

Irish Folk-History Plays. By Lady Gregory.
G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 2 vols. \$3.

The rapidly increasing literature of the Irish theater receives an important addition in two volumes of plays by Lady Gregory. The first volume consists of three tragedies, and the second contains three tragic-comedies, to use Lady Gregory's nomenclature. Readers of *The Outlook* will remember the charming picture of Lady Gregory and her place at Coole which Mr. John Quinn contributed to *The Outlook* last autumn. It has been due very largely to her encouragement and to the stimulus of her friendship and genius that the Irish play has come to hold so prominent a position among the original and interesting dramas of the day. In these new volumes the emphasis is on the tragical aspect of things; and the opening play, "*Grania*"—the tragedy of the old king who marries the young girl whose eyes have already lighted upon the man she loves and who loves her—is worked out with great power and with the Celtic naïveté and freshness. Neither the king nor the young girl, when they come together, know anything about love, although they have heard many things said of it; and their talk together has a delightful quality, which is brought out by extract more clearly than by any description:

Finn. Did they not tell you his name?

Grania. I was shy to ask them, and I never saw him again. But my thoughts went with him for a good while, and sometimes he came through my dreams. Is that now what you would call love?

Finn. Indeed, I think it is little at all you know of it.

Grania. I heard often in the stories of people that were in pain and under locks through love. But I think they are but foolishness. There was one of a lover was made go through a fire for his sweetheart's sake, and came out shivering. And one that climbed to his darling's window by one golden thread of her hair.

Finn. There are many such tales, and there are more in the making, for it is likely the tearing and vexing of love will be known so long as men are hot-blooded and women have a coaxing way.

Grania. I asked the old people what love was, and they gave me no good news of it at all. Three sharp blasts of the wind, they said it was—a white blast of delight and a gray blast of discontent and a third blast of jealousy that is red.

Finn. That red blast is the wickedest of the three.

Grania. I would never think jealousy to be so bad a smart.

Finn. It is a bad thing for whoever knows it. If love is to lie down on a bed of stinging nettles, jealousy is to waken upon a wasp's nest.

Grania. But the old people say more again about love. They say there is no good thing to be gained without hardship and pain, such as a child to be born or a long day's battle won. And I think it might be a pleasing thing to have a lover that would go through fire for your sake.

Finn. I know enough of the heat of love in my time, and I am ever glad to have done with it now, and to be safe from its torments and its whip and its scourge.

Grania. It being so bad a thing, why, I wonder, do so many go under its sway? That should be a good master that has so many servants and is so well obeyed.

Finn. We do not take it up of ourselves, but it sweeps us away before it, and asks no leave. When that blast comes upon us we are but feathers whirled before it with the dust.

Grania. It is a good thing surely that I will never know an unhappy, unquiet love, but only love for you that will be by my side forever. [A loud peal of laughter is heard outside.] What is that laughter? There is in it some mocking sound.