

hope; hope that the vigorous British life portrayed in that book may be presented with something of his old-time power, fear lest the disappointment that has been so often the lot of his readers should be repeated.

It is sometimes an evil for himself for an author to have accomplished a transcendently great book too early in life. He has created a standard of taste, and woe to him if he falls below his own standard!

Blackmore's latest book, "Dariel" is a somewhat voluminous tome. It is called "A Romance of Surrey," and this makes the reader anticipate a fine story. Unfortunately the author does not stick to Surrey and his English life and landscape. He wanders far afield and drags his hero into strange adventures among strange characters in the far east.

That Blackmore has power, that much of his old force and fire is still with him is seen in the very excellent chapter entitled "Kuban." If every chapter had been done in the same manner "Dariel" would have been another "Lorna Doone." A hero who can give utterance to such sentiment as the following is worth knowing: "To battle with the world, instead of battenning in luxury, is the joy of life, while there is any pluck and pith." And how Isaac Walton would have applauded such writing as this: "This was a swift bright stream as yet ungriddled by any railway works, and unblocked by any notice-boards menacing frightful penalties. For although the time was well-nigh come when the sporting rights over English land should exceed the rental in value, the wary trout was not yet made of gold and rubies; and in many places any one, with permission of the farmers, was welcome to wander by the babbling brook, and add to its music, if the skill were in him, the silvery tinkle of the leaping fish."

The chapter in true British style describes a dog fight—the death-grip of a bull-dog. With what gusto the author tells of the close of that fight, and how well he knows a dog! We laugh with him as he relates how by a pinch of snuff—or rather a whole box of it poured into Grab's nose, he made that brute, "made of iron and guttaperk," let go his hold on the noble wolfhound.

"Aha, what a change! His grim set visage puckered back to his very ears, as if he were scalped by lightning; the flukes of his teeth fell away from their grip, as an anchor sags out of a quicksand, he quivered all over, and rolled on his back, and his gnarled legs fell in on the drum of his chest, while he tried to scrub his squat nose in an agony of blisters. Then he rolled on his panting side, and sneezed till I thought he would have turned all his body inside out."

If Blackmore had given us more of "Grab," more of Farmer Ticknor, more of his English familiar life and his English landscape, the book would have been much finer. The orientals who figure in it are too shadowy—they have, indeed, no reality, and the plot, through the dual nature of the story, is hard to follow.

T. G. M.

Corleone. By F. Marion Crawford. London: MacMillan & Co. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co.

Dariel. By R. D. Blackmore. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co.

CASUAL COGITATIONS.

Henry George is dead! His departure does not seem to have startled the world into a eulogy either of his system or of himself. Yet after all there was something about the man that lifted him above the ordinary. Talk as the politicians and learned political economists will, his theory has some value or it would hardly have taken hold upon the world as it has done. Men of ordinary common sense generally give such a theory its severest criticism, and it is wonderful how many ordinary common-sense men have accepted the theory as of some practical advantage. But whatever the value of the system, Henry George showed his greatness in that he saw the need of some remedy for the unbalanced state of affairs, and that having found what, as he thought, was the popular remedy, he stood his ground with all the conviction of a great souled man, and spent his life in the promotion of that one idea.

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Another name connected with New York life of late is that of Seth Low, President of Columbia University. Like our own Principal he is too large a man and has too clear an insight into the civic and national life of his people to take a silent part in the affairs of the country. He has already done much for the University and much for New York, and even his late failure may not be so complete as it seems. There may be another reason too for that failure apart from the "machine politics" that we hear so much about. When one party sets itself up as the party of reform, and proves to the people by all its movements the sincerity of its purpose, the mass of the people join in heartily with those who are so evidently working for their good. But when corruption and bribery, &c., are harped upon until it becomes an old song, they are apt to weary of its music, and especially so when the reform movement to be instituted is not so much spoken of as necessary for the good of the people as it is hurled at the opposite party. The reform will continue all the same, and if Tammany is no wiser than heretofore her lease of power is bound to be a short one.