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Review

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indifferent either one way or the other, are yet interested in what a cultured literary man has to say regarding one of the most romantic movements in British history.

KENNETH MACLEOD.

*Naigheachdan Fhrinneach*. True Stories translated into Gaelic by FIONN.

Volume II. Paisley : Alexander Gardner. 3s. 6d. net.

Some books make the author, and some authors make the book ; on the whole, 'Fionn's' *Naigheachdan Fhrinneach* may be placed in the second category. The merits of the volume are many, but what chiefly attracts attention to it is the fact that it is the work of the veteran 'Fionn,' who is so interesting and versatile a writer. The title *Naigheachdan Fhrinneach* appeals, and is doubtless meant to appeal, to one's sense of humour ; at any rate, few of us could have the heart to find fault with the author for including in a collection of 'True Stories' *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Nor is any one likely to inquire if Mackenzie's *Tales and Legends of the Highlands* and James Grant's *Legends of the Black Watch* are the most likely sources from which to extract plain, unvarnished truth. On the whole, the adjective *Fhrinneach*, thanks to its delightful impudence, will meet with less serious criticism than the noun which it qualifies.

The nineteen *Naigheachdan Fhrinneach* which the volume contains may be roughly classified thus : seven historical sketches (ranging from *Eachdraidh Chloinn Ghriogair* to *Eòghan-a'-Chinn-Bhig*) ; three legends proper (more or less !) ; one biographical sketch (*Maighstir Alasdair agus Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair*) ; five sketches, mainly humorous, starred as 'Original or adapted contributions' ; and *An Pòbair Stiallach agus na Radain* (from Robert Browning) and *An Ceannache Eadailteach* (from Charles Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*). Certainly 'Fionn,' like his great namesake, is no niggard with his fare ; also, he has due regard for different tastes.

From a Gaelic point of view the book will neither add to nor take from 'Fionn's' well-earned reputation as a capable writer of prose. On almost every page we meet with some felicitous phrase or happy idiom, but the author himself would be the very last to claim for the work as a whole high literary merit. We should say that his aim has been, not so much to produce literature, as to bring together matter which his countrymen might read with interest during the long winter nights, and in this he has been entirely successful, for 'Fionn' is never uninteresting. Will the Gaelic Revival give us a writer who will do both ?

We may add that misprints are fairly numerous, and inconsistencies in spelling not entirely absent—but when are they !

KENNETH MACLEOD.

*The Date of the First Shaping of the Cuchulainn Saga*. By WILLIAM RIDGEWAY, Fellow of the British Academy. From the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. ii. Oxford University Press. 34 pp. 3s. net.

At the dawn of history and before it the Celt was in his Iron Age. The