

ness) to give the world yet another doing into English of the four books of Odes, and the *Curmen Seculare*. While the work affords fresh proof, if such were needed, of the intellectual vigor of the octogenarian author, it will hardly add much to his literary fame. I confess, at least, that I have been not a little disappointed with it. The splendid literary reputation of the author, his wonderful mastery of the English language, which all acknowledge, led one possibly to expect too much, to look, in fact, for a *chef d'œuvre* at his hands. This it certainly is not; indeed, it will not compare favorably with many of the translations which we have had in our hands for years; certainly not with the fine metrical translation by Lord Lytton, the poetical and finished translation of Sir Theodore Martin, the scholarly and faithful one of Professor Conington, nor with that of the American scholar, the friend of Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Osborne Sargent, to whom I have already referred, and least of all with the exquisite renderings of Sir Stephen De Vere, or any of the dozen odes which that accomplished scholar, Goldwin Smith, has translated and published (unfortunately for private circulation only) in his exquisite literary bijou, "Bay Leaves."

I have long looked on the last ode of the first book, that to his attendant, beginning 'Persicos odi,' as a crucial ode for Horatian translators; partly, no doubt, because Lord Lytton, himself a poet and an accomplished translator of the Odes, pronounced this particular ode untranslatable, and partly because I had myself, in ignorance at the time, let me add, of Lord Lytton's dictum, tried on it my 'prentice hand. Certain it is that this ode, short and simple as it is, has for some reason baffled translators. I turned, therefore, eagerly over the pages of my "Gladstone," to see how this test ode had come out of his hands.

The ode is short, and is, in my judgment, a perfect gem, simple, elegant, and transparent as crystal—an example of Horace at his best.

It is thus translated by Gladstone :

" Off with the Persian gear, I hate it,
Hate the wreaths with limebark bound.
Care not where the latest roses
Linger on the ground.

" Bring me myrtle, nought but myrtle !
Myrtle, boy, will well combine,
Thee attending, me carousing,
'Neath the trellised vine."

This is by no means up to what I expected. There is no finish or elegance about it, no "translation of 'poesie into poesie.'" Why "Linger on the ground." Where else could the roses linger? and what is meant by "combine," in the second verse? How can the myrtle "combine" Horace and his attendant? Surely they are not to be tied together with myrtle. The lines certainly do not convey Horace's idea that the myrtle was equally suitable as a wreath for master and attendant.

If the test ode which I selected was a fair sample of the whole work, I felt that the last literary performance of the Grand Old Man would not add to his reputation, and this is the conclusion to which a careful study of the work has brought me. There are, no doubt, some striking, bold and effective translations, many good ones, and all are marked by what Gladstone considers the matter of most importance—*compression*: so far, at least, as the number of lines and words is concerned—a compression, however, which is occasionally fatal to the meaning. One of the most spirited is the noble ode addressed to a ship, (Book 1, 14):

" O ship ! new billows sweep thee out
Seaward. What wilt thou ? hold the port,
be stout.
Seest not ? thy mast
How rent by stiff south-western blast,

" Thy side, of rowers how forlorn ?
Thine hull, with groaning yards, with rigging torn.