

Reformed Church, and the Scottish Reformers, renouncing the doctrines and the practices of the Church of Rome, renounced at the same time their mediæval hymns. Taking nothing at second hand, they had recourse to the Bible for their doctrines and form of worship, and finding in Rous's Metrical Version of the Psalms a faithful rendering of the old Hebrew Psalms, they chose them to be their "songs in the house of their pilgrimage." Two centuries and more have passed since these time-honoured psalms were chosen. By them men were fortified for the fiery trial which the Scottish Church was to pass through. Never before nor since has it fallen to the lot of any "Songs of Praise" to be tested as to their value as these were. These true Hebrew melodies have ascended "from the utmost corner of the land," and their cry has been sent from the Covenanters' hiding-place among the caves of the moss hag, from the prison, the scaffold, and the stake, from "the moorland of mist, where the martyrs lay," as well as in the chamber of death, in the bosom of his family, where "the end of the good man is peace," these psalms have never been found wanting. Will the old Scottish version of the psalms ever cease to be music to those who owe so much to their covenanting forefathers, who first sang them? Whatever may be thought by some of their setting, the gems by which these psalms are enriched illuminate the text. An old divine well known on the Ottawa, when conducting family worship at a friend's house, was wont to say, "Let us read the Metrical Version of this psalm, it is nearest the original." The author of "The Book of Psalms" has dedicated it "to the Scottish Churches," and has succeeded in producing a psalter which in its entirety is more in accordance with the Presbyterian ideal of a "Book of Praise" than any other version that has appeared since Francis Rous, the venerable Provost of Eton, became the bard of the Church. The pious Sternhold still lives in some grand old stanzas, and so do Tate and Brady, Watts, Wesley, Montgomery, and others. Gems of rare beauty are found among all these, but no entire version has retained its hold on any church as its medium of praise, save the Scottish version. Tate and Brady, the last representatives, have all but disappeared. The Scottish version alone remains in vigorous service in all the Presbyterian churches throughout the British Dominions. Its nearness to the Word of God, the Spirit speaking in it, and through it, has held it up; and here the author of the "Book of Psalms," in his preface, says, "The use of the actual words of the Bible is alone satisfactory to ears accustomed to Rous's Psalms, and I have sought in the case of the psalms translated into common metre to adhere as closely as possible to the language of the original."—"To the new version offered in this volume the psalms of the authorized versions are added, wherever their excellence has made them favourites with the Scottish people." As may be expected the Words of "The Book of Psalms" are David's words, and much conscientious talent has been exercised to render David's mind in such simplicity of language. Thus the last verse of the xxxiv. Psalm:

The Lord redeems His servants' souls,  
And, through His saving grace,  
Shall none of them be desolate,  
Their trust in Him who place.

Last verse of Psalm lxxxii. :

Arise, O Lord, and judge the earth,  
All nations unto Thee,  
Yea, all the heathen, Thou shalt take  
Thine heritage to be.

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