

THE BOOK PAGE

"That is a good book which is opened with expectation and closed with profit."

THE LIFE OF HENRY DRUMMOND, by George Adam Smith. Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company. Price \$2 00 net.

"When he was upon his African journey the natives called him by a name which signifies 'He who looks' or 'gazes.'" So tells his biographer of Professor Henry Drummond, and so say the two portraits, the one at the beginning of the volume, in the freshness of his earlier manhood, the other, later on in the book, when he has returned from that African journey with its sad sights of the ghostly slave trade and the tragedies of missionary life, "a splash of gray hair upon his head," although but two and thirty, and with "a certain tinge of sadness" not noticed before.

The keenness of his eyes, when he looked into your face, was what struck one first and most impressively on meeting Professor Drummond. He searched into your very soul. But it was a kindly gaze, that sympathized and longed to help. These portraits—and they are extremely life-like—revive, too, the impression of the charm, quite indescribable, which seemed part and parcel of the man. An hour in his classroom in Glasgow, a few moments of conversation with him at the close of the lecture, a glimpse of him once or twice afterwards as he strode along the street, a fine, handsome figure, tall, lithe, instinct with healthy life—these are the personal recollections of the present writer; and slight as the contact was with that wonderful personality, the memory of it makes even the almost extravagant eulogies of his biographer seem, as indeed they are, true to the life.

Professor George Adam Smith has given us a volume of unusual interest. It is a vivid picture by one who was of the inner circle of his friends, and writes with fullest knowledge a picture of a manly life. It has the merit also of straightforward and frank criticism of his views and writings where this seems to be required.

There are several classes of readers who will welcome the "Life of Henry Drummond." Those—and it is a great multitude in many lands—whose lives have been enriched by his sermons and addresses, will find here a living portraiture of the man who spoke and wrote with such tact and power. Christian workers will be attracted by the story of his labors in the great religious movement in Britain which began with Moody's mission in 1873, and in which Drummond, although only twenty-three years of age, took so large a part; his work winter after winter for ten years amongst the students, especially of Edinburgh, his connection with the Boy's Brigade, and his visits to America and Australia in the interests of young men. His scientific observations in Africa, very accurate and valuable so far as they go, and the full account of the controversies over his two principal books, "Natural Law

in the Spiritual World" and the "Ascent of Man," will interest the student; whilst all who value a first-hand—and withal picturesque—view of a mission field will eagerly read Professor Drummond's visit to the New Hebrides.

The many-sidedness, indeed, of Drummond was very remarkable. He seemed equally at home talking to a bunch of street Arabs or speaking on the concerns of the soul to invited guests at Grosvenor House in the West End. He was the gayest of the gay in the club of like-minded college men and ministers who, for over twenty years, never failed to spend a summer week together at some quiet spot; and he was the friend and counsellor, literally by the thousands, to burdened and sin-sick souls. Gladstone pressed him to enter Parliament, and the authorities of McGill University asked him to succeed Sir William Dawson on his retirement from the principalship of that seat of learning. He had the true scientific instinct, as his book on Tropical Africa testifies, and at the same time possessed a rare art of simple and persuasive eloquence.

Drummond's logic did not always cohere, and it is easy enough to pick flaws in his theology, especially if one forgets what he himself said when brought to task for not expressing himself more fully on the great central doctrine of the Atonement. "My message lies among the forgotten truths, the false emphasis and the wrong accent. To every man his work." But his life is an inspiration.

The book, which contains 506 pages, including appendix and an excellent index, is in the best style of the printer's art.

David Lyall's short stories have an attractiveness peculiarly their own. His style is so utterly simple, and he deals so frankly and so tenderly with the tragedies and comedies of ordinary everyday life that he is easy to read. And one is the better of the reading. His NEIL MACLEOD: a tale of literary life in London (The Copp, Clark Company, Toronto; paper 50c., and cloth \$1.25), is somewhat more ambitious. The story flows smoothly and there are some striking situations. It turns on the sudden success of a young Scotch author in literary London. The whirlpools which engulf so many are described with skill and from evident knowledge.

Among his friends, Angus Fraser, the young minister of Trinity church, is admirably depicted. "A striking figure in the pulpit. The ample folds of the gown became his tall figure admirably, and his earnest face was one to win his hearers before he spoke. His voice was deep and resonant, yet singularly mellifluous; his pronunciation perfect. The Highland accent, slightly emphasized when he warmed to his subject, gave him an individuality which set him apart." The portrait might stand for a certain London minister whose name has been of late much in people's mouths on this side of the Atlantic, a preacher of rare gifts and powers.