REVIEWS.

"ENGLISH AS WE SPEAK IT IN IRELAND."(*)
BY P. W. JOYCE, LL.D., T.C.D., M.R.I.A.

This latest work by our fellow-member, Dr. Joyce, is one that must appeal to most of us. In societies such as ours, the interest of the members is divided amongst the various branches of history, and archaeology, but the Anglo-Irish dialect, otherwise the speech of the people, may be said to be a subject of general interest, and which we are pleased to see dealt with in the fascinating style of the little volume before us. To those who have studied the previous literature on the Anglo-Irish dialect, which is not extensive, this book is sure to recommend itself, but it is the reader who possibly may not have given much consideration to the subject, that, in our opinion, will derive the greatest pleasure from it.

Amongst the sources of the Anglo-Irish dialect, the influence of the Irish language is greater than is generally supposed. Numerous interesting examples are given by Dr. Joyce. We select a few—"How are all your care?" is merely a translation of the inquiry in Irish Cionnós tá do chúram go léir? "More's the pity" is a phrase we frequently use, it is a common expression in Irish, as in the story of Dermot and Graina—"Budh míth an sghille Diarmaid do bheith marbh." "More's the pity Dermot to be dead." Irish idioms, too, have left a mark upon our English, many of which are noticed; our misuse of the personal pronoun amongst the number, thus, "I found Phil there, too, and he playing his fiddle for the company," is an idiomatic phrase frequently used by writers of English. In the burial of Sir John Moore, we read:

"We thought . . . .
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow."

(*) Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd. 2s. 6d. net.
In colloquial Irish the same word *fein* is used to express *even* and *itself*, and it is curious to find the phrase *da mbeith an moud sin fein agum*—"if I had even that much," expressed in English generally; "if I had that much *itself*"—and rarely is the correct word *even* used in such cases.

In the chapter on "Grammar and Pronunciation," the author notices two tenses in English to which there is nothing corresponding in Irish, the perfect, as "*I have finished* my work"; and the plu-perfect, "*I had finished* my work." The Irish people, finding the want of these in English, commonly use the word *after*, following the verb to be, as, "*I am after finishing my work*"; or "*I was after finishing my work*." These phrases are never used by Englishmen, though common amongst educated Irishmen. Indeed we are aware that in England, this expression when used in correspondence, reveals the nationality of the writer with more certainty than anything else. Irish pronunciation, or as it is sometimes called "brogue," is fully dealt with, and it is shown that in many instances we only retain the old English sounds of three hundred years ago, when sea was pronounced *say*, tea was *tay*, and meat, *mate*. That *ea* has retained its original sound in *great* was owing to the influence of the Irish orators in the English House of Commons, and in opposition to Lord Chesterfield.

Pope, rhymes sphere with *fair*, perceive was *persaive*, and severe, *sevair*. The old English sounds of *ee* and *ie* have not changed, and the Irish correctly pronounce them. It is a sure sign that a writer knows little of Ireland, when his Irishmen call the priest, *the praste*, or *say intade* for indeed; while on the other hand, much of the pleasure we derive from the works of some Irish authors is due to their intimate acquaintance with Irish idioms and vocabulary. We say of such "How natural the characters are," in other words "How true the dialect."

The chapter on Irish Proverbs, collected from all parts of Ireland, is very interesting, as is also a chapter on a variety of phrases in every-day use. The author does not attempt to inquire into the origin of any of these, but merely notes their application, in fact to do so would require a second volume. Although the collection of both is very full still there are others that will suggest themselves to the reader, as well
as the variations of the phraseology in different districts. In fact one of the distinct charms we found in the book was its suggestiveness; but we must admit that oftentimes when the text suggested some dialectical word or phrase that we thought was “new” we afterwards found it in the very full vocabulary and index at the end of the book. Interspersed through the work are some anecdotes, and folk-lore tales, and an interesting chapter on “Memory of History and old Customs,” which give that personal flavour which is always so welcome in Dr. Joyce’s works.

We have only skimmed the surface of this interesting volume. It may be said to be too clear for analysis, and requires no criticism but praise. The subject is one with which every educated person in Ireland should be familiar, for apart from learning to appreciate those dialectical expressions in daily use, which, as Dr. Joyce remarks, are “vivid and picturesque, and give a sparkle to our conversation,” there is the interest our knowledge would lend to the speech of the Irish peasant, which is sometimes looked upon as an ungrammatical brogue, when at the time he may be giving expression to his thoughts by a literal translation of his native tongue, or making use of some old Irish idioms or phrases with a pronunciation recalling the cultured age of Elizabeth.

P. J. L.

ADVENTURES AND EXPERIENCES OF A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CLERGYMAN. (*)

By REV. ST. JOHN D. SEYMOUR, B.D.

Mr. Seymour in his introduction informs us that he has edited this diary of the Rev. Devereux Spratt, B.A., from a MS. in the possession of Colonel Spratt Bowring, of Tunbridge Wells. The diary has already been utilised by several writers and it is now published verbatim for the first time.

The diary gives us an interesting account of the experiences of the author in very troublous times, and Mr. Seymour is to be congratulated on the manner in which he has done his work. Spratt was born in 1620, and ordained in 1641. During his ministry he held various

(*) Dublin : Church of Ireland Printing and Publishing Co., 1909. 1/- net.
livings, both in Ireland and England. He describes in his diary some of the effects of the Rebellion of 1641, but, perhaps, the most interesting passage is that in which he relates the story of his capture by pirates.

Spratt was on his way to England from Youghal, but while within sight of land, the boat in which he sailed was taken by an "Algire Piratt, who putt the men in chaines and stockes."

The men were taken to Algiers, and while detained there Spratt ministered to some fellow-countrymen whom he found in the country. Subsequently he was released and returned to England, finally settling down in Ireland, where he ministered first in Michelstown, and then in Galbally. He died in 1688 in the town of Tipperary. There is very much of interest in this little book, and we would commend it to the attention of our readers. The book is published at the modest price of one shilling and is neatly got up.

T. F. A.