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## Books of Special Interest

## Education and the Future

EDUCATION FOR A CHANGING CIVILIZATION. By WILLIAM HEARD KILPATRICK. New York: The Macmillan Co. \$1.

Reviewed by I. L. KANDEL

Teachers College

UNREST in education is no new theme, but at no period has it been so widespread and universal as in the last decade. Everywhere the chief preoccupation is with the reform of content and methods of instruction. Outside of the United States there is the additional complication that arises out of the new attempts to evolve systems of educational organization that are more consistent with the demands of democracies. In general the unrest is caused by a recognition that much that was taught whether in the elementary or secondary schools failed to carry over into life activities, that education in general had become encrusted with tradition and formalism, and with content that had lost its meaning for modern societies. The keynote of the new movements is a desire to cultivate personality through content that has at once meaning for the individual and value for social progress. So stated the problem seems apparently simple and the very simplicity of statement has elicited greater interest among parents and laymen than educational questions have done hitherto. It is only as one examines the professional proposals for reform that revolve around this central aim and that are appearing in almost every important language of the civilized world, that one realizes the essential difficulties involved in the problem.

Professor Kilpatrick presents in the first two of his three lectures on "Education for a Changing Civilization" an excellent and clear statement of the problems that confront education and society today. Starting with the thesis that the chief characteristic of the present age is rapid change due to the rapid development of science and the changed mental attitude consequent thereon, to industrialization, and to democracy, he draws attention to the intellectual, moral, and social "lag" between the school and society as it is coming to be. Authoritarianism, while declining to some extent in the intellectual field, still dominates the religious, moral, social, legal, and political outlook. While a critical attitude and tested thought characterize modern science they do not carry over into other activities of life. The task of education is to develop a new freedom which asks why and demands an answer before it accepts. The tempo of modern life is rapid, old solutions will not satisfy, and the new generation is facing an unknown future, for which youth should be prepared. The cultivation of dynamic personality able to face new problems and situations is, then, the problem, or, in Professor Kilpatrick's words, "Our problem then would seem to be to help our young people make the shift from external authority to internal authority."

The solution of this problem lies in a close approximation between education and its processes to immediate life and its educational processes. In other words, the content of the school must have meaning for the pupil and be of value for life in society, while the methods must follow the methods common in life outside of the school. The separation between education and life resulted in formalism, conservatism, and neglect of the individual, and the establishment of a purely literary and bookish ideal of education. "Only as the school is placed on a basis of actual living can certain necessary social-moral habits and attitudes be built, certain necessary methods of attack upon problems and enterprises be developed." The purpose of education from this point of view is, then, to develop a critical attitude, a scientific habit of mind, ability to judge and open-mindedness, breadth of view and readiness to cooperate in the interest of social progress and well-being even at the risk of questioning the validity of existing institutions.

Up to this point no one who holds a rational conception of liberal education would differ from Professor Kilpatrick's main thesis. It may be objected that he does not state how many pupils could profit by such an education and takes no account of the contributions of the psychologists on individual differences. One may question both the economy and validity of "the internal authority of how it works when tried" in any type of activity, without pointing to crime statistics and moral stand-

ards due to some extent to the elimination of external authority in our education, while still another criticism may be found in the still inadequate knowledge of the factors that make for progress. Yet in the main his thesis on the aims of modern education may be accepted without following Professor Kilpatrick in all his implications.

The third lecture, in which these implications are worked out, is, as the author admits, the most controversial. Here Professor Kilpatrick develops his ideas on curriculum and method. Taking as his point of departure the necessity of preparing the younger generation to face an unknown future and to be prepared to meet unsolved social problems, he is prepared to discard "for most pupils" Latin as well as Greek, mathematics, much of present history study and modern foreign languages, while "English and the sciences need remaking from within rather than rejection." He leaves, then, for major consideration the study of social problems. This is a serious indictment of current practices, all the more serious because it finds wide acceptance among educators. And yet it may be seriously questioned whether the indictment can ever be against subjects as such. Those who criticize subjects because of their failure to achieve anything, fail always to take into account what is today a far more serious indictment of our systems of education, and that is the large number of teachers who are either inadequately prepared in, or entirely unfamiliar with, subjects that they profess to teach. Before subjects can be discarded, it would be well to discover what can be done with good teaching; otherwise the time will not be distant when "social studies," too, will follow the rest into the discard. Assuming, however, that Professor Kilpatrick's contention is sound, can the unknown future be anticipated, can the future social problems be foreseen? Attempts to discover lines of future interest have been made, as, for example, in the sciences. Newspapers and magazines were analyzed to discover the major scientific trends of the day; ten years later it was found that the emphases had shifted. The same would no doubt be true in any field. It would be unjust to Professor Kilpatrick, however, to leave the impression that he wishes to discard everything that has come from the past. "Many old demands remain substantially unaltered." "Accordingly, to such of the older limited stock of precise subject-matter as should survive from this generation to the next, there must be added certain more generalized methods and attitudes of attack that especially fit for meeting novel situations."

Knowledge of what has been done and said in the past is still essential, and without knowledge new methods of attack cannot be developed. It is highly problematical, however, whether teachers can go beyond this, whether education can undertake more than transmission of the inheritance of the race and adjustment to the present through content that has meaning and by new methods that would be valid in new situations. Granted that "we face as never before an unknown shifting future," how can "children learn to adapt themselves to a situation which we, as teachers, can only partially foresee"? Dealing with similar proposals for an education in civic and social preparedness Walter Lippmann in "The Phantom Public" offers a criticism and suggestion that apply in the present instance. "If the schools attempt to teach children how to solve the problems of the day, they are bound always to be in arrears. The most they can conceivably attempt is the teaching of patterns of thought and feeling which will enable the citizen to approach a new problem in some useful fashion." And again, "No scheme of education can equip him (the citizen) in advance for all the problems of mankind; no device of publicity, no machinery of enlightenment, can endow him during a crisis with the antecedent detailed and technical knowledge which is required for executive action."

How great is the difficulty of anticipating the educational demands of a "shifting future" can best be realized by a comparison of the varied "job analyses" and enumeration of objectives for adult life. The criticisms offered of the solution proposed by Professor Kilpatrick do not affect the value of his analysis of the present educational situation. Indeed, Professor Kilpatrick does not claim to legislate; he recognizes, as has been long recognized in England and is today in a new sense recognized in Germany, that the ultimate solution of the educational problem can only be

found in a well-prepared teacher enjoying a freedom that is limited only by sound professional knowledge and insight. Such a condition is still remote and especially in the United States, where the chief danger lies not in inadequacy of theory, solutions, and panaceas, but in preaching the philosophy of freedom for the pupil and in denying it for the teacher by a welter of courses of study, textbooks, supervisors, and experts. The older theory lent itself to such a hierarchy of controls. If Professor Kilpatrick's general survey has any value, it lies in directing attention to the incompatibility between new theories of education and old systems of organization.

How difficult is the task of reform is well illustrated in Miss Josephine Chase's "New York at School," whose publication was made possible by the Public Education Association. The volume does not attempt to do more than present a descriptive account of the public educational system of New York City. The task is well performed and one cannot read it without realizing the immensity of the educational problem that confronts New York. Obviously the danger lies in the development of a vast machine. While schools have been set aside for various experiments, New York City is still far from encouraging that variety and freedom that is found in the educational system of the London County Council. It is unnecessary, however, since the volume does not invite it, to enter into any considerations of the quality of education offered in New York, the size of buildings, the inbreeding of teachers, and other questions. As a survey of the fabric of the educational system "New York at School" is a valuable contribution for giving the parents and taxpayers an intelligent insight into the largest educational enterprise in the world.

## How Names Arise

SURNAMES. By ERNEST WEEKLEY. Dutton. 1927. \$2.50.

IT was an excellent idea to reprint, after a decade, this book whose earlier editions must have received little attention in the war years. This is a sort of by-product of Mr. Weekley's resources toward a dictionary of English surnames, whose completion, he confesses in his introduction (dated 1916), continually recedes into the future. Meanwhile some six thousand English names and their derivations, with some hundreds in French and German, are here listed. It is a book to be kept and nibbled at, from time to time, with that curious sort of pleasure which some people derive from browsing in "Who's Who" or the dictionary.

"The Study of Surnames," Mr. Weekley observes, "may be regarded as a harmless pastime or as a branch of learning. As a pastime it is as innocent as stamp collecting, and possibly as intellectual. As a branch of learning it is an inexhaustible, and hitherto practically unworked, branch of philological knowledge. A complete dictionary of English surnames would not only form a valuable supplement to the 'New English Dictionary,' but would in great measure revolutionize its chronology." Again and again he cites occupational names (all surnames, one learns, are derived from baptismal names, locality, or occupations, or are nicknames) appearing on medieval rolls a century or two before there is any trace in the language records of the nouns and verbs of which they are composed.

There are a good many surprises for the lay reader in this volume. The older a name is the more likely it is to have been corrupted and abbreviated "to a cacophonous monosyllable distinguished by great economy of vowels." So, says Mr. Weekley, Germans named Bugge, Bopp, Dietz, Dankl, and Kluck have as much right to look down on most of their polysyllabic neighbors as our own Bugg, Bubb, etc., on such upstarts as Napier, Pomeroy, Percy, and Somerset. Names that sound alike have been assimilated, so that Mr. Smith's ancestor who, some time between the beginning of the Crusades and the Renaissance bestowed his personal cognomen as a legacy to his descendants, may have been a blacksmith, or have lived on a "smeth" or plain, or have been a "smethe," i.e., smooth or slippery, person. Medieval names were extraordinary and not always complimentary—e.g. William Thynnewyt and Ralph Badintheved; no doubt most of us are lucky if we are unable to trace our ascent.

On the other hand, some names have kept their early form with little or no change; one is grateful to Mr. Weekley for reminding us that the name of that tough person, the present (at this moment of writing) Premier of France, means exactly what it seems to mean. "Raymond Squarefist"—it sounds like the First Crusade.

*A Selected List of New Books That Are Thoroughly Entertaining and Decidedly Worth While*

By the Author of "WILD GEESE" and "THE DARK DAWN"

**THE MAD CAREWS**By Martha Ostenso

"About 'The Mad Carews' there lingers the atmosphere of a pagan summer day awaiting the onset of an electric storm. In prose that bursts into passages of wild beauty the author dramatizes each and every member of the Carew family."—*New York Times*. \$2.50

**A VAGABOND IN FIJI**By Harry L. Foster

The fiercely joyous adventures of this well-known travel author, who went through Samoa, the Tongas and the Fijis in search of cannibals. The story is told with the same humor and vividness which have distinguished the author's earlier travel narratives. Richly amusing. Illustrated. \$3.00

**THE INN OF THE HAWK AND RAVEN**By George Barr McCutcheon

A new tale of Old Graustark in which the daughter of a robber chieftain marries a colonel of the Dragoons. \$2.00

**THE CAT'S EYE**By R. Austin Freeman

Another mystery story featuring the celebrated Dr. Thorndike, whom many critics consider the foremost detective created since Sherlock Holmes. The plot centers around the exciting search for a cat's-eye jewel. \$2.00

**THE BARBURY WITCH**By Anthony Richardson

"A powerful novel, written with great sensitiveness. The sinister, selfish Mrs. de Fevel will haunt the reader long after the book has been finished."—*The Bookman, London*. \$2.50

**THE THUNDERER**By E. Barrington

Author of "The Divine Lady," "Glorious Apollo," etc.

A story of the passionate love of Napoleon for Josephine, which is proving the most popular of E. Barrington's many successful books. Illustrated. \$2.50

**LINCOLN AND THE RAILROADS**By John W. Starr, Jr.

A colorful study of the Great Emancipator and war-time President in an entirely new light—as a railroad attorney and traveler. The book includes ten hitherto unpublished writings of Lincoln. \$3.00  
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**DECORATIVE MOTIVES OF ORIENTAL ART**By Katherine M. Ball

A thorough interpretation of the art motives that enrich the art of the Orient. The magnificent collection of 673 illustrations makes the book of especial value and interest. \$15.00

**THE LIFE OF THE WHITE ANT**By Maurice Maeterlinck

A delightful companion book to "The Life of the Bee," dealing with the remarkable social life of the "white ants," interwoven with which is a profound and moving philosophy of human life. \$2.50

**ANATOLE FRANCE THE PARISIAN**By Herbert L. Stewart

A full-length portrait of Anatole France—a total analysis of a brilliant and influential personality, set against the background of the city in which he lived. The book is not only a biography but it gives also a detailed picture of the stirring political events which determined to a large degree the subjects and the character of Anatole France's fiction. \$3.00

Watch for "REBELLION" the PRIZE NOVEL, Ready November 12

**THE KINGDOM OF THEOPHILUS**By William J. Locke

Author of "Perella," "The Beloved Vagabond," etc.

The story of Theophilus Bird, who owned health and wealth but came near to failure in his search for happiness. A good story told in Locke's best manner. \$2.50

**DOMESTIC MANNERS OF THE AMERICANS**By Frances Trollope

A frank, first-hand observation of American life in the middle-west about a century ago. An important re-issue of a famous piece of Americana. \$4.00

**WATERWAYS OF WESTWARD WANDERING**By Lewis R. Freeman

The author, who "collects" rivers as most people collect furniture or firearms, or first editions, here recounts his experiences on three of America's great streams. This is a sporting and adventurous chronicle of outboard motor trips down the Ohio, Mississippi and Missouri. Illustrated. \$3.50

**YE GODS AND LITTLE FISHES**By Eugene Slocum

"Perfectly corking fish book. I swallowed it hook, line and sinker. The chapter on breeding habits of trout should become a classic."—*George A. Dorsey*. Illustrated. \$2.50

**EUGENICS AND OTHER EVILS**By G. K. Chesterton

A diverting and stimulating discussion of contemporary tendencies, their origins and aims. Typically Chesterton, alert, paradoxical, stimulating, provocative—a book thoroughly amusing and decidedly worth while. \$2.50

**DANGEROUS BUSINESS**By Edwin Balmer

Is it dangerous to mix business and social friendship? A fast-moving novel of men and women caught in the craze of entertaining for business—a story rushing to a tremendous climax. \$2.00

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This unusual novel takes us into the whirl of social life in Washington with its endless social formalities, the hubble-bubble of Washington society life. \$2.50

**KONG**By Harold Kingsley

Here is a tale which in its cruelty, its passion and its sensuous beauty holds all the gorgeous East in fee. It is the story of Kong, rover pirate and the lovely Ker-A, his golden mouse. \$2.50





# A Letter from Ireland

By PADRAIC COLUM

THE WHIRLPOOLS and eddies of the summer stream have at last gently dropped the Oxonian again on the strand of the publishing world. All the other recalcitrants of Indian summer holidays are there before him:—the Publisher's Young Man, tragically noble after a bad heart attack on the Maine Coast; Young Harvard, with features still ruddy from hatless days at Forest Hills and fiesta nights on West Twelfth Street; and above all Pamela, nicely tanned and six pounds the worse after untold but suspected adventures up-country.

About the Publishers' Building at 35 West 32nd Street is an aura of renewed endeavor. Mixed bags of new publications are daily emptied upon our library table, the advance agents of a Christmas company. The Oxonian, impresario of books, cannot do better than introduce these handsome heralds of whatever new the realms of thought may hold.

Enter first an impressive newcomer whose arrival has long been trumpeted, *The Oxford Book of American Verse*. Bliss Carman is the anthologist, and few modern collections will wear so well. The form and price will be similar to the other Oxford Books of Verse; publication is promised before Christmas.<sup>(1)</sup>

Within the next few weeks the Oxford University Press will publish *American Mystery Stories*, selected with an introduction by Carolyn Wells. Even the unemotional flesh of the Inner Sanctum Potentate crept visibly when its august owner read proof of these stories. An ideal book for the train or the rainy Sunday, (the price but One Fifty!). American Detective Stories will follow!<sup>(2)</sup>

Not all phases of the popular interest in crime should be encouraged, but when a scholar like Boris Brasol, former Prosecuting Attorney in St. Petersburg, (we nearly said Petrograd!) writes a book on *The Elements of Crime*, authorities take notice, and the common reader wisely purchases and is edified.<sup>(3)</sup>

*The Legacy of Israel* (which is one of the most handsome books for the money the Oxonian has seen) wins high praise in exalted places. No similar study of the effect of Jewish culture on civilization exists, and none is likely to rival it for years to come.<sup>(4)</sup>

In the field of religious study there are few names more universally honored than that of Friedrich Heiler. The Oxford Press is about to publish an English translation of Heiler's book on *Sadhu Sundar Singh*, the Modern Indian mystic. A translation of Heiler's *Das Gebet*, that unequalled study of prayer, will appear later.<sup>(5)</sup>

Miss Ryllis Alexander, the editor of the new *Garrick Diary*, which will soon emerge handsomely in a limited edition, uncovered this interesting document while working for her Doctorate at Yale. She offers a brief account of this Diary (hitherto unpublished) in the last number of the Yale Review.<sup>(6)</sup>

Two new volumes have been added to the Oxford Reading Courses, now in preparation. These are *The Essay*, by M. Edmund Spenser, and *Biography*, by A. C. Valentine. They may be bought separately for One Dollar each, or secured in connection with the accompanying volumes. The Oxford Press will give full information.<sup>(7)</sup>

The Oxford Best Seller for 1927 will probably be *Modern English Usage*,<sup>(8)</sup> but the American *Pocket Oxford Dictionary*<sup>(9)</sup> and Rostovtzeff's *History of the Ancient World*<sup>(10)</sup> will be close seconds. And there are still various pre-Christmas tricks hidden up our scholarly sleeves!

The recent interest in Colonel Isham's purchase of Boswell material has made us turn again to *Boswell's Note-book*,<sup>(11)</sup> that convenient and too little known volume edited by R. W. Chapman.

Perhaps the most attractive gift book for the Fall is *Architectural Design in Concrete*.<sup>(12)</sup> A hundred full page plates depict new designs in concrete the world over, and the text by T. P. Bennett is not only authoritative but interesting.

Corrado Ricci, the famous Italian art critic, has written a book on the Lombard country-side and its artists. The English translation, with handsome off-set illustrations, has just emerged from its publisher at 35 West 32nd Street. The title is *Umbria Santa*,<sup>(13)</sup>—but be not discouraged by that, for it is a charming and delightful book even for you and me. The publisher's Young Man is going to give one to Pamela, who has been very high-hat of late!

"High-hat" is a bad word. Once used, it owns a man forever, and he can think of no other!

—THE OXONIAN.

(1) \$3.75 cloth. (2) Each vol. \$1.50. (3) \$5.00. (4) \$4.00. (5) \$3.00. (6) about \$7.50. (7) each \$1.00. (8) cloth \$3.00; Oxford India paper \$4.00. (9) \$2.00. (10) 2 vols. each \$5.00. (11) \$1.25. (12) \$10.00. (13) \$4.00.

IRELAND is a country which has had since the seventeenth century two traditions in her culture: she has been English-speaking on her most accessible side; she has produced writers in English who were molded, to an extent not quite realized by writers of histories of English literature, by a tradition of speech and letters which existed in the country since Norman times: she has also drawn in a less evident way from what some of her writers are beginning to speak of as "The Hidden Ireland," that is, from an Ireland which is Gaelic-speaking, and whose poems and stories belong to a tradition, a *milieu*, a way of looking at life that is as removed as any European literature can be from all that is in English literature. These two traditions will persist in Irish life; their conflict or their blending will make Irish intellectual life richer and more vital.

The new Irish state is doing all that is possible to do at present for the fostering of Gaelic. Gaelic is compulsory in all the schools of Saorstát Eireann, and the effort of the state to make Gaelic current, although the results of that effort are doubtful and will be doubtful for some time to come, can be defended. I quote from an article by Professor Tierney, one of the champions of the Gaelic idea. "Language," says Von Humboldt, in a passage which justifies completely the contention that without Irish the Irish nation will cease to exist, "is the organ of our inner being, nay, is that being itself gradually attaining self-recognition and self-expression. It strikes all the finest fibres of its roots into the spiritual strength of the nation." "A language," says M. Meillet, the great linguist of the Sorbonne, "is of no value unless it be the organ of an original civilization. That civilization need not be widely extended; it suffices that it should have individuality." It is, of course, the contention of the protagonists of the Gaelic idea that Gaelic is the organ of an original civilization—a civilization which has individuality even although it has only meagre extension.

So far, in spite of the patronage of the state, no writer worth translating has appeared in Gaelic, and it is disappointing to note that the one literary man who has come out of the Gaeltacht, Liam O'Flaherty, writes in English, and in an English which has not even a Gaelic flavor.

The insistence upon Gaelic is apt to produce a reaction towards the other tradition in Irish intellectual life—the Anglo-Irish tradition. Anglo-Irish writers like Berkeley and Swift are being brought forward again, and one can detect an attempt being made to "situate" them more completely in Irish life. It is because of this reaction that I consider a little book which has just been published to be of some importance.

"English is one of the languages of this country for more than seven centuries," Mr. Jeremiah Hogan's booklet<sup>1</sup> begins. He speaks of two periods in the history of English in Ireland—the medieval or Middle Anglo-Irish of which the most important monument is the Kildare Poems, and Modern Anglo-Irish. Mr. Hogan is careful to mention that modern Anglo-Irish is not a development from Middle Anglo-Irish; Middle English came to Ireland in the twelfth century; spread in the thirteenth, and declined in the following centuries almost to extinction. "It survived unmixed except with Irish, in the rural areas of North Dublin and South Wexford. Modern English came to Ireland in the seventeenth century, and has now spread over almost the entire country." Mr. Hogan finds very little pre-seventeenth century English in any of the dialects of modern Anglo-Irish. In 1366 measures were taken through the Statutes of Kilkenny to arrest the decline of English in Ireland—these Statutes were an attempt to hold as much as could be held of Ireland at the time for the English race, the English law and speech at the cost of giving up the rest. After that time Medieval Anglo-Irish exists only in official pronouncements. In the sixteenth century, even in the towns, English was being rapidly replaced by Irish. Then came the new conquest in the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, with a new English, and the second Anglo-Irish civilization which continues in the blend of modern Ireland, a culture which produced Swift,

and in producing Swift produced the beginning of an Anglo-Irish literature." The history of modern Anglo-Irish is briefly this:

This English of the Protestant nation is the form of English which, mixed with the older Anglo-Irish and learned by a population with an Irish speech-basis, is the language of Ireland today. But it did not begin to spread among the people until the end of the sixteenth century, nor did it emerge victorious from the struggle with Irish until the middle of the nineteenth.

Of the poets writing in English, the two who draw most from the Gaelic tradition are Austin Clarke and F. R. Higgins—they are young men—F. R. Higgins has one book other than this new one to his credit, while Austin Clarke has four. Both of these poets go to Gaelic sources, not only for their material, but for their technique. I know of no poet who has such an extraordinary command over assonantal verse as Austin Clarke has—he has gained it through his familiarity with Gaelic verse. As an example of such command I quote a stanza from a rather long poem of his which appeared in the July-September issue of the *Dublin Magazine*:

*Smithied in gloom the low day  
Had glowed upon the axle,  
Southward along the causeways  
The hilly clouds were backing:  
We saw the drummers ride  
The sands beside our kingdom,  
And, as in sky, the tide stand  
Amid a clan of wings.*

His new volume, "The Son of Learning,"<sup>2</sup> is in the form of a poetic comedy, but the best speeches in it are those in which the poet remembers that he is a storyteller, and writes like this:

*I know a bay where men are binding  
The cartwheel twice upon the stone  
with fire  
And cold. There with the tide the  
blowing sails  
Have dropped, and hands that rowed  
with blessed Brendan  
Unload the chasubles from boats; no-  
bles  
Hurry with women, whose red lips  
are cut  
By the salt dark, into a lighted house  
To talk, to dance: and when fire  
thickens the roof  
With clergy bless their mirth with  
Latin, for  
Their grace is such a couple every night  
Is married and with candles, music,  
they  
Prepare those innocent delights.*

I do not think "The Son of Learning" succeeds as a play—the speeches exist for themselves and not as something forced out by a situation. They are best as descriptive passages, and they show that when he returns to narrative Austin Clarke can give us such brilliant episodes as he gave in his last volume, "The Cattle Drive in Connacht." If Austin Clarke is at his best when he is relating some episode out of the old epic literature, F. R. Higgins is best when he is giving us a lyric that has in it the wavering music of the Gaelic folk-song. He often reaches to a lovely music in his verse and he is an adept at reviving old modes in traditional poetry. His background is the Gaelic West of Ireland, and the people he writes about are the dark men and women of Galway and Mayo—"The Dark Breed." Because he has a passion for that land and these people there is a real root to F. R. Higgins's poetry.

Senator Yeats has also a book of verse out—a very slender collection entitled "October Blast,"<sup>3</sup> which contains no more than nine poems. In this slender collection there are a few poems that are as beautiful as this great poet has ever written, for all that he now prefers to see himself as "a sixty-year-old smiling public man," and that the theme of the principal poems is "deceit age that has been tied upon me as upon a dog's tail." Into this new poetry of his he brings an individual idiom. "Two Songs from a Play," and "The Young Countryman" are as fine as the first poem in his book, "Sailing to Byzantium."

Last week we saw Senator Yeats's version of "Oedipus at Colonus" at the Abbey Theatre. The theatre was filled while for

<sup>1</sup> The Son of Learning. By Austin Clarke. London: George Allen & Unwin.

<sup>2</sup> The Dark Breed. By F. R. Higgins. London: The Macmillan Co.

<sup>3</sup> October Blast. By William Butler Yeats. Dublin: The Cuala Press. 1927.

two hours without a break that tragic, disquieting, and, in the opening, very talkative play was on the stage. Great credit is due to Mr. McCormick, the Abbey's principal actor at present, for holding the play up with such power, weakly as he was supported by the girls who played Antigone and Ismene. The audience, I believe, had been trained to attentiveness by attendance at High Mass; they saw, I think, a stage that was like an altar and a chorus sang like priests at High Mass. The lyrical parts of the chorus were sung, and sung in a liturgical fashion. I thought the singing occurred too often: the chorus describing the battle between Theseus's men and Creon's men should, I am sure, be spoken and not sung. The singing was undoubtedly impressive, and gave points of rest in a very exacting play, but like all choir singing, there was a difficulty in hearing the words, and that was a pity, considering that the words were Yeats's rendering of Sophocles:

*In the long echoing street the laughing  
dancers throng,  
The bride is carried to the bride-  
groom's chamber through torch-light  
and tumultuous song,  
I celebrate the silent kiss that ends  
short life or long.*

At last, almost at the eleventh hour, Ireland is about to make a systematic effort to collect and publish her folk-lore. Irish folk-lore is the most distinctive, and it was a little while ago the richest in Europe, but only spasmodic efforts were made in the days of the *seanchaithe* or traditional story-tellers. Now, when our folk-culture barely survives, the proper sort of effort is being made: A Folklore Society has been founded, and a journal, *Bealoideas* (Lore of the Country), is being published. The first number has just come out; it contains short contributions, mainly stories, in Irish, with English translations or summaries—they read like gleanings from a field already harvested. Still, we may be sure, there will be much to add to what is in store already: the editors announce that two important collections from Mayo and Kerry have come in which, if published, would fill a thousand pages of the journal. The society announces, too, that it has set about the compilation of a bibliography of Irish folk-lore. The subscription to the society is seven shillings and six pence a year and this includes a subscription to the journal which will be published twice a year.

But in spite of our carelessness about such matters, it is remarkable what influence certain traditional forms have, and how often such forms become filled with a new life. Going through the collection of antique Irish ornamental work in the National Museum a few years ago I could not dream that we could have in our day an artist who could pick up the tradition that these makers of crosses, chalices, and shrines were in, and who would make something that could go beside these distinctive and brilliant works. And then a while ago, after I had looked upon the work of the craftsmen of the eighth and tenth centuries, I came upon something that was being shown in the Museum and that was the work of an artist of our day. It was a monstrance made by Miss Mia Cranwill. I had seen only one other specimen of this artist's work—a casket made to hold the roll of names of the first Senators of the Free State, and which stays on the Senate table—a beautiful piece of work in silver and red yew, crowded with fantastic and elaborate ornament. This monstrance could be left beside the antique work, and would seem to be as brilliant and as distinctive as any of it. Miss Cranwill had no traditional forms to go on in making the monstrance, for the monstrance was not used in the early church. But in the figures she has used, in the style or ornament, in the personality which she has managed to reveal even in this sacred work, she shows that she is in the tradition that these antique craftsmen worked in. The monstrance produces the same effect of brilliancy which the Cross of Cong, or some of the figures in the Book of Kells, produce—imagine a great circle raying out, in which red enamels are set in gold! I stood for a long time before this shining and solemn thing. San Francisco—for the work has been done for a church there—has certainly done itself proud in getting such a great piece of work from so fine an artist. Crafts are on the upgrade in Dublin: the best stained glass made anywhere is being made in Dublin at present, in the studios of Miss Purser and Mr. Harry Clarke.