

THE BOOK PAGE

A man who lived to seventy-eight and enjoyed the use of his faculties to the last, who was acquainted with forty-two different languages besides his own, and who spoke many of these like a native, and who, likewise, enjoyed, for the larger part of his life, a fair competence, ought to have had more than seven productive years, but the seven years, two in Russia and five in Spain, for which George Borrow worked for the British and Foreign Bible Society, really comprise the chief life work of this remarkable man, whose story Herbert Jenkins gives afresh in **The Life of George Borrow**: Compiled from unpublished Official Documents, His Works, Correspondence, etc. (John Murray, London, 496 pages, with Portraits and Illustrations, \$3.50). Borrow will be remembered permanently in English literature by four of his fourteen books, *The Bible in Spain*, *Lavengro*, *The Romany Rye*, and *The Zincali*, an account of the gypsies of Spain. One of this strange man's eccentricities was an affinity for all sorts of vagabonds, and chiefly for gypsies. He was at home all Europe over in any gypsy camp and knew much of their lore. No writer perhaps lets one more intimately into the life of that curious wandering people, and therein lies much of the charm of the three last mentioned books. They are filled with gypsy incident and lore, as well as with a quaint philosophy of life. *The Bible in Spain* is Burrow's classic. It consists of the "Journeys, adventures and imprisonments of an Englishman in an attempt to circulate the Scriptures in the Peninsula." It created a furore at the time of publication, then dropped pretty much out of

sight, and lately has again come in vogue. For vivid description, dramatic incident and wild adventures, it is excelled by no romance. And it is one of the humanest of all books. One seems to see in every page the great, rosy-faced, white-haired, dark-eyed athlete of six feet three, who was shy and constrained in ordinary company, although a gentleman born, but at home with what the Irish call "orra" people, and could hold his own in diplomacy with consuls and ambassadors. George Borrow was not perhaps a literary star of the first magnitude, but he has the stamp of originality which will always command its audience. Like many another great writer, his chief vogue came after he was gone.

In **The Friar of Wittenberg** (The Macmillan Co. of Canada, Toronto, 433 pages, \$1.35 net), William Stearns Davis gives us from the lips of Walter van Lichtenstein, a German noble of half Italian blood, a picture of the Italy and the Germany of Luther's time, and particularly of the great Friar of Wittenberg himself. Solicited for the priesthood, with promises of high honors and emoluments in the Church, Van Lichtenstein is won finally to the cause of Luther and eventually marries a sweet German bride, who had been a nun. The whole story is vividly told, naturally with strong coloring for the follies and vices of the Papal Court of the time and of such characters as Tetzel, the infamous seller of indulgences; and with equally high praise for the great Friar, who nailed his thirty-nine theses on the church door proclaiming war upon the Church as it then was and became the father of the Reformation in Germany. The story of the

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