

own image, that we must see what is behind our eyes.

Indeed it is a grave question whether the most critical mind, impelled by conscious effort of the highest tension, constantly renewing its zeal at the fountain of the mighty, can transcend the narrow bounds of *was uns alle baendigt, das Gemeine*—bounds that seem at times as narrow as the grave. Nevertheless this effort, limited as it must be at best, is the only thing worthy of the historian. To borrow from Matthew Arnold, it is his highest function to ascertain the master current in the age of which he writes. Yet it so happens that the master current only reveals itself in the crisis of the age that follows. A soft voice by the wayside, not the thunderous tramp of Roman legions, may set in motion the master current of the Augustan age. Hence the historian must be like the poet—a seer as well as a chronicler. He endures only in so far as he succeeds in casting through the warp of the past the weft of the future—the future which he can behold only by prophetic discernment. It is given to but a few to walk with the gods in the dusk of ages.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

Horace Reprocessed

Including Horace, by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

LET me avow, at the outset, that it will be very hard for me to appraise in a spirit of calm justice these translations and paraphrases of the Odes of Horace. Louis Untermeyer might have tried his hand at the Satires and the Epistles, which he professes to admire so much, and I should have examined his results with interest and patience. At least in the Satires, the thought and the color of life are everything, and these might be dressed up passably in an alien form and language. Of real poetic art there is so little that Horace himself admitted that his essays were only prose; that one could rearrange his words without destroying their effect. But that could not be done, he insisted, with real poetry like the hexameters of Ennius. "Take them apart, and you will find in their fragments the mangled members of the poet himself." The Odes are Horace himself, and every paraphrase or translation I have ever seen reeks of laceration. And so I feel like crying out, as Horace himself did when Davus paraphrased his moralities and made solemn earnest out of his quaint mockeries: *Unde mihi lapidem? Unde sagittas?* Where can I find a crushing rock, or a pointed arrow, to throw at Louis Untermeyer through the opaque medium of print?

Perhaps some of his titles would meet the need. "On with the dance." Is there anything in Horace to correspond with the mood of that? "Tears, idle tears." Thus to libel anything of Horace's! "The Female of the Species." How terrible, to attempt to classify the clear sighted, civilized Roman with the muttering barbarian, hammering out political saws in the cold truculence of British sex patriotism. "An infamous rendering."—No, that title I approve. "Lugubrious Villanelle of platitudes." What on earth?—I turn to page 125. Yes, indeed, well named, so far as Louis Untermeyer's version is concerned.

"Ah Postumus, my Postumus, the years are slipping by;
Old age with hurrying footsteps draws nearer day by day

And we leave this friendly earth and every friendlier tie."

Flat, isn't it? And to make it as much flatter as possible, Louis Untermeyer drags in "Ah Postumus," "And we will leave this friendly earth" as alternating refrains to his three line stanzas. The Ode so hideously mangled is one of the best examples extant of a rich and exquisite pattern woven from the simplest elements of thought and rhythm. Imagine an antique prayer rug shredded and re-woven in a New Jersey rag carpet factory. "Longer, wider, softer; original material and colors preserved"; so it might be advertised. That is as near as I can come to an exact expression of the relation between the Ode of Horace and the Ode of Untermeyer.

But as Horace himself was quick to anger, yet ready to make up "*irasci celerem, tamen ut placabilis essem*," so it behooves one who loves Horace to try to make up with Louis Untermeyer, even if he did make

tandem desine matrem
tempestitiva sequi viro

into

"Come you are a child no longer.
Make your faint desires stronger
Be a bride."

Nice touch, that, "make your faint desires stronger." Pity Horace did not have a modern psychologist's capacity for penetrating the motives that made Chloe run away! But I am getting angry again, as my eye falls upon another version of the Ode to Chloe where Louis Untermeyer gives free rein to his impulse to embellishment. What one of the gods above or below shall I invoke? I suppose I most need the help of Minerva, goddess of cool reason.

The first part of Louis Untermeyer's book is decidedly interesting. He parodies a host of modern poets, ranging from Shakespeare to Irving Berlin, at work on the rendering of the *Integer Vitae* theme. The first, a parody of Robert Bridges, looks very much indeed like Robert Bridges, except for the indication in the fourth stanza that the writer doesn't read Latin very well. More curiously, it looks more like Horace than anything else in the book. The parodies of J. M. Synge, Carl Sandburg, Franklin P. Adams are very like; that of Whitman is excellent, and it is impossible to conceive a more perfect parody than that of Irving Berlin. The Parodies of poets farther from Louis Untermeyer's spirit, like Shakespeare, Coleridge and Heine are not really parodies at all, but a patchwork of familiar lines and phrases. Still, they are amusing.

And if I constrain myself to be fair, I am forced to admit that among the sixty or more odes Louis Untermeyer has undertaken to translate, there are many that come near the mark,

"Shrouded with ice and snow
Soracte stands in splendor
The rivers freeze; the slender
Branches are weighted low."

That is a good beginning; it shows that Louis Untermeyer is capable of reproducing something of the effect of the original. And this, too, is rather Horatian.

"What virgin, what barbarian fair,
When you have slain her lord and lover
Will be your slave? With perfumed hair,
What stripling from the court will bear
The golden cups of wine?"

So often, in fact, does Louis Untermeyer strike the right note that you wait, expecting him at last to find the tune. He doesn't ever, quite. As it seems to me, it cannot be done. It certainly will not be done by any one who sets

out with the hypothesis as to Horace and his work that you find in Louis Untermeyer's preface.

How life might best be lived was the inquiry of profoundest interest to Horace. In pursuing it he naturally discoursed a great deal on virtue and vice, on wisdom and folly, and by an instructive aversion to priggishness and pharisaism, took especial pains to make it clear that he had his own full share of all kinds of folly and vice. The generations upon generations of prigs and pedants, through whose hands Horace was fated to pass, underscored, each one, the picaresques Horace admits or invents until they stand out like pillars of black basalt. You would not have expected Louis Untermeyer to be taken in by this pedantic maltradition, but he writes, "When he was not consulting doctors or reading, he was fighting under Brutus against his future patron; carrying on a multiplicity of amours; indulging in a variety of wines; suffering horribly in consequence; taking the warm baths at Baiae and the cold ones at Clusium for his invalidism; forgetting caution and eating rich and almost fatal food with the Roman elite . . . Whenever he was free from more fascinating diversions, he was a poet." Of course, if that were a true account of Horace's life, he'd be just the poet for another busy man to translate well when free from more fascinating diversions. But Horace wasn't that kind of man at all, but one who served in an army once, a little while, and unwillingly, who had occasional amours, perhaps, and facile ones, as fell to the lot of a proud man and the son of a freedman; who liked good wine, but usually had a mediocre vintage; loved the good fare and good conversation at the table of Maecenas, but made brave excuses to escape the fate of a slave to weekends. All that was incidental as it is in the lives of most men who take their work seriously. That Horace took his work seriously any one can see for himself if he will calculate the labor that must have been required to transform the dreary moral themes baldly versified in the Satires into the flawless lyrical gems of the Odes. And even the Epistles, in which Horace proclaims his love of ease and sleep, are models of painstaking composition. One should look closely to Horace's verses before taking his account of himself too seriously.

This conception of Horace as rioting adventurer and occasional poet helps Louis Untermeyer to his conclusion that "the technically artificial versions of Austin Dobson, the colloquial adaptations of Eugene and Roswell M. Field, even the most slangy and impudent burlesques of Franklin P. Adams and Bert Leston Taylor reveal more of the living Horace than the meticulous gravity of Professor Conington and the precise but prosy translations of Addison and Roscommon." One would get nearer to Horace if he assumed that neither the slang nor the pedantry could reflect Horace at all. How does one better represent a subtle twinkle in the eye: by a solemn, steady gaze or by a twisted grin? Louis Untermeyer votes for the grin, and, perhaps, he is right, so far. But he banks too much on it, with the result that he dresses up the most polished writer of an exquisitely wrought civilization as a broad humorist, rather more clownish than even our loose grained culture entirely relishes.

Still, Louis Untermeyer is not to be held to strict personal responsibility for thus distorting and cheapening the quality of Horace. He is merely following the established American convention. Horace might write frankly and seriously about the brevity of life, the fated limitations upon the true value of riches, honors, fame. We Amer-

icans have a vague feeling that it isn't quite decent to discuss such matters. The Sunday sermon is supposed to look after the distinction between true values and false, between the eternal and the evanescent. Let not the working days look beyond their proper horizon. And so, if we must moralize, we save our faces as best we may by speaking through the mouths of rustics or quaint old negroes, or hide our naked seriousness in a thicket of slang. It is a consequence of the Puritan tradition, to which Louis Untermeyer, for all his brave efforts, remains enchained.

ALVIN JOHNSON.

Women's Wages

Women's Wages, by Emilie Josephine Hutchinson. Columbia University Studies. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

WHEN sex generalities begin to fly, women are referred to as though they were descended from an infinite line of virgin births, and men as though they had propagated by fission, one man from the other, back to an Eveless Adam. To those who feel conscious of an equal number of paternal and maternal ancestors, the fierce division of the sexes is both ridiculous and annoying but to a certain extent they are forced to recognize it. To treat women as a special group of workers may be an artificial distinction but not to admit that this distinction exists is as foolish as denying the strength of the equally artificial barriers of class. Neither can be destroyed without being recognized at least long enough to be examined, and it is this kind of service that is done by a book like Miss Hutchinson's *Women's Wages*, a study of the wages of industrial women in the United States, and a unique and much needed piece of work.

It is, necessarily, a pre-war study. The detailed government statistics on which she bases her conclusions are those of the 1900-1913 period. No trustworthy information can as yet be had on the influence which the war period may have on women's wages, but whatever we have points only to sporadic and impermanent increases. The more or less mythical women who had been earning twenty to thirty dollars in munition factories had to come back and stand in line for eight-dollar jobs, and lucky to get that, as triumphant employers expressed it. The wage situation before the war, then, is Miss Hutchinson's chief concern, and, after pitiless statistics, she sums it up as follows: "The wages of industrial women are compressed within a narrow range of from four to eight dollars. Occasionally a woman earns over ten dollars. More frequently she earns less than four. She who may be regarded as the typical worker receives five, six or seven dollars in a normal working week."

The only way of looking at these wages is of course through the glasses of the cost of living and the result is disheartening shrinkage. Miss Hutchinson quotes the working-woman's budgets made up by several minimum wage boards. One of them, in 1916, set a minimum wage of \$8.98, paring down laundry to 25 cents a week and board and lodging to \$5.75, but in a large industry of that state nearly nine-tenths of the workers received less than eight dollars a week.

Here enters of course the picture, so comforting to the employer, of the girl who "lives at home," spending her earnings in powder and chewing gum and depending on a steadily employed father for the rest of life's necessities.