

began his psalmistry is familiar. The young man complained to some people in the church at Southampton in which his father was a deacon, that "the hymnists of the day were sadly out of taste." "Give us something better, young man." He set about it, and that very evening the church service was closed with that inspiring psalm:

"Behold the glories of the Lamb  
Amidst His Father's throne!  
Prepare new honors for His name;  
And songs before unknown!"

Speaking of Watts, there are so many interesting and quaint things about that man. He is jilted by a young woman whose name is Singer; in 1739 he edits her hymns (part humorously) entitled, "Devout Exercises of the Heart." If his grandfather had blown up his ship and lost his life in fighting against the Dutch a few years earlier, where had Isaac been, what had the Church done without his hundreds of hymns? His annotations on his versions of the Psalms, how quaint and honest! I am indebted to Miss Susan Hayes Ward for kindly calling my attention to them; and who will not agree with her that "the *naïveté* with which the good doctor ventures to give the Psalms another turn more conformable to the spirit of Christianity is rarely delicious!"

On Psalm xcii. 11: "Rejoicing in the destruction of our personal enemies is not so evangelical a practise; therefore I have given the eleventh verse another turn. See notes on the Third Psalm." On Psalm iii.: "In this Psalm I have changed David's personal enemies into the spiritual enemies of every Christian, viz., sin, Satan, etc.; I have mentioned the serpent, the tempter, the guilt of sin, and the sting of death, which are words well known in the New Testament." On Psalm v., "Where any just occasion is given to make mention of Christ and the Holy Spirit, I refuse it not, and I am persuaded David would not, had he lived under the Gospel; nor St. Paul, had he written a psalm-book." On Psalm lv.: "I have

left out whole psalms, and such parts of others that tend to fill the mind with overwhelming sorrow or sharp resentment; neither of which are so well suited to the Gospel, and, therefore, the particular complaints of David against Ahitophel here are entirely omitted." On Psalm cxx.: "I hope the transposition of several verses of the psalm is no disadvantage to this imitation of it. Nor will the spirit of the Gospel and charity at the end render it less agreeable to Christian ears."

I have written somewhat of the origin of hymns. It may have been noticed that many issued from personal or public sorrows. I imagine this is the case far oftener than usually apprehended. I remember spending an evening once with Horatius Bonar and the Guthries, in Edinburgh. He wore not only a serious but sad expression. The next day his preaching indicated the same, of such totally different nervous structure from Dr. Guthrie. And yet the Guthrie put so much of his own rich joy into the hearts of his hearers, the other put more into the hearts of his readers and the singers of his songs. The theory struck me then, and has been a favorite theory since, that the great majority of the hymns of faith and hope have been the outcry of the Christian soul out of depressions and poverties and sores and sins. "Out of the *depths* have I cried unto Thee, O Lord;" depths of sorrow, of loneliness, of unconquered passions, of great wrongs. "I will *sing* of mercy and judgment. Unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing." Bonar never could have sung many of his beautiful hymns but for some such pressure on his soul. Madame Guyon, except for her discipline in many a dungeon, never had breathed such sweet prayers and praises to God for use of souls in every land bound in fetters and seeking liberty in Christ. "The agonies of Germany in the Thirty Years' War and other conflicts were productive of a vast number of patriotic and Christian songs. At the end of the seventeenth century,