

deserves special mention, for the subject obviously presented many difficulties to the author, an Englishman with a 'holiday acquaintance' (albeit extending over thirty years!) with Dublin. These difficulties Mr Harvey has surmounted admirably: the statements he makes are authoritatively supported; his topographical and statistical knowledge of Dublin (not alone of present-day Dublin but of Dublin through the ages) very extensive; his realistic deference to all the implications of the New Ireland very gratifying. Above all else the book is invaluable for its thorough treatment of Georgian Dublin; it is a 'must' for anyone who wishes to assess the Georgian legacy. A magnificent tribute to Dublin, 'where life still keeps the full flavour of humanity'; but when the author contrasts the 'grand culture' of Dublin with that of other cities, London for instance, he is hardly correct in saying that religion and race are only *superficial* explanations of the 'remarkable position of Dublin'.  
L.M.B.

**VOLUNTEER EARL.** By Maurice Craig. (The Cresset Press, 18s.)

The architectural harmony of Dublin is largely due to its brief flowering as a capital city during the last twenty years of the eighteenth century. This was the period of 'Grattan's Parliament', before the Act of Union imposed by William Pitt, and the Volunteer Earl was the great nobleman who gave Grattan his seat in Parliament. This book is a biography of the Earl of Charlemont, whose leadership of the Volunteer Movement, called out by the exigencies of the war of American Independence, applied the pressure necessary to create Grattan's Parliament. It was the Earl, also, who brought to Ireland, only just emerging from the most savage period of the Penal Laws, the cultivated taste in architecture and the other arts which helped enormously to create the harmonious Dublin we can still see today. The background to this interesting, though limited, Anglo-Irish nobleman is fairly fully indicated, but one cannot help feeling that, for English readers, a more comprehensive picture of the Irish political system of that day would have been useful and illuminating. It is a pleasantly written book and one could wish it had been considerably longer. Mr Craig has a well-balanced judgment on things political; one will look forward to other studies from him on less tenuous themes. PAUL FOSTER, O.P.

**THE SPICE OF LIFE AND OTHER ESSAYS.** By Donal O'Sullivan. (Brown and Nolan; 10s.6d.)

Since Chesterton died and Belloc withdrew into old age, the English essay—apart from the immortal 'Y.Y.'—has practically disappeared. Catholics are not the only losers; but they should have been the last to lose. You cannot very well be a Catholic and know more and more about less and less, which is the prime disability of our age and its essayists. Here Ireland, still in her highest reaches humane, comes to our rescue; and Mr Donal O'Sullivan, Civil Servant, sailor, barrister, authority on Gaelic music and poetry, and

lecturer-designate in International Affairs at Trinity, produces a book of essays in which wisdom plays—as she should never forget to play—before the Lord. The old Dublin that ‘tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky’ persists in these happy pages. Their marriage of enthusiasm and scholarship enlivens even old music-hall songs; and the author plans a school for buskers, so that these ineluctable minstrels may entertain their bus-queues more melodiously. He is less intolerant of slug-a-beds than the Curé d’Ars. Like Thackeray, he has no use for ‘literary gents’. In fact he is one of us, magnified, as an essayist should be.

H. P. E.

ENGLISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES. By Christina Hole. (Batsford; 15s.)

In her latest book, *English Sports and Pastimes*, Miss Christina Hole continues her work as a recorder of our social history. She has given an absorbing account of the English at play from the middle ages until recent times.

It is interesting to notice how the larger issues of history are reflected in the national recreation. Although the English have perhaps a less scientific approach to modern sports and amusements than the Americans, one cannot but reflect on the contrast between the carefree approach to pleasure of our forefathers and the earnestness which characterises our attitude today. The development of the professional expert has led to the increased popularity of sport; but at the same time caused a great decrease in active participation. Thus we have a vast majority of ‘sportsmen’ who are content to remain spectators.

Miss Hole has traced the history of almost every conceivable form of amusement with a tenacity that is admirable; it is surprising to find how far in the past many of them have their roots. The book is well worthy of the immense amount of research it must have involved. The selection of the many illustrations which decorate the pages is also a matter for congratulation.

MAURICE McLOUGHLIN.

CORNISH YEARS. By Anne Treneer. (Cape; 12s.6d.)

A lovable book, and a welcome successor to that lyric of childhood’s primrosing, *The School-house in the Wind*. We are now taken into the world of a student and teacher, but we can still wander at times in faerie, and be caught enchanted between cliff and sky.

Miss Treneer’s descriptions of landscape are vivid. ‘Cornwall is a poem’, she declares; but she finds poetry also in the streets of Exeter, in the Bodleian Quad, and even in her Liverpool interludes. We may challenge her wildest flights, or sense an occasional turgidity, or regret a superficial philosophy of life, but we cannot fail to enjoy the gaiety and sparkle of these pages.

Miss Treneer is perhaps inclined to view Cornwall *couleur de rose*, but we are grateful for her vignettes of its characters and her records of a dialect passing away. ‘We don’t belong to talk like that now’, someone said of her earlier book!