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THOMAS O'CONNOR

BY the death on the 8th of August of Mr. Thomas Francis O'Connor, BLACKFRIARS has lost one of the very earliest of its collaborators. It is quite in keeping with the whole character of the man that this should be the first time for his name to appear in these pages. We can quite safely print it now that Tom is no longer here to remove it when correcting the proofs. His self-effacing modesty concealed an amazing erudition. It was only by a series of accidents that one made a progressive discovery of his unsuspected stores of knowledge. He could always be applied to as one would approach a ready and reliable Encyclopedia of General Information. His was the shy scholarly spirit that thrives in the background and works all the happier and more effectively as a nobody. Though his talents and learning might have justified his seeking the highest places, he deliberately avoided promotion with the real and rare greatness of humility. He was always forgetting himself and always helping others. He would certainly give away his last penny to anyone who asked it. He was never known to say or do an unkind thing: he seems never to have had an unkind thought. "Tom was a most saintly man," has been the spontaneous utterance of many who knew him when told of his death. May God rest his kind gentle soul!