

Friends and Current Literature

IT seems hardly fair that the author of *A Quaker Singer's Recollections* should include the word "Quaker" in the title of his work, seeing that, apparently, he never was a member of the Society though of Quaker descent. David Scull Bispham (b. 1857) was the only son of William Danforth Bispham and Jane Lippincott Scull. The family of Bispham (pron. Bis-pam) was of Lancashire origin; there was a prominent Friend, John Bispham (1642-1723), who was a member of Hardshaw M.M. Our author's father left Friends and his mother was disowned on her marriage, but, subsequent to her son's birth, she was re-instated. The immigrant ancestor of the Scull family was Nicholas, "who became William Penn's surveyor and made the first map of Philadelphia." Mrs. Bispham (carte-de-visite in D.) had several noted brothers: "David Scull [1836-1907], the second brother and my mother's favorite, was the handsomest man I ever knew and I loved him deeply." The youngest brother was Edward Lawrence Scull (1846-1884, see *Memoir*, by Allen C. Thomas).

After passing through the school of Bartram Kaighn, at Moorestown, N.J., David Bispham entered Haverford College in 1872, and here his passion for music proved stronger than his surroundings.

"Among the impedimenta which I took from Moorestown to Haverford was my beloved zither, which I played upon when occasion offered in spare moments. I had not counted upon the strict authorities at Haverford forbidding such harmless music as was made upon this rather primitive instrument; but to my great chagrin I was soon informed that music was against the rules, and that if I must needs play at all, I would have to do so off the college grounds. I therefore packed my zither in its little case and took it over to the Haverford station on the Pennsylvania Railway, where, through the kindness of the ticket-seller, I was enabled to keep it and where I went daily to practice."

After leaving college, David Bispham worked in the wool-warehouse of his uncle, David Scull, an uncongenial occupation, which only lasted till he could enter the profession of music, though in so doing he had not the hearty approval of his mother, or of his Quaker acquaintance:

"One morning, while Gustave Kobbé was talking to an elderly Friend, I went by, humming what seemed to be a vocal exercise. The elderly Friend stopped in his conversation, and pointed to me as I passed, saying: 'Does thee see that young man going along there singing? Well, he is the grandson of an old friend of mine, but I tell thee he isn't going to come to any good, for he is always fooling around after music.'"

The "Quaker Singer" was for some time a member of the choir of St. Mark's, a church in Philadelphia where the services were very "high."

But through all his professional career there ran the Quaker spirit of thoroughness and a sense of call to the highest and best—he had "a gift from Heaven," and he so far overcame opposition as to receive from the college which would not allow him his zither, the honorary degree of LL.D., conferred on Commencement Day, 12th June, 1914.

Though much in England we do not find any note of his association with English Friends.

His Preface is dated, New York, November 15th, 1919. The book is published by the Macmillan Company of New York, at \$5.00.

Professor George Aaron Barton has sent an offprint from *The Bryn Mawr Alumnae Quarterly*, November, 1919, giving a biographical sketch of his connection with Bryn Mawr College and a selected bibliography of publications by him.

**Mary-girl*, by Hope Merrick (the late Mrs. Leonard Merrick) is a novel, the principal characters of which are called Quakers, but we see little, if anything Quaker in them or their surroundings, and the description of a meeting for worship at the Hammersmith Meeting House is surely quite unlike that of any Friends' meeting held there (London: Collins, 7½ × 5½, pp. viii. + 272, 7/- net).

**An Introduction to the Study of Cytology*, by Leonard Doncaster, Sc. D., F.R.S., fellow of King's College, Cambridge, Derby professor of Zoology in the University of Liverpool. (London: Cambridge University Press, 9 × 5½, pp. xiv. + 280, one guinea.) See *The Friend* (London), 9th April, 1920.

The Odes and Psalms of Solomon, re-edited for the Governors of the John Rylands Library, by Rendel Harris and Alphonse Mingana. Vol. II.: The Translation, with introduction and notes (Manchester: University Press, 9 × 6½, pp. 464, one guinea).

●In *St. Nicholas* for March (New York) there is a reproduction of the picture of Penn's Treaty with the Indians, painted by Edwin A. Abbey, in the Pennsylvania State Capitol at Harrisburg.

The latest book of family history to reach us is *My Ancestors*, by Norman Penney. This is a quarto book of 252 pages, containing thirty-eight illustrations, bound in red cloth. Two hundred-and-fifty copies have been printed. About forty families, mainly Quaker, receive notice, including Penney, Ianson, Horne, Rickman, Norman, Grover, Hedley, Dixon, Kitching. The book has been printed for private circulation by Headley Brothers—a very creditable piece of work. Copies may be obtained from the Author, Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2. Price one guinea.

A copy has been presented to **D** by the treasurers of the printing fund.

*=not in **D**.