Review

Source: *The Celtic Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Oct., 1904), pp. 175-176

Published by:

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30069793>

Accessed: 17-12-2015 04:01 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

<http://www.jstor.org>

felt by learners of old Gaelic everywhere. The beginner finds here the complicated Irish verbal system set forth tense by tense. This is a step in the right direction, and useful. Professor Strachan has made special contributions already on 'Action and Time in the Irish Verb,' on the use of the particle *ro*—with Preterital Tenses, on the Sigmatic Future and Subjunctive, on the Verb Substantive, and on the verbal system of *Saltair na Rann*. Learners have happily the additional advantage of a valuable translation of these old Gaelic glosses in a monumental work issued by the Cambridge University Press, the *Thesaurus Paleohibernicus*, edited by Stokes and Strachan, in two volumes. The present selection will, we hope, be made further helpful in a second edition by prefixing a brief Old Irish Grammar embodying present knowledge. The needs of students, especially in the school where it is used, will reveal the necessity of such a prefix, unless indeed we are to look for a new edition of Dr. Moore's *Windisch*. The glosses are taken chiefly from the Würzburg codex (being explanations partly in Latin, partly in Irish, of the general sense of the 13 Pauline *Epistles*, and *Hebrews* as far as chapter xii.); from the Milan codex (formerly belonging to the Columban monastery of Bobbio, and thought to have been a juvenile work of Columban); from the St. Gall glosses on Priscian,—all which provided with a succinct vocabulary furnish the beginner with excellent material of instruction, dating from the best days of the old Celtic Church. Professor Strachan's work in old Gaelic Grammar and Lexicography is invaluable to the student whose path is thereby made so much the less thorny.

Pagan Ireland. By ELEANOR HULL, author of the *Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature*. London: David Nutt. Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son. 3s. 6d. net.

We want simple, lovely narratives of the times, the people, the manners and the customs of old, like this of Miss Hull's, set down and circulated among our youth. The schools sadly need interesting reading books at present, and amongst recent publications two that struck me as being particularly suited to supply the want are *Pagan Ireland*, and Mrs. Stephen Gwynne's recently published and most admirable little *Stories from Irish History*. Both these books should not only fascinate the Gael youth, but give him a deeper interest in his country, and whet his appetite for further information concerning it.

Pagan Ireland is not merely a book for children. The simplicity of the narrative, and the deep interest interwoven with it, admirably suit it for holding the attention of the young, but the mass of information, well digested and arranged, which it contains, makes it a most useful book for the average man or woman, who has, in nineteen cases out of twenty, only the haziest idea of early Irish history and Irish mythology.

Scattered through this book are snatches of the old stories that like strewn jewels brighten the path. We may have heard many, or most, or all of them; but ever they bear another and another telling—and they lose

none of their charm in Miss Hull's handling. The portions of her narrative which she devotes to the women of those remote days are not the least interesting. Emer, the fairest of the women of Erin whom Cuchullin wooed and won, had the six womanly gifts: The gift of modest behaviour, the gift of singing, the gift of sweet speech, the gift of beauty, the gift of wisdom, and the gift of needlework. For the latter charming accomplishment there is too often substituted, in these our days of woman's rights and advanced civilisation, the gift of novel-reading.

Irish mothers in those days knew their stern duty to their country. Miss Hull mentions how an old Roman writer said that the Irish mother gave to her babe the first bit of food from the point of a sword. The expression was probably metaphorical, and shows that the lesson of patriotism was begun upon the babe in arms. Our Irish people are fabled to be fond of fight still. 'Are you of the fighting kind too?' an American once asked me. 'Did you ever know an Irishman who couldn't fight?' I asked in reply. 'I knew many Irishmen who couldn't fight,' he said; 'but I never knew one of them who wouldn't.' It is so, only the old old spirit still lingering as a survival. We are not nurtured at the sword-point nowadays. We would have the warrior's reward without his spirit and without his toil. We sigh for Magh Mell. It is worth striving for. Hear Miss Hull's description of the enchanted plain: 'In that land there was neither age, nor sickness, nor any grief or pain, and all things were fair and lovely, and all were young, and full of happiness, and songs, and love; a single apple would suffice for food for a hundred years, and it tasted of every delicious flavour that the heart of man could conceive; and there was ale and meat in abundance. There apple-trees bloomed and sweet birds sang, and there was music all day long, and men took no note of time, for they grew never old or weary.'

There will not be many who, having read this book, will not look forward eagerly for Miss Hull's next two (promised) books.

Ériu. The Journal of the School of Irish Learning, Dublin. Edited by KUNO MEYER and JOHN STRACHAN. Vol. I. Part I. Dublin: School of Irish Learning; and Hodges, Figgis and Co. Ltd., 1904. 6s. net. Annual Subscription, 10s. (2 Parts).

As the elder by a few weeks, it is the pleasant privilege of *The Celtic Review* to welcome the advent of *Ériu*, and say to it 'gu 'm meal thu do shláinte!' As was to be expected from the joint editorship, *Ériu* is learned, and as was to be expected from the School of Irish Learning, it is devoted chiefly to the study of Old and Middle Irish, and includes Grammar, Literature, and History. Henceforth no serious student of old Gaelic can afford to ignore the valuable help of *Ériu*. Both Professor Kuno Meyer and Professor Strachan know exactly what is required to assist and guide the student on the steep, yet tempting road to Celtic Scholarship, for have they not, besides other achievements, made the School of Irish Learning the