

her uncle's cottage may be seen, or certainly might have been seen some twenty years ago, and it is or was that of a man following the humble calling of a rustic architect and builder. There Marian Evans passed a good portion of her childhood, and her book, 'Adam Bede,' was eagerly read in all the farm houses of the neighbourhood. The landscape, moreover, of 'Adam Bede,' recalls the grassy slopes of the valley of the Dove, with their growth everywhere of beautiful trees, and the rich colouring that makes the country in question so pleasant a one to look at. The people too, of the district, the borders of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, have much to recommend them. Their frankness and sterling honesty are not to be surpassed, and the roughness which may also be found among them may often be forgotten because of virtues which atone for it. Much given are they, again, to all the ways of Methodism, and a Dinah Morris would there find attentive audiences and devout followers. We can well believe, too, that some living artisan there may have been to suggest the manliness and nobility of Adam Bede. The clever sharpness of Mrs. Poyser, however, most probably was the sole product of the writer's mind, for the country-folk in question are not remarkable for any particular quickness of thought or smartness of tongue. Mr. Donnelly's treatment of the story of Adam Bede was full of feeling, and sympathetic understanding, and there are few of us who have had any experience of life who will not agree with his conclusion that whatever may be smooth flow of the later years the distress of those which have gone before can never be forgotten, or its traces wholly erased. Very pathetic, again, was his picture of Milly Barton's motherless children, recalling, as it did, by a few master strokes, the sad and simple story of the mother's life and death, and touching the chord in all our hearts that responds to the cry of the orphan. Maggie Tulliver's heroism, also, was finely brought out, and a striking contrast drawn by the lecturer between it and that of Jane Eyre, with which some critics have compared it. The thread that bound the whole lecture together, however, was the constant manifestation made by the lecturer of the sympathy with human nature which he had discerned as the writer's guiding principle in the composition of all her works. When dealing with a lecture, nevertheless, that contained so much that was excellent and worthy of all praise, we feel that we can afford to be candid, and where we dissent from the opinion or criticism of the lecturer to say so without scruple. We do not think, then, that we ever so clearly before recognised the departure from her higher inspirations made by George Eliot, in Middlemarch, and still more in Daniel Deronda, as while Mr. Donnelly was engaged with Lydgate and Dorothea Brooke, or confessedly puzzled to explain why he had found nothing surpassingly great in the Jewish hero or those with whom he was concerned. A devotion to science, marred by the whims and extravagances of a frivolous and selfish wife is, no doubt, a matter to be deplored, but it does not touch the heart, and tend to elevate the mind by a wholesome awakening of the higher emotions, as do the events in the tales that had preceded that in question. And the story of Dorothea Brooke strikes us as ridiculous principally—to exalt a "man with white mice," to which Mrs. Cadwallader aptly compared Dorothea's second husband, into an ordinarily respectable member of Parliament, was a very fitting issue for all her "notions." Married to Lydgate, no doubt, she would have been a benefactress to some community, and premature drinking-fountains, or an improved system of sewerage, fifty years before its time, would have made her memory monumental. But on the whole the realms of fiction are not much advantaged by her presence in them. Again, as for Daniel Deronda, we very heartily agree with the critic who styled him a "walking gentleman"—he was neither more nor less. The inspiration that led him away—in company with Mirah, another nonentity—to the East or elsewhere to do nothing on earth that any one with an ounce of common sense can divine, was a most consistent one. "Daniel Deronda" is a disagreeable book, with no particular meaning, and although here and there a flash of the writer's old genius may be found, it is another proof, and a sad one, of the decay of all that is earthly—but a proof that might well have been spared.

HOW
SHOCKING!

THE correspondent of a contemporary, in writing the notes of a tour, makes the following quotation from the "Englishwoman in Italy,"—"whoever her ladyship may be.—"I then went to look at the statue of St. Peter *alias* Jupiter, and scarcely recognised my worthy friend in his holiday garb. He was arrayed in robes of crimson cloth of gold draped regally about his sable person. The tiara, with its triple crown sparkling with jewels, adorned his head, and a ring of enormous size appeared on his finger. Whether in this guise the image looked most hideous or ludicrous it would be hard to say; but a more grossly grotesque object I never beheld. If it is not image worship for the people to kneel down and kiss his toe and pray before him, I know not what is. It was a grievous, shameful sight—that grim idol decked out like a frightful black doll, to be kissed and adored." But this is worth just the value of the "Englishwoman's" opinion. It is altogether a matter of taste as to how anything looks,

and there is nothing to dispute in it. For an Englishwoman to go gaping about, however, and putting her own stupid interpretation on everything she sees is not of a doubtful nature; it is very bad taste, and not raised in the least from being so because it is the common trick of the class to which she belongs. They are to be seen everywhere exhibiting their ignorance, and conceit in Catholic countries, and owe much to the forbearance of the people whom they annoy and insult. This Englishwoman, then, in accordance with the manners of the people whom she represents sets up her own stiff and starched standard of propriety in worship, and is prepared to pronounce all those who do not conform themselves to it guilty of idolatry. The fact, nevertheless, remains that people who understand the matter aright may deck and show honour to an image without being in the remotest degree guilty of idolatry or so much as tempted by an idolatrous thought:—and English women at home or abroad might find some better employment than to go about seeking an occasion to be shocked. But as a set off let us take what an Englishman, who had come from the like misunderstanding with this Englishwoman to a true comprehension of the matter has to tell us, concerning, among the rest, such devotions as that referred to. "Only this I know full well now," writes Cardinal Newman, "and did not know then, that the Catholic church allows no image of any sort, material or immaterial, no dogmatic symbol, no rite, no sacrament, no Saint, not even the Blessed Virgin herself, to come between the soul and its Creator; it is face to face, *solus cum solo*, in all matters between man and his God, He alone creates; He alone has redeemed; before His awful eyes we go in death; in the vision of Him is our eternal beatitude."

A CONTEMPORARY quoted the other day in his RELICS TRUE AND FALSE, columns an article from some Home magazine on ecclesiastical relics, and in which it was made to appear that Catholics are men most easily imposed

upon, and who have in their time received as sacred an immense amount of rubbish. This article, indeed, reasonably includes the "early Christians" in the accusation of superstition, and as having had their part also in the veneration of relics. But how could the early Christians have done otherwise than to-day is done by us who succeed them and inherit their faith? For that there is nothing extravagant in Catholics, then, or now, ascribing a supernatural virtue to relics is undeniable, as, for example, Cardinal Newman shows most clearly from Holy Writ itself. "The sacred text runs thus," he writes: "And Elisha died and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha. And, when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet." Again, in the case of an inanimate substance, which had touched a living Saint: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them." And, again, in the case of a pool. "An Angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then, first, after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." The writer of the article in question, however, gives many instances of what he asserts or implies, to have been, or to be still, the veneration of false relics, so many, indeed, that we cannot pretend to follow him categorically. We, nevertheless, find that he has made such glaring errors in cases which it is convenient for us to deal with that we conceive ourselves justified in supposing that in numerous other instances he has drawn only on his imagination, relying upon the unquestioning manner in which the public he writes for are ready to swallow any sort of nonsense which may be written concerning Catholic matters. Let us, first, take the following case of inaccuracy. "The brain of St. Peter," he says, "preserved at Rome, and enclosed in a box for better safety, was, on examination, found to be a marble stone." But, says John Calvin, "At the commencement of this treatise I mentioned that St. Peter's brains, which were shown in this town (Geneva), were found on examination to be a piece of pumice stone."—"Treatise on Relics" trans.; p. 259) Let those who will take Calvin for an authority, who, nevertheless, most probably suggested also to this writer his story of the "supposed arm of St. Anthony, which was afterwards discovered to be the mutilated limb of a hart." For, continuing to speak of the relics of St. Peter and St. Paul, the heresiarch supposed that many of these bones "would turn out to be the bones of some animal"—for which, by the way, had men of his mind been the providers of the supposed relics there would have been no need; human bones could have been availed of by them easily enough. Our magazine writer next gives the following instance. "A Bishop of Tours, in the eleventh century being induced to visit a much-venerated chapel in which a saint was buried, found that its patron was no other than a robber who had been executed for his crimes. That people thus regarded the remains of a robber as a fitting emblem of divinity, is undoubtedly strange; but it may have