Review

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he has all the sweetness and spontaneity of the noblest Elizabethan lyrists, there are others in which his pinions drag the ground, encumbered as they are with a weight of pedantry.

It is to be wished that the editor of this collection of Campion's works could have told us more about his religious verse; for here too the poet is an interesting transitional figure. Some of the religious pieces contained in his *Bookes of Ayres* resemble those metrical paraphrases of the Hebrew Psalms which stand for religious lyric poetry in the early Elizabethan period; but into others there is breathed that spirit of personal feeling and individual soul-searching which we meet with in the religious lyrists of the seventeenth century.

Mr Vivian appends some valuable Notes to his edition of Campion's works, and the equipment of the volume with Index and Bibliography is most scholarly.

F. W. MOORMAN.

LEEDS.

The Works of Sir John Suckling. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by A. HAMILTON THOMPSON. London: Routledge. 1910. 8vo. xvii + 424 pp.

In this volume Mr Hamilton Thompson has given us a careful reprint, based on the early editions of the *Fragmenta Aurea*, of all Suckling's writings in verse and prose. In a short Introduction—which might with advantage have been longer—he relates the chief facts in the author's life, and forms a sane and liberal estimate of the man's character. He also makes some attempt to indicate his relation to the poets of the preceding generation and to those contemporary with himself. He rightly insists on his detachment from Ben Jonson, adding that 'his inclinations led him rather in the direction which had been pointed so forcibly by Donne.' Mr Thompson has drawn attention to certain verbal reminiscences of Donne's *Songs and Sonets* in the lyrics of Suckling, but it might well be contended that the influence of the Elizabethan poet penetrated much deeper than this. For Donne was the poet who waged relentless war in his early lyrics upon the Petrarchian tradition in English lyric poetry as represented by Spenser and the sonneteers as a whole; and in this warfare Suckling may be looked upon as Donne's direct successor. Something too might have been said of Suckling's influence upon post-Restoration lyric poetry. Of the Cavalier poets of Charles I's reign, Suckling alone seems to have been widely read in the next generation. Dryden's well-known reference, in the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, to Suckling's courtly style and to his reproduction in his poetry of 'the conversation of a gentleman,' and Congreve's Millamant's praise of 'natural, easy Suckling,' are eloquent tributes to his vogue in the second half of the seventeenth century; and it would have been well within the scope of Mr Thompson's survey to have indicated the

influence which Suckling exerted upon the lyrics of poets like Sedley and Rochester.

The most interesting part of the Introduction is that in which resemblances of idea and characterisation are traced between Suckling's lamely-constructed plays and those of Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists; while in his Notes, which are excellent, Mr Thompson renders valuable service by pointing out, among other things, a number of passages in these plays which bear a more or less close resemblance to passages in Shakespearean drama.

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LEEDS.

The Literature of the Victorian Era. By HUGH WALKER. Cambridge: University Press. 1910. 8vo. vi + 1067 pp.

A critic could perhaps set himself no more difficult task than that undertaken by Prof. Walker in the book under review. To pass judgment on the achievements in Art and Philosophy of our own generation or of the generation which fathered us is at all times a work fraught with danger and difficulty, for it means the critical analysis of the influences which have done most to determine our own imaginative bent and standards of judgment. We are in acute danger both of over-estimating and of under-rating what we criticize. Further there is the obvious difficulty of obtaining a right perspective and a right focus. Time is needed to reveal clear development in the multiplicity of interests and movements which perplex us in the literature of our own period; to leave in high light those which were of intrinsic importance and to cast into beneficent shadow those which belonged only to their day.

At no period has the difficulty of seeing behind the endless agitation to the central principles been greater than at the present. Professor Walker has, we think, carried through his task with conspicuous success, —a success due chiefly to his fine and catholic literary taste, but in part also to the scheme upon which he has framed his work. Like Mr Courthope he works on the principle that the criticism of literature must be based on a study of social, political and intellectual developments, but his outlook and method are more philosophic than those of his predecessor. He lays more stress upon the thought which inspired the movements of the age and less upon its political and social manifestations. He believes that 'the surest way to penetrate the thought of any age is to study it in the systematic thinkers'; and he therefore divides his book into two main sections, dealing in the first with Speculative Thought, in the second with Creative Art. These divisions are flanked on the one side by an Introduction, on the other by that necessary evil, a section devoted to 'Et Cetera.' The Introduction, by its contrast of the 'rationalistic' and 'Catholic-romantic' movements in thought, suggests at once an excellent point of view from which to study