

he blessed the madcap Borrow for having called his romance by the sober-sounding, propitiatory title of 'The Bible In Spain.'"

I do not know what effect this had or will have upon you when you read it. As for me, I am determined to read Borrow's books without more loss of time than is absolutely necessary.

Of Cardinal Newman, Birrell writes reverently and of his literary work with much praise. The charms of Dr. Newman's style, he says, necessarily baffles description. As well might we seek to analyze the fragrance of a flower, or to expound in words the jumpings of one's heart when a beloved friend unexpectedly enters the room.

But I shall only prejudice you against my critic if I continue quoting sentences here and there in this disjointed fashion.

In 1894 Birrell published another volume, called essays on "Men, Women and Books." These are shorter and in lighter vein than the earlier essays. When reading them, you know that you are listening to the most delightful literary chit-chat, but they do not tax your thinking powers too heavily. Indeed, Birrell is never profound, nor can we regret the fact very deeply. It is sufficient, if we are seeking profundity, to find it in the authors whom he criticizes. Nevertheless he has a keen mind and is well endowed with the critical faculty. He is a man of wide miscellaneous reading and much mental culture. This has taught him tolerance. "It is not," he says, "an obviously wise policy to be totally indifferent to what other people are thinking about, simply because your own thoughts are running in another direction." Birrell certainly does not pursue such a policy. He invariably writes of an author in a sympathetic way — or perhaps it would be putting it more truthfully to say that he seldom or never writes of an author with whom he is not in sympathy, or in whom he does not see a good deal to admire.

He never tries to pull down a writer from his pedestal of fame. If Birrell does not think he should be set up at all, he leaves it to Father Time to tumble him down. With an eye