

**HORATIANA,
CANTICA,
MISCELLA**

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Horatiana, Cantica, Miscella by William Hathorn Mills

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WILLIAM HATHORN MILLS

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CANTICA,
MISCELLA**

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Miscella**

**By
William Hathorn Mills**

Published by the Author

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Horatiana

Three

TO THE
ABBOT OF
Stet Capitolium.

WHETHER he sings of high romance,
Or hymns the everlasting Sire,
Or suits his lay to choral dance,
Or scourges forms of base desire,
Or paints the lady of his choice,
Horace is still a living Voice.

Your sweetly smiling Lalage,
Whose spirit turned a wolf to fight,
Your little farm by Tivoli,
Bandusia's fountain crystal-bright,
Your haunts, your hospitalities—
Horace, they're all before our eyes.

Orbilus flogged you when at school;
You have our fullest sympathy,
For we remember a ferule,
That smote us oft and lustily;
Would it had gotten into us
A measure of your genius.

You sang how Regulus put aside
The crowds encumbering his return,
Refused his wife's kiss, and denied
Her plea with answer curt and stern;
"Rome must be saved; let cowards die"—
We hear it yet—that haught reply.

How Paulus and how Cato died,
Too staunch to fly, too proud to yield;
How stout Marcellus turned the tide
Of war in many a foughten field;
How yeomen played heroic parts—
You've stamped it all upon our hearts.

Four

They left their farms to fight; they braved
All pains of death; and, if they fell,
What mattered it, so Rome were saved?
Her weal safeguarded, all was well.
The State must stand, tho' men may die—
That was Old Rome's philosophy.

You made them household words—the names
Of those who fought and fell for Rome—
And you—your memory lives, and claims
Place at their side in every home;
Your bones lie on a Roman hill,
Horace, but you are with us still.



Five

404117

Puellis Idoneus

Od. III. 26

HORACE had many themes; his rimes
At times clomb Helicon's peak; at times
His Muse just sported;
He sang of Gods, of mighty men,
Of wines, of rustic joys, of ten
Damsels he courted.

It seems he had a lot of flames
From first to last; his list of names
Is gey an' long;
Were they real living demoiselles,
Or quite imaginary belles—
Just pegs for song?

Some anyhow were real, and two
Adorned, as gentle souls and true,
His poetry—
The kindly Cinara—rapt, alas!
From earth untimely—and the lass
Named Lalage.

Militavi

PYRRHA bound up her golden hair;
For whom? Well, Horace didn't know;
Well dressed yet simply, she was fair,
But was she constant? No. And so
Horace, shipwrecked by her of yore,
Thanked Heaven that he'd got safe to shore.

* * * *

When Lydia praised Telephus,
Horace, indignant, made a fuss;
He said that scratches on her lips
And shoulders meant beauty's eclipse;
She'd better far have stuck to him;
Then she'd have been unscratched and trim.

* * * *

Glycera's face was slippery—
Too slippery for stedfast gaze;
Its beauty twinkled, seemingly,
Or dazzled as a flash-light's rays.
Each ray was as a Cupid's dart,
And Horace played the target's part.

* * * *

As Horace sorrowed that in battle
He'd left his shield, and fled to Rome,
Came Lalage, and with sweet prattle
Shifted his thoughts to joys of home;
Which shows that prattlings sweet may be
Sometimes as good as poetry.

I hope that Lalage was not
All talk—her name implies a tongue—
If so, she'd better far have got
Hold of a lyre, and sweetly sung;
Ah well—lest Horace should get rattled,
She smiled as sweetly as she prattled.

* * * *