

we know him better as the man who eventually overcame, dispersed and destroyed that band of outlaws, the Doones of Bagworthy Forest. He was one who literally did not know his own strength, and his wonderful feats, told with all simplicity, make us almost hold our breath. Or artfulness and cunning there is not a particle in his composition, but despite his slow reasoning—or shall we say because of it?—he always contrived to arrive at a just appreciation of whatever subject was presented to him. No one will begrudge him his honours, or his dearlybought bride. We are proud of John Ridd, proud to include him in our ranks; but as a farmer how shall we class him?

George Eliot has given us in "Adam Bede" a fine picture of a farmer. Martin Poyser, the younger, the "portly, blakhaired" Martin who had been kinder and more respectful to his father since he had made a deed of gift to him of all his property but who was as "hard and implacable as the north-east wind" to a neighbour whose fallows were not well cleaned, is a find fellow, but—Here we must leave off and turn to Mrs. Poyser, for the husband in this case is completely overshadowed by the wife. No better picture of a farmer's wife exists than is drawn for us in Mrs. Poyser. Kind-hearted and sympathetic though she was, she yet had a tongue that stung like whipcord, and if she thought occasion demanded it she used it unstintingly on her husband, her niece, her domestics, and even on the old squire, their landlord, himself. The said squire was very slow at carrying out repairs, though this she bore grumblingly; but when, for the sake of a newcomer, he proposed to take away some of their choice land and substitute moderate land for it, she turned on him, and the way in which she routed him, in spite of his easy assurance and her husband's acquiescence, is one of the best scenes in the book.

"Thee'st done it now," said Mr. Poyser, a little alarmed and uneasy, but not without some triumphant amusement at his wife's outbreak.

"Yes, I know I've done it," said Mrs. Poyser; "but I've had my say out, and I shall be th' easier for't all my life. There's no pleasure i' living if you're to be corked up for ever, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel."

But we must pass on to the next. Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield" gives us Farmer Flambor-

ough, a quiet, easy, simple soul; a yeoman of bygone days, who lived on terms of equality with his vicar, and whose daughters entered into rivalry with the vicar's family. Of his social life we learn a good deal; of his farming but little. We know that at a horse fair he was cajoled into buying a gross of green spectacles in shagreen cases on the supposition that they had silver rims, but which in reality were framed in much baser metal; we know also that the sharper who sold them afterwards boasted that he swindled Flamborough in one way or other once a year. We are, in the light of this, not as certain as Flamborough was, that "he would catch him yet." We do not know how he "paid his way;" he belonged to a class of farmers who were "equal strangers to opulence and pov-rty," who having "all the conveniences of life within themselves seldom visited towns or cities," and who "frugal by habit scarcely knew that temperance was a virtue." It would be hard to find representatives of this class now.

Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" is fragmentary, but the fragments are such as to make us wish for the whole. The son wished to marry a poor curate's daughter, the father objected, and thus enforced his wordly wisdom:

"Luvy? what's luvy? thou can luvy thy lass an' her
[nunny too,
Maakin 'hem goa together as they've good right to do.
Couldn't I luvy thy muther because o'er munny laaid by?
Naay—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it; reason
why."

After enumerating his possessions he decides:

"And if thou marries a good un I'll leave the land to thee."

And this is his unalterable determination:

"Thim's my noations, Sammy, wheerby I means to stick;
But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leave the land to Dick."

As ends abruptly the "Northern Farmer," so do these notes.

There are many other farmers in the domain of literature it would have been a pleasure to refer to, had space allowed. Those dealt with are but examples. The object of these notes is to interest readers in the subject; if they cause a few to turn to their libraries, and institute a search on their own account, this object will have been attained.

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