

Through the politeness of Messrs. W. Drysdale and Company, I have received a copy of Dr. Morrison's *Great Hymns of the Church*. The book is very neatly printed; and the account which Dr. Morrison gives of the authors and origin of the various hymns is very instructive. It is gratifying to know that a minister of our church possesses the ability and the taste which Dr. Morrison has shown in his translation of these hymns into Latin verse. In the March number of the *Knox College Monthly*, there appears a notice of Dr. Morrison's book, wherein rather severe strictures are made on the style and Latinity of Dr. Morrison. Unfortunately for the reviewer, he did not pause to consider that the very sentences in which he finds fault with Dr. Morrison's style contain similar, if not greater blemishes, than those which he seeks to expose. The reviewer must have forgotten that so far as Latin verse is concerned, "A little learning is a dangerous thing." Were the case otherwise, he would not have written these words regarding the translations which Dr. Morrison has made of several hymns into Latin. "Were we to turn to what might be regarded as more important and examine some of the Latin translations, graver errors might be noted." Unhappily for the accuracy of classical learning in Canada, the writing of Greek and Latin verse has been virtually abolished in our universities owing in a large measure to the intrepid self-assertion of science. Is the reviewer of Dr. Morrison's book aware that the laws which the Latin poets of the Augustan age observed are not the laws that have governed the writers of Latin hymns since the days of Ambrose and Augustine with his *Psalmus Abecedarius*, which virtually effected a revolution in Latin poetry. Few perhaps are aware that Celtic forms of versification with its rhyme and alliteration were introduced into Latin verse by Ambrose and Augustine, and that those forms, bringing with them as they do a certain license of grammatical constructions, have been deserved by subsequent writers of Latin hymns. It is always difficult to have typographical accuracy. In looking over the Latin translation of the various hymns that Dr. Morrison has published, I find in one place *sperna*, where *spretum* must have been intended. In the very low translation of *Lead, kindly light, capio* occurs where *cupid* must surely have been intended. If the editor of this journal had more space at his disposal, I could easily make citations from the Latin of Dr. Morrison, which indicate great neatness of idiom and felicity of expression, and which, therefore, reflect great credit on the scholarship and diligence of Dr. Morrison. Those who have attempted similar translations, and those alone can know how difficult it is to achieve even moderate success. Dr. Morrison's numerous friends cannot be otherwise than hopeful, that he will continue the work for which he has rare aptitude; and that he will long be spared to enjoy the honor which has been recently conferred upon him.

Cornwall, 5th April, 1890.

NEIL MACNISH.