

EPISTLES, SATIRES AND EPIGRAMS

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Epistles, Satires and Epigrams by James E. Thorold Rogers

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*Inveniat quod quisque velit, non omnibus unum est
Quod placet, hic spinas colligit, ille rosas.*

PRY. ARR.

LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY & SON, NEW BURLINGTON STREET

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1876

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TO GEORGE WARING.

*Why is it that the meed of changeless fame
Is grudged the present, granted to the past?
Why is it that the praise will seldom last
With which its flatterers deck a living name?
Must all success be bounded by its aim?
Shall unsought glory brighten and grow vast?
Does future time its warmest radiance cast
On what its own day left to scorn or blame,
As the true crop thrives by the winter's blast?
Then shall the man who labours for his age,
Who heeds no purpose but divinest truth,
And bends not to the passion of the hour,
Though wrath and envy wreak their fellest rage,
Be gifted with the boon of deathless youth,
And as he grows in honour, grow in power.*

HORACE.

Epistles: I. xx.

[In the last epistle of his first book, Horace addresses his poems as though they were eager for publication.]

THE AUTHOR TO HIS BOOK.

TRICKED out by dainty paper, clad in blue,
Marked with some quaint device and lettered too,
Like a weak bird, in gaudy plumage dressed,
You strive, poor book, to flutter from your nest,
And win attention from the noisy throng.
Will they believe your twitter is a song?
Bentley, forsooth, must tell your little all¹,
And Smith² must vend you at the station-stall;

¹ *Vertumnum Janumque, liber, spectare videris*

Scilicet ut praestes Sosiorum pumice mundus.

The places referred to by Horace were the Row of Rome, the Sosii were leading publishers.

² Mr. W. H. Smith is the contractor for most of the railway book-stalls.

His boys must seek to catch the languid eye,
 Clip off your H³ and bid the traveller buy;
 Or Mudie deign to circulate your page—
 Mudie, the one Mecaenas of the age.
 What, are you weary of the kindly key⁴
 Which kept you from the risks which I foresee?
 The drawer which should, if you were wisely coy,
 Remain your only home, your modest joy?
 You murmur that you only know a few⁵,
 And long to mingle with the general crew.
 'Twas not for this I trained your stumbling feet⁶,
 That you should flirt with every one you meet.
 Well, if you must, depart, my counsel spurn,
 But know, once gone, you never can return.
 'Unhappy me⁷!' you 'll cry, when ail too late;
 'What did I do, to rush upon my fate?
 'What did I dream of, wish, devise, intend,
 'To seek a foe and quit a faithful friend?
 'He warned me, and I find his warning true
 'When flouted by this slashing, smart review,
 'Whose savants use their instincts, spare their eyes,
 'And rarely read the books they criticise.

³ These imitations were originally published under the name of 'Horace without his Toga.'

⁴ *Odisti claves, et grata sigilla pudico.*

⁵ *Faucis ostendi gemis, et communia laudas.*

⁶ *Non ita nutritus, etc.*

⁷ *Quid miser egi?* etc.

'Whose constant rule is, "'Tis a sneer that pays:
 "There's nothing so unsaleable as praise."⁷
 But if they spare you, or you heed them not,
 And chance to hit upon a happier lot;
 If there be some who love you in your prime,
 They will be cloyed and surfeited in time:
 Love may be roused, I grant it, by a look;
 But very few are constant to a book;
 And when that doom is yours you will confess
 Neglect exceeds all scorn in bitterness.
 And yet, unless my wrath at your offence⁸
 Deprives my judgment of its finer sense,
 You will be liked awhile in Town, as long
 As youth and freshness keep you bright and strong;
 But when you sink into a commonplace,
 Become a public, a familiar face;
 Or, when neglected, laid upon the shelf,
 You seek to drown the knowledge of yourself,
 Ere you are left to gathering dust a prey,
 Or feel the slow corrosion of decay,
 Fly while you can, and seek another clime,
 Another market and a happier time.
 Perhaps some Yankee publisher may give⁹
 A shoddy dress in which to ply and live;

⁷ Quod si non odio peccantis desipit augur,
 Carus eris Romae, donec te deserat aetas.

⁹ Aut fugies Uticam, aut victus mitteris Herdam.

Perhaps the charms which pall in English eyes
 Australia's squatters may admit and prize.
 The world is wide, then wander where you can;
 They're learning English, settle in Japan.
 Like Ida Pfeiffer¹⁰, roam the ocean o'er;
 Lean, ragged, dirty, visit shore on shore.
 I warned you, and you heard not¹¹. I disdain
 To take such truants to my home again;
 I loved you as a father, but can bear
 To laugh at that which once was all my care.
 I often told you when you were a child,
 When you were docile and yet unbeguiled,
 How, down the precipice he would not pass,
 The angry master drove his stubborn ass;
 So though I strove to guide you, shall I still
 Strive till I'm weary, and against your will?
 This, let me also tell you, is your end¹²;
 When tattered, dirty, torn, you find no friend;
 When the smart covers which were once your pride,
 Have left you shelterless on either side;

¹⁰ Madame Pfeiffer was a great traveller, and was said, like the late Dr. Woolf, to have owed her life or safety to that total neglect of personal adornment which necessity or policy led her to practise.

¹¹ Ridebit monitor non exauditus; ut ille
 Qui male parentem in rupes protulit asellum
 Iratus: quis enim invitum servare laboret?

¹² Hoc quoque te manet, etc.