

Book Reviews

roll of men and women who, whether you agree with them or not, have definite opinions on the meaning and purpose of life, . . . no one here will advocate compulsory lethal chambers for the old, facilities for suicide, polygamy, or even that "removal of the nots from the Commandments" which commanded so much applause for its "courage" from the Press a few months ago.' And the same writer reminds these worthies of their responsibilities, and he suggests that the intellectual and spiritual future of England depends very much upon the use that is made of their opportunities by the men and women whose names appear in these pages.

THE DEATH OF ENGLAND. By Egerton Clarke. (London: Cecil Palmer; 3/6 net.)

A few years ago I read with admiration *The Death of Glass*, a volume of poems by Mr. Egerton Clarke. *The Death of England*, apart from the title poem itself, wins my prompt approbation. There are no more than thirty poems in this book but they cover a wide field of observation and experiment.

In fact, observation is the author's strong point; and, if one of the duties of a poet is to delineate the things of every day we commoner mortals miss, then Mr. Egerton Clarke at once puts us under a debt of gratitude. For he discovers for us poems in such diverse things as five-barred gates and freshly-made beds.

The bed is made : white Tidiness
Resumes her sleep
And, all day long, till we undress,
Will tidy keep—
What are the dreams of Tidiness?
She says no prayers
Before she lays her gentleness
All day, upstairs.

But that is only one of the poet's whims, showing that nothing is too small for his notice.

His power of expression is equal to his vision. With an ease that might deceive even the elect he avoids the obvious in word and phrase. His images are always unexpected, satisfying, and he can paint a complete picture in a couple of lines. The shorter poems, as is so often the case with modern poets, show him to better advantage than his longer efforts.

There is a subtle flavour about the poem under the title 'Ah, qu'elle est belle, la Marguerite' that makes it different from everything else in the book.

E.E.