

LITERARY NOTES.

IN his Maoriland and other verses published by *The Bulletin* Newspaper Company, Sydney, Mr. Arthur H. Adams has redeemed New Zealand from the reproach of stolid freezing silence at a time when Australia can boast of her O'Haras and Hebblethwaites, her Ogilvies and Pattersons, her Daleys and Brennans. We have in this dainty volume, we do not hesitate to say, as promising work as any other Southern poet has shown in the earlier period of his literary career. Mr. Adams is only twenty-eight years of age, and is assuredly, a writer whom time will ripen. Judged by the absolute standard of criticism—the only one that is just alike to poet and audience—these verses surprise us by their wealth of true poetry. There is genuine poetic imagination in his lyrics like "The Goal," and in many of the sonnets—notably the two entitled "Reminiscence," and "Love and Life," and in all the longer poems. This imaginative faculty manifests itself in apt and luminous figures. Here are some examples taken almost at random :

"And the nights wedge in the narrow day
Like the walls of an open grave!"

Stars are

"The idle spray God's prow flings in its sweep
'Through wider waters."

In the stillness and mysterious light of dawn

"A timid new-born breeze
Stirs through the grasses, petulant—her eyes
Half blinded by the clinging scarves of mist."

Our poet, too, has ideas that are well worth clothing in the richest dress the poetic art can weave. "The Minstrel,"—an incident in one act—"The Question," "The Goal," and "To You," abound in striking thought. Even in his lighter verse there is much to

arrest the attention. This is a stanza from "A Song of Failure." The fighter in life's battle who "faltered and quailed" addresses those whom the world acclaims heroes.

"We that lie dumb in your scorning
Made you the heroes you are,
BUILT you a road to the morning
Taught you to reach for a star;
We have had sight of the glory,
Pointed it clear to the blind;
Yours is the conquerors' story,
Ours is the vision you find."

Many of the shorter poems deal with the elemental feelings, and show that the author possesses that essential of the poet—a broad and palpitating human sympathy. Maternal love, the beauty and simplicity of a child's innocence, the passionate longing for a love that shall ennoble, are the subjects of some of the best lyrics in the book. The following stanzas from "The Epitaph" will perhaps show clearly how strong a grip upon our emotions Mr. Adams can succeed in getting and retaining.

The earth speaks :

"Hush! he drowns, drowns deep,
While my quiet arms I keep
Close about him in his sleep.

Once he glanced at me aghast,
Shuddered from my kiss, and passed—
But I hold him here at last.

He had frenzied thoughts of fame,
Piteous strivings for a name—
But I called him and he came.

Called him with the mother-call
That shall on the weary fall,
Whispering Home to all, to all.

Fair white skin he looked upon;
Eyes in his with passion shone;
But my patient love has won.

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