

**THE LONDON DAILY NEWS
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Neurotic Talent.

"Alice." By ? Society for the Propagation of Religious Truth.
Boleskine, Inverness. 5s.

The author of this volume has an extremely "guid conceit o' himsel'," but a perusal of his poetry convinces us that it is ill-founded. He has a good deal of talent of a weak, neurotic, lyrical kind, but it is purely derivative, manner and form coming almost undisguised from the greater (and least English) of the pre-Raphaelites. For matter the author has turned to some unsavoury reminiscences of a chance acquaintance, reminiscences which plead to be forgotten, and which none but the very shameless would dare to put into print. The book is mostly about kisses, and to show the reader what a lot the author can say about them we venture to quote a stanza:

One kiss, like moonlight cold
Lightning with floral gold
 The lake's low tune.
One kiss, one flower to fold,
On its own calyx rolled
 At night, in June!
One kiss, like dewfall, drawn
A veil o'er leaf and dawn—
Mix night, and noon, and dawn,
 Dew, flower, and moon.

Which seems to us (who do not pretend to be learned in these matters) a considerable deal for a single kiss to effect. Most of the book is in need of what a poet has called "purging fire." One or two lines are good. One or two stanzas have the meaningless, derivative prettiness of the fragment we have quoted. For the rest, we will content ourselves with applying to the author the three words he applies to the late Poet Laureate.