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THE .. .. BOOKLOVER'S



#### Selected Poems of Francis Thompson.

In our last book notes we spoke at some length of Thompson's essay on Shelley, seeing that it was an appeal to Catholics for a greater appreciation of poetry, for the reunion of sanctity and song, and a better understanding of Shelley, whom the essayist defends with fine power. We also remarked that in power. We also remarked that in length of Thompson's essay general characteristics of their the general characteristics of their poetry, there is a parallel between Shelley and Thompson, and that the brilliant passages in which the last describes and explains Shelley are no less applicable to himself, and re-flect his own qualities as a poet. hompson's published poems empace "Poems," "Sister Songs,"
"New Poems" and "The Hound of Heaven"—and on these rests his fame. Our remarks in this review are based on a later volume of "Sected Poems," edited by Wilfrid Meynell, and published by Burns and Oates, price 5s.

odes, price 5s.

Shelley is a poet for a rost, and he won a great meed of appreciation from Thompson; Thompson is a poet for a poet, and he was happy in receiving judgment from contemperary poets, who recognized his worth at once. We will not soek to define a true poet, by which, however, it may be observed, is not meant a professional conjurer with words. Poeta nascitur etc. You remember Keats' lines:

"I was taught in Paradise To ease my breast of melodies."

So it is with every poet in the true sense of the word. Thompson's poe-try was the 'incere effluence' of his life; now and then of his physi-cal sufferings, though he shows reve on this sad subject-

"slight Is all that any mortal knows there-

giving us occasional glimpses of sad days and nights spent by the ing Cross, derelict and desolate-

Forlorn and faint and stark
I had endured through watches

The bashless inquisition of each

But the life of his soul and of his thought, that indeed stands out on every page, telling of his struggles, his loves, his anguish, his despair, his hope and his loneliness—

Therefore must my song-bower lone

That my tone be

Fresh with dewy pain alway."

Every poet is a prophet in spite of himself—

speak a lesson taught we know not how, And what is it that from us flows The hearer better than the utterer

And so it is; they are media through which we catch glimpses of better and higher things. Of Shelley, Thompson wrote—"The universe is his box of toys"; it is Thompson's also, but he is a little Christian boy at play; Shelley was sporting with pagan gods and goddesses. Thompson saig of the Omnipotent God and the greatness and grandeur of His works. It is the ultimate meaning of their song that is different; their the greatness and grandeur of His works. It is the ultimate meaning of their song that is different; their genius is alike. Shelley was the enchanted child, fulfilling Thompson's description of what it is to be a child—"to know not as yet that you are under sentence of life: nor petition that it be commuted into death": too rude and unkindly a reality broles such a dream for Thompson, but in his verse the thought is echoed and he looks back glady to the time, when—

"We did then
Divinely stand, not knowing yet
against us
Sentence had passed of life, nor commutation

titioning into death."

He loved children and speaks somewhere of "the heart of childhood so divine for me," and in some beautital lines to his godchild tells the young boy that when they both be dead—

"Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven."

After a rough and trying time in London and Manchester, Thompson retired (having shown his gifts as

a poet) to the pretty Sussex village of Storrington, and was there sub-ject to the tender influences of friendship, love and calm. There,

Where the thistle lifts a purple

Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on
windy hill"—

he met his "Daisy."

"Oh! There were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on S

Was the Daisy-flower that day!"

It was here, too, that he watched nature, "dabbled his fingers in the dayfall," revelled in the sunset, and saw in the stars "glimmering tapers round the day's dead sanctities." This was the scene of the poet's musings, and the inspiration of some of his most beautiful imagery; here he penned his "Ode to the acting Sun"—

A bubble of fire, drops slowly to-ward the hill. nile one bird prattles that the day is done."

He is sad at its setting-at the

death of the day. Death and birth are the fairest things in life, and fairer of these is Death. Is not the glory of everything in its fall?

"It is the falling star that trails the light,
It is the breaking wave that hath the might.

The passing shower that rainbows maniple,
Is it not so, O thou down-stricken

day
That draw'st thy splendors round
thee in thy fall?"

And as the golden orb dips slowly in the West, he apostrophises it, lauds its greatness and beneficer.ce—"Thou genitor that all things nourishest" from the earth that was 'suckled at thy shining breast,"

"With dusky cheeks burnt red She sways her heavy head, Drunk with the must of her own

O why must all beauty pass, why must Orpheus ever pursue a doomed Eurydice?

"Even as he trembles to the impassioned kiss
Of reincarnate Beauty, his control cold body and foregoe

the soul! Whatso looks lovelily
Is but the rainbow on life's weeping
rain."

And the sun is set, "no rift dis-turbs the dewy shade and chill" and as he meditates, he sees a sym-bol in the sun—

Thou foot the Eastern sea,
Or like a golden bee
Sting the West to angry red,
Thou dost image, thou dost follow
That King Maker of creation,
Who, ere Hellas hailed Apollo,
Gave thee, angel-goof, thy station;
Thou art of Him a type memorial.
Like Him thou hang'st in dreadful
pomp of blood
Upon thy Western rood;
And His stained brow did veil like
thine to-night
Yet lift once more Its light, Thou foot the Eastern sea,

thine to-night
Yet lift once more Its light, And, risen, again departed from or

And when It set on earth arose in

heaven, Thus hath He unto death His beauty

· given And so of all which form inheriteth, The fall doth pass the rise in worth, For birth hath in itself the germ of death,
But death hath in itself the germ
of birth."

of birth."

This majestic passage (and indeed the whole poem) gives us a good idea of the worth of Thompson and the reunion of good idea of the worth of Thompson as a poet, and the reunion of sanctity and song, the "crucifix carven from the laurel tree," which he so beautifully advocated in his essay on Shelley, he himself realized. In one of his poems he calls himself the sun's "constant Magian" and such he is. To him the sun is symbolical of God, and this is again expressed in another sun-poem called "Orient Ode." We give the opening steanza.



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In all his robes pontifical exprest, Lifteth slowly, lifteth sweetly, From out its Orient tabernacle

Litteth slowly, lifteth sweetly,
From out its Orient tabernacle
drawn,
Yon orbed sacrament confessed,
Which sprinkles benediction from the

And when the grave processions ceased,
The earth with due illustrious rite
Blessed,—ere the frail fingers featly,
Of twilight, violet-cassocked aco

lythe, His sacerdotal stoles unvest— Sets, for high close of the mysteri

ous feast, The sun in august exposition meet ly
Within the flaming monstrance of
the West."

Only a Catholic could have written that, and one who was cons-cious of the rich beauty of his reli-

Thompson's best piece is perhaps "The Hound of Heaven," pronounced by Coventry Patmore to be "one of the very few 'great' odes of which the language can boast." We have read it over and over again and ever with fresh delight. It describes the anguish and unsatisfied lorgings of a soul fleeing from the love of God. God is Love. It is the history of a soul which thought to find perfect joy with man, with Nature, but not with God. The soul failed in the attempt; whithersoever it turned, the presence of the omnipresent God was evidenced. In the end the soul sees the truth end the soul sees the truth-

"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest, I am He, Whom thou seekest Thou drawest love from Thee, w nou drawest love from Thee, who drawest Me!"

The rhythm is marvellously adapted to the thought, and as typical of the style of the piece, we quote the first verse.

"I fled Him down the nights and

down the days; I fled Him down the arches of the years; I fled him down the labyrinthine ways

own mind; and in the midst of tears I hid from Him, and under running

laughter,
Up vistaed hopes I sped:
And shot, precipitated
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed

From those strong feet that fol-lowed, followed after

But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat.
More instant than the Feet "All things betray thee, who trayest Me."

trayest Me."

The poems "The Poppy," "The Making of Viola," "To Monica Thought Dying," "To my Godchild," "Sister Songs" and "Love in Dian's Lap" form Thompson's legacy to a London family (apparently that of Mr. Wiffrid Meynell) into which he was received. The conception in the first The conception in the first of these is characteristic

'Summer set lips to earth's bosom

bare,
And left the flushed print of a poppy there; a yawn of fire from the grass

And the fanning wind puffed it to flapping flame."

We are given seven selections from 'Sister Songs' of which perhaps 'A Child's Kiss' is the best. 'Love in Dian's Lap' includes a fire ode entitled 'Her Portrait,' in which the poet bewails the insufficiency of language in which to praise his 'dear administrass'.'

"Oh, but the heavenly grammar did I hold Of that high speech which angel's

tongues turn gold So should her deathless beauty take

no wrong
Praised in her own great kindred's
fit and cognate tongue,
Or if that language yet with us
abode
Which Adam in the garden talked
with God!

But our untempered speech descends

poor heirs!
Grimy and roughcast still from Dabel's bricklayers."

"An Anthem of Earth" leals with the exalted theme of Life and Death. It is the picture of shortlived man-we, the "nos morituri," saluting the earth, our "Roma immortalis"; the picture of mysterious man, filled with ambitions, hopes and ceaseless longings—and yet at the end,

"successive unto sothing But patrimony of a little mould, And entail of four planks"

The earth gives us not the lilies, glory; "not even Solomon in all his glory; "not even Solomon in a glory was arrayed as one of these," No; we are foisted off

"With hasty tarnished piecings ne-

"With hasty tarnished piecings negligent,
Snippets and waste
From old ancestral wearings,
That have seen sorrier usage; remainder flesh
After our father's surfeits; nay with chinks
Some of us, that if speech may have free leave,
Our souls go out at elbows.'

"What is this Man, thy darling kiss-ed and cuffed
Then lustingly engender'st
To sweat, and make his brag, and
rot,
Crowned with all honor and all
shamefulness!"

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In a little peace, in a little peace, ike fierce beasts that a common thirst makes brothers,

We draw together to one hid dark

"Who hammered you, wrought you

From argentine vapor?—
God was my shaper.
Passing surmisal
He hammered, He wrought me,
(From curled silver vapor,
To lust of His mind;—
Than could'st not have thought me! So purely, so palely Tinnily, surely Mightily, frailly, Instulped and emboss

With His hammer of wind And His graver of frost."

It is almost safe to say that anyone of the longer poems in this selection would have sufficed to make Thompson famous; as it is, his output is inconsiderable when compared with that of other great poets; however, better have consistent quality than a quantity with a certain percentage of trash. Thompson voice will ever be heeded; 'ven if he be a dreaming "sun-hazed steeper," is it not good to dream sometimes?

"I hang mid men my needless head And my fruit is dreams, as theirs is

bread goodly men and the sun-hazed sleeper Time shall reap; but after the reap-

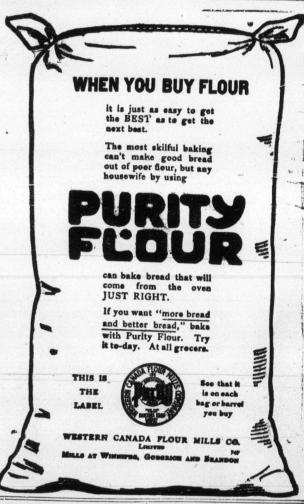
A. B. PURDIE.

## Time Proves All Things

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#### Disappearing Difference. Mr. Birrell, in one of those phrase

Mr. Birrell, in one of those phrases which cling to memory, defined the differences between the Protestant denominations and the Catholic church by saying "It is the Mass denominations and the Catholic church by saying "It is the Mass that makes the difference." Some of the Anglicans are doing all they can to make the difference disappear, and according to the latest evidence they are not content with imitating the Low Mass but go still further. In the "Ecclessiastical Intelligence" of the "Times" for Friday, July 16. We draw together to one hid dark lake;
In a little peace, in a little peace, We drain with all our burthens of dishonor
Into the cleansing sands o' the thirsty grave."

Next to "The Hound of Heaver," this poem impressed us most.

"Any Saint" and "The Dead Cardinal" are written in a pretty metre, and "To a Srowflake" is strongly reminiscent of Fr. Tabb's delicately-chiselled verses,

we draw together to one hid dark the ("Ecclessiastical Intelligence" of the "Clow Mass but go still further. In the "Ecclessiastical Intelligence" of the "Times" for Friday, July 16, we read "The Bishop of Chichester dedicated the chapel of the Convent of the Holy Cross, Hayward's Heath, yesterday, in the presence of a large gathering. At the dedication festival in the morning there was "Solemn High Mass' at which the Rev. A. H. C. Cocks, rector of St Bartholomew, Brighton, preached."

What about the twenty-nine articles, which assert that the Mass is a blasphemous fable? We think plain people will be puzzled to uncles, which assert that the mass is a blasphemous fable? We think plain people will be puzzled to understand how members of a chuich which thus emphatically affirms its disbelief in the Mass can with any pretence to consistency entertain and show a belief in the Holy Sacrifice. It is manifest that their true home is not the Church of England which rejects the Mass, and in which hostility is expected by the there mention of the name, but the Catholic church, which has always preserved it.—London Catholic Times.

AS NEAR AS HE DARED.

A couple of city men were playing golf when they saw an old gentleman looking at them wistfully. They asked him to join the game, which he did with ubanture. He was mild he did with areas He was mild in speech and manner and played well. But once when he had made a foozle he ciaculated vehemently the word: "Assouan!"

A few minutes later, when he made amother bad play, he repeat-

ed:

"Assouan!"

The fourth time he said this one of his new made friends said:

"I don't want to be inquisitive. but will you tell ne why you say 'Assoumn' so often?"

"Well," said the old gentlemen. "Isn't that the biggest dam in the world?"

He was a Presbyterian clergyman.

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