HORATIAN ECHOES; TRANSLATIONS OF THE ODES OF HORACE

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Horatian echoes; translations of the Odes of Horace by John Osborne Sargent

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JOHN OSBORNE SARGENT

HORATIAN ECHOES; TRANSLATIONS OF THE ODES OF HORACE



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TRANSLATIONS OF THE ODES OF HORACE

BY

JOHN OSBORNE SARGENT



WITH AN LYTRODUCTION BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES



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INTRODUCTION

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

IT gives me peculiar pleasure to write a few lines of introduction to the translation made by my dear and almost lifelong friend, John Osborne Sargent.

We began our literary life together. Hand in hand, like the Babes in the Wood, we ventured into the untried realm of letters: he, a college senior of twenty; I, a half-trained graduate of about the same age. Side by side our early productions appeared in the same periodicals; and from that day to the year of his death we have kept in friendly relations with each other.

Mr. Sargent was by no means homo unius libri, a man of a single book, but few scholars have shown more devotion to a chosen author than he has manifested to his beloved Horace. That classic writer was always a favorite of the learned. The perfection of his style, the admirable truth and discrimination of his critical judgment, the charming companionable familiarity of his Odes, the thoroughly human feeling which pervades them, qualified by the sensitive fastidiousness inseparable from the highest cultivation, fit him for the scholar's intimate and the student's Few could appreciate these excellences so fully as Mr. Sargent. He assimilated all that was most characteristic and captivating in this delicious writer, whose fascination surpasses that of poets of far loftier pretensions. Virgil has been the object of an admiration amounting almost to worship, but he will often be found on the shelf, while Horace lies on the student's table, next his hand. It is a privilege to be introduced to the great Augustan lyrical poet and critic by one so thoroughly conversant with his author, and so deeply imbued with all the distinguishing qualities of this refined, genial, clear-sighted, thoroughbred Roman gentleman.

All Mr. Sargent's translations bear the same mark of fidelity to the original, and a happy transfusion of ancient thought, which can never grow old, into the modern phrases of another language.