

**THE SATIRES AND  
EPISTLES  
OF HORACE**

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The Satires and Epistles of Horace by David Hunter

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**DAVID HUNTER**

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THE  
SATIRES AND EPISTLES  
OF  
HORACE.

INTERPRETED BY

DAVID HUNTER, Esq.

“NON ITA CERTANDI COPIDUS, QUAM PROPTER AMOREM.”

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HORACE ne se contente point d'une superficielle expression, elle le trahiroit: il veut plus clair et plus outre dans les choses; son esprit crochette et furette tout le magasin des mots et des figures pour se représenter; il les lui faut outre l'ordinaire, comme sa conception est outre l'ordinaire.

MONTAIGNE.

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LONDON:  
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XXXVIII.

INTRODUCTORY SONNET.

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IN various moods of mind, these latter years,  
Horace has strewed a couch for my repose;  
Laughing as follies vividly arose;  
Uninjured objects of the poet's jeers.  
Leave to the young the luxury of tears!  
To boobies their declamatory woes:  
Give us the verse which clear and sparkling flows  
With tuneful pleasure for delighting ears.  
But is it poetry? ah, there's the strife!  
All, all would emulate the eagle's wings:  
One mimics Byron to the very life;  
Another, pale, aghast, and vaporous, sings  
'Tis dismal work to sail in a balloon  
With Keats and Shelley, to explore the moon.



## PREFACE.

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WHAT Horace has said of Lucilius, with equal propriety applies to himself.

Ille velut fidei arcana sodalibus olim  
Credebat libris ; neque, si male gesserat, usquam  
Decurrens alio, neque si bene ; quo fit, ut omnis  
Votivâ pateat veluti descripta tabellâ  
Vita senis.

In the Satires and Epistles of Horace, every personal peculiarity of the poet, every remarkable incident of his life, are with great candour laid before us. Horace involuntarily is his own biographer, and entertaining, if not instructive, is the account we glean from his writings of his life and character.

Searching, beneath his candour, and graceful cheerfulness, with seeming negligence, and conversational pleasantry, he scatters knowledge, like gold, upon his path : uniting acute observation of the customs of the world, and the characters of men, with reflections, enriched by his habitual study of Grecian writers.

Rapid, alert, and various ; singularly frugal in the use of words, expressive and nervous in his style, abrupt in his transitions, and delightfully careless in his numbers, he never gives his reader time to grow weary.



Whilst his tempered wit and exquisite humour amuse, his writings abound with prudence, and judicious rules for the conduct of men, in various situations of life.

He left it to Juvenal to waste his brilliant eloquence and diffuse indignation in attempting to reform the "highly respectable,"—the patrician dignitaries of the land. Horace had too quick a sense of propriety to make such vivid and vigorous aggressions, with no nobler credentials than his own authority, upon "the established order of things."

To conciliate the dandies of his day, he tells them that he himself was one of those meritorious individuals, born only to consume the fruits of the earth.

Nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,  
Sponsi Penelopeæ, &c.

He left to Eolus the management of the winds; and diverted himself and his readers by laughing good humouredly at the universal follies of mankind, in a way which has rarely been successfully imitated. *Cui bono*, said he, to grieve with sympathy over the oppressions of the poor, or snarl sarcastically at the innocent pastimes of the rich! "These have many advantages: those few, if any."

Scilicet uxorem cum dote, fidemque, et amicos,  
Et genus, et formam, regina pecunia donet.

Omnis enim res  
Virtus, fama, decus, divina humanaque, pulchris  
Divitiis parent.

"Whether wealth or virtue are preferable, I cannot

take upon me to say: but the suffrages of the world are in favour of wealth." When Ulysses repudiates the paltry tricks and subserviency which are pointed out to him as the only refuge in his bankrupt state, Horace puts into the mouth of the Theban seer, Tiresias, the emphatic answer, "Ergo pauper eris."—"If you wish to maintain any dignity of character, pray do so, and starve. If you *must* speak truth, adieu (in your present condition) to wealth and honours." Get riches first: it will then be time enough to think of virtue.

O cives, cives, querenda pecunia primum est;  
Virtus post nummos.

Without the former, you cannot be a gentleman.

Est animus tibi, sunt mores, est lingua fidesque;  
Sed quadringentis sex septem millia desint;  
Plebs eris.

This "love of money" was evidently a prominent feature in the incipient corruption of morals among the Roman people:—a prelude to the darker and more revolting enormities, which increased fearfully after the death of Augustus Cæsar.

In his graver moods, Horace, with much amenity, counsels us to avoid extremes in all things, and to gain knowledge from all men, without adopting precipitately the opinions of any.

Let us neither place implicit confidence in, nor be necessarily hostile to, generally received maxims. Away with enthusiasm! Let us get at the *fontes rerum*,—the sources of all established truths,—and be

fully persuaded in our own minds that names are not things.

Let us not aim at the abstract and impracticable, not soar for shadows which elude the grasp, but stoop and cull the flowers which grow around us, and at our feet.

The fruits and flowers of the earth grow upon its surface: let us receive with gratitude the joys within our reach.

Let us beware of being the slaves of a superficial education, of custom, of example.

Let us be charitable in judging others, nor expect that perfection which no candid man ever discovered in himself: but let no social complacency induce us to mistake the appearances of things for things themselves.

Let us be frugal in our desires, and let us cherish a contented spirit: convinced that if happiness is not in our own breasts, it is in vain to seek it elsewhere.

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