

THE ODES OF HORACE AS FRESHMAN LATIN.

With great satisfaction I read in the December number of the Classical Journal the plea for the Odes of Horace as Freshman Latin, and wish to strongly endorse it. Indeed, of all the Latin literature, none in my opinion makes such a strong appeal to the young American of today as Horace, -- and a distant second perhaps Ciceronis de officiis. Though for over forty years life has carried me into other fields of activity, I still enjoy with undiminished pleasure Horace's poems.

Incidentally, it is a liberal education to the boy to realize from this "monumentum aere perennius" the true value of things, compared with our generation's false gods. How Maecenas atavis editus regibus survived the ages merely as a type, by the grace of the libertino patre natus; how Horace promises immortality to fons Bandusiae. -- and keeps the promise, for here, after nearly twenty centuries, in far away Atlantis, we read his immortal work.

In reading Horace, I would urge a liberal memorizing of selected poems: the pretty little appeal Ad Leuconoen, the old college song Integer vitae; the spring song Solvituro Acris hiemps; Beatus ille qui procul negotiis; the Carmen saeculare, which so impressed one of the great popes, that he after nineteen centuries wrote a second Carmen in true Horatian style; the pretty meter of Miserarum est negue amori, and many others.

However, I do not agree with Mr Mierow in the difficulty which he sees in the prosody. I would not devote any time to it except perhaps later on, after greater familiarity has been acquired by reading and memorizing. Then it may be of interest to devote some time to the interesting relation between the meter and the psychological appeal made by it. In the grade schools, at much earlier age, poems are read and memorized by the children without prosodic preparation. The same can be done with Horace, and the Horatian verse falls so easily in reading, that you can hardly miss it, and certainly no more than a diagram of the meter should be sufficient for the slowest pupil.

I hope we may yet see Virgil's Aeneis, which after all is a mere plagiarism of Homer's great epic, dropped from the regular course and its place taken by the great modern poet of Augustian Rome, Horace.

Feb. 1923.

CHARLES P. STEINMETZ
CHIEF CONSULTING ENGINEER.
GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY.