

LIFE OF HORACE.

Nulla etenim mihi te fors obtulit ; optimus olim
Virgilius, post hunc Varius, dixere quid essem.
Ut veni coram, singultim pauca locutus,
(Infans namque pudor prohibebat plura profari,)
Non ego me claro natum patre, non ego circum
Me Satureiano vectari rura caballo,
Sed quod eram, narro : respondes (ut tuus est mos)
Pauca : abeo ; et revocas nono post mense, jubesque
Esse in amicorum numero. Magnum hoc ego duco,
Quod placui tibi, qui turpi secernis honestum,
Non patre praeclaro, sed vitâ et pectore puro.

His friendship for Varius and Virgil is also thus alluded to in the 5th Satire :—

Postera lux oritur multo gratissima, namque
Plotius et Varius Sinuessae, Virgiliusque
Occurrunt ; animae, quales neque candidiores
Terra tulit, neque quis me sit devinctior alter.
O qui complexus et gaudia quanta fuerunt !
Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.

Satisfied with the competency which the kindness of Maecenas had bestowed, he neglected the calls of ambition, and steadily resisted all the solicitations of his friends that he would enter upon a political career. He even refused to become the secretary of Augustus, who, however, invited him to his table, and while sitting at his meals with Virgil at his right and Horace at his left, often ridiculed the short breath of the former, and the watery eyes of the latter, by observing that he sat between sighs and tears. "Ego sum inter suspiria et lachrymas." This weakness in his eyes is also referred to in the Satire from which we last cited a passage :—

Hic oculis ego nigra meis collyria lippu.
Illinere.

Lusum it Maecenas, dormitum ego Virgiliusque :
Namque pilâ lippis inimicum et ludere crudis.

Horace was warm in his friendships ; and, if ever any ill-judged reflection had caused offence, he made every concession which was calculated to effect a reconciliation. The natural cheerfulness of his mind, fortified by his preference for the philosophical tenets of Aristippus, was admirably suited to his position ; for whether he appeared at the imperial court, or listening to the rude jokes of the peasantry on his Sabine farm, he was equally at home. The last years of his life were saddened by the deaths of his most intimate friends, Virgil, Tibullus, and Varius ; but the severest blow he had to sustain, was inflicted by the dissolution of Maecenas. He had declared that he could never survive the loss of one who was "part of his soul," and