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## XIX.—Horace's Influence upon American Criticism

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This paper is summarized in the first paragraph.

### I

Horace's literary theories have played an important part in the growth of literary criticism. Whether derived from Horace himself or through some admirer of Horace, the knowledge of the Horatian principles has formed the thinking of many of the American critics. In tracing this influence from Bryant's day to the present, only passages that are unmistakably Horatian have been used; consequently, it is a safe assumption that most of these passages were drawn directly from their Roman source. To include matter that has the Horatian tone without being in Horace's words or a paraphrase of them would extend this paper beyond all possible bounds. For convenience the critics to be considered are divided chronologically into three groups.

### II

Bryant and Poe compose the first group. Bryant, indeed, overlaps in time the second group, but the work of his earlier years determines his place.

William Cullen Bryant grew up under the conservative influence of neo-classicism. The favorite books of the elders in his native Cummington, in eighteenth-century literature, were preferred reading throughout his life.<sup>1</sup> The copious references to classical literature in these books, coupled with the urging of his scholarly father, aroused in the precocious

<sup>1</sup> Tremain McDowell, *William Cullen Bryant* (New York, American Book Company, 1935), xv-xvi; John Bigelow, *William Cullen Bryant* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1890), 293. For the extent of Horatian influence in the eighteenth-century English literature, see Caroline Goad, *Horace in the English Literature of the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1918).

boy the desire to learn Greek and Latin.<sup>2</sup> Although he later embraced the romanticism of his time, he never renounced his classical heritage; and his reversion, when an old man, to the study and translation of Homer shows the depth of the impression made upon him by his youthful studies.

Dr. Peter Bryant, his son testifies, preferred the odes of Horace to all other Latin poetry. His son inherited this interest. Among his first published poems was a translation of *Odes* I 12, soon followed by the *Integer Vitae*; and at the outbreak of the Civil War he appropriately published a translation of the seventh epode.<sup>3</sup> One cannot, however, judge fairly Bryant's interest in Horace by the scarcity of reference to him. His critical career was cut short by his editorial work; and while his criticism shows amply the influence of Horace, frequent classical references are hardly to be expected of a busy editor.

Among Horace's critical teachings Bryant is chiefly interested in the Roman's insistence upon that care and deliberation which are safeguards against mediocre performance. In 1824 he wrote in a review: <sup>4</sup>

. . . Where so many of the elements of poetry are present, we cannot but regret that any cause should mar, in the slightest degree, that perfection and harmony into which they should mingle. We are at the same time glad to see, that if any such cause exists, it is one which the author may easily remove. A little of the *limae labor*, a stricter attention to the niceties of poetical diction, and a more painful revision of weak passages, would do much towards freeing the poetry of our author from the imperfections to which we allude. . . .

With the phrase *limae labor* as the clue, one sees that Bryant

<sup>2</sup> Tremaine McDowell, "Cullen Bryant Prepares for College," *South Atlantic Quarterly* xxx (April, 1931), 125; Bigelow, *op. cit.* (see note 1), 12.

<sup>3</sup> McDowell, *op. cit.* (see note 2), 127, and "The Juvenile Verse of William Cullen Bryant," *Studies in Philology* xxvi (January, 1929), 111; Parke Godwin, *The Poetical Works of William Cullen Bryant* (Two volumes. New York, D. Appleton, 1883), II 305.

<sup>4</sup> William Cullen Bryant, "Review of *The Ruins of Paestum; and Other Compositions*," *North American Review* xix (July, 1824), 42-43; *Ars Poetica* 291.

also has in mind Horace's refusal to condemn a good poem for a few careless blots, his insistence upon proper diction, and his requirement that inferior passages be improved or deleted.<sup>5</sup> Of a mediocre work which had long escaped review, he wrote: <sup>6</sup>

. . . The *lettered post* alone, the immense column before the book-seller's shop, plastered with the names of all the works sold within, informed the passing traveller who was indolent enough to stop and examine it, that a new book had been given to the world.

Years after, in a tribute to Fitz-Greene Halleck, he said: <sup>7</sup>

. . . One of the resemblances which he bore to Horace consisted of the length of time in which he kept his poems by him that he might give them the last and happiest touches. . . .

A few other passages in Bryant's criticism contain illuminating mention of Horace. Irving he describes as a satirist amiable beyond Horace, equally devoid of bitterness in his irony.<sup>8</sup> Halleck he considers the American Horace: <sup>9</sup>

. . . Halleck's humorous poems are marked by an uncommon ease of versification, a natural flow and sweetness of language, and a careless, Horatian playfulness and felicity of jest, not, however, imitated from Horace or any other writer. . . .

At a dinner in honor of Halleck, he said: <sup>10</sup>

If, gentlemen, by any possibility we could have among us for a time, in full life, the Roman satirist and lyrist, Quintus Horatius Flaccus, we should forego no fitting manner of expressing our admiration for his genius. We should give him dinners private and dinners public; we should have poetics, symposiums, festivities of all kinds in his honor. Gentlemen, with a dead Horace you can do nothing—I suppose you are all aware of that; but the living Horace is here—the Horace of this great, opulent, populous,

<sup>5</sup> For other passages probably referred to by Bryant see *Ars Poetica* 46–72, 234–250, 347–359, 438–452.

<sup>6</sup> Parke Godwin, *The Prose Works of William Cullen Bryant* (Two volumes. New York, D. Appleton, 1884), I 69; *Ars Poetica* 372–373.

<sup>7</sup> Godwin, *op. cit.* (see note 6), I 391; *Ars Poetica* 388, 291–294.

<sup>8</sup> Godwin, *op. cit.* (see note 6), I 348.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* I 382.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* I 380 (note).

luxuriant Rome of the Western Hemisphere. Let us do him honor. His numbers are as sweet as those of his predecessor, his wit as keen, as brilliant, and as playful, the spirit of his serious odes even more fiery and enthusiastic.

I only wish he had written as much as Horace, and Horace was no voluminous author. I wish that, instead of two or three satires, he had given us twenty or thirty, and instead of one book of odes, five or six, and three or four epodes after them. . . .

Poe's use of Horace is much more extensive than Bryant's. His classical tags include rarely quoted passages from Horace as well as the common phrases. His criticism, as numerous quotations of Horace attest, is essentially Horatian. Since I have elsewhere attempted a detailed study of Horatian elements in Poe's criticism, I shall here indicate merely the heads under which he actually makes definite use of Horace.<sup>11</sup> His illustrations for his theories of prosody are passages from the odes.<sup>12</sup> He describes poets as a *genus irritabile*, who possess the *mens diviniore*, are *nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri*, and never write *invita Minerva*; they know how to mingle *utile* and *dulce*, and do not employ the *deus ex machina*.<sup>13</sup>

Poe and Bryant are products of the eighteenth century's interest in the classics. Although their attitude is modified by the new currents in literature, their criticism is essentially classical in origin. Poe in particular presages the carefully worked out classical criticism of the period that follows.

### III

"Books," wrote Emerson, "are for the scholar's idle times"; and critics have mistakenly believed him to be describing his own methods. Stedman mentions "Emerson's infrequent

<sup>11</sup> See my "Horace and Edgar Allan Poe," *The Classical Weekly* xxvi (March 6, 1933), 129-133.

<sup>12</sup> E. C. Stedman and G. E. Woodberry, *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (Ten volumes. Chicago, Stone and Kimball, 1895), vi 55-56, 62, 92-93, 96-99. Extended discussion of Poe's theory of classical poetry is found in John Mackinnon Robertson, *New Essays towards a Critical Method* (London, John Lane, 1897).

<sup>13</sup> *Epistles* II.2.102; *Satires* I.4.43; *Epistles* I.1.14; *Ars Poetica* 385; *Ars Poetica* 343-344; *Ars Poetica* 391.

borrowing,"<sup>14</sup> and Garnett asserts that his genius "rendered him more independent of books than any other great writer of his age."<sup>15</sup> Emerson's *Journals*, however, have made evident what should have been obvious to careful criticism; and a more recent student of Emerson dilates upon his indebtedness for his poetical theories to many writers.<sup>16</sup> Emerson's indebtedness to classical sources other than to Plato has for some reason been neglected, although the only textbooks from which he believed himself to have derived benefit were his classical texts.<sup>17</sup> His much-advertised strictures upon the classics, when analyzed, show merely that he detested that classical instruction which stopped at long-drawn-out "gerund-grinding."<sup>18</sup>

The attempt to study Emerson's use of a classical author meets at the start an apparent rebuff from the master himself:<sup>19</sup>

. . . Most of the classical citations you shall hear or read in the current journals or speeches were not drawn from the originals, but from previous quotation in English books; and you can easily pronounce, from the use and relevancy of the sentence, whether it had not done duty many times before,—whether your jewel was got from the mine or from an auctioneer. . . .

Judged by the very test he suggests, Emerson's quotations were not got at second hand; and most of his references to Horace are from the Latin, in spite of his avowed preference for translations of books in foreign tongues.<sup>20</sup>

Emerson's references to Horace cover such a wide variety of subjects that no systematization of them is possible. His

<sup>14</sup> Edmund Clarence Stedman, *Poets of America* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin 1885), 297.

<sup>15</sup> Richard Garnett, *Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York, Scribner's, 1888), 108–109.

<sup>16</sup> Bliss Perry, *Emerson Today* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1931), 86–87.

<sup>17</sup> Edward Waldo Emerson, *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Twelve volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1903–1903), II 404.

<sup>18</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 17), III 258–260, 353; XII 259–260.

<sup>19</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 17), VIII 194.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* VII 204.

mention of Horace is almost uniformly admiring. Horace is the ideal traveling companion.<sup>21</sup> He is one of almost all of Emerson's lists of literary worthies.<sup>22</sup> He is a whole popular literature by himself.<sup>23</sup> Even in his drinking songs—here speaks the New England writer—he is a teacher of “morals,” without which letters are vain.<sup>24</sup> He is immortal, but not to be mastered in a single generation;<sup>25</sup> he is “the eye of the Augustan Age.”<sup>26</sup>

. . . If in travelling in the dreary wildernesses of Arkansas or Texas we should observe on the next seat a man reading Horace, or Martial, or Calderon, we should wish to hug him.

Emerson's writings contain eight references to the odes, one to the epodes, and nine to the satires and epistles, besides the numerous quotations on matters critical.<sup>27</sup> From slight errors in quotation, it seems probable that Emerson quoted from memory, and did not need to search for his allusions to Horace<sup>28</sup>—further evidence of his familiarity with the Roman poet.

His critical quotations, since he was not a trail-blazer in criticism, are those commonly found in eighteenth-century

<sup>21</sup> Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes, *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Ten volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1909–1914), x 392. Cf. *op. cit.* (see note 17), viii 295.

<sup>22</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 17), xii 341; *Journals* (see note 21), vi 33, 387; vii 163–164, 188; viii 540.

<sup>23</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 21), viii 26.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* vii 188.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* x 261.

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 17), vii 204; vi 159.

<sup>27</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 17), x 437, *Odes* ii.1.24; *Journals* (see note 21), iii 149, *Odes* i.1.25; *Journals* x 185, *Odes* i.3, 10; *Journals* ii 108, *Odes* ii.10.5; *Journals* viii 112, *Odes* iii.2.31–32; *Journals* x 286, *Odes* ii.18.40; *Works* (see note 17), x 139–140, *Odes* iv.12.28; *Works* v 207, *Epode* iii 4; *Journals* ii 478, *Satires* i.1.69–70; *Journals* i 360, *Satires* i.3.18; *Journals* iv (at head of year 1837), *Satires* ii.1.30–34; *Works* viii 225, *Journals* iii 451, viii 65, *Epistles* i.10.24; *Works* ii 105, *Journals* vi 317, *Epistles* i.10.24; *Journals* ii 470, *Epistles* i.17.23.

<sup>28</sup> In *Journals* i 360, he quotes *Satires* i.3.18, *nil fuit umquam sic dispar sibi*, where the accepted reading substitutes *impar* for *dispar*; and in *Journals* ii 470, he quotes *Epistles* i.17.23, *Omnis Aristippum docuit color et status et res*, where the accepted reading substitutes *decut* for *docuit*.

criticism. He mentions Socrates relieving Plato's "purple diction by his perverse talk."<sup>29</sup> Of language, he writes:<sup>30</sup> ". . . In general, according to the elevation of the soul will the power over language always be, and lively thoughts will break out into spritely verse"; and among his proof-texts for this doctrine he quotes, *verbaque praevisam* (sic) *rem non invita sequentur*.<sup>31</sup> In apparent contradiction to Horace, he praises his friend Channing's verse because it is crude, and has never been "filed or defiled for the eye that studies surface: the writer was not afraid to write ill."<sup>32</sup> But Edward Emerson adds a note: "Yet Channing's refusal to mend his verses was a trial to his friend." Twice he uses the phrase *invita Minerva*: once to Furness about his experience in life, and twenty-five years later to Carlyle of his attempt to finish a book by a fixed date.<sup>33</sup> Twice also he quotes *nec deus intersit, dignus nisi vindice nodus*;<sup>34</sup> in both instances he wrests the sentence from a critical to a theological meaning as only one closely acquainted with the *Ars Poetica* would venture to do. In the *Journal* for 1854, he quotes the pregnant words, *ut pictura, poesis*, with the addition:<sup>34a</sup> ". . . 'Painting is silent poetry; poetry, speaking painting,' is ascribed to Simonides."

Readers of Emerson should always be on their guard against trying to force him into a system of thought. A similar precaution is advisable in the study of his quotations; but at

<sup>29</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 17), XII 286-287, *Ars Poetica* 14-16.

<sup>30-31</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 21), II 415-416, *Ars Poetica* 311, where the accepted reading substitutes *provisam* for *praevisam*.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 21), v 417, *Ars Poetica* 290-291.

<sup>33</sup> *Ars Poetica* 385: Tu nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva. . . . ; Horace Howard Furness, *Records of a Lifelong Friendship* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1910), 35, cf. 6, 159; Charles Eliot Norton, *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Two volumes. Boston, James R. Osgood, 1883), II 311. A more complete edition of Emerson's letters, now in preparation, should increase materially the information about his reading and sources.

<sup>34</sup> *Ars Poetica* 191-192:

Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus

Inciderit . . . (Emerson has transposed two words); *op. cit.* (see note 21), IV 269-270, v 142.

<sup>34a</sup> *Ars Poetica* 361; *op. cit.* (see note 21), VIII 453.



least the generalization may be drawn that Horace was one of the stronger forces that conditioned his thinking.

Although the transcendentalists laid claim to extensive scholarly attainments, the very nature of their beliefs made them chary of admitting always the source of many of their ideas. This, true of Emerson, is even more characteristic of Thoreau. One gains insight into their classical interests more from their private journals than from their works intended for publication. Consequently, while Thoreau's literary theory owes much to Horace, he states it as though the theory were his own, without careful reference to sources. As a competent scholar has remarked, however, "Thoreau without his classical background would simply not have been Thoreau";<sup>35</sup> and in this classical background Horace has his large place.

Since Thoreau's actual reference to, or quotation from, Horace represents only a small part of his indebtedness to him, his references will be mentioned merely in chronological order. In his journal for December 31, 1837, he remarks:<sup>36</sup> "We go picking up from year to year and laying side by side the *disjecta membra* of truth." Two years later he asserts:<sup>37</sup> "For an impenetrable shield, stand inside yourself; he was an arrant coward who first made shields of brass. For armor of proof, *mea virtute me involvo* (I wrap myself in my virtue)." In January, 1840, he writes a lengthy letter in Latin to his sister Helen, in which he quotes the opening lines, slightly modified, of *Odes* I 9, uses the phrase *laetiore plectro*, a slight alteration of *Odes* II.1.40, three verses of *Odes* I 4, and the

<sup>35</sup> Norman Foerster, "The Intellectual Heritage of Thoreau," *The Texas Review* II (January, 1917), 208. For information concerning Thoreau's classical knowledge, see also Henry S. Salt, *The Life of Henry David Thoreau* (London, 1890), 23, 95-96, 144; Mark Van Doren, *Henry David Thoreau, a Critical Study* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1916), 64, 80, 88, 90, 94, 97-99; Van Wyck Brooks, *The Flowering of New England* (New York, Dutton, 1936), 284, 293.

<sup>36</sup> Henry David Thoreau, *Collected Works* (Twenty volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1906), VII 24; *Satires* I.4.62: *Invenias etiam disiecti membra poetarum*.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* VII 106, *Odes* III.29.54-55.

phrase *desipere in loco*.<sup>38</sup> In January, 1843, he describes a lecturer as driving "gracefully *in medias res*."<sup>39</sup> In March of 1853, he quotes without context in his journal, *coelum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*;<sup>40</sup> and four days later, in a criticism of John Evelyn, he makes use of the term "sesquipedalian words."<sup>41</sup> In *Walden*, published in 1854, he uses, though quite out of its Horatian setting, the phrase "a ridiculous mouse."<sup>42</sup> In April, 1857, he notices among the wall-mottos in his friend Ricketson's shanty the Horatian tag beginning *mors aequo pulsat*.<sup>43</sup> It is significant that this motto, of the several which he jotted down, is the only motto which he felt it unnecessary to assign to its author. Horace apparently charmed Thoreau for his "elegance and vivacity."<sup>44</sup>

Since I have elsewhere<sup>45</sup> treated in some detail Hawthorne's indebtedness to Horace, I shall here content myself with mere mention of the passages in which Horace appears in Hawthorne's writings. In his *American Note-Books*, he once uses the tag *ore rotundo*;<sup>46</sup> all the other passages are the direct outcome of his visit to Italy. Soracte is mentioned three times in his *Italian Note-Book*, although, strangely, Horace's name appears not at all.<sup>47</sup> It is in *The Marble Faun*, with its attempted reconstruction of the classic past, that Horace more frequently appears:<sup>48</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* vi 27-28; *Odes* II.1.40 *leviore plectro*; *Odes* I.4.3-5; *Odes* IV.12.28.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* vi 52-53; *Ars Poetica* 149.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* xi 27; *Epistles* I.11.27.

<sup>41</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 36), xi 43; *Ars Poetica* 97.

<sup>42</sup> *Walden* (Houghton, Mifflin, 1882), 219; *Ars Poetica* 139.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* xv 323; *Odes* I.4.13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* I.327: "Here in Persius is none of the interior dignity of Virgil, nor the elegance and vivacity of Horace. . . ."

<sup>45</sup> "Hawthorne's Debt to Classical Literary Criticism," *The Classical Weekly* XXIX (December 2, 1935), 41-45.

<sup>46</sup> *American Note-Books* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1870), 48; *Ars Poetica* 323.

<sup>47</sup> *Italian Note-Book* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1870), 222, 225, 226.

<sup>48</sup> *The Marble Faun* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1888), 183, 189-190; *Odes* I.9.21-24.

. . . In the distance rose Soracte and other heights, which have gleamed afar, to our imaginations. . . .

. . . Some youths and maidens were . . . playing at hide-and-seek a little way within the duskieness of the ground-tier of arches of the Coliseum, whence now and then you could hear the half-shriek, half-laugh of a frolicsome girl, whom the shadow had betrayed into a young man's arms. . . .

. . . Nor, if we would create an interest in the characters of our story, is it wise to suggest how Cicero's foot may have stepped on yonder stone, or how Horace was wont to stroll nearby, making his footsteps chime with the measure of the ode that was ringing in his mind. . . .

. . . Each of these old dames looks as much like Horace's *Atra Cura* as can well be conceived. . . .

It is probable, also, that the description of Cleopatra's statue owes some of its spirit to Horace's fiery ode about the fall of the serpent of old Nile.<sup>49</sup> But, like Emerson and Thoreau, Hawthorne's actual reminiscences of Horace fail to convey the depth of the imprint which he made upon him. Horace the philosopher was in some ways repugnant to those sealed with the seal of transcendentalism; it was Horace the critic whom they followed; and while they employed enough Horatian tags to show clearly their acquaintance with him, they accepted his critical doctrines without in most cases giving him credit for them. The writers in Cambridge were far more at ease with the many-sided Horace.

Of all the American critics of the nineteenth century, Lowell was by far the most scholarly. "He read everything," we are told, "except the inept and negligible; and everything, ancient and modern, in its own tongue."<sup>50</sup> Another critic's declaration that his Latin was as fluent as his English<sup>51</sup> is supported by his free use—and abuse—of Latin authors, so noteworthy in the *Biglow Papers*. Of the classical authors Horace is clearly his prime favorite. His admiration causes

<sup>49</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 48), 151–153; *Odes* I.37.

<sup>50</sup> William Crary Brownell, *American Prose Masters* (New York, Scribner's, 1909), 295.

<sup>51</sup> Van Wyck Brooks, *op. cit.* (see note 35), 312.

him to express the startling judgment that "the Roman genius produced but one original poet, and that was Horace,"<sup>52</sup> an opinion which few classical students are likely to support. Although trained in the German methods of linguistic study, he anticipates the modern desire to free classical poetry from the clutches of the philologists:<sup>53</sup>

. . . Many a boy has hated, and rightly hated, Homer and Horace the pedagogues and grammarians, who would have loved Homer and Horace the poets, had he been allowed to make their acquaintance. . . .

A bewildering profusion of classical tags spouts from Lowell's pen. His essays and letters teem with them. The pedantic letters of Homer Wilbur are alive with classical tags, puns, and allusions. Whether seriously meant or not—and it is fairly certain that prankish humor is seldom far from Lowell's mind—they disclose a mind stocked with classical wares, ready for display at a moment's notice. Such Horatian phrases abound as *eheu, fugaces anni* (which in later years he once varies into *eheu, fugaces labuntur capilli*), *carpe diem* ("But how if the *dies* be slippery as an eel?"), *atra Cura* (which is nothing for riding double when compared with the Irish), *credat Iudaeus Apella, cras ingens iterabimus aequor*, and that old favorite of New England, *canities morosa*, with its preliminary hearth-song, *dissolve frigus, large super foco ligna reponens*.<sup>54</sup> Parson Wilbur also indulges in such ethical tags as *quaerenda pecunia primum, virtus post nummos*.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *The Complete Writings of James Russell Lowell* (Sixteen volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1904), II 199.

<sup>53</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), VII 184. Cf. Horace E. Scudder, *James Russell Lowell* (Two volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1901), I 36: ". . . I translated an ode of Horace into poetry the other day, and it was pretty good. . . ." From a letter, October, 1835.

<sup>54</sup> M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *New Letters of James Russell Lowell* (New York, Harper's, 1932), 258, *Odes* II.14.1; *ibid.* 321, *Odes* I.11.8; *ibid.* 199, 268, *Odes* III.1.40; *ibid.* 146, *Satires* I.5.100; "Biglow Papers," Series II 5, *op. cit.* (see note 52), XI.199, *Odes* I.7.32; "Biglow Papers," Series II 2, *op. cit.* (see note 52), XI.113; *Odes* I.9.

<sup>55</sup> "Biglow Papers," Series I 8, *op. cit.* (see note 52), X 158, *Epistles* I.1.53–54.

Lowell's use of Horace's criticism covers nearly all that Horace says about the art of writing. To Lowell, Horace's poems are of the highest literary order, and inimitable; he rates Daniel's and Dryden's translations or imitations of Horace far below their original.<sup>56</sup> Lowell, whose interest in the study of words is well-known, quotes with appreciation Horace's *multa renascuntur quae iam cecidere*.<sup>57</sup> His choice of appropriate figures is often governed by Horace; he expresses his objections to Thoreau's *Week*, which he failed utterly to appreciate, with the simile of the *mulier formosa superne*, who *desinit in piscem*.<sup>58</sup> The purple patch he fears and detests:<sup>59</sup>

. . . I have lost the tune in these ten years and cannot get it back again. Were I to meddle with the web now I should most likely, nay, too surely incur the blame of Horace's purple patch. . . .

Parson Wilbur, although he is constantly verbose, plaintively interjects, *brevis esse laboro*; <sup>60</sup> and again, paraphrasing Horace, Lowell complains that Bulwer "brevis esse laborat, obscurus fit."<sup>61</sup> And he echoes Horace's conviction of the supremacy of nature: *expellas naturam furca, tamen usque recurrit*.<sup>62</sup> Concerning the forthcoming production of great literature, which his contemporaries assumed to be the natural progeny of a large country, Lowell drily remarks: <sup>63</sup>

. . . The received treatises on mountainous obstetrics give no hint of any parturition to be expected, except of mice. . . .

<sup>56</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), III 31, IV 240.

<sup>57</sup> "Biglow Papers," II 5, *op. cit.* (see note 52), XI 189, *Ars Poetica* 70. For *renascuntur* read *renascentur*. For Lowell's interest in words, see *op. cit.* (see note 52), IV 300, 314-315, VIII 37, XV 265, 266, XVI 6, and Brooks, *op. cit.* (see note 35), 516: ". . . He would run through the whole of Ovid and Seneca to find word for one of his poems. . . ."

<sup>58</sup> James Russell Lowell, *The Round Table* (Boston, Richard C. Badger, 1913), 43; *Ars Poetica* 1-5.

<sup>59</sup> Howe, *op. cit.* (see note 54), 209-210; *op. cit.* (see note 52), VIII 271; *Ars Poetica* 15-16.

<sup>60</sup> "Biglow Papers," II 1, *op. cit.* (see note 52), XI 91; *Ars Poetica* 25.

<sup>61</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 58), 156.

<sup>62</sup> "Biglow Papers," II 1, *op. cit.* (see note 52), XI 93; *Epistles* I.10.24.

<sup>63</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 58), 13, 125. *Ars Poetica* 139.

. . . These enthusiasts wonder, that our mountains have not yet brought forth a poet, forgetting that a mouse was the result of the only authentic mountainous parturition on record. . . .

Lowell borrows the greater part of Horace's detailed description of the poet. Calling him *vates sacer*, Lowell continues with Horace to insist upon his need for external stimulus and inspiration: <sup>64</sup>

. . . If, as Horace tells us, the heroes who lived before Agamemnon have perished for want of a poet to celebrate them, so doubtless many poets have gone dumb to their graves, or, at any rate, have uttered themselves imperfectly, for lack of a fitting vehicle or of an amiable atmosphere. . . .

Lowell himself feels the external direction, sometimes urging, sometimes dissuading: <sup>65</sup>

The true ideal is not opposed to the real. . . . It is the *mens divinius* which hides within the actual, transfiguring matter-of-fact into matter-of-meaning for him who has the gift of second sight. . . .

. . . If I have any vocation, it is the making of verse. . . . But, when I write prose, it is *invita Minerva*. . . .

Using the tag, *omnibus hoc vitium est*,<sup>66</sup> Lowell condemns the reprehensible intolerance of the poetic mind. He follows Horace's recommendation that the young poet study the *exemplaria Graeca*;<sup>67</sup> and, in the guise of Homer Wilbur, repeats Horace's words about praise: <sup>68</sup>

. . . Mr. B. does not employ his pen, I can safely say, for any lucre of worldly gain, or to be exalted by the carnal plaudits of men, *digito monstrari*, etc. . . .

He objects strenuously to mediocre poets: <sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 58), 23; *op. cit.* (see note 52), VIII 179; *Odes* IV.9.25-28.

<sup>65</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), III 288, *Satires* 1.4.43; Edward Everett Hale, *James Russell Lowell and His Friends* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1899), 93, *Ars Poetica* 385.

<sup>66</sup> "Biglow Papers," I 7, II 3, *op. cit.* (see note 52), x 133, XI 147; *Satires* 1.3.1.

<sup>67</sup> "Biglow Papers," I 7, *op. cit.* (see note 52), x 133; *Ars Poetica* 268-269.

<sup>68</sup> "Biglow Papers," I 3, *op. cit.* (see note 52), x 90-91, *Odes* IV.3.17-24.

<sup>69</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), II 157, VIII 300, *Ars Poetica* 372-373.

. . . New poets, to our thinking, are not very common, and the soft columns of the press often make dangerous concessions, for which the marble ones of Horace's day were too stony-hearted. . . .

. . . It is bad enough to be, as Marston was, one of those middling poets whom neither gods nor men nor columns (Horace had never seen a newspaper) tolerate. . . .

How should the author proceed in writing? First, he should be humorous at the proper time. Lowell, championing *Elsie Venner* before the serious-minded New Englanders, resorts to Horace's own defense of his humor: <sup>70</sup>

. . . We fancy that the question, *Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?* was plaintively put in the primitive tongue by one of the world's gray fathers to another without producing the slightest conviction. . . .

But humor should be clean. So Horace's *virginibus puerisque* has been traditionally interpreted as a defense of decency in literature, and so Lowell employs it.<sup>71</sup>

Concerning plot, Horace has little to say that had not been better said by Aristotle, and Lowell naturally employs the better authority.<sup>72</sup> He does, however, appreciate Horace's *nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus*: <sup>73</sup>

. . . If Horace's rule be true, that a god must not be brought in unless the knot refuses to be unloosed by simpler means, then it follows *a fortiori*, that, when brought, the god should be competent to the task in hand. . . .

To insure proper finishing of a poem, Horace requires *limae labor, et mora*.<sup>74</sup> Lowell recognizes the need of both: <sup>75</sup>

<sup>70</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 58), 67, *Satires* I.1.24-25. Cf. Howe, *op. cit.* (see note 54), 239: ". . . I am writing in a great hurry in order to save the post, so I cannot *desipere* as usual . . ."; *Odes* IV.12.28.

<sup>71</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), VIII 177, XV 139, *Odes* III.1.4.

<sup>72</sup> See my "Aristotle's Poetics and Certain American Literary Critics," *The Classical Weekly* XXVII (January 15, 1934), 89-93. For an earlier study of Lowell and Horace, see my "Lowell's Debt to Horace's *Ars Poetica*," *American Literature* III (November, 1931), 259-276.

<sup>73</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 58), 150-151, *Ars Poetica* 191-192.

<sup>74</sup> *Ars Poetica* 291.

<sup>75</sup> "Biglow Papers," Series I, Introduction, *op. cit.* (see note 52), x 37.

. . . I do not know [says Parson Wilbur of a poem by Hosea Biglow] that the foregoing extracts ought not to be called my own rather than Mr. Biglow's, as, indeed, he maintained stoutly that my file had left nothing of his in them.

As to the fitting delay, Horace ironically suggests nine years as the suitable term; he is of course addressing poetasters. Lowell plays frequently with this figure: <sup>76</sup>

For years thrice three, wise Horace said,  
A poem rare let silence bind.

. . . There was nothing wiser than Horace's ninth year—only it overwhelms us like a ninth wave. . . .

Lowell does not expect impossibilities of the poet; he quotes Horace's kindly pardon for failures in execution: <sup>77</sup>

Verum, ubi plura nitent, . . . non ego paucis  
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,  
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

Still, although even a Homer may nod, slips are dangerous if they occur frequently. <sup>78</sup>

Any author a nap like Van Winkle's may take,  
If he only contrive to keep readers awake,  
But he'll very soon find himself laid on the shelf,  
If *they* fall a-nodding when he nods himself.

The tradition of scholarly criticism developed by Lowell is continued by his follower, Edmund Clarence Stedman, whom I have discussed elsewhere. <sup>79</sup>

Other writers of this period who were deeply influenced by Horace were Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Oliver Wendell Holmes. Since I have elsewhere discussed this relation in detail, there is needed here only a brief summary of their use

<sup>76</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), xv 138, iv 247; *op. cit.* (see note 53), II 43; *Ars Poetica* 388.

<sup>77</sup> *Ars Poetica* 351–353, *op. cit.* (see note 52), VII 77.

<sup>78</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 52), XII 31, *Ars Poetica* 359, 104–105. Cf. *op. cit.* (see note 52), iv 109: “. . . That Mr. Evans should nod now and then I do not wonder. . . .”

<sup>79</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 72), 97–99.



of Horace.<sup>79a</sup> Few references to Horace are to be found in Longfellow's verse.<sup>79b</sup> In his diaries and letters, however, throughout his long life, there are recurring references to Horace; and every opinion which he expresses of Horace is favorable.<sup>79c</sup> Longfellow is not, however, given to frequent quotation, and it is rather in the general literary theory of Longfellow that Horace's influence is to be traced.

Of all American literary men Holmes is the most nearly Horatian. The prose and verse from his pen contain frequent references to Horace, and betray intimate acquaintance with him throughout Holmes' life. Holmes resembled Horace in his devotion to one spot of ground, Boston, above all others; in his facile production of mellow and polished occasional verse; in the writing of lyrics; in informal discourse; in eclectic religious and philosophical outlook; and in incisive yet kindly criticism.

#### IV

George Edward Woodberry, a man born out of due time, completes the trio of Lowell, Stedman, and Woodberry. Spiritually he belonged to the times of Lowell and Holmes; but his active life began when Lowell was dying, when he was called, upon Lowell's recommendation, to a professorship in literature at Columbia. Although he was quite the equal of Lowell and Stedman in classical knowledge, even polite letters could not in his day be freely garnished with bits from the classics; consequently, one finds fewer actual quotations from Horace in Woodberry's work than in that of his forbears. On the other hand, he was probably better acquainted than

<sup>79a</sup> "The Horatian Influence upon Longfellow," *American Literature* iv (March, 1932), 22-38; "The Autocrat and Horace," *The Classical Weekly* xxv (May 16, 1932), 217-223.

<sup>79b</sup> See his poem *Monte Cassino*, and *Odes* 1.31.8.

<sup>79c</sup> See Samuel Longfellow, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (Two volumes. Boston, Ticknor and Company, 1886), I 49, 67, 319-320, II 187; Samuel Longfellow, *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: Final Memorials* (Boston, Ticknor and Company, 1887), 174, 193, 197, 320; *Outre Mer* (Two volumes. New York, Harper, 1835); *Ultima Thule* (his last volume of verse); E. S. Robertson, *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (New York, Scribner's, 1887), 43.

they with the history of classical criticism. One of his pupils produced the best study in any language of the development of critical theory in the Renaissance, in the preface to which he expresses deep appreciation of Woodberry's guidance and advice in the composition of the work.<sup>80</sup> Naturally, therefore, one finds his works saturated with Horatian theory and sentiment, but less studded with actual quotation than was characteristic of the preceding literary generation. There are, however, a number of Horatian passages worth mentioning.

The non-critical references to Horace are of diverse subjects. "Did not Homer," he inquires, "sing for his supper, and Spenser for a place at court?—this one for his laurel, that one for the gold beaker, and that other for some laughing Lalage?"<sup>81</sup> Horace, to him, is poet, not moralist.<sup>82</sup> In his study of Poe, he remarks that the *Southern Literary Messenger* had contributors whose sole merit, and that insufficient to redeem their barren imitativeness, was some knowledge of Horace.<sup>83</sup> Among the Horatian tags are *hinc illae lacrimae* (which may also be from Terence),<sup>84</sup> a reminiscence of *coelum, non animum*,<sup>85</sup> and the command of the priest, *Favete linguis*.<sup>86</sup>

In the critical field, one meets the same lack of definite citation of authorities. Possibly with Horace's successful resistance to the attempts to control him by Maecenas and Augustus in his mind, Woodberry wrote of Bayard Taylor:<sup>87</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Joel E. Spingarn, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1899. Sixth impression, 1930), viii.

<sup>81</sup> *Studies of a Litterateur* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1921), 38, *Odes* I.22.23. Woodberry's essays appeared at intervals between about 1890 and 1915.

<sup>82</sup> *Literary Essays* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1920), 33.

<sup>83</sup> *Appreciation of Literature* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1921), 195.

<sup>84</sup> *Life of Edgar Allan Poe* (Two volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1909), I 41, *Epistle* I.19.41, Terence, *Andria* I.1.99.

<sup>85</sup> *Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1902), 243, *Epistle* I.11.27.

<sup>86</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 81), *Odes* III.1.2.

<sup>87</sup> *Literary Memoirs of the Nineteenth Century* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1921), 239–240.

. . . For the youth to whom Griswold was a Maecenas, the auguries were certainly of doubtful complexion; and when he found his Augustus in the person of the natty Willis, the odds against his making a man of himself were to be counted off only by his innate virtue and the vigor of his mind. . . .

With perhaps a glance towards his own situation, he wrote: <sup>88</sup>

. . . The paradox of progress, in that the *laudator temporis acti* is always found among the best and noblest of the elders, while yet the whole world of man ever moves on to the greater knowledge, power, and good, continues like the riddle of the Sphinx. . . .

In a similar mood, he once told a friend: <sup>89</sup> "I find myself more at home in the times before Agamemnon or immediately subsequent." Woodberry's criticism is in fact decidedly subjective. His confused state with reference to the world about him finds expression in the use of the phrase *in medias res*. Although he is aware of its significance in the *Ars Poetica* ("Everything begins in the middle—to adapt a wise saying—like an epic poem"), <sup>90</sup> he applies it to humanity also: <sup>91</sup> "We are plunged at birth *in medias res*." He notes that Gray filed his poems, <sup>92</sup> and, like Bryant and Poe, objects to the prosy passages connecting the poetry of an epic: <sup>93</sup> "Homer nods, and his successors inherited the weakness with the art." Referring to the *nonum prematur in annum*, he writes: <sup>94</sup>

. . . I was given to understand <by publishers> that perhaps two years would be a reasonable time for the music to ripen in the machine. I suggested the Horatian rule of 'nine,' as relieving the poets from responsibility altogether in a matter where they are slow to learn wisdom. . . .

<sup>88</sup> *Heart of Man, and Other Papers* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, and Howe, 1920), 249, *Ars Poetica* 173.

<sup>89</sup> Walter de la Mare, *Selected Letters of George Edward Woodberry* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1933), *Odes* iv.9.25.

<sup>90</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 83), 135, *Ars Poetica* 148–149.

<sup>91</sup> *The Torch, and Other Lectures* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, and Howe), 1920), 249, *Ars Poetica* 148–149.

<sup>92</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 91), 16, *Ars Poetica* 291. Cf. *op. cit.* (see note 81), 89.

<sup>93</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 83), 46, *Ars Poetica* 359.

<sup>94</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 89), 108, *Ars Poetica* 388.

These references, though few in themselves, when studied in the light of Woodberry's criticism, are ample evidence that he knew and loved Horace, although he was prevented by the fashion of the time from frequent citation.

Although William Crary Brownell's name is indissolubly associated with France, that is no reason—quite the contrary—to doubt his knowledge of Horace. While he is not given to mentioning his sources, the comparatively few instances in which he shows definite acquaintance with Horace are enough to establish him as a student of the Roman poet-critic. Apart from one or two references to *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* and the tag *consule Planco*,<sup>95</sup> all his Horatian passages deal with criticism. The mention of the *purpureus pannus* occurs four times: once, when he remarks of Hawthorne's style that it "views the purple patch with the unmoved placidity of the color-blind";<sup>96</sup> twice in passages of no particular import;<sup>97</sup> and once, after having quoted a patch whose color has not proved quite fast, he remarks:<sup>98</sup>

. . . It is not, to be sure, quite in the classic key. Horace, who objected to the *purpureus pannus* even in poetry, we may be quite certain would not have cared for it. . . .

It is significant that Brownell uses the term in the derogatory sense employed by Horace, not in the laudatory sense ascribed to it by many of Horace's followers.

Brownell is no slavish classicist; his attitude toward French painting shows him to be no mere *laudator temporis acti*:<sup>99</sup> "As there were great men before Agamemnon there have been great painters since Raphael and Titian, even since Rembrandt and Velasquez." His implication is obviously the conclusion that modern French art *caret vate sacro*,<sup>100</sup> a position which Brownell undertook to fill. Yet he does not permit his en-

<sup>95</sup> *French Traits* (New York, Scribner's, 1888 <1897>), 38, *Odes* III.2.13; *The Genius of Style* (New York, Scribner's, 1924), 91, *Odes* III.14.28.

<sup>96</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 50), 124, *Ars Poetica* 14-16.

<sup>97</sup> *The Genius of Style* (see note 95), 113, 131.

<sup>98</sup> *Victorian Prose Masters* (New York, Scribner's, 1901 <1909>), 228.

<sup>99-100</sup> *French Art* (New York, Scribner's, 1892), 18, *Odes* IV.9.25-28.

thusiasm for things French to carry him away: <sup>101</sup> "In many respects Paris is not France, and probably nearly all the *genus irritabile* to be found in France is to be found in the capital." Nor is he a worshipper of American authors *per se*; with all his appreciation of Henry James, he still inquires: <sup>102</sup>

Is it not because of a certain coolness in Mr. James's own temperament that his report of human nature is thus incomplete? Does he make us weep—or laugh—so little because he is so unmoved himself, because he illustrates so imperturbably the converse of the Horatian maxim? . . .

Brownell's judgments of contemporary and preceding English prose-writers give further evidence of acquaintance with Horace. He notes of Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*: <sup>103</sup> "The beauty of Beatrix is the mainspring of the book's action; that of her *mater pulchra* is a softened and spiritualized parallel." Defending Thackeray's reputation as a literary artist, he remarks ironically: <sup>104</sup>

. . . Fiction having become a "finer art" since Thackeray's day, owing to the vigorous filing and sand-papering which it has received, in the course of our critics' and craftsmen's culture evolution, the artistic vulnerability of Thackeray as an old practitioner is logically deduced. . . .

Ruskin also comes in for mingled praise and blame: <sup>105</sup>

. . . He gave everything, himself included—a procedure that, if not in every respect exemplary, is at any rate too exceptional to excite the uneasiness of even the wise and prudent. It is not, however, the way either to influence one's future fellowmen or to raise to one's self a literary monument *perennius aere*.

In pleading for a more tolerant criticism based upon the understanding of other peoples rather than upon arbitrary standards, he refers to Horace the moralist: <sup>106</sup>

<sup>101</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 95), 26, *Epistles* II.2.102.

<sup>102</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 50), 377, *Ars Poetica* 102-105.

<sup>103</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 98), 32, *Odes* I.16.1.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* 4-5, *Ars Poetica* 291.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* 207, *Odes* III.30.1.

<sup>106</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 95), 45.

. . . By retaining our manners and character, and adopting their ethics, we should no more attain the French moral result than, to turn the case around a little, Sophocles, Solomon, Horace, Raphael, Goethe, would have attained their success had they committed their characteristic indiscretions amid the environment which produced Jonathan Edwards and Cotton Mather. . . .

An interesting variation from the Augustan writers, in some respects violently opposed to them, is James Gibbons Huneker. Belonging to the group of writers who profess to find no good in the classical tradition, he is, at least as far as Horace is concerned, a deserter to the camp of the enemy. After describing the rigid discipline of his preparatory school, where military discipline and Latin were his daily abhorrence, he remarks:<sup>107</sup>

. . . Before I could parse an English sentence I had Caesar pumped into me. At twelve I had bolted the Latin literature and to-day I can't read Cicero without mental nausea, though Horace is ever at my elbow. . . . I know little Latin and less Greek. But the solid foundations were laid and aided me in modern literature and in the study of law. . . .

Of wider artistic interest than the majority of our American critics, his interests, commencing with music, included the plastic arts as well as literature, and his significance to American criticism lies partly in his efforts to break down the century-old boundaries set up between the several arts.

Huneker's classical tags do not betray deep study of Horace. One finds the usual *carpe diem*, *odi profanum vulgus*, *disjecta membra*, and he remarks once, "Homer nodded."<sup>108</sup> Of the soiled hero of *Painted Veils* he mentions that "his motto in life was Horatian,"<sup>109</sup> an obvious reference, if one reads the context, to *nil admirari*. The tags, though few, are nevertheless apropos.

<sup>107</sup> *Steeplejack* (Two volumes. New York, Scribner's, 1918), I 63. *Steeplejack* is Huneker's autobiography.

<sup>108</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 107), I 179, *Odes* I.11.8; *Variations* (New York, Scribner's, 1921), 129; *Unicorns* (New York, Scribner's, 1917), 26, *Satires* I.4.62; *Unicorns* 260, *Ars Poetica* 359.

<sup>109</sup> *Painted Veils* (New York, Boni and Liveright, 1920), 20, *Epistles* I.6.1.

Huneker's criticism at four points admits indebtedness to Horace. He notes his own addiction to the *purpureus pannus*,<sup>110</sup> and several times mentions it as a danger safely avoided by great writers of the past.<sup>111</sup> The Horatian picture of the mountains in parturition of a mouse also frequently occurs to him, sometimes as a condemnation of the false sublime, and sometimes as the illustration of the enormous labor involved in the production of a literary work.<sup>112</sup> Repeatedly he insists upon the requirement that the artist "keep training" like the athlete, in this almost echoing Horace's metaphor.<sup>113</sup> His descriptions of music and literature often use the Horatian figure of the file:<sup>114</sup>

. . . Chopin filed at his music for years. . . .  
 Pater, a man who filed his form to a tenuous degree. . . .  
 . . . The history of art can show few more laborious workmen than Baudelaire. . . . He filed his poems. . . .

Without being an accomplished student of Horatian criticism, Huneker was deeply indebted to it and aware of the debt.

## V

Contemporary with the writers last discussed, but forming a group by themselves, are Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More, with their follower for a time, Stuart Sherman.

The reader of Irving Babbitt needs to know, above all other critical works, the *Poetics* of Aristotle, the *Satires* and *Epistles* of Horace, and the treatise *On the Sublime*. Paul More notes that, in their student-days at Harvard, Horace was the classic

<sup>110</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 107), II 252, *Ars Poetica* 14-16.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* I 125; *Iconoclasts* (New York, Scribner's, 1905), 382; *Unicorns* (see note 108), 125, 137; *Variations* (see note 108), 35.

<sup>112</sup> *Ars Poetica* 139; *Steeplejack* (see note 107), I 50, 135; *Ivory, Apes, and Peacocks* (New York, Scribner's, 1915), 73, 117, 278; *Painted Veils* (see note 109), 57; *Visionaries* (New York, Scribner's, 1905), the story, "A Master of Cobwebs," toys with the theme *parturient montes*, etc.

<sup>113</sup> *Ars Poetica* 412-414.

<sup>114</sup> *Egoists* (New York, Scribner's, 1909), 94; *The Pathos of Distance* (New York, Scribner's, 1913), 282; *Variations* (see note 108), 41, 44.

most frequently on Babbitt's tongue;<sup>115</sup> and his works are ample evidence that this interest increased with his years. Babbitt had two interlocking interests, ethics and literary criticism, in both of which his attention was directed towards the humanistic outlook as opposed to the romantic. One finds him quoting Horace even on modern social problems:<sup>116</sup>

. . . Horace was uttering only the sober truth when he proclaimed the progressive degeneracy of the Romans of his time (*aetas parentum*, etc.). The most significant symptom of this degeneracy seemed to Horace and other shrewd observers to be the relaxation of the bonds of the family.

Babbitt's humanism, like Horace's, is not democratic:<sup>117</sup>

. . . It is enough to oppose the democratic inclusiveness of our modern sympathies to the aristocratic aloofness of the ancient humanist and his disdain of the profane vulgar (*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*). . . .

Even the neo-classicist had virtues which should not be lost among his undoubted errors:<sup>118</sup>

. . . Even in his worst artificiality, the neo-classicist is still related to the ancient humanist by his horror of one-sidedness, of all that tends to the atrophy of certain faculties and the hypertrophy of others, by his avoidance of everything that is excessive and over-emphatic; and, inasmuch as it is hard to be an enthusiast and at the same time moderate, by his distrust of enthusiasm. He cultivates detachment and freedom from affectation (*sprezzatura*) and wonders at nothing (*nil admirari*) whereas the romanticist, as all the world knows, is prone to wonder at everything—especially at himself and his own genius. . . .

Babbitt, who has failed of the Horatian urbanity, has nevertheless, as the passage above shows, Horace's knack of describing a whole train of thought by some word or phrase

<sup>115</sup> "Irving Babbitt," *The American Review* III (April, 1934), 26.

<sup>116</sup> *Democracy and Leadership* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1924), 271; *Odes* III.6.46-48.

<sup>117</sup> *Literature and the American College* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1908), 11; *Odes* III.1.1.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 21; *Epistles* I.6.1.



which indicates it. The humanistic attitude, he continues, bringing his argument down to the present, is for the cultivated few: <sup>119</sup>

. . . The number of those who can receive the higher lessons of Greek culture is always likely to be small. The classical spirit, however, is salutary and formative wherever it occurs, and if a man is not able to appreciate it in Pindar, he may in Horace; and if not in Horace, then in Molière. . . .

This humanism is not passive, but vitally active: <sup>120</sup>

. . . A humanism that hopes to act upon the world cannot afford to recline even with Horace and Gray. It must take hold of the character and will and not be simply epicurean. . . .

Horace is, however, superior in energy to some at least of the modern humanists: <sup>121</sup>

. . . There is a side to Horace that is more obviously and grossly epicurean than anything in Sainte-Beuve. . . . Yet in the final analysis Horace is more humanistic than Sainte-Beuve. He had been more deeply preoccupied with questions of conduct ever since his boyhood and those object lessons in morality he had received from his father. Through all his experimenting with stoical and epicurean tenets we can trace an ascending effort, a gradual ripening and mellowing, until in the most amiable and undogmatic fashion, and simply by the exercise of a keen good sense, he comes to assert that discipline which the human self and its law of measure impose on the ordinary self. "Dare to be wise," is the sum of his message. "A right beginning is more than half of the whole. Despise pleasures and bridle and chain the mind. If you do not command it, it will command you." (*Epistle* 1.2.40-62). In one of his last poems he says that he is neglecting more and more the numbers and measures of Latin song for the numbers and measures of the true life. He is preoccupied, above all, with the problem whether he is becoming gentler and better with the progress of the years: "Lenior et melior fis accedente senecta?" Religion goes higher than this; even the best poetry goes higher. Yet Horace's confidence in the power of the indi-

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>120</sup> *The Masters of Modern French Criticism* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1912), 144.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 116-118; *Satires* 1.4.103-126, 1.6.65-99; *Epistles* 11.2.211.

vidual to perfect himself is plain. . . . Sainte-Beuve's humanism is not, like Horace's, a discipline and a rule of life; it is not active, erect, and militant, but has retired from the intellect and will to the sensitivity, and so is more or less a matter of passive enjoyment. . . .

Babbitt's more properly critical work is equally indebted to Horace. *The New Laokoon* is an amplification of Horace's *ut pictura poesis*. Without attempting to quote from the wealth of Horatian material in this book, one cannot avoid mention of a few outstanding points. Horace's immense influence upon the Renaissance made for an excellent prose rather than an excellent poetry.<sup>122</sup> Horace's good sense triumphed over the ingenuity of a multitude of commentators; their efforts to distort his meaning were successful chiefly in their giving a pseudo-Aristotelian meaning to the phrase *ut pictura poesis*.<sup>123</sup> Of Rousseau he ironically remarks:<sup>124</sup>

. . . Rousseau would have sympathized with that ancient, who, as Horace narrates, had the gift of witnessing gorgeous spectacles in an empty theatre, and who, when restored to his senses by copious doses of hellebore, cried out to his officious friends that they had undone him and not saved him by thus bringing him back to a dull reality and robbing him of his delightful dreams. This ancient was, indeed, merely a romanticist born out of due season. . . .

Horace's requirement that poems should have both polish and enthralling charm is a better-rounded conception than that of the modern who is satisfied to be merely charmed out of his senses.<sup>125</sup> And on the age-old question of discipline versus inspiration, he again refers to Horace:<sup>126</sup>

. . . One might suppose that before deserting the *exemplaria Graeca* it would be wiser to wait until the world has another age

<sup>122</sup> *The New Laokoon: An Essay on the Confusion of the Arts* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1910), 4.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* 4-5, 17-18; *Ars Poetica* 361.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 79; *Epistles* II.128-140. Cf. *The New Laokoon* 101-102.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 231-232; *Ars Poetica* 99-100.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 251-252; *Ars Poetica* 268-269.

that proves as clearly as did the great age of Greece that man may combine an exquisite measure with a perfect spontaneity, that he may be at once thoroughly disciplined and thoroughly inspired.

The movement for a natural simplicity in literature, as for a return to nature in life, finds Babbitt its violent antagonist: <sup>127</sup>

. . . Primitivistic dreaming was also popular in ancient Rome at its most artificial moment. The great ancients, however, though enjoying the poetry of the primitivistic dream, were not the dupes of this dream. Horace, for example, lived at the most artificial moment of Rome when primitivistic dreaming was popular as it had been in Alexandria. He descants on the joys of the simple life in a well-known ode. One should not therefore hail him, like Schiller, as the founder of the sentimental school "of which he has remained the unsurpassed model." For the person who plans to return to nature in Horace's poem is the old usurer Alfius, who changes his mind at the last moment and puts out his mortgages again. In short, the final attitude of the urbane Horace towards the primitivistic dream—it could hardly be otherwise—is ironical.

The man of the present day also comes in for a contrast with Horace. He "is definitely removed from the Horatian *nil admirari*, even though he does not set out deliberately, like a certain French minor poet, to 'live in a state of bedazzlement. . . .'" <sup>128</sup>

Babbitt looked with concern upon the *μεριμνοφροντισται* who have constituted so large a portion of the output of American graduate schools, to the detriment of their, and our, capacities for literary appreciation: <sup>129</sup>

Our universities are turning out a race of patient and laborious investigators, who may claim to have rivalled the Germans on

<sup>127</sup> "Impressionist *versus* Judicial Criticism," *Publications of the Modern Language Association* XXI (1906), 695–696; *Epode 2; Rousseau and Romanticism* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1919), 77.

<sup>128</sup> *On Being Creative* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1932), 130–131; *Epistles* I.6.1.

<sup>129</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 117), 130–131; *Epistles* II.1.32–33. Cf. a letter to Stuart Sherman, Jacob Zeitlin and Homer Woodbridge, *Life and Letters of Stuart P. Sherman* (Two volumes. New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1929), I 232.

their own ground, as Horace said the Romans had come to rival the Greeks:—

“Venimus ad summum fortunae; pingimus atque  
Psallimus et luctamur Achivis doctius unctis.”

Whether as strong support for his position, or as ironical assault upon the stronghold of his opponent, Babbitt finds Horace a never-failing and adequate weapon.

Paul Elmer More's own writings, as well as the literary and theological controversies of which they have constituted the center, are evidence of his classical interests. Although he was in his earlier years “infected,” as Babbitt would have said, with the romantic point of view, the years 1892–1895, which saw him a graduate student at Harvard in oriental and classical languages, fixed his thinking in the classical mold. Although the great Goodwin was among his instructors, his fellow-student Irving Babbitt is credited by his biographer with having effected the change.<sup>130</sup>

More's mention of Horace is uniformly laudatory. He is “that clear-eyed pagan”; “the friendly mentor of the centuries”; “to go about with Virgil and Horace in one's mind is to travel as a gentleman.” In Xenophon and Horace he finds intimated a conception of life as one of the fine arts. Even Horace's most questionable Epicureanism becomes through his “final adjustment of language” almost a lesson in austerity. His genial rather than malicious satire and his humanism contain that higher insight which the philosophy of the eighteenth century was so busy hiding away.<sup>131</sup> Among the many citations and tags of Horace in More's works two stand out, apart from those concerned with criticism. He

<sup>130</sup> Robert Shafer, *Paul Elmer More and American Criticism* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1935), 68, 70. Cf. Paul Elmer More, “Irving Babbitt,” *American Review* III (April, 1934), 26; and G. R. Elliott, “Mr. More and the Gentle Reader,” *Bookman* LXIX (April, 1929), 144: “. . . classic ideas that other modern critics have suavely given forth as their own are carefully assigned by More to classic authors. . . .”

<sup>131</sup> Paul Elmer More, *Shelburne Essays* (Eleven volumes. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1904–1921), II 41; II 121; V 162, 217; V 13–14; VIII 229–230; X ix.

describes Donald G. Mitchell as one among the many writers who have retired to their *modus agri non ita magnus*.<sup>132</sup> And in an early poem, *Helena*, he concludes with a sentiment obviously from Horace's *paraclausithyron*:<sup>133</sup>

Snow-white Helena, hear me while the time is;  
Lest the winter come on you unexpected;  
Lest men pass you in scorn; and through the long night,  
All unmoved on its hinges, dark and silent,  
Hang your door that is wont to creak so often;  
For no mortal will turn it seeking Helen,  
Helen sitting alone and old and ugly.

Since it is the ethical side of literature, and not merely the science of ethics, that forms the subject of More's ethical and religious essays, a clear-cut distinction between his literary and ethical essays is impossible to draw. In a sense, his ethical teaching may be considered a part of his criticism. Horace's philosophy shows its influence in a number of his essays. After asking the question, who is concerned to mold his life into an artistic design, he continues:<sup>134</sup>

It would carry me too far . . . to trace the development of this conception of life as one of the fine arts. There are hints of it in Xenophon and Horace and other writers of antiquity, but its real origin would be found in the engrafting of the classical sense of decorum on the mediaeval ideal of chivalry. . . .

In another essay he feels that "for the most part we are like Alphius (*sic*) of the Latin poem, always about to abandon ourselves to rustic delights, yet still tangled in the toils of the market. . . ." <sup>135</sup> His reading of Tolstoy inspires him to write:<sup>136</sup>

More than one great artist . . . has vaunted the perfect efficacy of his craft to satisfy the human soul. . . . Even Horace has

<sup>132</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 131), v 163, *Satires* II.6.1.

<sup>133</sup> *Helena, and Occasional Poems* (New York, Putnam's, 1890), 27, *Odes* III.10.19-20, and perhaps IV.13.

<sup>134</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 131), v 217.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.* VII 47, *Epode* 2.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* I 205-206, *Epistles* I.2.4.

written his "melius Chrysippo et Crantore"; and no doubt in the last analysis the poets are right. Yet still the haunting dread will thrust itself upon the mind, that in accepting, though it be but a symbol, the beauty of the world, we remain the dupes of a smiling illusion. . . .

Having quoted from Shakespeare's sonnets the verses, "The expense of spirit in a waste of shame Is lust in action," he asserts:<sup>137</sup>

. . . If you wish to see how much of the world's experience has entered into these lines, turn back to Horace's *Epistles* and see in what way the matter presented itself to that clear-eyed pagan. *Sperne voluptates, nocet empti dolore voluptas*, was the height of his argument, and between that admonition and the anguish of Shakespeare have passed all the middle ages and the whole of Christianity. . . .

In the life of Horace Walpole he finds one of the noteworthy considerations that "through all the conflicts of his own age one feeling is constant with him: *Quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi*, as he expresses it in the verse of his namesake. . . ." <sup>138</sup>

Of the deistic movement of the eighteenth century, he writes:<sup>139</sup>

. . . It [Shaftesbury's private note-book] is one of the important documents to show how completely Deism was a revival of pagan morality. It is, in brief, no more than a translation of the great maxims of antiquity into modern purposes: the inner record of a man seeking character in the two elements of attention (*προσοχή*) and the harmony of life (*verae numeros modosque vitae*), and of a man who thought that this pursuit must be maintained unrelentingly. . . .

He notes in Gray's letters "the echoes of the Horatian *fallentis semita vitae* that we hear now and then from those in the cloistered walks by the Isis or the Cam"; but objects that

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* II 41, *Epistles* 1.2.55.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.* IV 273, *Epistles* 1.2.14.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.* VII 227, *Epistles* II.2.144.

Gray's preoccupation with death in his later years was a reversal of the Horatian maxim from *debemur morti* into *debemur vitae*.<sup>140</sup> Finally, paraphrasing Palladas and then commenting on his paraphrase, he writes: <sup>141</sup>

. . . All human must pay the debt (the Roman "morti debemur") nor is there any mortal who knows whether he shall be alive to-morrow; learning this clearly, O man, make thee merry, keeping the wine-god close by thee for oblivion of death, and take thy pleasure with the Paphian while thou drawest thy ephemeral life; but all else give to Fortune's control. You may say [More comments] that the conclusion, too, is common to a large body of poetry outside of the Anthology. So doubtless it is. You will find it, to go back to the seventh century B.C., in the elegies of old Mimnermus; it is the philosophy of Horace, and, through him, of men of the world generally. Yet if one reads these poets and the epigrammatists side by side, one catches a difference of note and emphasis, a something that sets them in two separate classes. Perhaps it is the suspicion of weariness in the diction of the epigrams that renders them so distinct from Mimnermus, while they lack that final adjustment of language which makes of Horace's most questionable Epicureanism almost a lesson in austerity. . . .

More uses of course the common Horatian tags, *de te fabula, ab Jove*, and *virginibus puerisque*,<sup>142</sup> which have so lost account of their origin as not assuredly to be drawn by modern writers from Horace. Others more certainly show their origin to be directly from Horace. These for the most part deal with matters literary. Of a militant prosodist's work on English verse, he writes: <sup>143</sup>

. . . It is a pity . . . that he should have adopted a tone of such revolutionary violence as is likely to discredit what is really valuable in his work. There were brave men before Agamemnon's time, and there have been "scientific" students of verse even before this present year of grace. . . .

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* x 259, 271, *Epistles* i.18.103, *Ars Poetica* 63.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* v 13-14, *Ars Poetica* 63.

<sup>142</sup> "How to Read Lycidas," *The American Review* vii (May, 1936), 143, 145; *op. cit.* (see note 131), ii 6, v 158, vii 45.

<sup>143</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 131), i 103, *Odes* iv.9.25-26.

In defence of light literature he declares that "there is an art of desipience and a place for it, as Horace well knew";<sup>144</sup> and of Shaftesbury's essays:<sup>145</sup>

. . . His essays are no more than sermons on two texts: that of Horace: *Ridiculum acri Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res*—a jest often decides weighty matters better and more forcibly than can asperity; and the saying of Gorgias Leontinus, which he misinterprets and expands for his own purpose, "That humour was the only test of gravity; and gravity of humour. For a subject which would not bear raillery was suspicious; and a jest which would not bear a serious examination was certainly false wit. . . ."

More's position in critical matters is well defined in several points by quotations from or references to Horace. For instance, he objects to a quatrain of Fitzgerald's translation of the *Rubaiyat* that, while it shows all the apt felicity of Horace, it displays too little of his shrewd manliness.<sup>146</sup> Some lines of Whitman's *Autumn Rivulets* resemble "clumsily distorted stanzas of Gray and Horace."<sup>147</sup> The eighteenth-century pseudo-classic literature comes in also for comment:<sup>148</sup>

. . . In particular any comment on the pseudo-classic literature (which in itself has many comfortable excellences) should not fail to distinguish the truly Augustan circle of Butler and Johnson and Reynolds and Goldsmith and Burke, whose humanism, like that of Horace, contained, not so much explicitly as in solution, the higher insight which the philosophy of their age was so busily hiding away. They contained, that is to say, some marks of true classicism as contrasted with pseudo-classicism. . . .

His discussion of the present state of English contains the following statement:<sup>149</sup>

<sup>144</sup> *New Shelburne Essays* (Three volumes. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1928-1936), I 104-105, *Odes* iv.12.28.

<sup>145</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 131), vii 215-216, *Satires* I.10.14.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* II 121.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid* iv.197-198.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* viii.229-230. Cf. x ix.

<sup>149</sup> "English and Englistic," *Academy Papers* (New York, Scribner's, 1925), 15, *Ars Poetica* 51.



. . . Our written style must always be a compromise between the new and the old. This is a commonplace ever since Horace proclaimed the law of linguistic safety: *dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter*. But if we all acknowledge the Horatian rule as a commonplace, its application, never entirely easy, may become extremely difficult. . . .

Browne's *Religio Medici* furnishes More with an excuse for a diatribe against the effect of scientific writing upon imaginative literature:<sup>150</sup>

. . . His work takes its place, a splendid place, among the innumerable protests of the imagination against the imperious usurpations of science. The very freedom of fancy which had wantoned in every arbitrary and impossible combination of natural objects—*Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam*—such license was becoming impossible for a trained intellect, as Browne himself had proved in *Vulgar Errors*. . . .

It is however in a discussion of *Lycidas* that More makes his most impressive borrowing from Horace. Discussing the relation of the art and content of a poem, he sets up Horace as arbiter:<sup>151</sup>

. . . For later times, and for us of the West, the principle involved was formulated by Horace in his famous saying that the most successful poet was he who knew how to mix the *utile* and the *dulce*. What Horace meant by the *dulce* is clear enough; it is just that in a poem which gives pleasure to a reader. And what he meant by the *utile* is equally clear; it is that in a poem from which we draw instruction. So in one of the *Epistles* he tells a friend held in Rome by the practice of declaiming, no doubt about the schools of philosophy, that he is in the country reading Homer, who is a better teacher than all the philosophers:

Qui, quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,  
Plenius ac melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

In exactly that form the question reached the Renaissance critics, with the emphasis still heavily on the *utile*. . . .

The classic restraint, so often preached by Horace, is part and parcel of More's criticism; Kipling is deprived of a place

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* vi 166, *Ars Poetica* 1.

<sup>151</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 142), 148–149, *Ars Poetica* 343–344, *Epistles* 1.2.3–4.

among the *sacri vates* because he has not the will to refrain.<sup>152</sup> In fact, More's criticism is largely a return to the *exemplaria Graeca* to which he so frequently alludes.<sup>153</sup>

Stuart Sherman, after a late start in classical training, was graduated from Williams with prizes for his proficiency in Latin; his biographers record that he enjoyed particularly his courses in Horace, the elegiac writers, and the satirists.<sup>154</sup> Although he became a teacher of English instead of following what was for a time his intention, to teach Latin, he remained his life long a staunch defender of classical training.<sup>155</sup> His interest as a student in Horace remained with him also. He classes Horace among the wits, with Petronius, Montaigne, Casanova.<sup>156</sup> He relishes Louis Untermeyer's renderings of *Integer Vitae* into the manner of various popular modern versifiers.<sup>157</sup> In more serious vein, he traces the acquaintance of Thomas Campion with Horace, gives a detailed account of the Horatian influence in England, and, some years before Miss Goad undertook the task, suggested as a suitable theme for a doctoral dissertation in English "Horace in the Eighteenth Century," for which he asserts there are "oceans of material."<sup>158</sup>

Since the classical influence was a late graft upon Sherman's stock, only the usual Horatian tags are found in his work, such phrases as *Jupiter tonans*, *virginibus puerisque*, *crede mihi experto*, *dulce desipere in loco*, and *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*.<sup>159</sup> Likewise in his criticism the identifiably Horatian passages are well-worn phrases. His tutelage under Babbitt and his intimacy with More are, however, ample

<sup>152</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 131), II.118, *Odes* IV.9.28.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, VII.217, *Ars Poetica* 268.

<sup>154</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 129), I 52, 63, 72, 76, 216.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* I 216, II.531.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.* II 396.

<sup>157</sup> *Points of View* (New York, Scribner's, 1924), 165.

<sup>158</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 129), II 425. Cf. note 1.

<sup>159</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 157), 75; *op. cit.* (see note 129), II 742; *ibid.* II 434; *The Genius of America* (New York, Scribner's, 1923), 31; *Odes* III.5.1, *Epode* 2.29, *Odes* III.1.4, *Odes* III.25.18, *Odes* III.2.13.

evidence to support the thesis that his undergraduate reading of Horace was not forgotten in later years.

Perhaps the most frequently met critical Horatian tag in Sherman's work is the mention of the purple patch. He inquires:<sup>160</sup>

Why is it that the great poets, novelists, and critics, with few exceptions, have been, in the more liberal sense of the word, scholars—masters of several languages, students of history and philosophy, antiquarians? First of all because the great writer conceives of his vocation as the most magnificent and the most complex of crafts. He is to be his own architect, master-builder, carpenter, painter, singer, orator, poet and dramatist. His materials, his tools, his methods are, or may be, infinite. To him, then, the written tradition is a school and a museum in which, if he has a critical and inventive mind, he learns, from both the successes and the failures of his predecessors, how to set to work upon his own problem of expression. As Mr. Yeats is fond of pointing out, the young poet may find Herbert and Vaughan more helpful to him than the work of his own contemporaries, because the faults in the elder poets, the purple patches that failed to hold their color, will not attract and mislead him.

He remarks of Disraeli's novels that "the purple of the *purpurei panni* is frequently finely royal";<sup>161</sup> and he quotes appreciatively a remark by Sinclair Lewis on a similar theme.<sup>162</sup>

Other Horatian critical phrases occur less frequently. In a polemic for the study of literature as literature by graduate students, he declares with some heat:<sup>162a</sup>

. . . The puissant Darwinians, who have taken charge of the "higher" study of literature, are suspicious of felicity in expression.

<sup>160</sup> *Americans* (New York, Scribner's, 1923), 17; *Ars Poetica* 14-16.

<sup>161</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 157), 314.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 197: ". . . I remember hearing him say, with a grimace, that he liked best in *Main Street* the purple patches over which he had sweat blood, but that no one else noticed them. . . ." Cf. *op. cit.* (see note 129), II 677.

<sup>162a</sup> *Shaping Men and Women* (New York, Doubleday, Doran, 1928), 38-39. Cf. *op. cit.* (see note 129), I 314, in a letter to P. E. More about the World War: ". . . At the present time the whole voluntary power of the earth is being directed to multiply pain beyond all precedent. This birth-pang it is predicted will produce us a divine child. More likely it will produce us a mouse." *Ars Poetica* 139.

They shun popularity as they do the devil. They wish the theses of their pupils to be what is technically called "scholarly," by which they mean true to the bare literal fact, objectively presented, unrelieved by humor or feeling, embanked and barricaded with notes. Every shaving of the workshop must be presented with the peg that the workshop produced; every mouse must be accompanied by the mountain that brought it forth. . . .

Acting upon the Horatian principle that there are some errors which ought not to condemn a book, he declares of the subject under review that "the book is so good that one can, perhaps, forgive the two or three instances of Homeric nodding in the brief retrospective glance at the essay-form."<sup>163</sup> Of a delayed introductory essay which he was writing for Brownell's *American Prose Masters*, he wrote to Brownell that he intended to "file it" at once.<sup>164</sup> And in a satirical essay on Paul Elmer More, after their rupture, he declares that it was More's custom "to plunge *in medias res*, like an epic poet or a member of the Modern Language Association."<sup>165</sup> The following statement about the dramatist is also evidence that he had made a study of the classical critical tradition:<sup>166</sup>

. . . His definition of the moral function of drama was not accepted by Congreve and the rest because they had been hypnotized by Collier, but because it had been accepted by Boileau, Ben Jonson, Sidney, the critics of the Renaissance, and by those inflamed Puritans, Horace and Aristotle. . . .

## VI

The century and a quarter which this paper has hurriedly surveyed saw the number of quotations from Horace made by

<sup>163</sup> Review of "A Group of English Essayists," *The Nation* xc (April 7, 1910), 352-353, *Ars Poetica* 359.

<sup>164</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 129), II 526. Cf. "Mr. Brownell on American Prose," *The Nation* LXXXIX (Dec. 30, 1909), 650: ". . . The unmistakable man Brownell—New Yorker, cosmopolitan, rationalist, Horatian—peers here and there over the edge of his entrenchments. . . ."

<sup>165</sup> *Op. cit.* (see note 160), 318, *Ars Poetica* 148.

<sup>166</sup> Review of "The Comedy of Manners," *The Nation* xcVIII (April 9, 1914), 408-409.

American critical writers rapidly decrease, until the recrudescence of classical reference in *Babbitt* and *More*. The decline in classical quotation is, however, rather to be ascribed to the change in the audience to which American writers catered, a change induced largely by universal education in America and the attendant lowering of the standard of the reading public. The writers who less frequently quote Horace are as deeply in his debt as those who constantly admit his authority. If the evidence presented in this paper were supplemented by a review of the passages in these writers which, while Horatian in tone, are not surely assignable to Horace—a task which the writer has also undertaken—it would be seen that the significant part of Horatian criticism and philosophy has entered into the thinking of these American critics until it has become an integral part of their belief.