



TOMÁS BAIRÉAD PAPERS

GP2/129

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Tomás Báiréad is definitely "a discovery". The promise of his first book, *Cumhacht na Cinneamhna*, is more than realised in this second collection of original short stories. Tomás Báiréad has an eye for a situation and the power to describe it aptly, having at his command a rich racy vocabulary of Galway Irish which he uses to excellent effect. In this book there are a couple of animal stories, *Sé Dia a Rathuigheann* and *Sionnach Ghleann na Síthe*, which are, in my view, quite outstanding in that particular genre and lift their author into the first rank. What is in them a necessity and a merit, namely, the objective redaction of the situations in which an old sheep and a hungry fox find themselves, is, however, a defect in some of the stories that deal with the inter-play of human beings. One feels, in reading the latter, that it would have been better if the author had relied more frequently on the use of dialogue, for instance, to advance the action and to delineate character.

Very little verse is being written in contemporary Irish, and very little of that is worth reading. The poets are either cribbed, cabin'd and confined in antique metres, pursuing themes that are, for the most part, terribly overworked, or have become unintelligible and unmusical in their experimentation with new ideas and verse-forms. There are, I hasten to add, exceptions, for men like Father Browne, Liam Gógan, Piaras Béaslá, Ernest Blythe and Séamas Ó hAodha, with different degrees of success, and not only sporadically, have made the most of us listen to what they had to say and the manner of their saying it. Peadar Ó hAnnracháin in this, his second or third volume of verses, stands midway between the old and the new. He is always intelligible, he has a highly-developed rhythmic sense, and everything in this book is marked by an amiability and a simplicity that is attractive. Many of the pieces have been evoked by the stress of the national struggle, in which the author played a conspicuous part, but little of the stress has got into the poetry. It lacks depth and genuine inspiration, qualities that are very pronounced in the second part of the author's recently published prose-work, *Mar Chonac-sa Éire*.

There is no need to describe the remaining four books on the list, Donn Byrne's *Marco Polo*, *The Innocence of Father Brown*, Mrs. Stopford Green's *Irish Nationality*, and that elixir of youth, *Longman's Latin Course*. They are established works in English; and the translation into Irish in each case has been well-done. It is pleasant to see the genial Father Brown of Chesterton's creation wearing an Irish jacket. His translator, Seán Ó Liatháin, is, I think, a newcomer, but his touch is very sure, and he has done justice to a difficult task.

LEÓN O BROIN.

" . . . science has to offer . . . an inspiration which is slowly but surely becoming the dominant driving force of modern thought and action."

" We have no science of science." The author of this sentence accepts the equation of " metaphysical " to " loose and unscientific ". That also was to be expected.

Most of the contributions are hard reading, chiefly on account of the crabbed technicality of the writing. An article on the Spanish painter, Goya, proved the most interesting.

R. Ó F.

Gold-Dusty. By Vera Marie Tracy. (Bruce. \$1.50.)

The authoress is, I gather from her verses, an invalid lady with a good deal of the sensibility of the physically frail. She has, however, set herself a somewhat unexacting standard of technical accomplishment; and her command of expression is not very great. The following lines are fairly typical of the work:

Sometime the Spring will be too much,
Sometime I know my heart will break,
Because of longing unfulfilled
For dancing trails I ne'er can take:

Because of wistful dreams that tease
And taunt my waking vision dulled,
And April winds that croon to me
With scent from some far woodland culled.

R. Ó F.

NEW GUM BOOKS.

- An Geall do Brisadh.* Tomás Búiréad. 2/6.
An Chaise Riabhach. Peadar Ó hAnnracháin. 1/-.
Marco Polo. Donn Byrne. Translated by Seán Mac Maoláin. 2/-.
Saontacht an Athar de Brún. G. K. Chesterton. Translated by Seán Ó Liatháin. 2/-.
Meanna Gaedheil. Alice Stopford Green. Translated by Tomás de Bhial. Price not stated.
Bun-Chúrsa Láilne. Longman's Latin Course, Part I. Translated by Míchéal Breathnach, M.A. Price not stated.