

of ordinary prose. The bare meaning may thus be got at; but the fine flavour, the pregnant fulness, the exquisite conciseness of expression in such lyrics as those of Horace can never be adequately represented in any prose translation, however scholarly and refined. Even in the most literal of such renderings, diction, more or less poetic, has to be frequently, if unconsciously, employed; and the version may as well have been cast in some poetic mould at once. In fact the poetry of one language can never be translated satisfactorily into the pure prose of another. Convinced of this, scholars have endeavoured to surmount the difficulty in different ways. Some have given us specimens of what are called *free* translations into various forms of English poetry. These are properly not translations at all, but simply poetic paraphrases: and to them what Bentley said of Pope's Homer is always applicable—"It is a pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer." Others have sought to introduce the very metres of the original into a language from which they are entirely foreign, thinking by this device to reproduce more faithfully the spirit of the original. The fate of the majority of such attempts, curious and marvellous as displays of human ingenuity, has not been of such a character as to inspire renewed imitations. A dress that may be ever so becoming and graceful to an idea expressed in one language, may sit very awkwardly and stiffly on the same idea expressed in another. Each language has its own natural modes of expression; and it is a perilous enterprise to force the flowing current of thought into channels that serve but to cramp and confine it. Let any one attempt to translate even Burns' trumpet-blast, "Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled!" into similar lines of modern English, and he will soon see how much of the inspired spirit of the original is retained. Is there no *via media* then? no way in which the advantages of the literal fidelity of a prose translation and those of a freer poetic version can be combined? We think there is. What may be now called the native verse of England—I mean the heroic verse of Milton, the easy flowing Iambic Pentameter—offers itself as a vehicle by which the full force and significance of the original may be conveyed to the reader. In it both matter and manner, both the outward dress and the inner soul, may be preserved and presented. It admits of almost *verbatim* literal rendering, and yet conserves to the greatest possible extent the essence of the poetic principle informing the whole. As an example of this a quotation may be allowed from Prof. Kennedy's *Virgil*. Let us take one almost at random—not because it is the best specimen. A comparison between the original and the learned professor's version will show that the plan thus briefly outlined has been consistently adopted by him throughout. *Virg. Æn. viii. 407-415*:

"Inde ubi prima quies medio jam noctis abactæ
Curriculo expulerat somnum, cum femina primum,
Cui tolerare colo vitam tenuique Minerva
Impositum, cinerem et sopitos suscitât ignes,
Noctem addens operi, famulasque ad lumina longo
Exercet penso, castum ut servare cubile
Conjugis et possit parvos educere natos:
Haut secus Igniparâs nec tempore segnior illo
Mollibus e stratis opera ad fabrilia segnit."

And now when earl'est had banish'd sleep,
And waning night had clos'd her mid career,
What time the housewife first, whose doom it is
With distaff and Minerva's humble toil
To eke out life, the embers and lull'd fire
Awakens, to her labours adding night,
That so she may preserve in chastity
Her husband's bed, and rear her little sons;
Even thus, and not more slothful, at that hour
The Fire-lord rises from his couch of down
To ply the labours of the forge.

What could be finer, or more true to the spirit of the original? And yet it is emphatically a literal translation, much more so than most of the so-called literal prose translations. Here is another short specimen from the same book—*Æn. 589-591*:

"Qualis ubi Oceani perfusus Lucifer unda
Quem Venus ante alios astrorum diligit ignes,
Extulit os sacrum caelo tenebrasque resolvit."