ODES OF HORACE

ODES OF QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUS
READ IN LATIN BY D.

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ODES OF HORACE
Eighteen Odes of
QUINTUS HORATIUS FLACCUSS

Read in Latin by JOHN F. C. RICHARDS

The Odes of Horace
Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65-8 B.C.) published the first three books of his Odes in 30 B.C., and these were followed about 13 B.C. by a fourth book. There are 103 Odes in the four books, and he uses the Alcaic strophe in 37 of them and the Sapphic strophe in 25; these meters were used by two Greek poets, Alcaeus and Sappho, who lived on the island of Lesbos about 600 B.C. The first has been imitated in English by Tennyson in his poem about Milton:

"O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies,
O skill'd in song of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted Organ-Wise of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages."

This has been imitated by Swinburne:

"All the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,
So deep and dark, nor shook nor unveiled a feather,
Yet with lips shut closed and with eyes of iron
Sleep and behid me."

This reproduces the five beats of the Sapphic line, those who are familiar with the music used for a famous Ode (\textit{integer vitae excellerisque pars}), in which there are only four beats in the line, may find this confusing.

Among the other meters used by Horace are the Lesser and Greater Asclepiad and three Asclepiad strophes, and the First and Fourth Archilochian strophes.

Horace is represented here by eighteen Odes; eight of them are written in Alcaic (I, 9, 16, 17; II, 3, 7, 14; III, 31; IV, 3), four in Sapphic (I, 33; II, 2, 10, 16), four in Asclepiad meters (Second Asclepiad, III, 16; IV, 14; Third Asclepiad, III, 13; Greater Asclepiad, I, 11), and two in Archilochian meters (First Archilochian, IV, 7; Fourth Archilochian, I, 4).

The Latin text, taken from the Oxford edition of the Odes, is given below; each Ode is followed by a translation in poetical prose by A.D. Godley and then by a verse translation.

Eight of the translations in verse are by Sir Stephen de Vere, 1015-1046 (I, 17; II, 3, 10, 14, 16; III, 16; IV, 9, 12), three are by Philip Francis, 1706-1773 (I, 4, 16; II, 2), three are by Charles Stuart Calverley, 1831-1884 (I, 9, 11; III, 13), two are by John Conington, 1829-1919 (II, 31; IV, 7), one is by William Cowper, 1731-1800 (I, 33), and one is by Sir Theodore Martin, 1836-1900 (II, 7).

The following are the editions which have been used:

1. Q. Horatii Flacci Opera, recognovit...Eduardus C. Wickham, editio altera curante H.W. Garrod, Oxoniis, (MDCCLIII) MDCCCLIII.


In this reading of the Odes the syllables which are elided (final vowel or final m before a following vowel or h) have been pronounced, though this has not affected the beat of the verse. Thus hostilis praestevit exercitus will be heard in I, 16, 21 and not hostilis praestevit exercitus, and regum est in IV, 12, 8 and not regum est.

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IV
Solvitque acri hiems gravis vice veris et Favoni,
trahuntque siccas machinae carinas.
ac neque iam stabulis gaudet peres aut avis aeterni ignis,
neque canis abest quidam prunina.
iam Cytherea chorus duci Venus imminent Luna,
inoctaque Nymphis Gracias decernens
altem terras quam quidam pede, dum gravia Cyclopus
Vulcanus ardors visit officinas.
nunc decet aut viridi nidiim capset impetido myro
aut flore terre quem ferunt soluetae;
nunc et in umbra Fauno decet immolare lucis,
seu poscat agna sive malit haedo.
pallida Mors aquae pulsat pede pestilentem tabernas
regumque turris o beate beata.
vita summa brevis spem non vetat inequa longam.
niam te premet nos laboreque Manes
et domus exilis Plutonia; quae simul mea,
nen regna vini soiete tali,
nunc tenuum Lydian mirabile, quo calet invenit
nunc omnis et nos viginti tepheont.

I, 4.
Keen winter thaws at the pleasant change to spring
and the west wind, and engines launch the ships' dry
keels; and now nor flocks loves its fold nor hind his
fire: nor are meads white with hoary frost. Now
while the moon hangs high in heaven Cytherean Venus
leads the dance; and lovely Graces with their
companion Nymphs foot it o'er the ground with changing
step, while glowing Vulcan makes the weary Cyclops'
smithies to blaze. Now 'tis meet to kind a sleek
locks with myrtle green or flowers that spring from
thawing earth. Now 'tis meet to sacrifice to Faunus
in shady groves, whether lamb or kid be the offering
of his choice. Pale death with foot impartial knocks
alike at poor men's hovels and royal palaces.

Fortunate destas! the shortness of life's sum forbids
us essay the hope of distant good. Soon, soon shall
night and storied shades and Pluto's narrow halls
imprison thee; once thou art thither gone, no
kingship of the feast shall dice assign thee: nor shall
thou marvel at tender lycidas, whom now all our youth
adore, and maidens presently shall cooly woo.

2Godley translates writ in 1. 8. The reading in the
Oxford text is visit.

I, 4.
Fierce winter melts in vernal gales,
And grateful zephyrs fill the spreading sails; *
No more the ploughman loves his fire,
No more the lowing herds their stalls desire,
While Earth her richest verdure yields,
Nor hoary frosts now whiten o'er the fields.
Now joyous through the verdant meads,
Beneath the rising moon, fair Venus leads
Her various dance, and with her train
Of Nymphs and modest Graces shares the plain,
While Vulcan's glowing breath inspires
The toilsome forge and blows up all its fires.
Now crowned with myrtle or the flowers
Which the glad Earth from her free bosom pours,
We'll offer in the shady grove
Or lamb or kid, as Pan shall best approve.
With equal pace impartial Fate
Knocks at the palace as the cottage gate;
Nor should our sum of life extend
Our growing hopes beyond their destined end.
When sunk to Pluto's shadowy coast,
Oppressed with darkness and the fabled ghosts,
No more the dice shall there assign
To thee the jovial monarchy of wine,
No more shall you the fairest share,
The virgin's envy and the youth's desire.

Philip Francis

* 1-2. These lines are not an exact translation.
XI

Ty ne queseris, etsi nefas, quem mihi, quem tibi
finem di dederint, Leucosce, nec Babylonis
 temperis numeros: ut molis, quidquid oris, pati,
sea plantis humos seu tumultum Jupiter ultimum,
quae nunc oppositum duellat pumicibus mare
Tyrrhenum: sapias, vina ligno, et spatii brevi
spem longam recess: dum loquimur, fugerit invida
antas: carpe digo, quam minimum credula postero.

I, lI.

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

I, 11.

Seek not, for thou shalt not find it, what my
end, what thing shall be;
Ask not of Chaldaean's science what God wills,
Leucosce:
Better far, what comes, to bear it. Haply many a
windy blast
Waits thee still; and this, it may be, Jove ordains
to be thy last,
Which flings now the flagging sea-wave on the
obstinate sandstone-reef.
Be thou wise: fill up the wine-cup; shortening,
since the time is brief,
Hopes that reach into the future. While I speak,
Jealous Time. Mistrust To-morrow, catch the
blossom of To-day.

Charles Stuart Calverley

XVI

O mater puella filia pulchrior,
quem crinorius cumque voles modum
pones lamiis, sive flamam
sive maris liber Hadrao.
non Dindymene, non aduidis quae
mentem sacerdotum incipias Pythia,
non Liber acue, non acuta
se gnomina Corybantes aeris,
tristes et iras, quae neque Noricus
deterret ensis nec mare naufragum
nec saecus ignis nec tremendo
Lupus ipse ruens tamultu.
ferter Prometheus addere principi
limo cocutum partimque unique
scatuta et insae semitum
vivam stomachum apponundus nostris.
ira Thestet exitio gravi
stravere et allis urbibus ultima
scire causa cur persen
funditum imperioetique muris
hostile atrum exercitus insulam
composcet monem: me quoque pectoris
temptavit in dulci inventa
servor et in celeris lamos
misit furustem: nunc ego milibus
mutare quero tripla, dam mihi
fias recutatia amica
approprior animique reddas.

I, 16.

Daughter fairer than thy mother fair! seek what end
thou wilt of my sourile lampoons -- cast them into
the fire or the Adriatic wave. Not Tyryne, nor the
Dweller of the Phthian shrine, nor Bechimus, nor the
redoubled clash of shrill Corybantic cymbals,
inspires the votary with frenzy like to gloomy
wrath -- wrath that quells not before Nereus' warnings
or wrecking billows or fierce fire or even the
fearful crush of Jove's descending thunder.
Prometheus, 'tis said, compelled to add to our primal
clay some portion culled from every creature, gave to
our breast the raging lion's fire. "Two anger that
laid Tyryne in dire destruction: for this, the
chiefest cause, have tall cities fallen, and
arrogant hosts driven the Thesmophorion's plough across
their levelled walls. Control thy temper: I too
in pleasant youth have felt the glow of passion, and
hurried madly into swift satiric verse: now I will
fail change bitter for sweet, if thou wilt take
my repentance for hard words, become my friend and
give me back thy heart.

I, 16.

Daughter, whose loveliness the bosom warms
More than thy lovely mother's riper charms,
Give to my bold lampoons what value ye please,
To wasting flames condemned or angry seas.
But yet remember, nor the gods of wine,
Nor Thesmophorion from his immaculate shrine,
Nor Dindymene nor her priests possess
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast
Like furious anger in its gloomy vein,
Which neither tempered sword nor raging main
Nor fire wide-swallowing nor tremendous Jove,
Rushing in haughty thunders from above,
Can tame to fear. Thus sings the poet's lay:
Prometheus, to inform his noble clay,
Their various passions chose from every beast,
And with the lion's rage inspired the human breast.
From anger all the tragic horrors rose,
Which crushed Tyryne with a weight of woes.
From hence proud cities date their utter falls,
When insolent in ruin o'er their walls.
The wrathful soldier drags the hostile plough,
The haughty mark of total overthrow.
We too in youth the heat of anger fired,
And with the rapid rage of rhyme inspired;
But now repentant shall the Muse again
To softer numbers tune her melting strain,
So thou recall thy threats, thy wrath control,
Resume thy love, and give me back my soul.

Philip Francis

XVII

Velox amoreu saepe Lucreti
mutat Lycaeo Faustus et ignem
defendit asanem capellas
usque mens pucissioe venos.
impune tumet per nemus arbus
quern structet latint et thyma devote
omnis auras mati.
nec viridis metuunt colubras
neque Marsalis Hadriani lupes,
uncumque dulci, Troyandi, femina
valles vaticae cubant
levia personae saxa.
di me teres, div pictas me
et musa cordi est. hic tibi copia
manahit ad pium benignos
ruis honorum opulentos cura:
hic in recta vale Canisius
vitabi astus et fide Tilia
dices laborantis in uno
Penechon vinamque Circe,
hic innocentis poena Lasci
duces sub umbra, nec Semelus
cum Marte confuderit Thymene
poeila, nec metus perperum
suspecta Cyrum, ne male dispari
incognitiminit incipit manus
at elis sub areis coronem
ovinum immemorante vestem.

I, 17.

Swift Faunus oft changes his pleasant Lucretius for
Lycaeus, and everwards the summer's fiery heat and
the rainy winds from my she-goats. Souses of their
till-smelling lord, safely they roam this protected
grove in quest of any arbus and thyme, nor fear
green vipers, nor Mars' army of wolves from Macedias...
Cynthia, where'er Faunus' sweet pipe echoes about
the valleys and the smooth rocks of low-lying Ustica.
The gods protect me: they love my petry and my Muse.
Here to thy heart's content shall plenty, rich in
the country's pride, flow thee from her bounteous horn. Here in my vale's recess thou shalt sham the dog-star's heat, and sing to thy Teian lyre of Penelope's and bright Circe's yearning for one and the same love: here 'neath the shade thou shalt drain cups of harmless Lesbian wine, nor shall Semle's Bacchus battle with Mars; nor shalt thou fear lest Cypreus, jealous headstrong woor, lay rash hands on thee in unequal strife, and rend the garland that decks thy tresses, and thy innocent raiment.

1 lit. takes Lucretia in exchange for Lyceus.

I, 17

Swift-footed Pausus oft delights to roam
From snow-clad peaks of Arcady, and find
Here in my soft Lucretia's home,
Where in sequestered brake,
Safe from hot suns and pitiless wind,
From ledge to ledge my nimble younglings climb
Nipping fresh arbustus and fragrant thyme,
Fearless of prowling wolf or venom'd snake,
While from Ustica's vale profound
From polished rocks the wood-god's pipes resound.
The gods protect me. They approve
My piety, my song they love.
Haste, Tyndaris, haste! partake my store
Of rural honours brimming o'er
From plenteous horn. This cool retreat
Shall guard thee from the Dog-star's heat.
Here that white hand the Teian lyre shall strike,
That sweet voice sing the old Greek melody
Of him, the wandering Prince beloved alike
By that true wife, Penelope,
And Circe glittering as a summer sea.
Tyndaris! neath the arching vine
Lift to thy lips the Lesbian wine,
An innocent draught! Not here shall Mars
And Bacchus wage their customed wars;
Not here shall Jealous Cypreus dare
To rend thy guiltless robe, or tear
The clinging garland from thy hair.

Sir Stephen de Vere

XXXVIII

Persas ocii, pura, apparatu,
Disdilencit nesse phyla corone;
Sub sectari, rose quo locorum
Sera moritur.
simpici myro nihil adduces
sedulus cura neque te ministrum
decedit myro neque me sub arte
tulit ibi sen timur.

I, 36.

My lad, I hate your Persian splendours: garlands
twined with linden delight not me: cease to search
where tartaries yet the latest rose. I care not that
thy diligence add aught to plane myrtle: for myrtle
well befits both thee the man and me the master, who
drink beneath my vine's encircling shade.

I, 38

Boy, I hate their empty shows,
Persian garlands I detest,
Bring not me the late-blowen rose,
Linger after all the rest.

Plainer myrtle please me,
Thus outstretched beneath my vine;
Myrtle more becoming thee,
Waiting with thy master's wine.

William Cowper

CARMINVM LIBER II

II

Nullus argentum color est aravis
Abdito terris, inimice lamarum
Crispe Sallusti, nisi temperatorum splendor aut
Vivit exspectus Proculei annum,
Notas in frangens animis patrem;
Illum agit perennis memorem suum
Fama superest.
latus regum avium domando
Spes, quae si Libyam remoti
Gadibus longas et ueteque Punicum
Servat uni.
Crescit indulgens sihi dius hydrops,
Nec stippe pelius, nisi causa morbit
Fugit venem et aquos albus
Corporis longor.
redimus, Cyprior Phrasantes
Disdint plenae flentes uterum
Excitato, populumque falso
dedecto ad
vocibus, regnum et diadema tumult
Defersens urbi propinquum laurum,
Quinquies ingentibus ocule inretito
Special scurvo.

II, 2.

No sheen hath silver while 'tis hid in avaricious earth,
Sallustius Crispus, whose praise it is to have
played a father's part to his brothers: him shall
Cypreus' name bear on unfailing wing. A wider
empire is his who curbs a covetous heart, than
were he to unite Libya and farthest Gades, and
rule alone o'er Phoenix's twin colonies. "'Tis
by self-indulgence that dread dryad grows, nor
quenches thirst unless the sickness' root be banished from the veins, and watery languor from
the pallid frame. Though Phraates be restored to
Cypreus' throne, yet Virtue in no accord with the
multitude denies him a place among the truly
blessed, and teacheth the crew to speak no wrongful
praise; bestowing on him alone a crown and royalty
unquestioned and the garland that is his by right, who
sees nor turns a longing eye on high-piled wealth.

II, 2

Gold hath no lustre of its own;
It shines by temperate use alone,
And when in earth it boarded lies,
My Sallust can the mass despise.
With never-failing wing shall Pame
To latest ages bear the name
Of Proculeius who could prove
A Father, in a brother's love.
By virtue's precepts to control
The furious passions of the soul
Is over wider realms to reign,
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Libya join,
And both the Carthagins were thine.
The drypos, by indulgence nursed,
Pursues us with increasing thirst,
Till art expels the cause and drains
The watery languor from our veins.
But Virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe professed,
Diedaksis to number with the blest
Phraates, by his slaves adored.
And to the Parthian crown restored;
And gives the diadem, the throne,
And laurel wreath to him alone
Who can a treasured mass of gold
With firm undazzled eye behold.

Philip Francis
III

Arkam memento rebus in arduis
serve tuo mentem, non secus in bonis
ab insolentia tempora
litteris, moribus Delphi,
seu maentus omni tempore vicinia,
seu sit in remoto gaudia per diem
festas recitantibus
interiore nota Faberii.

quo pinus ingens altaeque populus
umbrae hospitalium conscendens amans
ramis? quid obiquo laborant
lympha fugax trepidare rivo?

hoc vina et uva est et minium brevis
flores amoenae forum tibi roseae,
dum res et aetas eorum
flamis tenuit ventus atret.

cedris coepitis salutibus et domo
villaggio fluvius quam Tibiri levit;
cedres, et castrensis in alio
divitias potestas here.

diverse prisco natus ab inascho
nili interea saepus et invisa
de gente sub divo meroes,
ultrices nil miserrimae Osci.

omnes eodem cuspium, omnium
versari una serus oceo
sors exitum et nos in aeternum
essentiam imposidum cumbae.

II, 3.

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

II, 7.

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

II, 3.

Be mindful thou, when storms of adverse fate
Encompass thee, to meet still unsubdued
Their worst with manly fortitude:
When Fortune, fickle deity,
Smiles once again, grateful yet unexampled
Accept the gift, Dellius foredoomed to die;
Whether in gloom astounds
Thou liv’st, or whether, when the year
Renews its feasts, on some sequestered ward
By cooling stream reclined,
Thou quaff’st Palerian draughts long-stored
Where the huge pine, and poplar silver-lined
With branches interlaced have made
A hospitable shade,
And where by curving bank and hollow bay
The tumulus waters work their silent way

Bring hither wine and rich perfume,
And the loved rose’s short-lived bloom,
While wealth is thine, and youthful years,
And pious as yet the fatal sisters’ shears.
One day thy stately halls, thy dear-bought woods,
Thy villa bathed by Tiber’s yellow floods,
Shall see their loving master’s face no more:
And lavish heirs shall waste his high-heaped store.

What boots it, friend, albeit you trace
From Inachus your rich and ancient race?
Then pay to Jove the feasts, that be his due,
And stretch at ease these war-worn limbs of thine
Beneath my laurel's shade; nor spare the wine
Which I have treasured through long years for thee.

Pour till it touch the shining goblet's rim
Carce-drowning Mæsic; let rich ointments flow
- From ampest conchs! No measure we shall know!
What! shall we wreaths of omy parsley trim,

Or simple myrtle? Whom will Venus send
To rule our revel? Wild my draughts shall be
As Thracian Bacchanals', for 'tis sweet to me
To lose my wits, when I regain my friend.

Sir Theodore Martin

X

Recitvs vives, Licini, neque altum
semp er argento noque, dum prococel caeris horrens, nimium premendo
litus iniquum.

aevenam quippe mediocriteram
diligit, tutus carat obsolcto
suditas torci, cant invidenda
sobria aula.

tpectus venus agitatur ingens
pinus et cedrus gravakeus
decisit turres fastiisque summos
fulgura montis.

spectat inexit, meum secundus
alveum sorsen benec preparatum
pectus. informis Hiemes redact.

Iuppiter, idem
summum. non, si male nunc, etulum
cer nint: quondam cibara tacentem
suscitat Minam neque semper arcum
tendit Apollo.

rebus anguis animus atque
fortis appare: sapienter idem
contrahes viento nimium secundo
turgida rel.

II, 10.

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

II, 10

Tempt not the deep, nor while you fly
The storm, Licinius, steer too nigh
The breakers on the rocky shore:
Hold fast, contented evermore,
The way of Peace, the Golden Mean: -
That bounded space which lies between
The sordid hut and palace hall.
Tall towers with mightiest ruin fall:
The giant Pine, wind-shattered, bends;
On loftiest peaks the bolt descends.

The balanced mind with prophet eye
Sees tempest in the cloudless sky;
Nor less when clouds that sky deform
Describes the rainbow through the storm.
Jove sends us frost, and winter rain,
But bids the summer bloom again:
Repine not for a short-lived sorrow,
A happier sun shall shine tomorrow:
Not always Phoebus bends his bow;
Often his harp in accents low
Awakes the silent Muse. - Beware!

Besse with danger do and dare!
But reef betimes thy swelling sail,
Nor trust too far the flattering gale.
Sir Stephen de Vere

XIV

Eaur flagrum, Postumus, Postumus,
labour annis nec pieta moram
regis et instanti senectae
adiiet indomitable morti;

non si trecentis quosque eund dies,
amicus, placis illustrabilis
Pontra saeta, qui terram amplum
Geryonem Titonique tristi
composcit unda, scilicet omnibus,
quicunque terrae murum vestrum,
causas, sive reges
sive inopem crimin coloni.
frustra crevuit Mercia cardium
frustra ruinae naus fluvius Hadriam,
frustra per autumnos nocument
corporibus metuens Austrum:
veniundas auro fluminis languido
Cycnoes eras et Danai genus
infame damnaque longi
Siaphus Aeolidis laboris;

inque tellus et domus et placens
securus et auro visinis arborum
praetor invissa cupressos
ulla brevem dominum sequetur:
absumus heres Casuha dipiter
servata centum ciclavis et mero
tingit pavimentum superbo,
posticum potiora centis.

II, 14.

Postumus, Postumus, the flying years, alas! slide on, nor shall pietat delay wrinkles and hasting old and unconquered death, -- no, my friend, not if every day thou shouldst offer three hundred bulls to appease tearless Pluto, who enchains Geryon’s triple bulk and Tityus with that gloomy wave which all we who live by earth’s bounty must traverse, be we kings or poor husbandmen. ‘Tis vain to shun bloody war and the howse Adrastic’s breaking surf: vain to guard against autumn’s unhealthy south winds: still must we behold black Cocytus’ dull weeping stream, and Danais’ accursed inn, and Siaphus, Aeolus’ son, doomed to an eternity of toil. Thy lands, thy house, thy loved wife, -- all must thou leave; nor of all you trees that thou tendest shall any save the hated cypress follow their short-lived lord. Thy worthier heir shall drain the Casuene thou guarded with an hundred keys, and stain thy floors with royal wine that e’en priestly banquets cannot match.

II, 14

Alas, my Postumus, our years
Glide silently away. No tears,
No loving oisons repair
The wrinkled cheek, the whitening hair
That drop forgotten to the tomb:
Pluto’s inexorable doom.

Wooks at thy daily sacrifice:
Around his dreary kingdom lies
That fatal stream whose arms infold
The giant race accursed of old:
All, all alike must cross its wave,
The king, the noble, and the slave.
In vain we shun the battle roar,
And breakers dashed on Adria’s shore;
Vainly we flee in terror blind
The plague that walketh on the wind:
The sluggish river of the dead,
Cycnoet, must be visited,
The Danai’s detested brood,
Foul with their murdered husbands’ blood,
And Siaphus with ghastly smile
Pointing to his eternal toil.
All must be left; thy gentle wife, 
Thy home, the joys of rural life;
And when thy fleeting days are gone
Th’illomened cypress eaves alone
Of all thy fondly cherished trees
Shall grace thy funeral obsequies,
Cling to thy loved remains, and wave
Their mournful shadows o’er thy grave.
A lavish grace a nobler heir
Thy hoarded Cecuban shall share,
And on the tessellated floor
The purple nectar madly pour,
Nectar more worthy of the halls
Where Pontiff’s hold highest festivals.

Sir Stephen de Vere

XVI

Carmen Liber III

CARMINVM LIBER III

O rossis Bandusiae splendide virebant
In multa suprema desta sunt
Dulci digne mero non sine floribus,
Cras donaturis hardo,
cui frons turpis comings
primis et venere potiora destitut
frustra: nam gelidus infictus
rubro sanguis rivos
lacivi suboles gregis.
te flagrantis ater hora Caniculae
nec neque tumens, tu fugit amabilis
fascis venerae taut
praevers et pecoris vaga.

fies nobilium tu quoque fontium,
de cretae cavis imperantium illustres
saxis, unde lucopacae
lymphae: decus tuum.
Point on Banduaia, brighter than glass, worthy of sweet wine, ay and flowers! to-morrow shall a kid be offered thee, whose brow is big with earliest horns, promise of love, and that all in vain: for the sportive flock's scion shall dye with red blood thy current cool. Untouched thou art by burning Dogstar's fiercest hour; welcome coolness thou dost give to oxen weary of the stroke, and wandering flocks. Thou too shalt have a place 'mong storied springs, when I sing the oak that crowns those beeting crags whence leap thy babbling waters.

Banduaia, stainless mirror of the sky! Thine is the flower-crown'd bowl, for thee shall die, When dew upon the kid, the cow; Whose horns, half-seen, half-hid,
Challenge to dianio or to strike-in vain! Soon must the firstling of the wild herd be slain, And those cold springs of thine With blood incarminade.

Fierce glows the Dogstar, but his fiery beam Toucheth not thee: still grateful thy cool stream To labour-weary cox, Or wanderer from the flocks:
And henceforth thou shalt be a royal fountain: My harp shall tell how from yon cavernous mountain, Where the brown oak grows tallest, All babblingly thou fallest. Charles Stuart Calverley

Imprisoned Danae had been protected now 'gainst nightly suitors by her brazen tower with doors of oak and sturdy watchdogs to be her sentinels, had not Jupiter and Venus mocked Aeetes, blind king of the hidden maid: knowing right well that safe and easy the road would be once the god was changed to gold. Gold will find a way through banded guards, and split rocks more nightly than the lightning's stroke: 'twas gain that plunged the Argive seer's house in headlong ruin: with bribes the Macedonian brake city-gates and gained the power of rival kings: bribes enmure rough ship-captains. With growing wealth comes care and hunger for increase. Wisely, Macedon, pride of untitled knights! have I ever shrank from raising my head aloft for all to see. Heaven's bounty still follows self-denial: naked, I cast my lot with those that covet nought, and desert the banner of the hosts of wealth: prouder in my lordship of what the world contends, than in the fame of storing in my granaries all the harvests that hardly Apollon win: -- so were I 'mong blessings still unblest. Mine is but a stream of clear water, a few acres of woodland and the sure promise of a crop, yet little knows the lordly ruler of fertile Africa how far less happy is his lot than mine: albeit no Calabrian bees store honey for me, nor have I wine that mellow in Formian jar, nor rich fleeces that grow in Gallic pastures, yet hated poverty is far from me, nor, should I crave for more, wouldst thou refuse to grant. Better shall I add somewhat to my scant estates by limiting my desires than by joining Alcyone's realms to Phrygia's plains. Ask much, much shalt thou lack: happy be, to whom heaven hath granted sufficiency with sparing hand.

A tower of brass held Danae immured; Strong oaken doors, and watchdogs' midnight bay 'Gainst love too bold the royal maid secured; But Jove and Venus smiled Mocking her Sire, for gold will work its way Through guarded gates and sentinel's besigued.

Gold cleaves the fortress and the rock With force more potent than the thunder's shock. The Argive augur, said By his false wife, Ericlythe, for gold, Died with his sons. The man of Macedon Subdued with prideful kings in arms arrayed: And Menea, won By Roman gold, a Roman fleet betrayed.

Maecenas! knightly boast! thou knowest how Like thee I shrank from lifting of my brow Above my peers. To him whose modest thirst Denies itself, Heaven sends its ample gift. Naked I fly the standard of the great, And seek the ranks of those who nought desire More honoured thus despising vulgar state Than if I should my bursting garners fill With rich Apollon's grain heaped daily higher, Sitting 'mid worthless wealth, a beggar still.

Enough for me my little wood, my spring Where Zephyr's cooling wing Fans the crisp stream; my garden plot Whose promised crop deceiveth not: The Afric despot knows no happier lot.

What though Calabrian bees for me No honey filch from flower or tree - What though no Gallic flocks increase For me their wealth of snowy fleece - What though the Formian vine Rips not in my bin its mellowing wine - Content I live; not rich; yet free From harsh importune penury: If more I claimed thou wouldst not more refuse. True riches mean not revenues: Care cling to wealth: the thirst for more Grows as our fortunes grow. I stretch my store By narrowing my wants; far wealthier thus Than if the treasures of Alathea And Phrygia's plains were mine. We are not poor While nought we seek. Happiest to whom high Heaven Enough - no more - with sparing hand has been.

Sir Stephen de Vere
O KAYA mecum consule Manlio,
seu tu querelas sive genis iocos
sea nosam et ianues amores
seu facilem, pia testa, somnum,
quocunque lectum nomine Massicum
servas, muni digna boso sin,
descende, Corvinus labente
promere longuidoria vina.

Dixit quamquam Socratis adaequat
sermonibus, et neglect homines
narratur et prisci Catonis
vace meru calisse virtus.

tur ingestionem ingressus
plurimum duce: tuo sapientium
curis et arcanis iocco
vocant Latini Lyceum
et caudis unius animis
virisque et aditis cornua pauperi
post te neque maius terrae
regnos apicis neque milium arma.

te Liber et si laeta adieta, Venus
seque neque sommi solemne Gracie
vivaque producent lacrimae.
dum rediens fugit astris Phoebus.

III, 21.

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

III, 21

O born in Manlius' year with me,
Whate'er you bring us, plain or jest,
Or passion and wild revelry.
Or like a gentle wine-jar rest;
Hewer men call your Maecian juice,
Its broaching claims a festal day;
Come then; Corvinus bids produce
A mellower wine, and I obey.
Though steeped in all Socratic lore,
He will not slight you; do not fear.
They say old Cato o'er and o'er
With wine his honest heart would cheer.
Tough wits to your mild torture yield
Their treasures; you unlock the soul
Of wisdom and its stores concealed,
Armed with Lyceus' kind control.
'Tis yours the drooping heart to heal;
Your strength uplifts the poor man's horn;
Inspired by you, the soldier's steel,
The monarch's crown, he laughs to scorn.
Liber and Venus, both so,
And sister Graces, ne'er unkind,
And living lamps shall see you flow
Till stars before the sun rise slay.
John Conington

Grazia cum Nymphis geninisque sororibus audet
ducere nuda choros.

immortalia ne spes, moriet annus et alium
quae edebo hora diem.
frigera minores Zephyris, vest prope axis
interrita simul
pomerior Autumnus fruges effudit et max
bruna recurrit ineris.

danae tamen cella reparsa castella funere:
non est decisiones
quo pater Aeneas, quo Tellus dives et Ancus.
pulvis et umbra sumus.

quin sic an advento hodiece cratina summae
tempora diu superet?
cuncta manu aequas fugient heredis, amico
quae dobor anima.

cum semel acciderit et dea splendida Minos
fuisse arbitri,

noi, Torquato, genius, non post facta, non te
sine situ pietas:

in infima neque crinum tenebrius Diana podicum
liberat Hipolytum.

nec Lethara valet Theseeus abrumpere caro
vincula Peritho.

IV, 7

Meld are the snows, and now the fields once more are clad with grass, the trees with leaves: with the varying year the lessening streams flow between their banks: the sister Graces three in naked beauty venture forth with the Nymphs to lead the dance. Hope nought immortal -- so were the year and the hour that speeds the sunny day. Cold turns to mildness at the west wind's breath: summer races spring, itself to perish soon as fruitful autumn greets his store, and ere long sluggish winter comes again. Yet swift moons repair what skyes have wasted: but we, when we have followed record of Aeneas and wealthy Tullus and Ancus to their lovely bournes, are nought but dust and shadow. Who can tell if heaven above shall add a morrow to this day's sum of life? All that thou givest for thine own heart's delight shall 'scape the heir's greedy clutch. Once thou hast fallen and Minos passed high judgment on thee, nor lineage, Torquatus, nor eloquence nor plenty shall restore thee: for from the shades of death Diana frees not her chase Hippolytus, nor can Theseus break oblivion's bonds from off his loved Perithous.

'Gooley translates Perithoos, which is the usual spelling. The reading in the Oxford text is Perithoos.'

IV, 7

The snow is fled; the trees their leaves put on,
The fields their green.
Earth owns the change, and rivers lessening run
Their banks between.

Naked the Nymphs and Graces in the meads
The dance essay;
'No 'soaping death' proclaims the year, that speeds
This sweet spring day.

Frosts yield to zephyrs; Summer drives out Spring,
To vanish, whom
Rich Autumn sheds his fruits; round wheels the ring -
Winter again!

Yet the swift moons repair heaven's detriment:
We, soon as thrust
Where good Aenea, Tullus, Ancus went,
What are we? Dust.

Can Hope assure you one more day to live
From powers above?
You rescue from your heir whatever you give
The self you love.
When life is o'er, and Minos has rehearsed
The grand last dooms,
Not birth, nor eloquence, nor worth shall burst
Torquatus' tomb

Not Dion's self can chase Hippolytus
To life recall,
Nor Theseus free his loved Perithoos,
From Letha's thrall.

John Conington
Think not, my Lollius, that these strains can die,
Strains linked by arts unknown before;
With chords of lyric harmony,
Which from far-sounding Aufidus' banks
Where Ayes, the mountain flood down to the Adrian shore.
The poet dies not; Homer reigns alone;
Dionysus and the vengeful lyre,
Idemeneus still chants in graver tone;
And Pindar's glowing hymn to the soul inspire.
The generations pass away,
But spare Anacreon's sportive lay.
And love still breathes where Sappho sings
And still the soul of rapture cling
To the wild thrubblings of the Aeolian strings.

Not Spartan Helen, false and fair,
By passion blinded, driven by Fates;
First loved a stranger's braided hair,
His golden robes, his princely state;
And lost to shame, to honour dead,
From home, from country fled:

Not Hector, not Deiphobus,
Died first their wives, their babes to guard;
Idemeneus and Theneus
Not first defied the foeman's sword;
Not Teucer first bent the Cydonian bow;
Nor once alone Troy's god-built walls lay low.

A race of heroes brave and strong
Before Atrides fought and died;
No Homer lived; no sacred song
Their great deeds sanctified;
Obscure, unsept, unknown they lie,
Oppress'd with clouds of endless night;
No poet lived to glorify
Their names with light.

Virtue from human eye concealed,
Unseen, unhonoured, unrevealed,
Like buried cloths forgotten lies.
Thy toils, my Lollius, shall defy;
Oblivion pale, Foul oblivion;
Thy fame shall shine and star-like rise
On song's immortal blazon penned
By me, thy poet and thy friend.

Thine is the strenuous will, the constant mind,
The soul serene in calm or storm resigned:
Consult for Life: for, while one pulse survives,
In thee the Roman's soul, the spirit lives,
Spirit of justice, which disdains
The fraudful wine, the miser's gains,
The proffered bribe, which loves the light,
Sorrows the expatiant, grappes the right;
Spirit heroic, which when foes
Unnumbered round the legion close,
Measures the peril with untroubled eye
And bursts through circling hosts to victory.

Who dwells on earth supremely blest?
Not he of wealth and power possess'd;
But he alone to whom is given
Wisdom to use the gifts of Heaven;
Who fears to sin, but not to die;
Most rich when steeped in poverty,
Exulting when his native land
Of friends believed his life demand.
SIR STEPHEN DE VERE

Deem not that death will overtake the verse which I,
A child of far-sounding Aufidus' banks, make by arts
foretime unvelied, fit mate for lyric strings:
though Masonian Homer hold his pride of place, yet is
not Pindar's nor Clio Muse Forgotten, nor Alcaeus'
challenge nor Stesichorus' exalted song; nor hath time
erased Anacreon's sportive lay: there love yet breathes,
and yet lives in the lyre's keeping the Aeolian girl's
passion. Others beside Laocoon Helen have
with love and wonder by a personage's glossy looks, his
embroidered mien and royal pomp and retinue;
others ere Teucer aimed arrows from Cydonian bow;
other Troyes have been besieged: not Idemeneus
or Theneus alone fought fights that poesy should have sung:
not proud Hector, not brave Deiphobus first
faced the hard battle-shock for children and chaste
wives. Many the brave who lived ere Agamemnon: but all are buried in eternal night, unseen, unknown,
for lack of a sacred singer. Small is the space
that severs buried cloths from hidden worth. My page,
Lollius! shall not mutually leave thee unhonoured, or
suffer envious oblivion unrebuked to devour thy many
toils. Thou hast a soul wise in affairs, upright
in hours of success and danger, a soul to punish
greedy fraud and shun money's all-compelling charm,
a soul to make thee consul not one year alone, but
at whatsoever time it plays the honest judge's part
sets Honour above interest, refuses with lofty scorn
the bribes of guilt, and carries its triumphant
standards through the opposing hosts. The lord of
wide possessions merits not truly the name of blast:
more rigidly is the title his alone who knows how
wisely to use heaven's gifts and bear grim penury,
and dreadful crime worse than death: fearing not to
perish for friends beloved or fatherland.
nardi parus oysa eliciat cadum,
qui nam Sulpicius accedet hermosa,
spec dona novus largus amarunus
curum spero effica.

ad que si procerus gaudia, cum tua
velox mere omen; non ego te meis
immunem mediator tingere poculis,
plena dives ut in honis.

verum pone miss et studium lucr.
inaniusque memos, dux licet, ignium
miue mutilian corolla bexes:
dulce est desipere lobe.

IV, 12.

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

IV, 12

Now Thracian airs, companions of the Spring,
Temper the seas, and with Hesian wing
Fan the expanded sail. Released from snow
The earth awakes: late-raging rivers flow
With noiseless course. Once more the voice is heard,
As o'er she builds her nest, of that poor bird
Who grieves for Itys, - her, the dire disgrace
(Though foul the sin avenged) of Cecrops' rage.
The shepherd stretched on tender herbage trills
Strains like his native mountains wild and free,
Charming the god who haunts those pine-dark hills,
And loves the peaceful flocks of Arcady.
Thirst comes with Summer; Virgil, haste,
Comrade of noble youths, and taste
Choice wine of Caes: my reward
One little shall of Syrian nard.
The mellowed cask long-stored within
The depths of the Sulpician bin
Shalt then be thine, that nectar rare
Which brightens hope and drowns dull care.
Come taste my wine, but ere thou try it,
Remember, friend, that thou must buy it:
I cannot, like the rich man, give
Largess to all and nought receive.

Hence, sordid cares! Hence, idle sorrow!
Death comes apace: to-day - to-morrow -
Then mingle mirth with melancholy,
Wisdom et times is found in folly.

Sir Stephen De Vere