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Litir Ghrá agus Aoir on Gabhailín (1823)

Le Donncha Ó Duibhir

Seo litir ghrá sa dá theanga ó pheann Mhuiris Uí Bhuadha, scríobhaí Gaeilge ó Bhéal Átha Chairthinn, láimh leis an nGabhailín. Ní fheadar conas d'éirigh leis! Scríobhadh an lámhscríbhinn a bhfuil an litir inti 1823-25, agus tá sí anois in Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann i mBaile Átha Cliath. Cé nach bhfuil ainm Mhuiris le fáil sna Tithe Applotment Books, luaitear iontu William Bowes (ocht n-acra talún) agus John Bowes (trí hacra deag).

Is ó cháipéisí an *Irish Society* a fhaighimid léas eile ar an scríobhaí. Cumann Protastúnach a bhí ann a shíl eolas ar an mBíobla a scaipeadh trí mheán na Gaeilge, agus chuige sin d'fhostaíodar Muiris Ó Buadha agus daoine dá leithéid — Diarmaid Ó Riain agus Tomás Ó Briain ina measc — ina múinteoir Gaeilge. B'é Micheál Ó Meirghín ó Bhaile an Líontaigh, Tiobraid Arann an maor a bhí orthu. Seo tuairisc uaidh ar Mhuiris 1825:

"The more knowledge they are attaining — the more eager they are for the English translations — so that a man of the name of J.S.—, one of B—'s Scholars, came from K—, distant about nine miles for an English Testament". Tá an méid seo i dtuairisc eile: "A very interesting meeting has occasionally taken place these six Sundays past at K— between B. with three of his pupils and a man of the name of H[ughes?] with three more from B. at the other side of the Gaulties [*sic*]. The debate was kept up cordially and improvingly for the space of four successive Sundays."

Téacs

A chara mo Chroidhe,

Muna bhfuilid briathra na litreachsa taithniomhach, as é ró-mhéid mo ghrádh is cionntach leis; dá bhrígh sin budh cheart go ngeabhadh locht mo leithsgeul.

Acht más locht grádh, is ró-chionntach M. Ó Buadha. Gidheadh, a Mhuirnín, tabhair mar aisce dhom, uain ar do bhéal thaithniomhach do phógadh, ar uaigneas, san am agus san áit is oireamhnach leat féin: óir ón uair shonadha dá bhfuairis do shásamh a bheith ad chuideachta shúairc, ní bhfuairis a bheag do shúaimhneas, ná do shásamh aigne ach aig smaoineamh air t'fheicsin, agus a bheith dílios dhuitse go heug, agus tar éis más féidir.

M. Ó Buadha

Translation

My dear,

If the contents of this letter be presumptuous it is the excess of my love that has occasioned it; so that my fault should be my apology:

But if love be a fault how great a criminal is M.B. Therefore, permit me, my dear, to beg the opportunity of kissing your sweet lips at such a time, and in such a place, as you shall



deem it most convenient: for, since the happy moment, that I have enjoyed the pleasure of your sweet company, I did not harbour the least thought to my satisfaction, but the remembrance of having seen you, and the resolution of being yours till death, and after if possible.

M.B.

Aoir ar bheirt mháistir scoile atá thíos. Sampla maith é den chrua-Bhéarla casfhoclach a chleachtadh scoláirí na haimsire sin chun alltacht a chur ar an bpobal, agus binib na Gaeilge tríd.

“While words of learned length and thundering sound

Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around”.

Baineadh an aoir as LS95 in Ollscoil Chorcaí a scriobh Tomás Ó Briain i 1820. An Gleann Bán, Laitean, ba bhaile dúchais don scríobhaí Gaeilge seo a bhfuil fáil fós ar cúig cinn ar a laghad dá lámhscríbhinní. D’fhostaigh an *Irish Society* ina mhúinteoir Gaeilge é chomh maith le Muiris Ó Buadha agus go leor eile de ghrafóirí an chontae. Seo léas suimiúil air féin agus ar a mhuintir ó cháipéisí an chumainn:

“Although it rained incessantly, the “Scholar” [Michael Merrigan] accompanied us across the country five or six miles to the house of one O’B[rien] another famous Irish scholar; his father, himself and his brother, all in the same house, and seem to be comfortable farmers. His brother keeps an English School, at somelittle distance. They all speak English pretty well, although they still preferred speaking Irish; and I believe among themselves they seldom speak any language but Irish.”

“The conversation next turned upon Irish literature, in which the old man himself seemed to be equally conversant; and on every disputed point, put on his spectacles, and took the book or manuscript, and gave his opinion with the confidence of a man well read in all parts; the Book of Genesis was introduced, and a long criticism on an Irish word in it ensued. It would be in vain to look for any portion of the Scriptures in any poor man’s house in the country, except where the Irish was cultivated; and there I have invariably found the Scriptures, and also more of the English language spoken than in any other house.”

Téacs

The public are so much embarrassed and perplexed by the nonsensical orations of those uncultivated and opprobrious bravados, Bergin and Cagney, who style themselves country Schoolmasters, a title which they do not merit as being neither morally nor literally educated, but in my opinion the appellation of country pedants would be more suitable to them, or rather, being guides to Jack Asses peragrating the country, disposing of oysters, cockles and such trifling commodities, but their lineal descent, or extraction being not well-known in this country, they deem themselves philosophers and learned men, attracting the attention of the whole public, as Mr. Lacy did in the vicinity of Emly at his arrival, a professor of the learned language as he thought himself he was, or a second cicero, but in a short time he was found quite of different abilities and Qualifications; which caused him to abscond. Indeed I realy imagine this will be the identical fate of those Incondite professors.

Though stupid bumpkins dare to mount the stage,

I’ll hiss them off and show my open rage.

Now, I think it incumbent on me, or on any other humanist who has acquired a perfect knowledge of the English language, to open to the view of the public and to delucidate to them, the Inconsiderableness of the inconcludent and incongruous argument, held between the cynic Bergin and the pusillanimous Cagney at Pallis [*sic*], as I glean from the Libels issued out from



each of them, vilifying and defaming each others character, as they were the better able to trace a geneology of each other, knowing each others former way of living when at home, as I have before mentioned. Cagney proposed what he could not solve himself, but our philosophic Bergin, capable of solving any proposition as he says himself, attempted to solve it by Philosophy, by which were Grammar carried on we would find it to be, an endless and perplexing task.

In other Men we faults can spy,

Blame the mote that dims the Eye.

I must not forget the partial [?] Traveller who has criticised on Bergin's quotation from Pope, and at the same time Leaving his own Quotation from Easop criticisable, applying the relative who to the irrational animal Frog and Making it the masculine gender.

Swaggering Cagney also in his Libel has committed very gross orthographical and Syntactical Blunders. But to avoid assuming the office of a critic I will leave all to the curious reader who I expect will excuse myself if I have committed any.

ADMHÁIL

Táim faoi chomaoín ag Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann agus ag Ollscoil Chorcaí as ucht cead a thabhairt dom tarraingt as lámhscríbhinni dá gcuid. Táim buíoch freisin den Ollamh Pádraig de Brún agus d'Eagarthóir *Éigse* a thug cead dom ábhar as *Éigse* a úsáid.

CLÁR NA LEABHAR

RIA 23L10.

Tithe Applotment Books, par. Ath Aisil agus Reilig Mhuire 1833-34. (P.R.O.1).

de Brún, Pádraig: *Éigse* XX, 40.

de Brún, Pádraig *Éigse* XXIV, 97-8.

A love letter and a satire from Ballycarron circa 1823 are published with translations and commentary.

