

JAMES CARMICHAEL

In literature as such, he does not appear to have been very greatly interested. True, he read all the best fiction with avidity and delighted in tales of adventure. Troissart was ever one of his favourite writers. At one time he began to write a work of fiction but gave it up as it consumed too much time that ought to have been given to other things. On the whole it cannot be said that he loved literature for its own sake. He used to say that he cared little for poetry except that of the class to which Macauley's Lays of Ancient Rome belonged. And yet he wrote a poetic rendering of the Book of Ruth which was set to music by Dr. Illsley, the organist of St. George's. From this work, at one time well known in Canada, we may quote a part of one of the choruses.

Grief at parting, sobs and sorrows,
Kisses sweet, tho' wet with tears,
Head on breasts that throbbed with anguish,
Farewells measured by long years.

His poetic production was not great, but a hymn written to be sung in St. George's at the time of the Boer War may be quoted here:

God of all anxious, Saviour dear,
Bring faith and comfort far and near,
Let weak hearts wait Thy Holy Will,
Speak to them gently, "Peace be still."

Very touching is a stanza written by the Bishop in the year of his death. On the anniversary of Mrs. Carmichael's death, one of his friends sent him some beautiful flowers to which was attached a card bearing the following lines:

The ships put out on the shoreless sea
And we lose them in the night;
But the Captain is there, His hand on the helm,
And he steers for the land of light.