

This can hardly be considered a happy rendering. On the same sacramental occasions, after the tables had been "fenced," the intending communicants sang "two double verses" from the twenty-sixth Psalm. In the American version there are comparatively few double verses, but these two single stanzas will suffice to show after what fashion this Psalm has been modernised—

I'll wash my hands in innocence;  
Thine altar compass, Lord,  
That with the voice of thanks I may  
Thy wondrous works record.

O Lord, the house of Thine abode  
Has been my great delight;  
The place wherein Thy glory dwells  
Is lovely in my sight.

Remembering the goodness of Jehovah to His people, the inspired Psalmist enshrined his memories of deliverance wrought in Psalm xlv. "O God, we with our ears have heard." In somewhat more pretentious and swinging "meter" the revisers have sung—

O God, we have heard, and our fathers have told

What wonders Thou did'st in the great days of old;  
Where nations were crushed and cast out of the land,  
Thou plantest our fathers and madest them stand.

The forty-sixth Psalm—Luther's Psalm, as it has been called—has two renderings. The first follows so closely to the words and the rhythm of the Authorized Version as to suggest a regret that any change, involving a break in the continuity of association, was made at all. The second opens thus—

Our refuge and our strength is God,  
Our help in tribulation.

We will not fear though earth remove,  
Though hills forsake their station;  
And stand amid the sea,  
Though waters troubled be,  
Though swelling billows roar,  
And shake the rocky shore  
Until the mountains tremble.

Many a contemner of the Authorized Version has endeavored to excite a somewhat rapid ridicule by quoting as a specimen of its Psalmody the verses that include

Moab's my washing-pot, my shoe  
I'll over Edom throw.

In this fashion the American revisers have negotiated the difficulty of a too literal interpretation—

The land of Sochem I'll divide;  
And mete out Succoth's vale;  
I claim Manasseh, Gilead's mount,  
My rule they all shall hail.

My head's defence, is Ephraim's strength;  
My sceptre Judah yields;  
Philistia, Edom, Moab, each  
To Me its homage yields.

When congregational singing was in its full course there was always something stimulating in the way in which the precursor broke forth with "Sheffield" to the inspiring verses in the sixty-seventh Psalm, beginning, "O God what time thou didst go forth." In their new guise the verses appear to be somewhat shorn alike of their simplicity and their grandeur—

When Thou, O God, didst lead the way  
Before Thy people day by day?  
When through the wilderness so dread  
Thou marchest on with stately tread  
Earth shook with fear, the heavens were bowed

Before Thy presence in the cloud;  
Yon Sinai trembled to its base  
Before the God of Israel's race.

Thou, God, didst send a piteous rain  
To cheer Thy weary, parched domain.  
Thy people dwell therein and shared  
Thy goodness for the poor prepared.

And for the "double verse," beginning "Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high," this seems but a poor substitute—  
Thou hast ascended gloriously,  
And captive led captivity.

They come with gifts that did rebel.  
That God the Lord with them might dwell.

The Covenanters strengthened their hearts for the fight with Claverhouse on the Muir of Drumclog with the opening stanzas of the seventy-sixth Psalm—"In Judah's land God is well known." In the new version there is all the old battling of the early and still accepted measure. These are the second and third verses—

Excellent art Thou and glorious,  
Coming from the hills of prey,  
Thou hast spoiled the valiant-hearted.  
Wrapt in sleep of death are they;  
Mighty men have lost their cunning,  
None are ready for the fray

Horse and chariot low are lying  
In the sleep of death's dark night.  
Jacob's God, Thou didst rebuke them;  
Thou art fearful in thy might,  
When Thine anger once is risen,  
Who may stand before Thy sight?

Jehovah's sovereignty over all things is sung in Psalm civ. In our own Psalms in metre the rendering is perhaps not more simple than it is here, but it does not suggest the children's hymn as this does—

The moon hath He set  
The seasons to show;  
The sun doth the time  
Of down-going know.  
Thou makest it dark,

And the night follows day.  
When beasts of the wood  
Steal abroad for their prey.  
The young lions roar,

From God seeking meat,  
The sun doth arise;  
They swiftly retreat.

And down in their dens  
Do they hide from the light,  
While man goeth forth

To his labour till night.  
"I to the hills," the hundred and twenty-first Psalm, is rich in its associations, so much so that, for that reason alone, if for none other, Scottish folks will be loath to let it go in favour of this revision—

I to the hills will lift mine eyes.  
Oh whence shall come my aid?  
My help is from the Lord alone,  
Who heaven and earth hath made

He will not let thy foot be moved,  
Thy Keeper will not sleep:  
No sleep, no slumber, will He take  
Who doth His Israel keep.

Thy faithful Keeper is the Lord,  
Thy shade upon thy right.  
The sun shall smite thee not by day,  
Nor yet the moon, by night.  
The Lord shall keep thee from all ill,  
Will keep thy soul always;  
Will keep thy going out and in  
From this time forth and aye.

And the same may be said of the hundred and thirty-seventh Psalm—"By Babel's streams," even if we must admit that this rendering has claims to recognition of its own—

By Babel's streams we sat and wept,  
Our hearts to Zion clung.  
On willows in the midst thereof  
Our harps we hung.  
For there a song demanded they  
Who had us captive led:  
A song of Zion sing for us,  
Our spoilers said.

How shall we sing Jehovah's song  
In this a foreign land?  
If Zion I forget, may still  
Forsake my hand.

It is really very difficult for a Scottish Presbyterian and a Psalm-singer to assess the worth of this revision. It has its merits beyond doubt, but it breaks into a treasury of song that is enshrined in memory, in history, in association, in the most wholesale fashion. So much so, indeed, as to beget the fear that its effect may be to break a previous continuity without giving us anything that is on the whole more worthy, and that at the very time when it is all that the Psalms can do, as a medium of praise, to hold their own.

Perhaps the Authorized Version is crude here and there, and perhaps it is archaic in its words and expressions, but these are among its characteristics that render it dear, and that make us cling to it as it is. The Psalms are for all time, no doubt, but, as we have then, they are "the Psalms my father loved" and Scotland will think more than once or twice before she exchanges them for even the more smoothly flowing versification of the American translation. They are our heritage, and we must pass the heritage on.

#### AULD LIGHT.

#### PRESBYTERIAN CATHEDRAL.

The project of a "Cathedral Church" in Washington originated by Mr. Justice Harlan, and in the interest of which he addressed a number of representative men, has called forth the following from Dr. Patton, of Princeton, who writes:—"I have been intending for some time to write to you in reply to the letter which you were kind enough to send me regarding the proposed cathedral church in Washington. I cannot say that I have any practical suggestions to make, but I am unwilling to deny myself the pleasure of saying to you that I heartily approve of your suggestion, and that I wish you great success in carrying it out. I am sure that you will find throughout our Church a sympathetic response.

"Presbyterianism needs something corresponding to the cathedral system of England. There should be in our great cities, and pre-eminently in the capital of the nation, a church so well equipped, so independent of the ordinary sources of revenue, and so adapted to the doing of work beyond the requirements of a parish that within its walls and under its roof the best men of the nation and the best men of the Church could, from time to time, give expression to their mature thinking of the great themes of Christianity.

"Is there any place in America today where one can go and be sure to hear such uplifting sermons as one may expect to hear under the dome of St. Paul's? Is there a place in our land, is there a need in our day for sermons somewhat different from those which are prepared week by week to meet the exigencies of an ordinary parish? I think there is. And if the Presbyterian church shall provide such a place and open the way for the preaching of such sermons she will, in my judgment, do a great service to the cause of Christian truth. I am not looking at this matter from the standpoint of denominational pride. I am considering it in regard to what I consider a great intellectual need; and because our church is broad, liberal and possessed of a catholicity which does not unchurch those who belong to other communions than our own, I believe that the door of opportunity is especially open to her for the doing of a much needed and most important work in the direction indicated by your letter."

#### THE OLDEST COUNTRY IN THE NEW WORLD.

Everybody is talking about the high-class special excursion which the Grand Trunk Railway System are organizing for Mexico, and which will leave Montreal 9.00 a.m., January 29th, 1906, in special pullman cars on the "International Limited." These cars will be attached to the private train that will be occupied throughout the tour at Chicago the following morning. All expenses included in rate. Tour will last about forty days, and will cover the most interesting portions of the "oldest country in the New World." Apply to any Grand Trunk agent or to J. Quinlan, Bonaventure station, Montreal, for all information, descriptive matter, rates, etc.