

the power of the present in the ironic art of Browning; the poetry of religious inquiry in its various phases; and, finally, the outlook of faith." This is a praiseworthy programme, even if we may not accept the conclusion, "that the poetry of our age has a vital unity, and witnesses to an advance of the spirit, straight as the logic of experience, from doubt to faith and cheer." Anyone who starts out upon a critical excursion with such a thesis as this to maintain will be apt unconsciously to make the facts fit therewith; and, however plausibly they are arrayed by Miss Scudder in support of her contention, we feel at many points that something might be said upon the other side. Her appreciation of the spiritual elements in Victorian poetry is usually keen and adequate, although she now and then displays a curious blindness, as, for example, toward the social and ethical phases of Mr. Swinburne's work. To speak of him as "acknowledging no sphere but that of the senses and the passions" is the most grotesque of perversions. We are surprised, also, to find no account made of Mrs. Browning and Christina Rossetti, in which work the "life of the spirit" is surely, if anywhere, to be found. But in spite of some defects, Miss Scudder's book is a noteworthy contribution to poetical criticism, and deserves the careful attention of students.

*Spiritual life  
in modern  
English poetry.*

"The Life of the Spirit in the Modern English Poets" (Houghton), by Miss Vida D. Scudder, is a work

difficult of characterization in a few words. Attempting, although on a smaller scale and within the limits of a single nationality, what Dr. Brandes has attempted in his "Hovedströmninger," Miss Scudder has sought to isolate for special study such aspects of modern thought as have attracted to themselves the greater part of English poetic energy — such things, for example, as the revolutionary impulse, the new scientific spirit, the sympathetic envisagement of the historical past, and the aspirations of a deanthropomorphized religion. "Let us study," she says, "the influence of science in all our poets; the new democracy, especially in Wordsworth; the early religious and social ideals, especially in Shelley; the power of the past in the poetry of reversion;