the sea, soon feel their master's taste: A new whim prompts: 'tis "Pack your tools tonight! Off for Teanum with the dawn of light!" The nuptial bed is in his hall; he swears None but a single life is free from cares: Is he a bachelor? all human bliss, He vows, is centred in a wedded kiss.

How shall I hold this Proteus in my gripe? How fix him down in one enduring type? Turn to the poor: their megrims are as strange; Bath, cockloft, barber, eating-house,

they change; They hire a boat; your born aristocrat Is not more squeamish, tossing in his yacht.

If, when we meet, I'm cropped in awkward style By some uneven barber, then you smile; You smile, if, as it haps, my gown's askew, If my shirt's ragged while my tunic's new: How, if my mind's inconsequent, rejects What late it longed for, what it loathed affects, Shifts every moment, with itself at strife, And makes a chaos of an ordered life, Builds castles up, then pulls them to the ground, Keeps changing round for square and square for round? You smile not; 'tis an every-day affair; I need no doctor's, no, nor keeper's care: Yet you're my patron, and would blush to fail In taking notice of an ill-pared nail.

So, to sum up: the sage is half divine, Rich, free, great, handsome, king of kings, in fine; A miracle of health from toe to crown, Mind, heart, and head, save when his nose runs down.

II. TO LOLLIUS.

TROJANI BELLI SCRIPTOREM.

While you at Rome, dear Lollius, train your tongue, I at Praeneste read what Homer sung: What's good, what's bad, what helps, what hurts, he shows Better in verse than Crantor does in prose. The reason why I think so, if you'll spare A moment from your business, I'll declare.

The tale that tells how Greece and Asia strove In tedious battle all for Paris' love, Talks of the passions that excite the brain Of mad-cap kings and peoples not more sane. Antenor moves to cut away the cause Of all their sufferings: does he gain applause? No; none shall force young Paris to enjoy Life, power and riches in his own fair Troy. Nestor takes pains the quarrel to compose That makes Atrides and Achilles foes: In vain; their passions are too strong to quell; Both burn with wrath, and one with love as well. Let kings go mad and blunder as they may, The people in

the end are sure to pay. Strife, treachery, crime, lust, rage, 'tis error all, One mass of faults within, without the wall.

Turn to the second tale: Ulysses shows How worth and wisdom triumph over woes: He, having conquered Troy, with sharp shrewd ken Explores the manners and the towns of men; On the broad ocean, while he strives to win For him and his return to home and kin, He braves untold calamities, borne down By Fortune's waves, but never left to drown. The Sirens' song you know, and Circe's bowl: Had that sweet draught seduced his stupid soul As it seduced his fellows, he had been The senseless chattel of a wanton queen, Sunk to the level of his brute desire, An unclean dog, a swine that loves the mire. But what are we? a mere consuming class, Just fit for counting roughly in the mass, Like to the suitors, or Alcinous' clan, Who spent vast pains upon the husk of man, Slept on till mid-day, and enticed their care To rest by listening to a favourite air.

Robbers get up by night, men's throats to knive: Will you not wake to keep yourself alive? Well, if you will not stir when sound, at last, When dropsical, you'll be for moving fast: Unless you light your lamp ere dawn and read Some wholesome book that high resolves may breed, You'll find your sleep go from you, and will toss Upon your pillow, envious, lovesick, cross. You lose no time in taking out a fly, Or straw, it may be, that torments your eye; Why, when a thing devours your mind, adjourn Till this day year all thought of the concern? Come now, have courage to be wise: begin: You're halfway over when you once plunge in: He who puts off the time for mending, stands A clodpoll by the stream with folded hands, Waiting till all the water be gone past; But it runs on, and will, while time shall last. "Aye, but I must have money, and a bride To bear me children, rich and well allied: Those uncleared lands want tilling." Having got What will suffice you, seek no happier lot. Not house or grounds, not heaps of brass or gold Will rid the frame of fever's heat and cold. Or cleanse the heart of care. He needs good health, Body and mind, who would enjoy his wealth: Who fears or hankers, land and country-seat Soothe just as much as

tickling gouty feet, As pictures charm an eye inflamed and blear, As music gratifies an ulcered ear.

Unless the vessel whence we drink is pure, Whate'er is poured therein turns foul, be sure. Make light of pleasure: pleasure bought with pain Yields little profit, but much more of bane. The miser's always needy: draw a line Within whose bound your wishes to confine. His neighbour's fatness makes the envious lean: No tyrant e'er devised a pang so keen. Who governs not his wrath will wish undone The deeds he did "when the rash mood was on." Wrath is a short-lived madness: curb and bit Your mind: 'twill rule you, if you rule not it

While the colt's mouth is soft, the trainer's skill Moulds it to follow at the rider's will. Soon as the whelp can bay the deer's stuffed skin, He takes the woods, and swells the hunters' din. Now, while your system's plastic, ope each pore; Now seek wise friends, and drink in all their lore: The smell that's first imparted will adhere To seasoned jars through many an after year.

But if you lag behind or head me far, Don't think I mean to mend my pace, or mar; In my own jog-trot fashion on I go, Not vying with the swift, not waiting for the slow.

III. TO JULIUS FLORUS.

JULI FLORE.

Florus, I wish to learn, but don't know how, Where Claudius and his troops are quartered now. Say, is it Thrace and Haemus' winter snows, Or the famed strait 'twixt tower and tower that flows, Or Asia's rich exuberance of plain And upland slope, that holds you in its chain? Inform me too (for that, you will not doubt, Concerns me), what the ingenious staff's about: Who writes of Caesar's triumphs, and portrays The tale of peace and war for future days? How thrives friend Titius, who will soon become A household word in the saloons of Rome; Who dares to

drink of Pindar's well, and looks With scorn on our cheap tanks and vulgar brooks? Wastes he a thought on Horace? does he suit The strains of Thebes or Latium's virgin lute, By favour of the Muse, or grandly rage And roll big thunder on the tragic stage? What is my Celsus doing? oft, in truth, I've warned him, and he needs it yet, good youth, To trust himself, nor touch the classic stores That Palatine Apollo keeps indoors, Lest when some day the feathered tribe resumes (You know the tale) the appropriated plumes, Folks laugh to see him act the jackdaw's part, Denuded of the dress that looked so smart.

And you, what aims are yours? what thymy ground Allures the bee to hover round and round? Not small your wit, nor rugged and unkempt; 'Twill answer bravely to a bold attempt: Whether you train for pleading, or essay To practise law, or frame some graceful lay, The ivy-wreath awaits you. Could you bear To leave quack nostrums, that but palliate care, Then might you lean on heavenly wisdom's hand And use her guidance to a loftier land. Be this our task, whate'er our station, who To country and to self would fain be true.

This too concerns me: does Munatius hold In Florus' heart the place he held of old, Or is that ugly breach in your good will We hoped had closed unhealed and gaping still? Well, be it youth or ignorance of life That sets your hot ungoverned bloods at strife, Where'er you bide, 'twere shame to break the ties Which made you once sworn brethren and allies: So, when your safe return shall come to pass, I've got a votive heifer out at grass.

IV. TO ALBIUS TIBULLUS

ALBI, NOSTRORUM.

Albius, kind critic of my satires, say, What do you down at Pedum far away? Are you composing what will dim the shine Of Cassius' works, so delicately fine, Or sauntering, calm and healthful, through the wood, Bent on such thoughts as suit the

wise and good? No brainless trunk is yours: a form to please, Wealth, wit to use it, Heaven vouchsafes you these. What could fond nurse wish more for her sweet pet Than friends, good looks, and health without a let, A shrewd clear head, a tongue to speak his mind, A seemly household, and a purse well-lined?

Let hopes and sorrows, fears and angers be, And think each day that dawns the last you'll see; For so the hour that greets you unforeseen Will bring with it enjoyment twice as keen.

Ask you of me? you'll laugh to find me grown A hog of Epicurus, full twelve stone.

V. TO TORQUATUS.

SI POTES ARCHIACIS.

If you can lie, Torquatus, when you take Your meal, upon a couch of Archias' make, And sup off potherbs, gathered as they come, You'll join me, please, by sunset at my home. My wine, not far from Sinuessa grown, Is but six years in bottle, I must own: If you've a better vintage, send it here, Or take your cue from him who finds the cheer. My hearth is swept, my household looks its best, And all my furniture expects a guest. Forego your dreams of riches and applause, Forget e'en Moschus' memorable cause; To-morrow's Caesar's birthday, which we keep By taking, to begin with, extra sleep; So, if with pleasant converse we prolong This summer night, we scarcely shall do wrong.

Why should the Gods have put me at my ease, If I mayn't use my fortune as I please? The man who stints and pinches for his heir Is next-door neighbour to a fool, I'll swear. Here, give me flowers to strew, my goblet fill, And let men call me mad-cap if they will. O, drink is mighty! secrets it unlocks, Turns hope to fact, sets cowards on to box, Takes burdens from the careworn, finds out parts In stupid folks, and teaches unknown arts. What tongue hangs fire when quickened by the bowl? What wretch so poor but wine expands his soul?

Meanwhile, I'm bound in duty, nothing both, To see that nought in coverlet or cloth May give you cause to sniff, that dish and cup May serve you as a mirror while you sup; To have my guests well-sorted, and take care That none is present who'll tell tales elsewhere. You'll find friend Butra and Septicius here, Ditto Sabinus, failing better cheer: And each might bring a friend or two as well, But then, you know, close packing's apt to smell. Come, name your number, and elude the guard Your client keeps by slipping through the yard.

VI. TO NUMICIUS.

NIL ADMIRARI.

Not to admire, Numicius, is the best, The only way, to make and keep men blest. The sun, the stars, the seasons of the year That come and go, some gaze at without fear: What think you of the gifts of earth and sea, The untold wealth of Ind or Araby, Or, to come nearer home, our games and shows, The plaudits and the honours Rome bestows? How should we view them? ought they to convulse The well-strung frame and agitate the pulse? Who fears the contrary, or who desires The things themselves, in either case admires; Each way there's flutter; something unforeseen Disturbs the mind that else had been serene. Joy, grief, desire or fear, whate'er the name The passion bears, its influence is the same; Where things exceed your hope or fall below, You stare, look blank, grow numb from top to toe. E'en virtue's self, if followed to excess, Turns right to wrong, good sense to foolishness.

Go now, my friend, drink in with all your eyes Bronze, silver, marble, gems, and Tyrian dyes, Feel pride when speaking in the sight of Rome, Go early out to 'Change and late come home, For fear your income drop beneath the rate That comes to Mutus from his wife's estate, And (shame and scandal!), though his line is new, You give the pas to him, not he to you. Whate'er is buried mounts at last to light, While things get hid in turn that once looked bright. So when Agrippa's mall and Appius'

way Have watched your well-known figure day by day, At length the summons comes, and you must go To Numa and to Ancus down below.

Your side's in pain; a doctor hits the blot: You wish to live aright (and who does not?); If virtue holds the secret, don't defer; Be off with pleasure, and be on with her. But no; you think all morals sophists' tricks, Bring virtue down to words, a grove to sticks; Then hey for wealth! quick, quick, forestall the trade With Phrygia and the East, your fortune's made. One thousand talents here—one thousand there— A third—a fourth, to make the thing four-square. A dowried wife, friends, beauty, birth, fair fame, These are the gifts of money, heavenly dame: Be but a moneyed man, persuasion tips Your tongue, and Venus settles on your lips. The Cappadocian king has slaves enow, But gold he lacks: so be it not with you. Lucullus was requested once, they say, A hundred scarves to furnish for the play: "A hundred!" he replied, "'tis monstrous; still I'll look; and send you what I have, I will." Ere long he writes: "Five thousand scarves I find; Take part of them, or all if you're inclined." That's a poor house where there's not much to spare Which masters never miss and servants wear. So, if 'tis wealth that makes and keeps us blest, Be first to start and last to drop the quest.

If power and mob-applause be man's chief aims, Let's hire a slave to tell us people's names, To jog us on the side, and make us reach, At risk of tumbling down, a hand to each: "This rules the Fabian, that the Veline clan; Just as he likes, he seats or ousts his man:" Observe their ages, have your greeting pat, And duly "brother" this, and "father" that.

Say that the art to live's the art to sup, Go fishing, hunting, soon as sunlight's up, As did Gargilius, who at break of day Swept with his nets and spears the crowded way, Then, while all Rome looked on in wonder, brought Home on a single mule a boar he'd bought. Thence pass on to the bath-room, gorged and crude, Our stomachs stretched with undigested food, Lost to all self-respect, all sense of shame,

Disfranchised freemen, Romans but in name, Like to Ulysses' crew, that worthless band, Who cared for pleasure more than fatherland.

If, as Mimnermus tells you, life is flat With nought to love, devote yourself to that.

Farewell: if you can mend these precepts, do: If not, what serves for me may serve for you.

VII. TO MAECENAS.

QUINQUE DIES TIBI POLLICITUS.

Five days I told you at my farm I'd stay, And lo! the whole of August I'm away. Well, but, Maecenas, yon would have me live, And, were I sick, my absence you'd forgive; So let me crave indulgence for the fear Of falling ill at this bad time of year, When, thanks to early figs and sultry heat, The undertaker figures with his suite, When fathers all and fond mammas grow pale At what may happen to their young heirs male, And courts and levees, town-bred mortals' ills, Bring fevers on, and break the seals of wills. When winter strews the Alban fields with snow, Down to the sea your chilly bard will go, There keep the house and study at his ease, All huddled up together, nose and knees: With the first swallow, if you'll have him then, He'll come, dear friend, and visit you again.

Not like the coarse Calabrian boor, who pressed His store of pears upon a sated guest, Have you bestowed your favours. "Eat them, pray." "I've done." "Then carry all you please away." "I thank you, no." "Your boys won't like you less For taking home a sack of them, I guess." "I could not thank you more if I took all." "Ah well, if you won't eat them, the pigs shall." 'Tis silly prodigality, to throw Those gifts broadcast whose value you don't know: Such tillage yields ingratitude, and will, While human nature is the soil you till. A wise good man has ears for merit's claim, Yet does not reckon brass and gold the same. I also will "assume desert," and prove I value him whose bounty speaks his love.

If you would keep me always, give me back My sturdy sides, my clustering locks of black, My pleasant voice and laugh, the tears I shed That night when Cinara from the table fled. A poor pinched field-mouse chanced to make its way Through a small rent in a wheat-sack one day, And, having gorged and stuffed, essayed in vain To squeeze its body through the hole again: "Ah!" cried a weasel, "wait till you get thin; Then, if you will, creep out as you crept in." Well, if to me the story folks apply, I give up all I've got without a sigh: Not mine to cram down guinea-fowls, and then Heap praises on the sleep of labouring men; Give me a country life and leave me free, I would not choose the wealth of Araby.

I've called you Father, praised your royal grace Behind your back as well as to your face; You've owned I have a conscience: try me now If I can quit your gifts with cheerful brow. That was a prudent answer which, we're told, The son of wise Ulysses made of old: "Our Ithaca is scarce the place for steeds; It has no level plains, no grassy meads: Atrides, if you'll let me, I'll decline A gift that better meets your wants than mine." Small things become small folks: imperial Rome Is all too large, too bustling for a home; The empty heights of Tibur, or the bay Of soft Tarentum, more are in my way.

Philip, the famous counsel, years ago, Was moving home at two, sedate and slow, Old, and fatigued with pleading at the bar, And grumbling that he lived away so far, When suddenly he chanced his eye to drop On a spruce personage in a barber's shop, Who in the shopman's absence lounged at ease, Paring his nails as calmly as you please. "Demetrius"—so was called the slave he kept To do his errands, a well-trained adept— "Find out about that man for me; enquire His name and rank, his patron or his sire." He soon brings word that Mena is the name, An auction-crier, poor, but without blame, One who can work or idle, get or spend, Who loves his home and likes to see a friend, Enjoys the circus, and when work's got through, Hies to the field, and does as others do. "I'll hear the details from himself: go say I'll thank him if he'll sup with me to-day." Mena can scarce believe it; posed and mum He

ponders; then, with thanks, declines to come. "What? does he dare to say me nay?" "Just so; Be it reserve or disrespect, 'tis no." Philip next morn finds Mena at a sale "Where odds and ends are going by retail, And greets him first. He, stammeringly profuse, Alleges ties of business in excuse For not by day-break knocking at his door, And last, for not observing him before. "Well, bygones shall be bygones, if so be You'll come this afternoon and sup with me." "I'm at your service." "Then 'twixt four and five You'll come: now go, and do your best to thrive." He's there in time; what comes into his head He chatters, right or wrong; then off to bed. So, when he'd learnt to nibble at the bait, At levee early and at supper late, One holiday he's bidden to come down With Philip to his villa out of town. Astride on horseback, both, he vows, are rare, The Sabine country and the Sabine air. Philip looks on and chuckles, his one aim To get a laugh by keeping up the game, Lends him seven hundred, gives him out of hand Seven more, and leads him on to buy some land. 'Tis bought: to make a lengthy tale concise, The man becomes a clown who once was nice, Talks all of elms and vineyards, ploughs and soil, And ages fast with struggling and sheer toil; Till, when his sheep are stolen, his bullock drops, His goats die off, a blight destroys his crops, One night he takes a waggon-horse, and sore With all his losses, rides to Philip's door. Philip perceives him squalid and unshorn, And cries, "Why, Mena! surely you look worn; You work too hard." "Nay, call me wretch," says he, "Good patron; 'tis the only name for me. So now, by all that's binding among men, I beg you, give me my old life again."

He that finds out he's changed his lot for worse, Let him betimes the untoward choice reverse: For still, when all is said, the rule stands fast, That each man's shoe be made on his own last.

VIII. TO CELSUS ALBINOVANUS.

CELSO GAUDERE.

Health to friend Celsus—so, good Muse, report— Who holds the pen in Nero's little court! If asked about me, say, I plan and plan, Yet live a useless and unhappy man: Sunstrokes have spared my olives, hail my vines; No herd of mine in far-off pasture pines: Yet ne'ertheless I suffer; hourly teased Less by a body than a mind diseased, No ear have I to hear, no heart to heed The words of wisdom that might serve my need, Frown on my doctors, with the friends am wroth Who fain would rouse me from my fatal sloth, Seek what has harmed me, shun what looks of use, Town-bird at Tibur, and at Rome recluse. Then ask him how his health is, how he fares, How prospers with the prince and his confreres. If he says Well, first tell him you rejoice, Then add one little hint (but drop your voice), "As Celsus bears his fortune well or ill, So bear with Celsus his acquaintance will."

IX. TO TIBERIUS CLAUDIUS NERO.

SEPTIMIUS, CLAUDI.

Septimius, Nero, seems to comprehend, As none else does, how you esteem your friend: For when he begs, nay, forces me, good man, To move you in his favour, if I can, As not unfit the heart and home to share Of Claudius, who selects his staff with care, Bidding me act as though I filled the place Of one you honour with your special grace, He sees and knows what I may safely try By way of influence better e'en than I. Believe me, many were the pleas I used In the vain hope to get myself excused: But then there came a natural fear, you know, Lest I should seem to rate my powers too low, To make a snug peculium of my own, And keep my influence for myself alone: So, fearing to incur more serious blame, I bronze my front, step down, and play my game. If then you praise the sacrifice I make In waiving modesty for friendship's sake, Admit him to your circle, when you've read These lines, and trust me for his heart and head.

X. TO ARISTIUS FUSCUS.

URBIS AMATOREM.

To Fuscus, lover of the city, I Who love the country, wish prosperity: In this one thing unlike, in all beside We might be twins, so nearly we're allied; Sharing each other's hates, each other's loves, We bill and coo, like two familiar doves. You keep the nest: I love the rural scene, Fresh runnels, moss-grown rocks, and woodland green. What would you more? once let me leave the things You praise so much, my life is like a king's: Like the priest's runaway, I cannot eat Your cakes, but pine for bread of wholesome wheat.

Now say that it behoves us to adjust Our lives to nature (wisdom says we must): You want a site for building: can you find A place that's like the country to your mind? Where have you milder winters? where are airs That breathe more grateful when the Dogstar glares, Or when the Lion feels in every vein The sun's sharp thrill, and maddens with the pain? Is there a spot where care contrives to keep At further distance from the couch of sleep? Is springing grass less sweet to nose or eyes Than Libyan marble's tesselated dyes? Does purer water strain your pipes of lead Than that which ripples down the brooklet's bed? Why, 'mid your Parian columns trees you train, And praise the house that fronts a wide domain. Drive Nature forth by force, she'll turn and rout The false refinements that would keep her out.

The luckless wight who can't tell side by side A Tyrian fleece from one Aquinum-dyed, Is not more surely, keenly, made to smart Than he who knows not truth and lies apart. Take too much pleasure in good things, you'll feel The shock of adverse fortune makes you reel. Regard a thing with wonder, with a wrench You'll give it up when bidden to retrench. Keep clear of courts: a homely life transcends The vaunted bliss of monarchs and their friends.

The stag was wont to quarrel with the steed, Nor let him graze in common on the mead: The steed, who got the worst in each attack, Asked help from man, and took

him on his back: But when his foe was quelled, he ne'er got rid Of his new friend, still bridled and bestrid. So he who, fearing penury, loses hold Of independence, better far than gold, Will toil, a hopeless drudge, till life is spent, Because he'll never, never learn content. Means should, like shoes, be neither large nor small; Too wide, they trip us up, too strait, they gall.

Then live contented, Fuscus, nor be slow To give a friendly rap to one you know, Whene'er you find me struggling to increase My neat sufficiency, and ne'er at peace. Gold will be slave or master: 'tis more fit That it be led by us than we by it.

From tumble-down Vacuna's fane I write, Wanting but you to make me happy quite.

XI. TO BULLATIUS.

QUID TIBI VISA CHIOS?

How like you Chios, good Bullatius? what Think you of Lesbos, that world-famous spot? What of the town of Samos, trim and neat, And what of Sardis, Croesus' royal seat? Of Smyrna what and Colophon? are they Greater or less than travellers' stories say? Do all look poor beside our scenes at home, The field of Mars, the river of old Rome? Say, is your fancy fixed upon some town Which formed a gem in Attalus's crown? Or would you turn to Lebedus for ease In mere disgust at weary roads and seas? You know what Lebedus is like; so bare, With Gabii or Fidenae 'twould compare; Yet there, methinks, I would accept my lot, My friends forgetting, by my friends forgot, Stand on the cliff at distance, and survey The stormy sea-god's wild Titanic play. Yet he that comes from Capua, dashing in To Rome, all splashed and wetted to the skin, Though in a tavern glad one night to bide, Would not be pleased to live there till he died: If he gets cold, he lets his fancy rove In quest of bliss beyond a bath or stove: And you, though tossed just now by a stiff breeze, Don't therefore sell your vessel beyond seas.

But what are Rhodes and Lesbos, and the rest, E'en let a traveller rate them at their

best? No more the wants of healthy minds they meet Than does a jersey in a driving sleet, A cloak in summer, Tiber through the snow, A chafing-dish in August's midday glow. So, while health lasts, and Fortune keeps her smiles, We'll pay our devoir to your Grecian isles, Praise them on this condition—that we stay In our own land, a thousand miles away.

Seize then each happy hour the gods dispense, Nor fix enjoyment for a twelvemonth hence. So may you testify with truth, where'er You're quartered, 'tis a pleasure to be there: For if the cure of mental ills is due To sense and wisdom, not a fine sea-view, We come to this; when o'er the world we range 'Tis but our climate, not our mind we change. What active inactivity is this, To go in ships and cars to search for bliss! No; what you seek, at Ulubrae you'll find, If to the quest you bring a balanced mind.

XII. TO Iccitus.

FRUCTIBUS AGRIPPAE.

If, worthy Iccius, properly you use What you collect, Agrippa's revenues, You're well supplied: and Jove himself could tell No way to make you better off than well. A truce to murmuring: with another's store To use at pleasure, who shall call you poor? Sides, stomach, feet, if these are all in health, What more could man procure with princely wealth?

If, with a well-spread table, when you dine, To plain green food your eating you confine, Though some fine day a rich Pactolian rill Should flood your house, you'd munch your pot-herbs still, From habit or conviction, which o'er-ride The power of gold, and league on virtue's side. No need to marvel at the stories told Of simple-sage Democritus of old, How, while his soul was soaring in the sky, The sheep got in and nibbled down his rye, When, spite of lucre's strong contagion, yet On lofty problems all your thoughts are set,— What checks the sea, what heats and cools the year, If law or impulse guides the starry sphere, "What power presides o'er lunar wanderings, What means the jarring harmony of things, Which after all is

wise, and which the fool, Empedooles or the Stertinian school.

But whether you're for taking fishes' life, Or against leeks and onions whet your knife, Let Grosphus be your friend, and should he plead For aught he wants, anticipate his need: He'll never outstep reason; and you know, When good men lack, the price of friends is low.

But what of Rome? Agrippa has increased Her power in Spain, Tiberius in the East: Phraates, humbly bending on his knee, Submits himself to Csesar's sovereignty: While golden Plenty from her teeming horn Pours down on Italy abundant corn.

XIII. TO VINIUS ASELLA.

UT PROFICISCENTEM.

As I have told you oft, deliver these, My sealed-up volumes, to Augustus, please, Friend Vinius, if he's well and in good trim, And (one proviso more) if asked by him: Beware of over-zeal, nor discommend My works, by playing the impetuous friend. Suppose my budget, ere you get to town, Should gall you, better straightway throw it down Than, when you've reached the palace, fling the pack With animal impatience from your back, And so be thought in nature as in name Tour father's colt, and made some joker's game. Tour powers of tough endurance will avail With brooks and ponds to ford and hills to scale: But when you've quelled the perils of the road, Take special care how you adjust your load: Don't tuck beneath your arm these precious gifts, As drunken Pyrrhia does the wool she lifts, As rustics do a lamb, as humble wights Their cap and slippers when asked out at nights. Don't tell the world you've toiled and sweated hard In carrying lays which Caesar may regard: Push on, nor stop for questions. Now good bye; But pray don't trip, and smash the poetry.

XIV. TO HIS BAILIFF.

VILLICE SILVARUM.

Good bailiff of my farm, that snug domain Which makes its master feel himself again, Which, though you sniff at it, could once support Five hearths, and send five statesmen to the court, Let's have a match in husbandry; we'll try Which can do weeding better, you or I, And see if Horace more repays the hand That clears him of his thistles, or his land. Though here I'm kept administering relief To my poor Lamia's broken-hearted grief For his lost brother, ne'ertheless my thought Flies to my woods, and counts the distance nought. You praise the townsman's, I the rustic's state: Admiring others' lots, our own we hate: Each blames the place he lives in: but the mind Is most in fault, which ne'er leaves self behind. A town-house drudge, for farms you used to sigh; Now towns and shows and baths are all your cry: But I'm consistent with myself: you know I grumble, when to Rome I'm forced to go. Truth is, our standards differ: what your taste Condemns, forsooth, as so much savage waste, The man who thinks with Horace thinks divine, And hates the things which you believe so fine. I know your secret: 'tis the cook-shop breeds That lively sense of what the country needs: You grieve because this little nook of mine Would bear Arabian spice as soon as wine; Because no tavern happens to be nigh Where you can go and tipple on the sly, No saucy flute-girl, at whose jigging sound You bring your feet down lumbering to the ground. And yet, methinks, you've plenty on your hands In breaking up these long unharrowed lands; The ox, unyoked and resting from the plough, Wants fodder, stripped from elm or poplar bough; You've work too at the river, when there's rain, As, but for a strong bank,'twould flood the plain. Now have a little patience, you shall see What makes the gulf between yourself and me: I, who once wore gay clothes and well-dressed hair, I, who, though poor, could please a greedy fair, I, who could sit from mid-day o'er Falern, Now like short meals and slumbers by the burn: No shame I deem it to have had my sport; The shame had been in frolics not cut short. There at my farm I fear no evil eye; No pickthank blights my crops as he goes by; My honest neighbours laugh to see me wield A

heavy rake, or dibble my own field. Were wishes wings, you'd join my slaves in town, And share the rations that they swallow down; While that sharp footboy envies you the use Of what my garden, flocks, and woods produce. The horse would plough, the ox would draw the car. No; do the work you know, and tarry where you are.

XV. TO C. NUMONIUS VALA.

QUAE SIT HIEMS VELIAE.

If Velia and Salernum tell me, pray, The climate, and the natives, and the way: For Baiae now is lost on me, and I, Once its staunch friend, am turned its enemy, Through Musa's fault, who makes me undergo His cold-bath treatment, spite of frost and snow. Good sooth, the town is filled with spleen, to see Its myrtle-groves attract no company; To find its sulphur-wells, which forced out pain From joint and sinew, treated with disdain By tender chests and heads, now grown so bold, They brave cold water in the depth of cold, And, finding down at Clusium what they want, Or Gabii, say, make that their winter haunt. Yes, I must change my quarters; my good horse Must pass the inns where once he stopped of course. "How now, you creature? I'm not bound to-day For Cumae or for Baiae," I shall say, Pulling the left rein angrily, because A horse when bridled listens through his jaws. Which place is best supplied with corn, d'ye think? Have they rain-water or fresh springs to drink? Their wines I care not for: when at my farm I can drink any sort without much harm; But at the sea I need a generous kind To warm my veins and pass into my mind, Enrich me with new hopes, choice words supply, And make me comely in a lady's eye. Which tract is best for game, on which sea-coast Urchins and other fish abound the most, That so, when I return, my friends may see A sleek Phaeacian come to life in me: These things you needs must tell me, Vala dear, And I no less must act on what I hear.

When Maenius, after nobly gobbling down His fortune, took to living on the town, A social beast of prey, with no fixed home, He ranged and ravened o'er the whole of Rome; His maw unfilled, he'd turn on friend and foe; None was too high for worrying, none too low; The scourge and murrain of each butcher's shop, Whate'er he got, he stuffed into his crop. So, when he'd failed in getting e'er a bit From those who liked or feared his wicked wit, Then down a throat of three-bear power he'd cram Plate after plate of offal, tripe or lamb, And swear, as Bestius might, your gourmand knaves Should have their stomachs branded like a slave's. But give the brute a piece of daintier prey, When all was done, he'd smack his lips and say, "In faith I cannot wonder, when I hear Of folks who waste a fortune on good cheer, For there's no treat in nature more divine Than a fat thrush or a big paunch of swine." I'm just his double: when my purse is lean I hug myself, and praise the golden mean, Stout when not tempted; but suppose some day A special titbit comes into my way, I vow man's happiness is ne'er complete Till based on a substantial country seat.

XVI. TO QUINCTIUS.

NE PERCONTERIS.

About my farm, dear Quinctius; you would know What sort of produce for its lord 'twill grow; Plough-land is it, or meadow-land, or soil For apples, vine-clad elms, or olive oil? So (but you'll think me garrulous) I'll write A full description of its form and site. In long continuous line the mountains run, Cleft by a valley which twice feels the sun, Once on the right when first he lifts his beams, Once on the left, when he descends in steams. You'd praise the climate: well, and what d'ye say To sloes and cornels hanging from the spray? What to the oak and ilex, that afford Fruit to the cattle, shelter to their lord? What, but that rich Tarentum must have been Transplanted nearer Rome with all its green? Then there's a fountain of sufficient size To name the river that takes thence its rise, Not Thracian Hebrus colder or more

pure, Of power the head's and stomach's ills to cure. This sweet retirement—nay, 'tis more than sweet— Ensures my health e'en in September's heat.

And how fare you? if you deserve in truth The name men give you, you're a happy youth: Rome's thousand tongues, agreed at least in this, Ascribe to you a plenitude of bliss. Yet, when you judge of self, I fear you're prone To take another's word before your own, To think of happiness as 'twere a prize That men may win though neither good nor wise: Just so the glutton whom the world thinks well Keeps dark his fever till the dinner-bell; Then, as he's eating, with his hands well greased, Shivering comes on, and proves the fool diseased. O, 'tis a false, false shame that would conceal From doctors' eyes the sores it cannot heal!

Suppose a man should trumpet your success By land and sea, and make you this address: "May Jove, who watches with the same good-will O'er you and Rome, preserve the secret still, Whether the heart within you beats more true To Rome and to her sons, or theirs to you!" Howe'er your ears might flatter you, you'd say The praise was Caesar's, and had gone astray. Yet should the town pronounce you wise and good, You'd take it to yourself, you know you would. "Take it? of course I take it," you reply; "You love the praise yourself, then why not I?" Aye, but the town, that gives you praise to-day, Next week can snatch it, if it please, away, As in elections it can mend mistakes, And whom it makes one year, the next unmakes. "Lay down the fasces," it exclaims; "they're mine:" I lay them down, and sullenly resign. Well now, if "Thief" and "Profligate" they roar, Or lay my father's murder at my door, Am I to let their lying scandals bite And change my honest cheeks from red to white? Trust me, false praise has charms, false blame has pains But for vain hearts, long ears, and addled brains.

Whom call we good? The man who keeps intact Each law, each right, each statute and each act, Whose arbitration terminates dispute, Whose word's a bond, whose witness ends a suit. Yet his whole house and all the neighbours know He's bad at

heart, despite his decent show. "I," says a slave, "ne'er ran away nor stole:" Well, what of that? say I: your skin is whole. "I've shed no blood." You shall not feed the orow. "I'm good and true." We Sabine folks say No: The wolf avoids the pit, the hawk the snare, And hidden hooks teach fishes to beware. 'Tis love of right that keeps the good from wrong; You do no harm because you fear the thong; Could you be sure that no one would detect, E'en sacrilege might tempt you, I suspect. Steal but one bean, although the loss be small, The crime's as great as if you stole them all.

See your good man, who oft as he appears In court commands all judgments and all ears; Observe him now, when to the gods he pays His ox or swine, and listen what he says: "Great Janus, Phoebus"—this he speaks aloud; The rest is muttered all and unavowed— "Divine Laverna, grant me safe disguise; Let me seem just and upright in men's eyes; Shed night upon my crimes, a glamour o'er my lies."

Say, what's a miser but a slave complete When he'd pick up a penny in the street? Fearing's a part of coveting, and he Who lives in fear is no freeman for me. The wretch whose thoughts by gain are all engrossed Has flung away his sword, betrayed his post. Don't kill your captive: keep him: he will sell; Some things there are the creature will do well: He'll plough and feed the cattle, cross the deep And traffic, carry corn, make produce cheap.

The wise and good, like Bacchus in the play, When Fortune threats, will have the nerve to say: "Great king of Thebes, what pains can you devise The man who will not serve you to chastise?" "I'll take your goods." "My flocks, my land, to wit, My plate, my couches: do, if you think fit." "I'll keep you chained and guarded in close thrall." "A god will come to free me when I call." Yes, he will die; 'tis that the bard intends; For when Death comes, the power of Fortune ends.

XVII. TO SCAEVA.

QUAMVIS, SCAEVA.

Though instinct tells you, Scaeva, how to act, And makes you live among the great with tact, Yet hear a fellow-student; 'tis as though The blind should point you out the way to go, But still give heed, and see if I produce Aught that hereafter you may find of use.

If rest is what you like, and sleep till eight, If dust and rumbling wheels are what you hate, If tavern-life disgusts you, then repair To Ferentinum, and turn hermit there; For wealth has no monopoly of bliss, And life unnoticed is not lived amiss: But if you'd help your friends, and like a treat, Then drop dry bread, and take to juicy meat. "If Aristippus could but dine off greens, He'd cease to cultivate his kings and queens." "If that rude snarler knew but queens and kings, He'd find his greens unpalatable things." Thus far the rival sages. Tell me true, Whose words you think the wiser of the two, Or hear (to listen is a junior's place) Why Aristippus has the better case; For he, the story goes, with this remark Once stopped the Cynic's aggravating bark: "Buffoon I may be, but I ply my trade For solid value; you ply yours unpaid. I pay my daily duty to the great, That I may ride a horse and dine in state; You, though you talk of independence, yet, Each time you beg for scraps, contract a debt." All lives sat well on Aristippus; though He liked the high, he yet could grace the low; But the dogged sage whose blanket folds in two Would be less apt in changing old for new. Take from the one his robe of costly red, He'll not refuse to dress, or keep his bed; Clothed as you please, he'll walk the crowded street, And, though not fine, will manage to look neat. Put purple on the other, not the touch Of toad or asp would startle him so much; Give back his blanket, or he'll die of chill: Yes, give it back; he's too absurd to kill.

To win great fights, to lead before men's eyes A captive foe, is half way to the skies: Just so, to gain by honourable ways A great man's favour is no vulgar praise: You know the proverb, "Corinth town is fair, But 'tis not every man that can get there." One man sits still, not hoping to succeed; One makes the journey; he's a man indeed! 'Tis that we look for; not to shift a weight Which little frames and little souls think

great, But stoop and bear it. Virtue's a mere name, Or 'tis high venture that achieves high aim.

Those who have tact their poverty to mask Before their chief get more than those who ask; It makes, you see, a difference, if you take As modest people do, or snatch your cake; Yet that's the point from which our question starts, By what way best to get at patrons' hearts. "My mother's poor, my sister's dower is due, My farm won't sell or yield us corn enow," What is all this but just the beggar's cry, "I'm starving; give me food for charity"? "Ah!" whines another in a minor key, "The loaf's in out; pray spare a slice for me." But if in peace the raven would have fed, He'd have had less of clawing, more of bread.

A poor companion whom his friend takes down To fair Surrentum or Brundisium's town, If he makes much of cold, bad roads, and rain, Or moans o'er cash-box forced and money ta'en, Reminds us of a girl, some artful thing, Who cries for a lost bracelet or a ring, With this result, that when she comes to grieve For real misfortunes, no one will believe. So, hoaxed by one impostor, in the street A man won't set a cripple on his feet, Though he invoke Osiris, and appeal With streaming tears to hearts that will not feel, "Lift up a poor lame man! I tell no lie;" "Treat foreigners to that," the neighbours cry.

XVIII. TO LOLLIUS.

SI BENE TE NOVI.

You'd blush, good Lollius, if I judge you right, To mix the parts of friend and parasite. 'Twixt parasite and friend a gulf is placed, Wide as between the wanton and the chaste; Yet think not flattery friendship's only curse: A different vice there is, perhaps a worse, A brutal boorishness, which fain would win Regard by unbrushed teeth and close-shorn skin, Yet all the while is anxious to be thought Pure independence, acting as it ought. Between these faults 'tis Virtue's place to stand, At

distance from the extreme on either hand. The flatterer by profession, whom you see At every feast among the lowest three, Hangs on his patron's looks, takes up each word Which, dropped by chance, might else expire unheard, Like schoolboys echoing what their masters say In sing-song drawl, or Gnatho in the play: While your blunt fellow battles for a straw, As though he'd knock you down or take the law: "How now, good sir? you mean my word to doubt? When I once think a thing, I mayn't speak out? Though living on your terms were living twice, Instead of once, 'twere dear at such a price." And what's the question that brings on these fits?—Does Dolichos or Castor make more hits? Or, starting for Brundisium, will it pay To take the Appian or Minucian way?

Him that gives in to dice or lewd excess, Who apes rich folks in equipage and dress, Who meanly covets to increase his store, And shrinks as meanly from the name of poor, That man his patron, though on all those heads Perhaps a worse offender, hates and dreads, Or says to him what tender parents say, Who'd have their children better men than they: "Don't vie with me," he says, and he says true; "My wealth will bear the silly things I do; Yours is a slender pittance at the best; A wise man cuts his coat—you know the rest." Eutrapelus, whene'er a grudge he owed To any, gave him garments a la mode; Because, said he, the wretch will feel inspired With new conceptions when he's new attired; He'll sleep through half the day, let business go For pleasure, teach a usurer's cash to grow; At last he'll turn a fencer, or will trudge Beside a cart, a market-gardener's drudge.

Avoid all prying; what you're told, keep back, Though wine or anger put you on the rack; Nor puff your own, nor slight your friend's pursuits, Nor court the Muses when he'd chase the brutes. 'Twas thus the Theban brethren jarred, until The harp that vexed the stern one became still. Amphion humoured his stern brother: well, Your friend speaks gently; do not you rebel: No; when he gives the summons, and prepares To take the field with hounds, and darts, and snares, Leave your dull Muse to sulkiness and sloth, That both may feast on dainties earned by both. 'Tis a true

Roman pastime, and your frame Will gain thereby, no less than your good name: Besides, you're strong; in running you can match The dogs, and kill the fiercest boar you catch: Who plays like you? you have but to appear In Mars's field to raise a general cheer: Remember too, you served a hard campaign, When scarce past boyhood, in the wars of Spain, Beneath his lead who brings our standards home, And makes each nook of earth a prize for Rome. Just one thing more, lest still you should refuse And show caprice that nothing can excuse: Safe as you are from doing aught unmeet, You sometimes trifle at your father's seat; The Actian fight in miniature you play, With boats for ships, your lake for Hadria's bay, Your brother for your foe, your slaves for crews, And so you battle till you win or lose. Let your friend see you share his taste, he'll vow He never knew what sport was like till now.

Well, to proceed; beware, if there is room For warning, what you mention, and to whom; Avoid a ceaseless questioner; he burns To tell the next he talks with what he learns; Wide ears retain no secrets, and you know You can't get back a word you once let go.

Look round and round the man you recommend, For yours will be the shame should he offend. Sometimes we're duped; a protege dragged down By his own fault must e'en be left to drown, That you may help another known and tried, And show yourself his champion if belied; For when 'gainst him detraction forks her tongue, Be sure she'll treat you to the same ere long. No time for sleeping with a fire next door; Neglect such things, they only blaze the more.

A patron's service is a strange career; The tiros love it, but the experts fear. You, while you're sailing on a prosperous tack, Look out for squalls which yet may drive you back. The gay dislike the grave, the staid the pert, The quick the slow, the lazy the alert; Hard drinkers hate the sober, though he swear Those bouts at night are more than he can bear. Unknit your brow; the silent man is sure To pass for crabbed, the modest for obscure.

Meantime, while thoughts like these your mind engage, Neglect not books nor converse with the sage; Ply them with questions; lead them on to tell What things make life go happily and well; How cure desire, the soul's perpetual dearth? How moderate care for things of trifling worth? Is virtue raised by culture or self-sown? What soothes annoy, and makes your heart your own? Is peace procured by honours, pickings, gains, Or, sought in highways, is she found in lanes?

For me, when freshened by my spring's pure cold Which makes my villagers look pinched and old, What prayers are mine? "O may I yet possess The goods I have, or, if Heaven pleases, less! Let the few years that Fate may grant me still Be all my own, not held at others' will! Let me have books, and stores for one year hence, Nor make my life one flutter of suspense!"

But I forbear: sufficient 'tis to pray To Jove for what he gives and takes away: Grant life, grant fortune, for myself I'll find That best of blessings, a contented mind.

XIX. TO MAECENAS.

PRISCO SI CREDIS.

If truth there be in old Cratinus' song, No verse, you know, Maecenas, can live long Writ by a water-drinker. Since the day When Bacchus took us poets into pay With fauns and satyrs, the celestial Nine Have smelt each morning of last evening's wine. The praises heaped by Homer on the bowl At once convict him as a thirsty soul: And father Ennius ne'er could be provoked To sing of battles till his lips were soaked. "Let temperate folk write verses in the hall Where bonds change hands, abstainers not at all;" So ran my edict: now the clan drinks hard, And vinous breath distinguishes a bard.

What if a man appeared with gown cut short, Bare feet, grim visage, after Cato's sort? Would you respect him, hail him from henceforth The heir of Cato's mind, of Cato's worth? The wretched Moor, who matched himself in wit With keen

Timagenes, in sunder split. Faults are soon copied: should my colour fail, Our bards drink cummin, hoping to look pale. Mean, miserable apes! the coil you make Oft gives my heart, and oft my sides, an ache.

Erect and free I walk the virgin sod, Too proud to tread the paths by others trod. The man who trusts himself, and dares step out, Soon sets the fashion to the inferior rout. 'Tis I who first to Italy have shown Iambics, quarried from the Parian stone; Following Archilochus in rhythm and stave, But not the words that dug Lycambes' grave. Yet think not that I merit scantier bays, Because in form I reproduce his lays: Strong Sappho now and then adopts a tone From that same lyre, to qualify her own; So does Alcaeus, though in all beside, Style, order, thought, the difference is wide; 'Gainst no false fair he turns his angry Muse, Nor for her guilty father twists the noose. Aye, and Alcaeus' name, before unheard, My Latian harp has made a household word. Well may the bard feel proud, whose pen supplies Unhackneyed strains to gentle hands and eyes.

Ask you what makes the uncourteous reader laud My works at home, but run them down abroad? I stoop not, I, to catch the rabble's votes By cheap refreshments or by cast-off coats, Nor haunt the benches where your pedants swarm, Prepared by turns to listen and perform. That's what this whimpering means. Suppose I say "Your theatres have ne'er been in my way, Nor I in theirs: large audiences require Some heavier metal than my thin-drawn wire:" "You put me off," he answers, "with a sneer: Your works are kept for Jove's imperial ear: Yes, you're a paragon of bards, you think, And no one else brews nectar fit to drink." What can I do? 'tis an unequal match; For if my nose can sniff, his nails can scratch: I say the place won't snit me, and cry shame; "E'en fencers get a break 'twixt game and game." Games oft have ugly issue: they beget Unhealthy competition, fume and fret: And fume and fret engender in their turn Battles that bleed, and enmities that burn.

XX. TO HIS BOOK.

VERTUMNUM JANUMQUE.

To street and market-place I see you look With wistful longing, my adventurous book, That on the stalls for sale you may be seen, Rubbed by the binder's pumice smooth and clean. You chafe at look and key, and court the view Of all the world, disdainful of the few. Was this your breeding? go where you would go; When once sent out, you won't come back, you know. "What mischief have I done?" I hear you whine, When some one hurts those feelings, now so fine; For hurt you're sure to be; when people pall Of reading you, they'll crush and fold you small. If my prophetic soul be not at fault From indignation at your rude revolt, Your doom, methinks, is easy to foretell: While you've your gloss on, Rome will like you well: Then, when you're thumbed and soiled by vulgar hands, You'll feed the moths, or go to distant lands. Ah, then you'll mind your monitor too late, While he looks on and chuckles at your fate, Like him who, pestered by his donkey's vice, Got off and pushed it down the precipice; For who would lose his temper and his breath To keep a brute alive that's bent on death? Yet one thing more: your fate may be to teach In some suburban school the parts of speech, And, maundering over grammar day by day, Lisp, prattle, drawl, grow childish, and decay.

Well, when in summer afternoons you see Men fain to listen, tell them about me: Tell them that, born a freedman's son, possessed Of slender means, I soared beyond my nest, That so whate'er's deducted for my birth May count as assets on the score of worth; Say that I pleased the greatest of my day: Then draw my picture;—prematurely grey, Of little person, fond of sunny ease, Lightly provoked, but easy to appease. Last, if my age they ask you, let them know That I was forty-four not long ago, In the December of last year, the same That goes by Lepidus' and Lollius' name.

THE EPISTLES

BOOK II.

I. TO AUGUSTUS.

CUM TOT SUSTINEAS.

Since you, great Caesar, singly wield the charge Of Rome's concerns, so manifold and large, With sword and shield the commonwealth protect, With morals grace it, and with laws correct, The bard, methinks, would do a public wrong Who, having gained your ear, should keep it long.

Quirinus, Bacchus, and the Jove-born pair, Though now invoked with in cense, gifts, and prayer, While yet on earth they civilized their kind, Tilled lands, built cities, properties assigned, Oft mourned for man's ingratitude, and found The race they served less thankful than the ground. The prince whose fated vassalage subdued Fell Hydra's power and all the monster brood, Soon found that envy, worse than all beside, Could only be extinguished when he died. He that outshines his age is like a torch, Which, when it blazes high, is apt to scorch: Men hate him while he lives: at last, no doubt, He wins affection—when his light is out.

You, while in life, are honoured as divine, And vows and oaths are taken at your shrine; So Rome pays homage to her man of men, Ne'er seen on earth before, ne'er to be seen again. But this wise nation, which for once thinks true, That nought in Greece or here can rival you, To all things else a different test applies, And looks on living worth with jaundiced eyes: While, as for ancient models, take the code Which to the ten wise men our fathers owed, The treaties made 'twixt Gabii's kings and Home's, The pontiffs' books, the bards' forgotten tomes, They'll swear the Muses framed them every one In close divan on Alba's Helicon.

But what's the argument? the bards of Greece And those of Rome must needs be of a piece; As there the oldest hold the foremost place, So here, 'twould seem, the same

will be the case. Is this their reasoning? they may prove as well An olive has no stone, a nut no shell. Soon, flattered by such dexterous logic, we Shall think we've gained the summit of the tree; In art, in song our rivals we outdo, And, spite of all their oil, in wrestling too.

Or is it said that poetry's like wine Which age, we know, will mellow and refine? Well, let me grant the parallel, and ask How many years a work must be in cask. A bard who died a hundred years ago, With whom should he be reckoned, I would know? The priceless early or the worthless late? Come, draw a line which may preclude debate. "The bard who makes his century up has stood The test: we call him sterling, old, and good." Well, here's a poet now, whose dying day Fell one month later, or a twelvemonth, say: Whom does he count with? with the old, or them Whom we and future times alike contemn? "Aye, call him old, by favour of the court, Who falls a month, or e'en a twelvemonth short." Thanks for the kind permission! I go on, And pull out years, like horse-hairs, one by one, While all forlorn the baffled critic stands, Fumbling a naked stump between his hands, Who looks for worth in registers, and knows No inspiration but what death bestows.

Ennius, the stout and wise, in critic phrase The analogue of Homer in these days, Enjoys his ease, nor cares how he redeems The gorgeous promise of his peacock dreams. Who reads not Naevius? still he lives enshrined A household god in every Roman mind. So as we reckon o'er the heroic band We call Pacuvius learned, Accius grand; Afranius wears Menander's robe with grace; Plautus moves on at Epicharmus' pace; In force and weight Caecilius bears the palm; While Terence—aye, refinement is his charm. These are Rome's classics; these to see and hear She throngs the bursting playhouse year by year: 'Tis these she musters, counts, reviews, displays, From Livius' time to our degenerate days.

Sometimes the public sees like any lynx; Sometimes, if 'tis not blind, at least it blinks. If it extols the ancient sous of song As though they were unrivalled, it goes

wrong: If it allows there's much that's obsolete, Much hasty work, much rough and incomplete, 'Tis just my view; 'tis judging as one ought; And Jove was present when that thought was thought. Not that I'd act the zealot, and desire To fling the works of Livius on the fire, Which once Orbilius, old and not too mild, Made me repeat by whipping when a child; But when I find them deemed high art, and praised As only not perfection, I'm amazed, That here and there a thought not ill expressed, A verse well turned, should carry off the rest; Just as an unfair sample, set to catch The heedless customer, will sell the batch.

I chafe to hear a poem called third-rate Not as ill written, but as written late; To hear your critics for their ancients claim Not charity, but honour and high fame. Suppose I doubt if Atta's humorous show Moves o'er the boards with best leg first or no, The fathers of the city all declare That shame has fled from Rome, and gone elsewhere; "What! show no reverence to his sacred shade Whose scenes great Roscius and Aesopus played?" Perhaps with selfish prejudice they deem That nought but what they like deserves esteem, Or, jealous of their juniors, won't allow That what they learnt in youth is rubbish now. As for the pedant whose preposterous whim Finds poetry in Numa's Salian hymn, Who would be thought to have explored alone A land to him and me alike unknown, 'Tis not that buried genius he regards: No; 'tis mere spleen and spite to living bards. Had Greece but been as carping and as cold To new productions, what would now be old? What standard works would there have been, to come Beneath the public eye, the public thumb?

When, having done with fighting, Greece began To care for trifles that refine the man, And, borne aloft on Fortune's full flood-tide, Went drifting on to luxury and pride, Of athletes and of steeds by turns she raved, Loved ivory, bronze, and marble deftly graved, Hung raptured on a painting, mind and eye, Now leant to music, now to tragedy, Like a young child that hankers for a toy, Then throws it down when it begins to cloy. With change of fortune nations change their minds: So much for happy peace and prosperous winds. At Rome erewhile men rose by day-break, saw

Their clients at their homes, laid down the law, Put money at good interest out to loan Secured by names responsible and known, Explained to younger folk, or learned from old, How wealth might be increased, expense controlled. Now our good town has taken a new fit: Each man you meet by poetry is bit; Pert boys, prim fathers dine in, wreaths of bay, And 'twixt the courses warble out their lay. E'en I, who vow I never write a verse, Am found as false as Parthia, maybe worse; Before the dawn I rouse myself, and call For pens and parchment, writing-desk and all. None dares be pilot who ne'er steered a craft; No untrained nurse administers a draught; None but skilled workmen handle workmen's tools: But verses all men scribble, wise or fools.

And yet this scribbling is a harmless craze, And boasts in fact some few redeeming traits. Avarice will scarce find lodging in a heart Whose every thought is centred on its art; He lays no subtle schemes, your dreamy bard, To circumvent his partner or his ward; Content with pulse and bread of ration corn, Mres, losses, runaways he laughs to scorn; Useless in camp, at home he serves the state, That is, if small can minister to great. His lessons form the child's young lips, and wean The boyish ear from words and tales unclean; As years roll on, he moulds the ripening mind, And makes it just and generous, sweet and kind; He tells of worthy precedents, displays The example of the past to after days, Consoles affliction, and disease allays. Had Rome no poets, who would teach the train Of maids and spotless youths their ritual strain? Schooled by the bard, they lift their voice to heaven, And feel the wished-for aid already given, Prom brazen skies call down abundant showers, Are heard when sickness threats or danger lowers, Win for a war-worn land the smiles of peace, And crown the year with plentiful increase. Song checks the hand of Jove in act to smite; Song soothes the dwellers in abysmal night.

Our rustic forefathers in days of yore, Robust though frugal, and content though poor, When, after harvest done, they sought repair From toils which hope of respite made them bear, Were wont their hard-earned leisure to enjoy With those who

shared their labour, wife and boy; With porker's blood the Earth they would appease, With milk Silvanus, guardian of their trees, With flowers and wine the Genius, who repeats That life is short, and so should have its sweets. 'Twas hence Fescennia's privilege began, Where wit had licence, and man bantered man; And the wild sport, though countrified and rough, Passed off each year acceptably enough; Till jokes grew virulent, and rabid spite Ran loose through houses, free to bark and bite. The wounded shrieked; the unwounded came to feel That things looked serious for the general weal: So laws were passed with penalties and pains To guard the lieges from abusive strains, And poets sang thenceforth in sweeter tones, Compelled to please by terror for their bones.

Greece, conquered Greece, her conqueror subdued, And Rome grew polished, who till then was rude; The rough Saturnian measure had its day, And gentler arts made savagery give way: Yet traces of the uncouth past lived on For many a year, nor are they wholly gone, For 'twas not till the Punic wars were o'er That Rome found time Greek authors to explore, And try, by digging in that virgin field, What Sophocles and Aeschylus could yield. Nay, she essayed a venture of her own, And liked to think she'd caught the tragic tone; And so she has:—the afflatus comes on hot; But out, alas! she deems it shame to blot.

'Tis thought that comedy, because its source Is common life, must be a thing of course, Whereas there's nought so difficult, because There's nowhere less allowance made for flaws. See Plautus now: what ill-sustained affairs Are his close fathers and his love-sick heirs! How farcical his parasites! how loose And down at heel he wears his comic shoes! For, so he fills his pockets, nought he heeds Whether the play's a failure or succeeds.

Drawn to the house in glory's car, the bard Is made by interest, by indifference marred: So slight the cause that prostrates or restores A mind that lives for plaudits and encores. Nay, I forswear the drama, if to win Or lose the prize can make me

plump or thin. Then too it tries an author's nerve, to find The class in numbers strong, though weak in mind, The brutal brainless mob, who, if a knight Disputes their judgment, bluster and show fight, Call in the middle of a play for bears Or boxers;—'tis for such the rabble cares. But e'en the knights have changed, and now they prize Delighted ears far less than dazzled eyes. The curtain is kept down four hours or more, While horse and foot go hurrying o'er the floor, While crownless majesty is dragged in chains, Chariots succeed to chariots, wains to wains, Whole fleets of ships in long procession pass, And captive ivory follows captive brass. O, could Democritus return to earth, In truth 'twould wake his wildest peals of mirth, To see a milkwhite elephant, or shape Half pard, half camel, set the crowd agape! He'd eye the mob more keenly than the shows, And find less food for sport in these than those; While the poor authors—he'd suppose their play Addressed to a deaf ass that can but bray. For where's the voice so strong as to o'ercome A Roman theatre's discordant hum? You'd think you heard the Gargan forest roar Or Tuscan billows break upon the shore, So loud the tumult waxes, when they see The show, the pomp, the foreign finery. Soon as the actor, thus bedizened, stands In public view, clap go ten thousand hands. "What said he?" Nought. "Then what's the attraction? "Why, That woollen mantle with the violet dye.

But lest you think 'tis niggard praise I fling To bards who soar where I ne'er stretched a wing, That man I hold true master of his art Who with fictitious woes can wring my heart, Can rouse me, soothe me, pierce me with the thrill Of vain alarm, and, as by magic skill, Bear me to Thebes, to Athens, where he will.

Now turn to us shy mortals, who, instead Of being hissed and acted, would be read: We claim your favour, if with worthy gear You'd fill the temple Phoebus holds so dear, And give poor bards the stimulus of hope To aid their progress up Parnassus' slope. Poor bards! much harm to our own cause we do (It tells against myself, but yet 'tis true), When, wanting you to read us, we intrude On times of business or of lassitude, When we lose temper if a friend thinks fit To find a fault or two with what

we've writ, When, unrequested, we again go o'er A passage we recited once, before, When we complain, forsooth, our laboured strokes, Our dexterous turns, are lost on careless folks, When we expect, so soon as you're informed That ours are hearts by would-be genius warmed, You'll send for us instanter, end our woes With a high hand, and make us all compose.

Yet greatness, proved in war and peace divine, Had best be jealous who should keep its shrine: The sacred functions of the temple-ward Were ill conferred on an inferior bard. A blunderer was Choerilus; and yet This blunderer was Alexander's pet, And for the ill-stamped lines that left his mint Received good money with the royal print. Ink spoils what touches it: indifferent lays Blot out the exploits they pretend to praise. Yet the same king who bought bad verse so dear In other walks of art saw true and clear; None but Lysippus, so he willed by law, Might model him, none but Apelles draw. But take this mind, in paintings and in bronze So ready to distinguish geese from swans, And bid it judge of poetry, you'd swear "Twas born and nurtured in Boeotian air.

Still, bards there are whose excellence commends The sovereign judgment that esteems them friends, Virgil and Varius; when your hand confers Its princely bounty, all the world concurs. And, trust me, human features never shone With livelier truth through brass or breathing stone Than the great genius of a hero shines Through the clear mirror of a poet's lines. Nor is it choice (ah, would that choice were all!) Makes my dull Muse in prose-like numbers crawl, When she might sing of rivers and strange towns, Of mountain fastnesses and barbarous crowns, Of battles through the world compelled to cease, Of bolts that guard the God who guards the peace, And haughty Parthia through defeat and shame By Caesar taught to fear the Roman name: 'Tis strength that lacks: your dignity disdains The mean support of ineffectual strains, And modesty forbids me to essay A theme whose weight would make my powers give way. Officious zeal is apt to be a curse To those it loves, especially in verse; For easier 'tis to learn and recollect What moves

derision than what claims respect. He's not my friend who hawks in every place A waxwork parody of my poor face; Nor were I flattered if some silly wight A stupid poem in my praise should write: The gift would make me blush, and I should dread To travel with my poet, all unread, Down to the street where spice and pepper's sold, And all the wares waste paper's used to fold.

II. TO JULIUS FLORUS.

FLORE BONO CLAROQUE.

Dear Florus, justly high in the good grace Of noble Nero, let's suppose a case; A man accosts you with a slave for sale, Born, say, at Gabii, and begins his tale: "See, here's a lad who's comely, fair, and sound; I'll sell him, if you will, for sixty pound. He's quick, and answers to his master's look, Knows Greek enough to read a simple book Set him to what you like, he'll learn with ease; Soft clay, you know, takes any form you please; His voice is quite untrained, but still, I think, You'll like his singing, as you sit and drink. Excuse professions; they're but stale affairs, Which chapmen use for getting off their waves. I'm quite indifferent if you buy or no: Though I'm but poor, there's nothing that I owe. No dealer'd use you thus; nay, truth to tell, I don't treat all my customers so well. He loitered once, and fearing whipping, did As boys will do, sneaked to the stairs and hid. So, if this running off be not a, vice Too bad to pardon, let me have my price." The man would get his money, I should say, Without a risk of having to repay. You make the bargain knowing of the flaw; 'Twere mere vexatiousness to take the law.

'Tis so with me; before you left, I said That correspondence was my rock ahead, Lest, when you found that ne'er an answer came To all your letters, you should call it shame. But where's my vantage if you won't agree To go by law, because the law's with me? Nay more, you say I'm faithless to my vow In sending you no verses. Listen now:

A soldier of Lucullus's, they say, Worn out at night by marching all the day, Lay down to sleep, and, while at ease he snored, Lost to a farthing all his little hoard. This woke the wolf in him;—'tis strange how keen The teeth will grow with but the tongue between;— Mad with the foe and with himself, off-hand He stormed a treasure-city, walled and manned, Destroys the garrison, becomes renowned, Gets decorations and two hundred pound. Soon after this the general had in view To take some fortress, where I never knew; He singles out our friend, and makes a speech That e'en might drive a coward to the breach: "Go, my fine fellow! go where valour calls! There's fame and money too inside those walls." "I'm not your man," returned the rustic wit: "He makes a hero who has lost his kit."

At Rome I had my schooling, and was taught Achilles' wrath, and all the woes it brought; At classic Athens, where I went erelong, I learnt to draw the line 'twixt right and wrong, And search for truth, if so she might be seen, In academic groves of blissful green; But soon the stress of civil strife removed My adolescence from the scenes it loved, And ranged me with a force that could not stand Before the might of Caesar's conquering hand. Then when Philippi turned me all adrift A poor plucked fledgeling, for myself to shift, Bereft of property, impaired in purse, Sheer penury drove me into scribbling verse: But now, when times are altered, having got Enough, thank heaven, at least to boil my pot, I were the veriest madman if I chose To write a poem rather than to doze.

Our years keep taking toll as they move on; My feasts, my frolics are already gone, And now, it seems, my verses must go too: Bestead so sorely, what's a man to do? Aye, and besides, my friends who'd have me chant Are not agreed upon the thing they want: You like an ode; for epodes others cry, While some love satire spiced and seasoned high. Three guests, I find, for different dishes call, And how's one host to satisfy them all? I bring your neighbour what he asks, you glower: Obliging you, I turn two stomachs sour.

Think too of Rome: can I write verses here, Where there's so much to tease and interfere? One wants me for his surety; one, still worse, Bids me leave work to hear him just rehearse; One's ill on Aventine, the farthest end, One on Quirinal; both must see their friend. Observe the distance. "What of that?" you say, "The streets are clear; make verses by the way." There goes a builder's gang, all haste and steam; Yon crane lifts granite, or perhaps a beam; Waggons and funerals jostle; a mad dog Ran by just now; that splash was from a hog: Go now, abstract yourself from outward things, And "hearken what the inner spirit sings." Bards fly from town and haunt the wood and glade; Bacchus, their chief, likes sleeping in the shade; And how should I, with noises all about, Tread where they tread and make their footprints out? Take idle Athens now; a wit who's spent Seven years in studying there, on books intent, Turns out as stupid as a stone, and shakes The crowd with laughter at his odd mistakes: Here, in this roaring, tossing, weltering sea, To tune sweet lyrics, is that work for me?

Two brothers, counsellor and pleader, went Through life on terms of mutual compliment; That thought the other Gracchus, this supposed His brother Mucius; so they praised and prosed. Our tuneful race the selfsame madness goads: My friend writes elegies, and I write odes: O how we puff each other! "'Tis divine; The Muses had a hand in every line." Remark our swagger as we pass the dome Built to receive the future bards of Rome; Then follow us and listen what we say, How each by turns awards and takes the bay. Like Samnite fencers, with elaborate art We hit in tierce to be hit back in quart. I'm dubbed Alcaeus, and retire in force: And who is he? Callimachus of course: Or, if 'tis not enough, I bid him rise Mimnermus, and he swells to twice his size. Writing myself, I'm tortured to appease Those wasp-like creatures, our poetic bees: But when my pen's laid down, my sense restored, I rest from boring, rest from being bored.

Bad poets are our jest: yet they delight, Just like their betters, in whate'er they write, Hug their fool's paradise, and if you're slack To give them praise, themselves supply

the lack. But he who meditates a work of art, Oft as he writes, will act the censor's part: Is there a word wants nobleness and grace, Devoid of weight, unworthy of high place? He bids it go, though stiffly it decline, And cling and cling, like suppliant to a shrine: Choice terms, long hidden from the general view, He brings to day and dignifies anew, Which, once on Cato's and Cethegus' lips, Now pale their light and suffer dim eclipse; New phrases, in the world of books unknown, So use but father them, he makes his own: Fluent and limpid, like a crystal stream, He makes Rome's soil with genial produce teem: He checks redundance, harshnesses improves By wise refinement, idle weeds removes; Like an accomplished dancer, he will seem By turns a Satyr and a Polypheme; Yet all the while 'twill be a game of skill, Where sport means toil, and muscle bends to will.

Yet, after all, I'd rather far be blind To my own faults, though patent to mankind, Nay, live in the belief that foul is fair, Than see and grin in impotent despair. There was an Argive nobleman, 'tis said, Who all day long had acting in his head: Great characters on shadowy boards appeared, While he looked on and listened, clapped and cheered: In all things else he fairly filled his post, Friendly as neighbour, amiable as host; Kind to his wife, indulgent to his slave, He'd find a bottle sweated and not rave; He'd scorn to run his head against a wall; Show him a pit, and he'd avoid the fall. At last, when quarts of hellebore drunk neat, Thanks to his kin, had wrought a cure complete, Brought to himself again, "Good friends," quoth he, "Call you this saving? why, 'tis murdering me; Your stupid zeal has spoilt my golden days, And robbed me of a most delicious craze."

Wise men betimes will bid adieu to toys, And give up idle games to idle boys; Not now to string the Latian lyre, but learn The harmony of life, is my concern. So, when I commune with myself, I state In words like these my side in the debate: "If no amount of water quenched your thirst, You'd tell the doctor, not go on and burst: Experience shows you, as your riches swell Your wants increase; have you no friend to tell? A healing simple for a wound you try; It does no good; you put the simple

by: You're told that silly folk whom heaven may bless With ample means get rid of silliness; You test it, find 'tis not the case with you: Then why not change your Mentor for a new? Did riches make you wiser, set you free From idle fear, insane cupidity, You'd blush, and rightly too, if earth contained Another man more fond of what he gained. Now put the matter thus: whate'er is bought And duly paid for, is our own, we're taught: Consult a lawyer, and he'll soon produce A case where property accrues from use. The land by which you live is yours; most true, And Orbius' bailiff really works for you; He, while he ploughs the acres that afford Flour for your table, owns you for his lord; You pay your price, whate'er the man may ask, Get grapes and poultry, eggs and wine in cask; Thus, by degrees, proceeding at this rate, You purchase first and last the whole estate, Which, when it last was in the market, bore A good stiff price, two thousand say, or more. What matters it if, when you eat your snack, 'Twas paid for yesterday, or ten years back? There's yonder landlord, living like a prince On manors near Aricia, bought long since; He eats bought cabbage, though he knows it not; He burns bought sticks at night to boil his pot; Yet all the plain, he fancies, to the stone That stands beside the poplars, is his own. But who can talk of property in lands Exposed to ceaseless risk of changing hands, Whose owner purchase, favour, lawless power, And lastly death, may alter in an hour? So, with heirs following heirs like waves at sea, And no such thing as perpetuity, What good are farmsteads, granaries, pasture-grounds That stretch long leagues beyond Calabria's bounds, If Death, unbribed by riches, mows down all With his unsparing sickle, great and small?

"Gems, marbles, ivory, Tuscan statuettes, Pictures, gold plate, Gaetulian coverlets, There are who have not; one there is, I trow, Who cares not greatly if he has or no. This brother loves soft couches, perfumes, wine, More than the groves of palmy Palestine; That toils all day, ambitious to reclaim A rugged wilderness with axe and flame; And none but he who watches them from birth, The Genius, guardian of each child of earth, Born when we're born and dying when we die, Now storm, now

sunshine, knows the reason why I will not hoard, but, though my heap be scant, Will take on each occasion what I want, Nor fear what my next heir may think, to find There's less than he expected left behind; While, ne'ertheless, I draw a line between Mirth and excess, the frugal and the mean. 'Tis not extravagance, but plain good sense, To cease from getting, grudge no fair expense, And, like a schoolboy out on holiday, Take pleasure as it comes, and snatch one's play.

"So 'twill not sink, what matter if my boat Be big or little? still I keep afloat, And voyage on contented, with the wind Not always contrary, nor always kind, In strength, wit, worth, rank, prestige, money-bags, Behind the first, yet not among the lags.

"You're not a miser: has all other vice Departed in the train of avarice, Or do ambitious longings, angry fret, The terror of the grave, torment you yet? Can you make sport of portents, gipsy crones, Hobgoblins, dreams, raw head and bloody bones? Do you count up your birthdays year by year, And thank the gods with gladness and blithe cheer, O'erlook the failings of your friends, and grow Gentler and better as your sand runs low? Where is the gain in pulling from the mind One thorn, if all the rest remain behind? If live you cannot as befits a man, Make room, at least, you may for those that can. You've frolicked, eaten, drunk to the content Of human appetite; 'tis time you went, Lest, when you've tippled freely, youth, that wears Its motley better, hustle you down stairs."

THE ART OF POETRY.

TO THE PISOS, FATHER AND SONS. HUMANO CAPITI.

Suppose some painter, as a tour de force, Should couple head of man with neck of horse, Invest them both with feathers, 'stead of hair, And tack on limbs picked up from here and there, So that the figure, when complete, should show A maid above, a hideous fish below: Should you be favoured with a private view, You'd laugh, my

friends, I know, and rightly too. Yet trust me, Pisos, not less strange would look, To a discerning eye, the foolish book Where dream-like forms in sick delirium blend, And nought is of a piece from end to end. "Poets and painters (sure you know the plea) Have always been allowed their fancy free." I own it; 'tis a fair excuse to plead; By turns we claim it, and by turns concede; But 'twill not screen the unnatural and absurd, Unions of lamb with tiger, snake with bird.

When poets would be lofty, they commence With some gay patch of cheap magnificence: Of Dian's altar and her grove we read, Or rapid streams meandering through the mead; Or grand descriptions of the river Rhine, Or watery bow, will take up many a line. All in their way good things, but not just now: You're happy at a cypress, we'll allow; But what of that? you're painting by command A shipwrecked sailor, striking out for land: That crockery was a jar when you began; It ends a pitcher: you an artist, man! Make what you will, in short, so, when 'tis done, 'Tis but consistent, homogeneous, one.

Ye worthy trio! we poor sons of song Oft find 'tis fancied right that leads us wrong. I prove obscure in trying to be terse; Attempts at ease emasculate my verse; Who aims at grandeur into bombast falls; Who fears to stretch his pinions creeps and crawls; Who hopes by strange variety to please Puts dolphins among forests, boars in seas. Thus zeal to 'scape from error, if unchecked By sense of art, creates a new defect. Fix on some casual sculptor; he shall know How to give nails their sharpness, hair its flow; Yet he shall fail, because he lacks the soul To comprehend and reproduce the whole. I'd not be he; the blackest hair and eye Lose all their beauty with the nose awry.

Good authors, take a brother bard's advice: Ponder your subject o'er not once nor twice, And oft and oft consider, if the weight You hope to lift be or be not too great. Let but our theme be equal to our powers, Choice language, clear arrangement, both are ours. Would you be told how best your pearls to thread? Why, say just now what

should just now be said, But put off other matter for to-day, To introduce it later by the way.

In words again be cautious and select, And duly pick out this, and that reject. High praise and honour to the bard is due Whose dexterous setting makes an old word new. Nay more, should some recondite subject need Fresh signs to make it clear to those who read, A power of issuing terms till now unused, If claimed with modesty, is ne'er refused. New words will find acceptance, if they flow Forth from the Greek, with just a twist or so. But why should Rome capriciously forbid Our bards from doing what their fathers did? Or why should Plautus and Caecilius gain What Virgil or what Varius asks in vain? Nay, I myself, if with my scanty wit I coin a word or two, why grudge me it, When Ennius and old Cato boldly flung Their terms broadcast, and amplified our tongue? To utter words stamped current by the mill Has always been thought right and always will.

When forests shed their foliage at the fall, The earliest born still drops the first of all: So fades the elder race of words, and so The younger generations bloom and grow. Death claims humanity and human things, Aye, e'en "imperial works and worthy kings:" What though the ocean, girdled by the shore, Gives shelter to the ships it tossed before? What though the marsh, once waste and watery, now Feeds neighbour towns, and groans beneath the plough? What though the river, late the corn-field's dread, Rolls fruit and blessing down its altered bed? Man's works must perish: how should words evade The general doom, and flourish undecayed? Yes, words long faded may again revive, And words may fade now blooming and alive, If usage wills it so, to whom belongs The rule, the law, the government of tongues.

For metres, Homer shows you how to write Heroic deeds and incidents of fight.

Complaint was once the Elegiac's theme; From thence 'twas used to sing of love's young dream: But who that dainty measure first put out, Grammarians differ, and 'tis still in doubt.

Archilochus, inspired by fiery rage, Called forth Iambics: now they tread the stage In buskin or in sock, conduct discourse, Lead action on, and awe the mob perforce.

The glorious gods, the gods' heroic seed, The conquering boxer, the victorious steed, The joys of wine, the lover's fond desire, Such themes the Muse appropriates to the lyre.

Why hail me poet, if I fail to seize The shades of style, its fixed proprieties? Why should false shame compel me to endure An ignorance which common pains would cure?

A comic subject steadily declines To be related in high tragic lines. The Thyestean feast no less disdains The vulgar vehicle of comic strains. Each has its place allotted; each is bound To keep it, nor invade its neighbour's ground. Yet Comedy sometimes will raise her note: See Chremes, how he swells his angry throat! And when a tragic hero tells his woes, The terms he chooses are akin to prose. Peleus or Telephus, suppose him poor Or driven to exile, talks in tropes no more; His yard-long words desert him, when he tries To draw forth tears from sympathetic eyes.

Mere grace is not enough: a play should thrill The hearer's soul, and move it at its will. Smiles are contagious; so are tears; to see Another sobbing, brings a sob from me. No, no, good Peleus; set the example, pray, And weep yourself; then weep perhaps I may: But if no sorrow in your speech appear, I nod or laugh; I cannot squeeze a tear. Words follow looks: wry faces are expressed By wailing, scowls by bluster, smiles by jest, Grave airs by saws, and so of all the rest. For nature forms our spirits to receive Each bent that outward circumstance can give: She kindles pleasure, bids resentment glow, Or bows the soul to earth in hopeless woe; Then, as the tide of feeling waxes strong, She vents it through her conduit-pipe, the tongue.

Unless the speaker's words and fortune suit, All Rome will join to jeer him, horse and foot. Gods should not talk like heroes, nor again Impetuous youth like grave and reverend men; Lady and nurse a different language crave, Sons of the soil and rovers

o'er the wave; Assyrian, Colchian, Theban, Argive, each Has his own style, his proper cast of speech.

In painting characters, adhere to fame, Or study keeping in the type you frame: If great Achilles figure in the scene, Make him impatient, fiery, ruthless, keen; All laws, all covenants let him still disown, And test his quarrel by the sword alone. Still be Medea all revenge and scorn, Ino still sad, Ixion still forsworn, Io a wanderer still, Orestes still forlorn.

If you would be original, and seek To frame some character ne'er seen in Greek, See it be wrought on one consistent plan, And end the same creation it began. 'Tis hard, I grant, to treat a subject known And hackneyed so that it may look one's own; Far better turn the Iliad to a play And carve out acts and scenes the readiest way, Than alter facts and characters, and tell In a strange form the tale men know so well. But, with some few precautions, you may set Your private mark on public chattels yet: Avoid careering and careering still In the old round, like carthorse in a mill; Nor, bound too closely to the Grecian Muse, Translate the words whose soul you should transfuse, Nor act the copyist's part, and work in chains Which, once put on by rashness, shame retains.

Don't open like the cyclic, with a burst: "Troy's war and Priam's fate are here rehearsed." What's coming, pray, that thus he winds his horn? The mountain labours, and a mouse is born. Far better he who enters at his ease, Nor takes your breath with empty nourishes: "Sing, Muse, the man who, after Troy was burned, Saw divers cities, and their manners learned." Not smoke from fire his object is to bring, But fire from smoke, a very different thing; Yet has he dazzling miracles in store, Cyclops, and Laestrygons, and fifty more. He sings not, he, of Diomed's return, Starting from Meleager's funeral urn, Nor when he tells the Trojan story, begs Attention first for Leda and her eggs. He hurries to the crisis, lets you fall Where facts crowd thick, as though you knew them all, And what he judges will not turn to

gold Beneath his touch, he passes by untold. And all this glamour, all this glorious dream, Truth blent with fiction in one motley scheme, He so contrives, that, when 'tis o'er, you see Beginning, middle, end alike agree.

Now listen, dramatists, and I will tell What I expect, and all the world as well. If you would have your auditors to stay Till curtain-rise and plaudit end the play, Observe each age's temper, and impart To each the grace and finish of your art.

Note first the boy who just knows how to talk And feels his feet beneath him in his walk: He likes his young companions, loves a game, Soon vexed, soon soothed, and not two hours the same.

The beardless youth, at last from tutor freed, Loves playing-field and tennis, dog and steed: Pliant as wax to those who lead him wrong, But all impatience with a faithful tongue; Imprudent, lavish, hankering for the moon, He takes things up and lays them down as soon.

His nature revolutionized, the man Makes friends and money when and how he can: Keen-eyed and cool, though on ambition bent, He shuns all acts of which he may repent.

Grey hairs have many evils: without end The old man gathers what he dares not spend, While, as for action, do he what he will, 'Tis all half-hearted, spiritless, and chill: Inert, irresolute, his neck he cranes Into the future, grumbles, and complains, Extols his own young years with peevish praise, But rates and censures these degenerate days.

Years, as they come, bring blessings in their train; Years, as they go, take blessings back again: Yet haste or chance may blink the obvious truth, Make youth discourse like age, and age like youth: Attention fixed on life alone can teach The traits and adjuncts which pertain to each.

Sometimes an action on the stage is shown, Sometimes 'tis done elsewhere, and there made known. A thing when heard, remember, strikes less keen On the

spectator's mind than when 'tis seen. Yet 'twere not well in public to display A business best transacted far away, And much may be secluded from the eye For well-graced tongues to tell of by and by. Medea must not shed her children's blood, Nor savage Atreus cook man's flesh for food, Nor Philomel turn bird or Cadmus snake, With people looking on and wide awake. If scenes like these before my eyes be thrust, They shock belief and generate disgust.

Would you your play should prosper and endure? Then let it have five acts, nor more nor fewer. Bring in no god save as a last resource, Nor make four speakers join in the discourse.

An actor's part the chorus should sustain And do their best to get the plot in train: And whatsoe'er between the acts they chant Should all be apt, appropriate, relevant. Still let them give sage counsel, back the good, Attemper wrath, and cool impetuous blood, Praise the spare meal that pleases but not sates, Justice, and law, and peace with unbarred gates, Conceal all secrets, and the gods implore To crush the proud and elevate the poor.

Not trumpet-tongued, as now, nor brass-belayed, The flute was used to lend the chorus aid: Simple and slight and moderately loud, It charmed the ears of not too large a crowd, Which, frugal, rustic, primitive, severe, Flocked in those early days to see and hear.

Then, when the city gained increase of land, And wider walls its waxing greatness spanned, When the good Genius, frolicsome and gay, Was soothed at festivals with cups by day, Change spread to scenic measures: breadth, and ease, And freedom unrestrained were found in these: For what (said men) should jovial rustic, placed At random 'mid his betters, know of taste?

So graceful dance went hand in hand with song, And robes of kingly splendour trailed along: So by the side of music words upgrew, And eloquence came rolling, prompt and new: Shrewd in things mundane, wise in things divine, Its voice was like

the voice of Delphi's shrine.

The aspiring bard who served the tragic muse, A paltry goat the summit of his views, Soon brought in Satyrs from the woods, and tried If grave and gay could nourish side by side, That the spectator, feasted to his fill, Noisy and drunk, might ne'ertheless sit still.

Yet, though loud laugh and frolic jest commend Your Satyr folk, and mirth and morals blend, Let not your heroes doff their robes of red To talk low language in a homely shed, Nor, in their fear of crawling, mount too high, Catching at clouds and aiming at the sky. Melpomene, when bidden to be gay, Like matron dancing on a festal day, Deals not in idle banter, nor consorts Without reserve with Satyrs and their sports.

In plays like these I would not deal alone In words and phrases trite and too well known, Nor, stooping from the tragic height, drop down To the low level of buffoon and clown, As though pert Davus, or the saucy jade Who sacks the gold and jeers the gull she made, Were like Silenus, who, though quaint and odd, Is yet the guide and tutor of a god. A hackneyed subject I would take and treat So deftly, all should hope to do the feat, Then, having strained and struggled, should concede To do the feat were difficult indeed. So much may order and arrangement do To make the cheap seem choice, the threadbare new.

Your rustic Fauns, methinks, should have a care Lest people deem them bred in city air; Should shun the cant of exquisites, and shun Coarse ribaldry no less and blackguard fun. For those who have a father or a horse Or an estate will take offence of course, Nor think they're bound in duty to admire What gratifies the vetch-and-chestnut-buyer

The Iambic foot is briefly thus defined: Two syllables, a short with long behind: Repeat it six times o'er, so quick its beat, 'Tis trimeter, three measures for six feet: At first it ran straight on; but, years ago, Its hearers begged that it would move more

slow; On which it took, with a good-natured air, Stout spondees in, its native rights to share, Yet so that none should ask it to resign The sixth, fourth, second places in the line. But search through Attius' trimeters, or those Which Ennius took such pleasure to compose, You'll rarely find it: on the boards they groan, Laden with spondees, like a cart with stone, And brand our tragedy with want of skill Or want of labour, call it which you will. What then? false rhythm few judges can detect, And Roman bards of course are all correct.

What shall a poet do? make rules his sport, And dash through thick and thin, through long and short? Or pick his steps, endeavour to walk clean, And fancy every mud-stain will be seen? What good were that, if though I mind my ways And shun all blame, I do not merit praise? My friends, make Greece your model when you write, And turn her volumes over day and night.

"But Plautus pleased our sires, the good old folks; They praised his numbers, and they praised his jokes." They did: 'twas mighty tolerant in them To praise where wisdom would perhaps condemn; That is, if you and I and our compeers Can trust our tastes, our fingers, and our ears, Know polished wit from horse-play, and can tell What verses do, and what do not, run well.

Thespis began the drama: rumour says In travelling carts he carried round his plays, Where actors, smeared with lees, before the throng Performed their parts with gesture and with song. Then AEschylus brought in the mask and pall, Put buskins on his men to make them tall, Turned boards into a platform, not too great, And taught high monologue and grand debate. The elder Comedy had next its turn, Nor small the glory it contrived to earn: But freedom passed into unbridled spite, And law was soon invoked to set things right: Law spoke: the chorus lost the power to sting, And (shame to say) thenceforth refused to sing.

Our poets have tried all things; nor do they Deserve least praise, who follow their own way, And tell in comedy or history-piece Some story of home growth, not

drawn from Greece. Nor would the land we love be now more strong In warrior's prowess than in poet's song, Did not her bards with one consent decline The tedious task, to alter and refine. Dear Pisos! as you prize old Numa's blood, Set down that work, and that alone, as good, Which, blurred and blotted, checked and counter-checked, Has stood all tests, and issued forth correct.

Because Democritus thinks fit to say, That wretched art to genius must give way, Stands at the gate of Helicon, and guards Its precinct against all but crazy bards, Our witlings keep long nails and untrimmed hair, Much in brown studies, in the bath-room rare. For things are come to this; the merest dunce, So but he choose, may start up bard at once, Whose head, too hot for hellebore to cool, Was ne'er submitted to a barber's tool. What ails me now, to dose myself each spring? Else had I been a very swan to sing. Well, never mind: mine be the whetstone's lot, Which makes steel sharp, though cut itself will not. Although no writer, I may yet impart To writing folk the precepts of their art, Whence come its stores, what trains and forms a bard, And how a work is made, and how 'tis marred.

Of writing well, be sure, the secret lies In wisdom: therefore study to be wise. The page of Plato may suggest the thought, Which found, the words will come as soon as sought. The man who once has learned to comprehend His duty to his country and his friend, The love that parent, brother, guest may claim. The judge's, senator's, or general's aim, That man, when need occurs, will soon invent For every part its proper sentiment. Look too to life and manners, as they lie Before you: these will living words supply. A play, devoid of beauty, strength, and art, So but the thoughts and morals suit each part, Will catch men's minds and rivet them when caught More than the clink of verses without thought.

To Greece, fair Greece, ambitious but of praise, The Muse gave ready wit, and rounded phrase. Our Roman boys, by puzzling days and nights, Bring down a shilling to a hundred mites. Come, young Albinus, tell us, if you take A penny from

a sixpence, what 'twill make. Fivepence. Good boy! you'll come to wealth one day. Now add a penny. Sevenpence, he will say. O, when this cankering rust, this greed of gain, Has touched the soul and wrought into its grain, What hope that poets will produce such lines As cedar-oil embalms and cypress shrines?

A bard will wish to profit or to please, Or, as a tertium quid, do both of these. Whene'er you lecture, be concise: the soul Takes in short maxims, and retains them whole: But pour in water when the vessel's filled, It simply dribbles over and is spilled.

Keep near to truth in a fictitious piece, Nor treat belief as matter of caprice. If on a child you make a vampire sup, It must not be alive when she's ripped up. Dry seniors scout an uninstructive strain; Young lordlings treat grave verse with tall disdain: But he who, mixing grave and gay, can teach And yet give pleasure, gains a vote from each: His works enrich the vendor, cross the sea, And hand the author down to late posterity.

Some faults may claim forgiveness: for the lyre Not always gives the note that we desire; We ask a flat; a sharp is its reply; And the best bow will sometimes shoot awry. But when I meet with beauties thickly sown, A blot or two I readily condone, Such as may trickle from a careless pen, Or pass unwatched: for authors are but men. What then? the copyist who keeps stumbling still At the same word had best lay down his quill: The harp-player, who for ever wounds the ear With the same discord, makes the audience jeer: So the poor dolt who's often in the wrong I rank with Choerilus, that dunce of song, Who, should he ever "deviate into sense," Moves but fresh laughter at his own expense: While e'en good Homer may deserve a tap, If, as he does, he drop his head and nap. Yet, when a work is long, 'twere somewhat hard To blame a drowsy moment in a bard.

Some poems, like some paintings, take the eye Best at a distance, some when looked at nigh. One loves the shade; one would be seen in light, And boldly challenges the

keenest sight: One pleases straightway; one, when it has passed Ten times before the mind, will please at last.

Hope of the Pisos! trained by such a sire, And wise yourself, small schooling you require; Yet take this lesson home; some things admit A moderate point of merit, e'en in wit. There's yonder counsellor; he cannot reach Messala's stately altitudes of speech, He cannot plumb Cascellius' depth of lore, Yet he's employed, and makes a decent score: But gods, and men, and booksellers agree To place their ban on middling poetry. At a great feast an ill-toned instrument, A sour conserve, or an unfragrant scent Offends the taste: 'tis reason that it should; We do without such things, or have them good: Just so with verse; you seek but to delight; If by an inch you fail, you fail outright.

He who knows nought of games abstains from all, Nor tries his hand at quoit, or hoop, or ball, Lest the thronged circle, witnessing the play, Should laugh outright, with none to say them nay: He who knows nought of verses needs must try To write them ne'ertheless. "Why not?" men cry: "Free, gently born, unblemished and correct, His means a knight's, what more can folks expect?" But you, my friend, at least have sense and grace; You will not fly in queen Minerva's face In action or in word. Suppose some day You should take courage and compose a lay, Entrust it first to Maecius' critic ears, Your sire's and mine, and keep it back nine years. What's kept at home you cancel by a stroke: What's sent abroad you never can revoke.

Orpheus, the priest and harper, pure and good, Weaned savage tribes from deeds and feasts of blood, Whence he was said to tame the monsters of the wood. Amphion too, men said, at his desire Moved massy stones, obedient to the lyre, And Thebes arose. 'Twas wisdom's province then To judge 'twixt states and subjects, gods and men, Check vagrant lust, give rules to wedded folk, Build cities up, and grave a code in oak. So came great honour and abundant praise, As to the gods, to poets and their lays. Then Homer and Tyrtaeus, armed with song, Made manly spirits for the

combat strong: Verse taught life's duties, showed the future clear, And won a monarch's favour through his ear: Verse gave relief from labour, and supplied Light mirth for holiday and festal tide. Then blush not for the lyre: Apollo sings In unison with her who sweeps its strings.

But here occurs a question some men start, If good verse comes from nature or from art. For me, I cannot see how native wit Can e'er dispense with art, or art with it. Set them to pull together, they're agreed, And each supplies what each is found to need.

The youth who suns for prizes wisely trains, Bears cold and heat, is patient and abstains: The flute-player at a festival, before He plays in public, has to learn his lore. Not so our bardlings: they come bouncing in— "I'm your true poet: let them laugh that win: Plague take the last! although I ne'er was taught, Is that a cause for owning I know nought?"

As puffing auctioneers collect a throng, Rich poets bribe false friends to hear their song: Who can resist the lord of so much rent, Of so much money at so much per cent.? Is there a wight can give a grand regale, Act as a poor man's counsel or his bail? Blest though he be, his wealth will cloud his view, Nor suffer him to know false friends from true. Don't ask a man whose feelings overflow For kindness that you've shown or mean to show To listen to your verse: each line you read, He'll cry, "Good! bravo! exquisite indeed!" He'll change his colour, let his eyes run o'er With tears of joy, dance, beat upon the floor. Hired mourners at a funeral say and do A little more than they whose grief is true: 'Tis just so here: false flattery displays More show of sympathy than honest praise. 'Tis said when kings a would-be friend will try, With wine they rack him and with bumpers ply: If you write poems, look beyond the skin Of the smooth fox, and search the heart within.

Read verses to Quintilius, he would say, "I don't like this and that: improve it, pray:" Tell him you found it hopeless to correct; You'd tried it twice or thrice without effect: He'd calmly bid you make the three times four, And take the unlicked cub in

hand once more. But if you chose to vindicate the crime, Not mend it, he would waste no further time, But let you live, untroubled by advice, Sole tenant of your own fool's paradise.

A wise and faithful counsellor will blame Weak verses, note the rough, condemn the lame, Retrench luxuriance, make obscureness plain, Cross-question this, bid that be writ again: A second Aristarch, he will not ask, "Why for such trifles take my friend to task?" Such trifles bring to serious grief ere long A hapless bard, once flattered and led wrong.

See the mad poet! never wight, though sick Of itch or jaundice, moon-struck, fanatic, Was half so dangerous: men whose mind is sound Avoid him; fools pursue him, children hound. Suppose, while spluttering verses, head on high, Like fowler watching blackbirds in the sky, He falls into a pit; though loud he shout "Help, neighbours, help!" let no man pull him out: Should some one seem disposed a rope to fling, I will strike in with, "Pray do no such thing: I'll warrant you he meant it," and relate His brother bard Empedocles's fate, Who, wishing to be thought a god, poor fool, Leapt down hot AEtna's crater, calm and cool. "Leave poets free to perish as they will: Save them by violence, you as good as kill. 'Tis not his first attempt: if saved to-day, He's sure to die in some outrageous way. Beside, none knows the reason why this curse Was sent on him, this love of making verse, By what offence heaven's anger he incurred, A grave denied, a sacred boundary stirred: So much is plain, he's mad: like bear that beats His prison down and ranges through the streets, This terrible reciter puts to flight The learned and unlearned left and right: Let him catch one, he keeps him till he kills, As leeches stick till they have sucked their fills."

NOTES.

PAGE 6.

Enough: you'll think I've rifled the scrutore Of blind Crispinus, if I prose on more.

Howes has a very similar couplet:—

But hold! you'll think I've pillaged the scrutore Of blear Crispinus: not one word then more!

I believe it however to be a mere coincidence on my part. The word "scrutore" is an uncommon one; but it was the recollection of an altogether different passage which suggested it to me here. At any rate, Howes is not the first who has used it in translating the present lines.

Now 'tis enough: lest you should think I've dipt in blear-eyed Crispin's ink, And stolen my work from his scrutore, I will not add a sentence more.

SMART.

PAGE 9.

Gives Varus' name to knock-kneed boys, and dubs His club-foot youngster Scaurus, king of clubs.

This is, of course, in no sense a translation: it is simply an attempt (a desperate one, I fear) to give point to a sentence which otherwise to an English reader would have no point at all.

PAGE 13.

Heal to your majesty! yet, ne'ertheless, Rude boys are pulling at your beard, I guess.

Those commentators are clearly right who understand "vellunt," not of what the boys are apt to do, but of what they are actually doing, while the Stoic is talking and making himself out to be a king.

PAGE 17.

Say, you're first cousin to that goodly pair, Caelius and Birrius, and their foibles share.

Caelius and Birrius were a couple of robbers, a fact distinctly mentioned in the

Latin, and, I hope, capable of being inferred from the context of the English.

PAGE 35.

After life's endless babble they sleep well.

I need hardly refer to the well-known line in Macbeth.

PAGE 44.

Cassius the rake, and Maenius the buffoon.

This is nearly identical with a line in Howes, of which it may very possibly be an unconscious remembrance. Here and in other places I have called Nomentanus, metri gratia, by his family name Cassius, though it is nowhere, I believe, applied to him by Horace. Pantolabus is supposed to be the same as Maenius, whom Horace mentions elsewhere, and I have been only too glad to take the supposition for granted. Generally, where a Horatian personage is known to have had two names, I have used that one which the exigences of the verse recommended.

PAGE 61.

O heaven-abandoned wretch! is all this care. O inconsistent wretch! is all this coil. GIFFORD'S Juvenal, Sat. xiv.

PAGE 94.

And each man's lips are at his neighbour's ear.

Perhaps a recollection of Pope's line (Satires of Dr. Donne), "When half his nose is in his prince's ear."

PAGE 98.

Of studying truths that rick and poor concern, Which young and old are lost unless they learn.

This may seem borrowed from Cowper's "Tirocinium," —truths on which depend our main concern, That 'tis our shame and misery not to learn; but I believe the resemblance to be purely accidental. It may serve however to show that the more

serious passages in Horace, as well as the lighter ones, are not unlike Cowper.

PAGE 103.

That makes Atrides and Achilles foes.

Almost verbatim from a line in Pope's "Odyssey," which is itself probably from one in Maynwaring's First Book of the "Iliad."

PAGE 110.

Not to admire, Numicius, is the best, The only way, to make and keep men blest.

Slightly altered from the later editions of Francis: Not to admire is of all means the best, The only means, to make and keep us blest. Ten lines lower down I have a couplet nearly coincident with one in Howes, but not intentionally so.

PAGE 124.

But what are Rhodes and Lesbos, and the rest.

This and the nine following lines are a considerable expansion of the Latin: but I was apprehensive of not bringing out the connexion, if I translated more closely.

PAGE 126.

Empedocles or the Stertinian school.

As Horace has chosen to take Stertinius here as a type of the Stoics, I thought I might avail myself of a similar licence, and call the Stoics as a school by his name.

PAGE 129.

The ox, unyoked and resting from the plough, Wants fodder, stripped from elm or poplar bough.

Horace merely has "strictis frondibus:" but the writers De Re Rustica, quoted by the commentators, tell us what the leaves in use were.

PAGE 131.

When Maenius, after nobly gobbling down His fortune, took to living on the town.

"Took to living on the town" is not meant as a version of "urbanus coepit haberi," but rather as an equivalent suggested by the context.

PAGE 134.

Each law, each right, each statute and each act.

Horace's object is evidently to give an exhaustive notion of the various parts of the law: and I have tried to produce the same impression by accumulating terms, without caring how far they can severally be discriminated.

PAGE 135.

I've shed no blood. You shall not feed the crow.

I'll have thee hanged to feed the crow. SCOTT, Lay of the Last Minstrel.

PAGE 136.

The wise and good, like Bacchus in the play.

Borrowed from Francis, with a slight change in the order of the words.

PAGE 140.

In sing-song drawl, or Gnatho in the play.

"Partes mimum tractare secundas" seems to mean "to act the stage parasite," who, according to Festus, wag the second character in almost every mime. I thought therefore that I might substitute for the general description the name of a particular parasite in Roman comedy.

PAGE 144.

Let temperate folk write verses in the hall Where bonds change hands.

Strictly speaking, there does not seem to have been a hall of exchange at the Puteal, which was apparently open to the sky: but the inaccuracy is not a serious one.

PAGE 151.

While all forlorn the baffled critic stands, Fumbling a naked stump between his

hands.

I had originally written

By the old puzzle of the dwindling mound Bringing at last the critic to the ground,

which of course represents the Latin better: but it occurred to me that the allusion to the sophism of the heap, following immediately on the similar figure of the horse's tail, could only embarrass an English reader, and would therefore be out of place in a passage intended to be idiomatic. Howes has got over the difficulty neatly:—

Till my opponent, by fair logic beat, Shall find the ground sink fast beneath his feet.

PAGE 151.

Enjoys his ease, nor cares how he redeems The gorgeous promise of his peacock dreams.

I suppose the meaning to be this: Ennius, as appears from his own remains and the notices of him in other writers, began his Annals with a dream in which the spirit of Homer appeared to him, and told him that, after passing through various other bodies, including those of Pythagoras and a peacock, it was now animating that of the Roman poet himself. How this was connected with the subject of the Annals we do not know; probably not very artificially: Horace, as I understand him, means to ridicule this want of connexion, while he says that the critics are so indiscriminate in their praises that Ennius may well repose on his laurels, and not trouble himself as to whether there is any real connexion or no.

PAGE 152.

Just as an unfair sample, set to catch The heedless customer, mil sell the batch.

I believe I have given the exact force of the original, though the metaphor there is from a gang of slaves, where the best-looking is placed in front to carry off the rest. This interpretation, which the phrase "ducere familiam" seems to place beyond doubt, is as old as Torrentius: but the commentators in general reject or ignore it.

PAGE 157.

For, so he fills his pockets, nought he heeds Whether the play's a failure or succeeds.

Modern readers may wonder how the poet comes to fill his pockets if the play does not succeed. The answer is that he sold his play to the aediles before its performance. For the benefit of the same persons it may be mentioned, with reference to a passage a few lines lower down, that in a Roman theatre the curtain was kept down during the representation, raised when the play was over.

PAGE 166.

New phrases, in the world of books unknown, So use but father them, he makes his own.

I understand "quae genitor produxerit usus" not, with Orelli, "which shall be adopted into use at once, so that people shall fancy that they have been in use long before," but, with Ritter, "which shall have been already sanctioned by usage," the distinction being between words not only in common use but used in literature, and words in use, but not yet adopted into literature, and so relatively "nova." "Father" of course I use less strictly than Pope uses it in his well-known imitation of the passage, "For use will father what's begot by sense."

PAGE 172.

Attempts at ease emasculate my verse.

I find Dean Bagot has a line, "A want of nerve effeminates my speech."

PAGE 173.

In words again be cautious and select, And duly pick out this, and that reject.

I have adopted Bentley's transposition, simply because it happened to be convenient in translating.

PAGE 177.

Than alter facts and characters, and tell In a strange form the tale men know so well.

Many years ago I proposed this solution of a passage of admitted difficulty in the Classical Museum. I take "Difficile est proprie communia dicere" in its ordinary sense, "It is hard to treat hackneyed subjects with originality." Horace then goes on to say that it is better to give up the attempt altogether and simply copy (say) Homer, than to run the risk of outraging popular feeling by a new treatment of (say) the Trojan story, or a new view of the chief characters: but that if a writer still wishes to make the attempt, he may succeed by attending to certain rules, "si nec circa vilem," &c. &c. Thus I make "publica materies" identical with "communia," and "privati juris" with "proprie," contrary to Orelli's opinion.

PAGE 179.

Yet haste and chance may blink the obvious truth.

I am not sure whether this was the connecting link in Horace's mind; but I felt that the absence of any link would make the transition between the two sentences intolerably abrupt in English, and go I supplied a link as I best could. Macleane seems right in remarking that the remark "multa ferunt" &c. seems to be drawn forth by the dark picture of old age contained in the preceding verses, and has not much otherwise to do with the subject. Horace doubtless felt that he was passing middle life himself.

PAGE 182.

Yet so that none should ask it to resign The sixth, fourth, second places in the line.

Horace does not mention the sixth place: I have introduced it for the benefit of persons who, as actually happened to me when very young, may attempt to write Iambic trimeters with no guide but this passage, and may be in consequence in danger of making them scazons, as I actually did.

PAGE 188.

Entrust it first to Maecius' critic ears, Your sire's, and mine, and keep it back nine years.

Almost a verbal coincidence with Howes, but a coincidence only.

PAGE 189.

Then blush not for the lyre: Apollo sings In unison with her who sweeps its strings.

It is difficult to say whether the paragraph of which these lines are the conclusion is a sketch of the history of poetry in general or of lyric poetry in particular. The former would be rather inartistic after the other historical notices of poetry that have occurred in the poem: the latter is not easily reconciled with the mention of Homer. On the other hand, Horace's inexactness elsewhere makes either supposition quite possible. I have translated so as to leave the ground open to either.

PAGE 191.

A second Aristarch.

Before them marched that awful Aristarch. POPE, Dunciad, Book iv.

PAGE 191.

Leave poets free to perish as they will.

Following Mr. Howes and probably others who have written on the Ars Poetica, though apparently not the latest editors, I regard all the words from "Deus immortalis haberi" to the end as part of Horace's speech to the man who thinks of rescuing the mad poet. Much of the humour of what follows, e. g. "Nec semel hoc fecit," "Nec satis apparet," &c. would, it seems to me, be lost on any other supposition.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SATIRES, EPISTLES, AND ART OF POETRY OF HORACE ***

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