AMONG THE TRANSLATORS.

VIRGIL AND HORACE.

The number of versified translations of Greek and Latin poets which the English presses continually put forth must be a never-ending surprise to the practical American mind—if, that is to say, the practical mind ever thinks of so manifestly useless and absurd a thing at all. Authors are supposed to write and publishers to print for the purpose of making money; that either should work to any other end is a proposition which to the practical mind is simply bewildering. Yet one would think there can be but little money in laboriously turning into English a quantity of school-books which no one reads except at school, and whose only value is in their being in a foreign tongue. Original poetry is bad enough; the verdict of the practical mind on that point is pretty apt to be one with the view taken by Heine's rich uncle, to whom the poet, at the height of his fame, was but a Dummkopf (may not the uncle, alas! have been right?); but poetry at second hand, the "old clo'" of the Muses, Apollo's second table, the cold victual of Parnassus, a disaerated Helicon—the practical mind can only gasp at the notion (which, by the way, strikes it in quite another shape than the poetical one we have chosen to give it, but just as effectively) and seek to renew its faith in human nature over the credit column of its ledger.

Another class of minds, too, not quite so practical—a class that has been at college, we will say, that knows Virgil and Horace by name, or even by certain quotations (arma virumque, pallida mors pulsat, atra cura, etc.), and can read Greek letters at sight, but on the whole thinks Huxley a greater force in the world to-day than Homer—the cultured class, in short, about which some of our newspapers make so much to-do—can understand why the great classic poets should be turned into English verse (for the benefit of those who have not been at college), but not at all why such versions should be multiplied. If you want Virgil in an English dress,
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there's your Dryden; or Homer, there's Pope—say our person of culture is from an extreme northern latitude, geographically or mentally, he will perhaps put Chapman here, and pooh-pooh Pope with a reference to Bentley. Do you desire Horace in the vulgar, there's good old Francis—pray, what better do you ask? What better, indeed, can you expect to get? Just look at your *Cyclopaedia Septentrionalis* and see what it tells you! So what is the use or the meaning, what is the reason of being, of your Theodore Martins and your Coningtons, your Morrices and Cranches? What is there to be had of them all but vanity and vexation of spirit, and time and money mislaid?

Somewhat in that way, we take it, a good many folks, even of the book-buying, nay, of the book-reading, sort, must feel over every fresh announcement of a translation of one or other of the favorite classic poets. And as the supply of such things is in the long run, by a beneficent law of nature, tempered to the demand, and the mind of the book-buying many reacts upon, and often rules, the ardor of the book-making few—"book" in Lamb's sense, be it understood—it is not surprising that the list of American translators should be of the scantiest. Mr. Cranch's bold venture of last year—a blank-verse rendering of the *Aeneid*—had few precursors or precedents. There is Mumford's blank-verse Homer, which Professor Felton praised, and Professor Arnold, strange to say, seems not to have seen; and Mr. Bryant's blank-verse Homer, which everybody praised and a smaller number read. Then, some years since, a Philadelphian gentleman put forth still another version of the *Iliad* in what he said was English verse, although the precise metre of such lines as

"For Agamemnon insulted Chryses";
"But Agamemnon was much displeased";
"Wounded is Diomed, Tydæus' son,
Ulysses, also, and Agamemnon,"

unless it be hexameter—everything you cannot scan in English verse is hexameter, just as everything you cannot parse in Greek is second aorist—we have been unable to determine. We have heard, also, of a version of Horace by a professor in some Southern university, but this we have not seen. Are there any others? Mr. E. C. Stedman ten years ago printed specimens of a projected translation of Theocritus, in English hexameters, of considerable merit; but his reception does not seem to have encouraged him to go on. And that is all, a little Spartan band of four or five to oppose to the great host of British translators from Phaer to Morris. The practical mind may feel reassured of its country.

It is true that these English versions are often reprinted here; but it is only the chiefs of the army—those who shine pre-eminent among their fellows,

"sicut inter ignes
Luna minores,"

or who are already known to fame for triumphs in other fields. Prof. Conington made something of a critical furor by the bold breaking away from rule and precedent in his choice of a metre, though Dr. Maginn, in his Homeric ballads, had given him the hint. In like manner our booksellers have reprinted and our book-buyers bought Mr. Morris' *Aeneid* (we beg his pardon—*Aenidae*), not because it was a new translation of Virgil, but because it was a new work of the
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latest popular poet; just as they printed and bought Mr. Bryant's Homer because it was the latest work of our oldest living poet, as they printed and bought Lord Derby's Iliad because it was the work of a nobleman, and not only that, but of a leading European statesman, and therefore, in both aspects, a very surprising and desirable thing for our people, who have never been used to connect that sort of accomplishment with the idea they had formed of a nobleman, still less with their notion of a statesman. But we did not reprint or buy Mr. Worsley's, or Prof. Newman's, or Prof. Blackie's, or Mr. Wright's Homer; and even if we printed, it is to be feared we did not extensively buy, Mr. Cranch's Aeneid, although in the way of buying English Aeneids we might have done worse. Why? Not, certainly, because any of the versions named lacked merit, but because they appealed to us on their merits simply, without any outside helps to popularity, and we would none of them. The fact is, we do not care in the least for Homer or Virgil, and we care a great deal for Morris and Bryant—that is to say, while they are topics of talk; and it is one of the social duties, which persons of culture would die almost sooner than fail in, to have something, or even nothing, to say about the ordained subjects of fashionable gossip.

But in England it is otherwise. There is in that country a large class always to be counted on to buy any translation of a favorite classic which has successfully run the gauntlet of the reviews. This class is made up of diverse elements. First, the translators themselves, who in England form no inconsiderable percentage of the literary public; for every other graduate of either university who has not been a stroke-oar—that is honor enough to win or give—seems to feel within him a sacred void unfilled, a mysterious yearning unsatisfied, a clamorous duty unperformed, until he has translated some classic author in whole or in part. Every translator, of course, buys the publications of every other translator to chuckle over his failures or—let us do them justice—to applaud heartily and generously the happy dexterity which conquers a difficult passage. Then, too, even scholars who have Homer and Horace at their fingers' ends, who think in Latin and dream in Greek, who dare to take liberties with the digamma and speak disrespectfully of the second aorist—even they to whom the best translation of a classic is as corked claret or skim-milk—may still buy Prof. Conington's Aeneid or Lord Lytton's Horace for a better reason than the pleasure of finding fault with it. They know, none better, that, as the former puts it, a translation by a competent hand is itself an "embodied criticism" and commentary; and even scholars, after twenty centuries or so of criticism and commentary, and even of mutual vituperation, have not yet quite made up their minds as to the meaning, or at least the shades of meaning, straight through of any poet of antiquity. This is not to say that we have not here, too, scholars who might buy a translation for the same reason; but in neither country, perhaps, are there so many as to be much of a stand-by in themselves.

But the mainstay of the English translator is that sort of fashionable sentiment in favor of classical learning necessarily fostered in a country where the university is a work-
ing element and influence in political, social, and literary life. This sentiment is not so powerful or wide-spread as it once was; as it was, let us say, when a couplet made Mr. Addison a secretary of state, or a burlesque made Mr. Montague a minister and Mr. Prior an ambassador—an improvement still on the age when Sir Christopher Hatton danced himself into the chancellorship. But it is still powerful; and the university is still such a force in English life as it never has been, as it probably never will be, here. The Oxford and Cambridge debating clubs used to be regularly looked to, and are still, perhaps, now and again beaten up, by experienced huntsmen for embryo statesmen, much as the metropolitan manager will scour the provincial stage for an undiscovered star. University men edit the leading organs of public opinion; university men fill the desks in Downing Street and the Parliamentary benches in Westminster Hall; university men yawn day after day in the club-windows of Pall Mall, and night after night in the dancing and supper rooms of Belgravia—not the supper-rooms; that is, perhaps, the one spot of the fashionable world where young England forgets to yawn. Like enough, the learning of many of these sages is no deeper than the lore of our own pundits from Yale and Harvard; and not a few of them, no doubt, would be far more at home criticising the boat-race in the Fifth Æneid (the contestants in which they would probably characterize, in their delightful idiom, as “duffers”) than construing the Latin it is told in. Such is the proud result of modern university education in a free and enlightened Anglo-Saxon community. Never-}

theless, though the university may not actually give learning, it creates a sentiment in favor of learning; it develops almost unconsciously a taste for it. One may say that it is next to impossible for any man to go through college without taking in some sense of classical culture—through the pores, as it were—which shall ever after give him a feeling of companionship, a kind of Freemasonry, with authors he could never read. To have lived among books, in an atmosphere of books, is itself in some sort an education.

Now, with this feeling for learning diffused throughout a great nation, showing itself in its chief organs of public opinion, in its selection of public officers, and even to some extent in its popular elections, and centring above all in a great city, the headquarters of all the social, political, and literary activity of the nation—its book-making, book-branding, book-buying centre—we come to see why translations from the classics should have more vogue across the water than with us. If a cabinet minister choose to beguile his leisure by turning Aristophanes into English, it is but fit that society, before having him in to dinner, should know something about it, if only to avoid such a slip as is told of Catalani. The prima donna was seated, as a great compliment, next to Goethe at a state dinner, but not knowing the divine Wolfgang—or, indeed, much of anything but some operatic scores—gave her mind to the po-tage rather than to the poet. A friend nudged her: “Why do you not talk to M. Goethe?” “I don’t know him, and he’s stupid.” “What! not know M. Goethe, the celebrated author of the Sorrows of Werther?” “The Sorrows of Wer-
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ther! Ah! M. Goethe," cried the diva with empressement, turning to the great man, "how can I ever thank you enough for your charming Sorrows of Werther! I never laughed so much at anything in my life." She had seen a parody of that immortal work in a farce at Paris. Here, when our cabinet minister lets loose his intellectual surplus on exposures of Popery, society runs no great risk. Everybody can talk a little Popery—an easier subject, on the whole, to talk or write about than Aristophanes; and one knows pretty well what our cabinet minister’s book is about without the fatigue of failing to read it.

Of the feeling we have mentioned the taste for quotation in Parliamentary debate is a good test. An apt illustration from Horace or Virgil had at one time almost the force of an argument. "Pitt," says the late Lord Lytton, in the excellent preface to his unrhymed version of Horace’s Odes, "is said never to have more carried away the applause of the House of Commons than when, likening England—then engaged in a war tasking all her resources—to that image of Rome which Horace has placed in the mouth of Hannibal, he exclaimed:

``Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennisub
Nigra feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per caedes, ab ipso
Ducit opes animunque ferro."

Pitt, indeed, is famous for such felicities. In his speech on resigning the chancellorship in 1782, after claiming "to have used his best endeavors to fulfill with integrity every official engagement," he continued: "And with this consolation, the loss of power, sir, and the loss of fortune, though I affect not to despise, I trust I shall soon be able to forget."

``Lando manentem : si celeres quatis
Pennis, resigno quos dedit . . .
Probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quero."

Sir Robert Walpole had worse luck in attempting a like feat on his retirement, made not so gracefully in the shadow of a threatened impeachment.

``Nil conscire sibi, nulli pallescere culpa," †

he quoted, and was at once taken up by his rival, Pulteney, who offered to bet him a guinea that the line read Nulla pallescere culpa. Walpole lost, and, tossing the coin to Pulteney, the latter, before pocketing it, held it up to the House with the grim remark: "It is the first money I have, received from the treasury for many years, and it shall be the last."

It may well be that there is less of this sort of thing nowadays, when Parliamentary illustrations, among the younger members at least, seem to be drawn more extensively from natural history than from ancient poetry. Yet it is but a few years since Mr. Gladstone, on going out of office, created a sensation in his turn by his application of Virgil’s fine line,

``Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor." ‡

* * Constant I praise her, but resign
With equal mind her gifts,
When, swift deserting me and mine,
Her ready wing she lifts,
And, wrapped up in my virtue, wait
Fair Poverty’s undower’d estate."

—Horat. Carm. iii. 29.

The original of the line italicized Pitt modestly omitted.

† "Conscious of no wrong done, no crime to pale at remembered."

—Horat. Ep. 1. i.

‡ "Rise from our ashes thou unknown, the predestined avenger."

* * Even as the ilex, lopped by axes rude
Where, rich with dusky boughs, soars Algidos,
Through loss, through wounds receives
New gain, new life—yea, from the very steel."
—Horat. Carm. iv. 4, Lord Lytton’s Trans.
We cannot very well imagine a leading Congressman summoning Horace to enforce his argument, say, on the vital necessity to the nation of repealing the Seventh Commandment until such time as his constituents at Podunk can get enough of their neighbors' currency to make resumption and patriotism convertible terms. Not only would he be doubtful of being understood, but he would be awed by that practical-minded public opinion at home which severely discourages in its chosen representatives such frivolities as unknown tongues. He would see behind the Speaker's desk the grim phantom of the honest Granger transfixing him with a spectral finger, and asking him in hollow tones if he was sent to Congress to talk gibberish or to get that little appropriation; he would see the still more appalling phantom of the local editor grimly sharpening his quill and squaring himself for another of those savagely sarcastic articles about our erudite Congressman, who spends his time—the time we pay for, etc.—muddling his brains—the few brains, etc.—over obsoleterbush at the Congressional Library, while he neglects his constituents' interests and allows that little bill, etc., etc. He sees all this, and, instead of Horace, he quotes Josh Billings, and everybody is satisfied.

Now, this is not meant to be the dispraise of either the Congressman or his constituents, but only to show that here political is divided from literary life in a way quite unknown in England. The scholar in politics is a fond illusion of youthful enthusiasm. Our politicians do not write; our literary folks do not go to Congress. A stray editor, to be sure, now and then gets in, tumbling over, as it were, from the Reporters' Gallery, or a flourish is made of sending Mr. Motley or Prof. Lowell minister to some foreign court; but these are spasmodic exceptions, and usually result in a way to confirm the rule. We have no counterparts to Disraeli, or Gladstone, or Mr. Lowe, or Sir George Cornwall Lewis, or the Duke of Argyle. Perhaps, however, a new era is dawning with the present Secretary of the Navy, who spells his literature with a "P."

We have said enough—the reader may think more than enough—to show why translations from the classics should flourish better in England than here, and also, by implication at least, why of all classic authors, with the one exception of Homer, Horace and Virgil should most have taken the translators' attention. From one or other of these are all the Parliamentary quotations we have given; and it is indeed, we believe, considered what our English friends call "bad form" to quote in debate any other Latin or Greek. The cause of this popularity it is easy to see. Horace and Virgil, in the usual college curriculum, are put into the student's hands just as he has got over his initial struggles with the language, and his mind is a little freed to feel some of the beauties as well as the difficulties of the author—to know that the rose has fragrance as well as thorns. Homer, on the contrary, from his comparative ease, comes much earlier in the Greek course, and becomes so much the more distasteful to the learner as Greek is harder than Latin; its very letters are aliens to his eyes, its alphabet is a place of briars and brambles. It is hard to get over these early dislikes. St. Augustine confesses a
hatred for Homer thus implanted in his school-days which he could never overcome, while he declares Virgil to be the greatest and most glorious of poets—a censure echoed by Voltaire, who pronounced the Æneid, le plus beau monument qui nous reste de toute l'antiquité, and asserts that if Homer produced Virgil, it was his finest work.

Both in Virgil and Horace there is much to captivate a youthful mind and everything to keep the affections won. The story of the Æneid is not only full of life and color and motion, with plenty of fighting, which all boys love of course, but, despite its later-discovered want of a reasonable hero or heroine, its episodes—the Trojan horse and the sharp street-fight in fallen Ilium, the mysterious journey through the shades under a spectral moon, the races in the Fifth Book, the midnight scout of Nisus and Euryalus, the plucky young Iulus fleshing his maiden shafts at the siege in Book Ninth, the gallant onset and tragic fate of the young champions Lausus and Pallas—all are apt to take the boyish imagination; and in older years the haunting melody of the verse, the pensive grace that suffuses the telling of the story, renew and rivet the early charm.

Horace, too, is full of matter that even boyhood can taste and manhood never tires of. The lovely bits of rural landscape scattered like so many cabinet pictures through the odes—the sweltering cattle standing knee-deep under the oak-boughs in the pool of Bandusia, the bickering, pine-arched rivulet by whose side Dellius takes his nooning; the sunny slopes of Lucretiis dotted with sheep; the romantic beauty of the Happy Isles—do we not all recall the delight we felt when these enchanting little sketches first smiled on us from the weary drudgery of Tacitus and Thucydides like vistas of fresh meadow and woodland and cascade caught by the wayfarer from the hot and dusty highway? We did not so well relish then, in that out-door time of life, the warm little interiors that contrast and set off these: the glowing fireside piled high with logs, made merry with old Falernian, and laugh and joke and friendly talk, while the rain beats upon the roof and the snow whirls about Soracte, and, drawing closer to the cheery blaze, we hug ourselves in the "tumultuous privacy of storm"; the jolly dinner-parties, where we help to quiz Quinctius for his gravity or chaff that harebrain Telephus out of his affectation of wisdom; the more sober feasts with Mæcenas or Virgil at the little Sabine Farm—but these, too, we soon get to know, and linger over them with fond familiarity. Then, too, we win to the secret of that genial though pagan philosophy which comes home to the "business and bosoms" of all of us, and whose precepts are so pithily expressed we cannot forget them if we would: that there is a time when folly is the truest wisdom; that he alone is happy who is content with little; that a wise man takes care of the present and lets the future take care of itself, because, as Cowley puts it,

"When to future years thou extend'st thy cares,
Thou deallest in other men's affairs";

that we must pluck the blossom of to-day, or we may never have a chance at the morrow's.

"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying,"

says Herrick, a later Horace. As
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we grow older and graver his sympathetic companionship keeps pace with us still, and in his deeper tones there are hints which even Christian civilization need not disdain to add to its scheme of a lofty and noble life.

So it is that England for three centuries back—indeed, ever since she began to have a literature to house them in—has been trying to naturalize and domesticate these Roman poets. In this, however, Virgil had nearly a century the start of Horace, owing, no doubt, to the nature of his great work, which appealed to the romantic impulses of that early time. Indeed, long before either the Æneid or the Iliad was generally known in Europe, the stories of both had been made over into the form of romances: the former by Guillaume de Roy in French, the latter by Guido de Colonna in Spanish. De Roy's Livre d'Éneidos, translated into English and printed by Caxton, "no more resembles Virgil," cries the good Bishop of Dunkeld wrathfully, "than the devil does St. Austin."

It was probably to clear the fair fame of his beloved poet that the bishop brought out his own quaint and spirited Scotch version in 1513. The first complete English translation came out in 1558; but in the previous year appeared the Second and Fourth Books, done into blank verse by the Earl of Surrey, notable as the first-known blank verse in the language, unless we are to take as such the unrhymed, alliterative metre used by Longland in The Vision of Piers Ploughman. It is thought to have been Surrey's design, had he lived, to translate the remaining books. Had he done so, he would have added an ornament to our literature.

As it is, the distinction of giving the first full translation of the Æneid to the language rests with a Welshman—Dr. Thomas Phaer. He himself, however, did only the first nine books and part of the Tenth; when dying, the work was taken in hand and finished, with the Thirteenth or supplementary book of Maffeo Vegio, by another physician, Dr. Thomas Twynne. English doctors then and afterwards seem to have had a propension towards the Muse. Dr. Borde, Dr. Thomas Campion ("Sweet Master Campion"), and Dr. Thomas Lodge—they seem to have had a propensity to be named Thomas also—were only the first of a long line of tuneful leeches, ending with our own Drs. Holmes and Joyce. Is there any occult connection between physic and Parnassus, between rhyme and rhubarb, between poetry and pills? and is Castaly a medicinal spring? Phaer's version, which is printed in black-letter, is in rhymed fourteen-syllable verse, or "long Alexandrines"—a metre which Chapman afterwards took for his Homer, and to which Mr. Morris, the latest translator of the Æneid, has reverted.

The long Alexandrine has perhaps as much right as any to be called the English national metre in the sense in which we call the Saturnian verse the national metre of the Latins. Chaucer took his heroic couplet from the Italian or French, and Surrey, no doubt, had from the same source, or perhaps the Spanish, the hint for his blank verse. A curious parallel might be drawn between Surrey and Ennius, who, like him, introduced a new or "strange metre—the Greek hexameter—and, like him, by doing so revolutionized the versification of his country. Another point in common is that each has been reproached
for his action. Ascham impliedly finds fault with Surrey because he did not choose hexameters or unrhymed Alexandrines instead of his unrhymed verse of ten or eleven syllables; and certain of those dreadful German scholars, who know everything and a few things besides, assure us that Ennius dealt a fatal blow to Latin poetry when he foisted on it a metre unsuited to its genius. One can hardly help speculating on the result had Virgil had to content himself with the horridus numerus Saturnius as the vehicle of his tenderness and elegance, or if Hamlet had had to soliloquize in the metre of Sternhold and Hopkins. Would the rude instrument have cramped the player, or would the genius of the player have elevated the instrument? As Macaulay points out, the old nursery line,

"The queen is in her parlor eating bread and honey."

is a perfect Saturnian verse on Terence’s model:

"Dabunt mala Mætelli Naeviō poētae."

How would Mr. Gladstone’s menace,

"Exoriiere aliquis nostris ex ossibus ulter,"

have sounded in that shape? Should we recognize, do you think, those

"Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty,"

done up in long Alexandrines or in such hexameters as those of Master Abraham Fraunce, which moved Ben Jonson to dub him a fool:

"Now had fiery Phlegon his dayes revolution ended,
And his snoring snout with salt waves all to be washed;"

or even in Sidney’s or Spenser’s, which were, in truth, little better?

No doubt Virgil and Shakspere, being great poets, would have subdued what they worked in to their own artistic uses. Yet all the same let us be thankful to the humbler artisans who furnished to their hands pipes fit for them to play on, and to make such music as the world shall never tire of hearing. It should be added that the likeness between the English and the Latin reformer does not extend to the degree of refinement attained by each. In this respect Surrey is much the more advanced. Ennius never got over the barbarism of excessive alliteration which seems to mark the early metrical efforts of all peoples.

"Sicut si quando vinculis venaticae velox ";
"Sicut fortis equus spatio qui forte superno ";
"Quae neque Dardanhei campis potuere perire
Nec cum capta capel, nec cum combusta cremari."

The last passage Virgil copied, as he did many others, and it is instructive to see how his more polished taste tones down his predecessor’s jingle:

"Num Sigeiis occumbere campis,
Num capri potuere capi? num incensa cremavit
Troja viros?"

Surrey’s blank verse has the quaintness of his age, but not its defects of taste. Martial, writing about two centuries after Ennius, sneers at him, much as Ennius had sneered at his predecessor, Naevius—he who lamented that Latin poetry was to die with him!

"Ennius est lectus, salvotibi Roma Marone."

Pope, writing nearly the same length of time after Surrey, has only praise for him: "Surrey, the

* "Was there no dead man’s place for you on that Sigeian plain?
Had ye no might to wend as slaves? Gave Troy so poor a flame
To burn her men . . . ?"

—*Aeneid*, vii. 204 seq., Morris’ Trans. p. 175.

† "And Rome reads Ennius while Virgil lives!"
Grenville of a former age”—at least, Pope meant it for praise.

To return to Phaer. It may be of interest to the reader to contrast the manner of the earliest and latest English translators of the Aeneid. Venus’ admonition to Aeneas (ii. 607) is thus given by the Welsh doctor:

"Then to thy parent’s best take heed, dread not, my mind obey,
In yonder place where stones from stones and boulders huge to sway
Thou seest, and mixt with dust and smoke thickly
stretches of rages rise,
Himselfe the god Neptune that side both furne in
wonders wise:
With forke three tinde the wall vproots, foundations
alto shakes;
And quite from vnder soile the towne, with ground
works all uprakes,
On yonder side with Furies most, dame Juno fiercely
stands,
The gates she keeps, and from the ships the Greeks,
her friendly bands,
In armour girt she calles.
Lo! there againe where Pallas sits, on fortex and
castle towres,
With Gorgon’s eyes, in lightning cloudes enclosed,
grim she lowres,
The father-god himselfe to Greeks their mightes
and courage stieres,
Himselfe against the Troyan blood both Gods and
armour reeres,
Betake thee to thy flight, my sonne, thy labours’
ende procure,
I will thee never faile, but thee to restoring-place
assure.
She said, and through the darke night shade herself she drew from sight;
Appeare the grisely faces then, Troyes en’mies vgy
right."

Mr. Morris gives it thus:

"And look to it no more afeard to be
Of what I bid, nor evermore thy mother’s word disown.
There where thou seest the great walls cleft and
stone turn off from stone,
And seest the waves of smoke go by with mingled
dust-cloud rolled,
There Neptune shakes the walls and stirs the
foundings from their hold
With mighty trident, tumbling down the city from
its base.
There by the Scæan gates again hath bitter Juno
place
The first of all, and wild and mad, herself begirt
with steel,
Calls up her fellows from the ships.
Look back! Tritonian Pallas broods o’er topmost
burg on high,
All flashing bright with Gorgon grim from out her
stormy sky;
The very Father hearteneth on, and stays with
happy might
The Damas, crying on the gods against the Dar-
Dan fight.

Snatch flight, O son, whilest yet thou mayst, and
let thy toil be o’er;
I by thy side will bring thee safe unto thy father’s
door.
"She spake, and hid herself away where thickest
darkness poured.
Then dreadful images show forth, greatest godheads
are abroad,
The very haters of our Troy."

The half-lines respond to the imperfect verses in Virgil, which, in the fashion of the Chinese tailor, both Mr. Morris and his forerunner conscientiously copy. Phaer has other oddities, such as "Sybly" for Sibylla, "lymbo" for Hades, "Dei Phobus" for Deiphobus, and "Duke Aeneas"; while every book is wound up with a Deo Gratias by way of colophon. Let us hope it was not too fervently echoed by his readers. Indeed, Phaer’s version is better than its fame.

"After the associated labors of Phaer and Twynne," says Warton in his History of English Poetry, "it is hard to say what could induce Richard Stanihurst, a native of Dublin, to translate the first four books of the Aeneid into English hexameters." The remark shows less than the wonted perspicuity of the historian of English poetry. What induces any translation, except the belief (the fond belief!) that the work it aims to do has not yet been done? Master Stanihurst, like many other learned men then and since, was firmly persuaded that the hexameter was your only measure for a translation of Virgil. But there are hexameters and hexameters, and Master Stanihurst’s were unluckily of the other sort. A poet who proclaims his intention to "chaunt manhood and Garboiles," and gives us

"With tentive list’ning each wight was settled in
hark’ning"

for

"Conticuere omnes intenique ora tenebant,"