

A MASTER OF DRAMATIC FICTION.*

BY W. J. THOROLD.

IF there is any living novelist who deserves alike the admiration of the public and the praise of his fellows in the craft, that man is Hall Caine—and he receives it—from two continents. Born with a plentiful lack of advantageous circumstances—brought up amidst the hardships that make or mar—his only heritage, a big heart, a bright brain and an indomitable will—he has

strange fascination about the whole country of which the castle commands so fine a view. Before you, as you turn, spread two hundred and thirty square miles of delight that would kindle the fancy of the least imaginative—a very paradise. Why cannot we all live there the whole year round? During my brief stay, when I looked out of my window in the morning



PEEL CASTLE, ISLE OF MAN.

climbed, by reason of his masterful efforts, to one of the highest places in modern literature.

Greeba Castle, the home of the author but for whose books the Isle of Man would be a practically unheard of dot in the Irish Sea, is an ideal retreat for a man of letters. There is an atmosphere of romance about those old towers and a

the picture was so sunny and beautiful, and again at night the picture was so weird that I could scarcely resist the temptation to try my fountain pen at writing fiction. However, the thought of the genius who was sleeping in the next room, deterred me from such an undertaking. Another incident reinforced this. Owing to my own boots

* This paper is the first of a series upon the distinguished novelists of England, which will appear in this Magazine. Mr. Thorold, who has been traveling in Europe as our Special Correspondent, for some months past, visited the Isle of Man on purpose to interview Mr. Hall Caine for *MESSEY'S MAGAZINE*, and, through his courtesy, the illustrations accompanying the article were secured by Mr. Thorold for exclusive use in this publication. [EDITOR.]