

TO LAURA.

BY PHILIP ROSSITER.

Ay me! that love should Nature's work accuse,
Where cruel Laura still her beauty views;
River, or cloudy jet, or crystal bright,
Are all but servants of herself, delight.

Yet her deformed thoughts, she cannot see;
And that's the cause she is so stern to me.
Virtue and duty can no favor gain:
A grief, O death! to live and love in vain.

The New-York Tribune.

ILLUSTRATED SUPPLEMENT.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 1904.

Once more the question of the American book in England has been brought up for discussion, this time in the columns of the London "Daily Chronicle." In an article recently published in that journal it was stated that the demand in England for literature coming from our side of the Atlantic is steadily on the increase. Whereupon Mr. Edgar Jepson writes to announce that for his part he has been watching the vigorous development of American fiction, "and reading much of it with no less pleasure and assuredly more profit than I derive from the most widely read novels of my countrymen and countrywomen writing to-day." Continuing with the expression of the belief that the Americans are leaving the English behind in "the genuine interpretation of life and character," he has this to say about our literary conditions:

The American novelist is far less trammelled than the English. He is not so fettered by the convention of dead novelists, the convention of the woolly English gentleman, the woolly English nobleman, who must be roughly a black-guard or a prig, the woolly English lady, young or old, the woolly English genius, male or female, the woolly English sailor, soldier and so on. The American novelist is not only allowed but encouraged to write about live people, and very naturally produces live books.

This ought to be pleasing to our national vanity, but we cannot help pointing out to Mr. Jepson that the good book is written only by the competent author, who does not know whether "convention" is being forced upon him or not, and that the competent English author goes on writing good books to this day in blissful unconsciousness of "woolly" things. The competent author is nowhere "allowed" or "encouraged" to write. He writes—and lets it go at that.

A contributor to the "Academy" remarks that it has often struck him as curious "that literature has had so little to say of the greatest fact of life—death," and by literature he means poetry and fiction. "It is the scenic effect of death," he says, "or its tragedy, or its mere sorrow, or its horror for the spectator, that novelists treat; but what of the dying man or woman, what does death mean to him or her?" This inquirer is not satisfied with the answer that "not knowing what death is or means no man can write of it." That answer is conclusive enough, but we may remark that if the death scenes in modern poetry and fiction rarely have much significance, it is because the modern writer is not only ignorant, but in nine cases out of ten is incapable of rising to a really high plane of thought and feeling. The one moment in which he almost invariably fails to ring true is the moment in which he seeks to interpret a sublime note. Authorship is nowadays too self-conscious. It has travelled far from the spirit of Milton's noble lines:

What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support,
. . . to the height of this great argument.

Perhaps it is just as well that the poet and the novelist have little to say about death.

The fact made clear by the "Autobiography" of Herbert Spencer, that he "might have filled a bookcase with masterpieces which he had refrained from reading," has inspired Mr. Clarence Rook with an idea. It would be charming, he thinks, if we were all to make confession in this matter of classical reading, "owning up" to that neglect of certain immortal books of which thousands are doubtless guilty. Mr. Rook, with the desire for confession stirring in his breast, brought up the idea to a woman friend of his whom he describes as "famous as a maker of poetry and as a fine critic of literature and art." She admitted that it would be a relief to blurt out the truth. "But," she added, "we must all do it together. There are things I could not tell alone." Mr. Rook and his friend finally agreed to make one confession each. She said that she had never read "Don Quixote"; he had never read "Pilgrim's Progress." They got no further. They needed company. This is doubtless what is needed by most men and women if they are to tell the truth about what they have left undone in their reading. We believe that a general confession on this point would be amusing—to those who decline to confess. But ignorance of the classics among those who are supposed to be well read is exaggerated. It is an old charge. It will probably be revived again and again in unending years to come. But the reading of the classics is also, as it happens, an old habit of cultivated people. The man who is really capable of appreciating Cervantes or Bunyan or Dante generally manages to make their acquaintance.

DEAN FARRAR.

A Life of the Famous Preacher by His Son.

LIFE OF DEAN FARRAR. By R. A. Farrar. 8vo, pp. 361. T. Y. Crowell & Co.

We hardly expect to find a perfectly impartial view of any one, much less of a man who was the object of so much criticism as Dean Farrar, in a biography written by a son. Yet Mr. Reginald Farrar has, in fact, in the volume which he has lovingly prepared, succeeded in giving a very well balanced account of the notable teacher, preacher and author who was his father. Recognizing the biographical disability under which he labored, Mr. Farrar called upon a

DEAN FARRAR.
(From a photograph.)

number of persons who knew the dean intimately in his varied activities to contribute their personal recollections of him, and has associated their accounts with his own narrative. In the effort to be fair he has not hesitated to include extracts from articles of a not altogether friendly nature. The discriminating reader is left free to form his own impression. It is likely to be that Farrar was a sincere, earnest and impetuous Christian, a man of extensive reading and retentive memory, but of no great depth of scholarship; broad in his views, and set in them, too, and of a childlike seriousness that had a strong tendency to the grandiose. A keener sense of humor might have saved him from the florid style of pulpit oratory which made the judicious grieve, but filled the churches where he preached.

We are told that his own boyhood is quite accurately set forth in the pages of his first book, "Eric; or, Little by Little," which has been read and wept over by countless Sunday school scholars in Great Britain and the United States. If Eric seems a preternaturally introspective, morbidly conscientious, impossibly goody-good boy, it is well to remember that Frederick William Farrar was, nevertheless, just such a boy, and carried the same seriousness of purpose with him, or was carried by it, through his years of preparatory study at King's College, London, and later through Trinity College, Cambridge. At King's College he fell under the spell of Professor J. F. D. Maurice, the first real scholar whom he had known. Professor Maurice, a somewhat transcendental philosopher, was once characterized by Matthew Arnold as one "who spent his life in beating about the bush with great emotion, but never starting the hare." Dean Farrar, however, always felt that he owed a deep debt to his preceptor's teaching, and gathered from Maurice's books the germs of the convictions to which he gave utterance in his sermons on "Eternal Hope."

A serious minded young man he was, a hard student and a prodigious worker. His only recreations were walking and swimming. He gained a medal at Cambridge for a blank verse poem on "The Arctic Regions." The prize had not been awarded for an unrhymed poem since Tennyson had won it twenty-five years previously for a poem on "Timbuctoo." Farrar ventured to send "The Arctic Regions" to the poet laureate, and received the following rather chilly acknowledgment:

Dear Sir: I have just received your prize poem, for which I return you my best thanks. I believe it is true that mine was the first written in blank verse which obtained the chancellor's medal. Nevertheless (and though you assure me that reading it gave you the deepest pleasure), I could wish that it had never been written. Believe me, dear sir, yours very truly,
A. TENNYSON.

Of his many published works, the "Life of Christ," written while at Marlborough, brought him the most fame and much criticism. "Popular," it was called, and popular it undoubtedly was. It passed through thirty editions in England alone, and was translated into almost every European language and into Japanese. It has all the merits, and defects, of the author's personality.

Appointed by Disraeli Canon of Westminster and rector of St. Margaret's, London, in 1876, Farrar's subsequent career was that of

a popular preacher if ever there was one. He was not content to preach in the building as he found it. An intrinsically beautiful example of the perpendicular gothic, it had been hideously metamorphosed into a "Georgian changeling" by means of ugly wooden galleries and a sham apse. When, after an incredible effort, he had succeeded in restoring and beautifying the edifice, it would not contain the crowds that came to hear him. Stained glass memorials filled the windows, and the inscriptions in verse were contributed by Tennyson, Browning, Lowell, Whittier, Lewis Morris, Sir Edwin Arnold, Bulwer Lytton and Oliver Wendell Holmes. At St. Margaret's he preached his sermons on "Eternal Hope," expressing his disbelief in the doctrine of everlasting damnation. It is difficult to-day to understand the storm of criticism that this statement of his conviction in the infinite mercy of God aroused at the time. His son claims that his views were misunderstood as well by the workingman who exclaimed: "It's all right—Farrar says there's no 'ell," as by "writers in the ecclesiastical press, for whose distortions there was less excuse." The broadness of his own views made him tolerant of those of others. He was a great friend of Huxley and of Darwin, and when the latter died he acted as one of his pallbearers and preached the funeral sermon in Westminster Abbey, where through his efforts the great scientist was buried.

In 1895 Farrar was nominated by Lord Rosebery to the Deanery of Canterbury, and immediately set to work with his wonted enthusiasm to restore the cathedral, which had fallen into a sad state of decay. In three years he succeeded in raising £19,000, which with care was made sufficient to carry out the greater part of his designs. Unfortunately an injury to his spine, resulting from a fall, produced progressive muscular atrophy and put an end to his active labors. He died March 23, 1903.

TOM CAMPBELL.

His Entrance Into the Golden Treasury Series.

POEMS OF THOMAS CAMPBELL. Selected and Arranged by Lewis Campbell. (The Golden Treasury Series.) 16mo, pp. xii, 257. The Macmillan Company.

To be remembered in the anthologies or in this or that "series" is not necessarily to achieve the highest distinction. It may mean that you are remembered practically nowhere else. Take, for example, the case of "Tom" Campbell, as Scott loved to call him. "Not sixty years ago," says his present editor, "his countrymen thought him

THOMAS CAMPBELL.
(From the portrait by Wilkie.)

worthy of a public funeral, a grave in Poets' Corner and a statue in Westminster Abbey." To-day the inclusion of his poems in the Golden Treasury Series seems a double-edged compliment. He is admitted to a glorious company, but though he is in it he is, obviously, not of it. He takes rank in this series not as an indispensable classic, but simply as a poet whom we are glad to have, for purposes of reference, in this convenient form. Has Campbell readers enough to make a more imposing edition of his necessary? It is doubtful.

Mr. Lewis Campbell remarks in his introduction that he once heard Browning speak of the poet as "a great man." He himself regards Campbell as "something less than great," but, he adds, "he has elements of greatness," and he proceeds to point them out. The poet who needs to be defended is lost. We are told that Campbell's work has in it "the ring of absolute sincerity," that "there is heart in it," that "a native generosity breathes in every line." He is praised for his learning, for being "an excellent critic, especially of his own work," and the external matters that dampened his inspiration are duly pointed out. But nothing that Mr. Lewis Campbell has to say can do away with the central fact that his hero wanted, from first to last, the true celestial fire. A facile lyricist, and not only deft in metrical practice, but with, occasionally, an artless feeling for melodious effect, Campbell remains, nevertheless, a man of talent rather than a man of genius. The world will go on reading "Ye Mariners of England," "Hohenlinden," "Battle of the Baltic" and "Lord Ullin's Daughter"; it will dip from

time to time into "The Pleasures of Hope." But it will never cherish Campbell as it cherishes the masters of song.

OLD TIMES.

English Rural Life and Household Possessions.

OLD WEST SURREY. Some Notes and Memories. By Gertrude Jekyll. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 320. Longmans, Green & Co.

The old times that are gone forever! These are what Miss Jekyll, a dweller in the rural loveliness of the English county of Surrey, sorely laments in this volume. She looks yearningly back to the days when people "went lei-

AN OLD WEST SURREY TYPE.
(From a photograph.)

surely"; when the cottage built of local material had an appropriate homely beauty not to be seen in new erections; when the honest and thorough and simply designed in household furniture held the place now occupied by pretentious veneer and cheap shoddy; when the rustic workman felt in his work the pride of the artist. With things that were beautiful and fit and of good report went much that was ugly and painful in daily life, but with this reverse of the shield the author only now and then concerns herself. The old homes and the quaint household gear, the habits and lives of the older people of the working class, she describes and illustrates with lavish care—she provides, indeed, several hundred photographs of objects from cottages to "Dorsetshire pills." The last named articles, by the way, did not belong to medicine, but were queer, fat, earthenware harvest bottles. For many years Miss Jekyll has collected through the countryside ancient furniture, utensils and ornaments, as well as details of old-time housekeeping and cottage industries; and her book is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to the social history of her country.

How did the cottagers of a hundred years ago and less get light in their long dark mornings and evenings? A woman of ninety years went out to gather rushes and then peeled, dried and dipped them in grease to show the eager investigator how the rushlight of her childish days was made, and the light and its odd iron holder are shown in photographs. About an inch and a half at a time, the author tells us, was pulled up above the jaw of the holder, and a rushlight fifteen inches long would burn half an hour. To the children of the family was given the task of pulling up the greasy rush as it burned down. The faint light of the rush is typical of the meagreness that often made that cottage life hard. The author notes that it was wonderful how laboring people contrived to live in the earlier part of the last century, with their low wages and the terrific prices of bread and wheat. At one time a four pound loaf cost in English money the equivalent of twenty-five cents.

In and about the year 1812 a farm laborer had twelve shillings a week. I have a true record of such a one. There were seven mouths to feed. He was paid in wheat. He had to wheel or carry the corn between two and three miles to the mill and bring back the flour. It was then mixed with bran, beans, peas, or anything of the sort that could be obtained, and even then the amount was insufficient. "We was hungry always—never had a bellyful."

Yet some of these sparsely fed people were wonderfully strong. An old man spoke proudly of his mother. "She was a six-foot woman; she could pick up and carry two bags (sacks) of meal, one under each arm; in patters, too!"

That certainly was something of a feat, judging from the "tottery" appearance of the patters as shown in a photograph. A more extraordinary test of strength is recorded of a Guildford sack lifter who, eighty years ago, on a wager, carried a sack of wheat (over two hundred-weight) ten miles, from Guildford to Farnham, within five hours. "Twice only he put down his burden and rested for twenty minutes. . . . He finished well within the time, and as he put down his sack in Farnham market he merely said, 'Well, I wen it.' Then looking round he