

of lives. What a tremendous and devastating novel the title story, "Mother Knows Best", would have made. It is, of course, a variant of the same theme which Sidney Howard chose for his currently popular play "The Silver Cord". Technically perfect, and therefore completely realized, is this tale of a domineering mother and her daughter, successful in her career because of her mother, a failure, and a pitiful failure in life, because of her mother. Every story in this amazing book is good, and some of them are masterpieces. I can think of no other story of recent years which has the pathos, the depth, the universality of "Holiday". "Every Other Thursday" is another exquisitely planned and executed tale. Miss Ferber's genius as a story writer and as a novelist has always been that she can take a character from any walk of life and see, not only its strength and weakness, but

the poignant moments which correspond to the poignant moments in the lives of all of us. This, and the fact that in her translation of a mood or a setting she is not only accurate but economical. Her brief descriptions, her telling dialogue, are not only artistic but journalistically correct. Edna Ferber, in my opinion, will go on as long as she lives writing fine novels and fine short stories because she understands human beings. What is more, she has the gift, for which Defoe was noted, of being able to absorb the detail of a specific background and at the same time give it a universal quality. This is a combination for a certain type of romance which is unailing in its appeal, yet is as difficult to accomplish as any other type of writing. Long life to Edna Ferber, then; for she is incapable of being dull, just as she is incapable of being shoddy!

— J. F.

REITERATION

By Maxwell Bodenheim

AH love makes me confused and filled with trite
 Hyperboles, in which your lips suggest
 A split rose and your hair becomes the nest
 Where little birds of perfume end their flight.
 Your glance brings me a trance, in which the light
 Wherein you sit is but a humble guest
 And scarcely dares to graze your magic breast
 And almost vanishes in boy-like fright.

Yes, sublimated nonsense for the jeers
 Of skeptics and philosophers, whose brains
 Cross swords with logic in a cold, clear fight,
 And yet the sweeping of a million years
 Will never end the simple, mystic strains
 Of lovers proudly blind within the night!

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

FIFTEEN MINUTES A DAY

By Charles W. Ferguson

IF Fascism and Sinn Feinism are being discussed, do you have to go all evening without saying a single word? Are you embarrassed and diffident when talk at dinner turns to "Il Duce" and the Machiavellian tergiversations of diplomatists? Do you have to drum with your fork or bite your nails when Italy and Ireland are mentioned, and as you ride home in the limousine does your wife castigate you severely for making a showing less pedantic than other women's husbands? Then I commend to you a one foot bookshelf on these items which will give you all the strength and self assurance of a Ph.D. and solve your social and domestic difficulties. You can talk at length on these matters, or, better still, you can, by mastering this course of reading, turn the conversation into channels where you will have the whole stream to yourself.

The first of the books is "Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland". The two mammoth volumes of this spectacular work are as handsomely bound and boxed as are most of the books that nobody reads. Their shelf appearance is prohibitive. One gets suspicious of their contents. I put them on a table and shied around them for days before I got up courage enough for the task in hand. But, once under way, I found the tale Piaras Beaslai tells as engrossing as a dime novel, yet important and intelligent enough to give me the pleasant feeling that I was becoming more and more cultured as I read. I cannot say

that, once you have begun this work, you will not lay it aside. The very task of holding the thing on your lap precludes that. But I swear that I developed something akin to pleurisy pains before I was willing to change my reading position or come up for nicotine. Then I went under again, totally immersed in a tale which makes "Beau Geste" read like an account of pacifists at tea. The fact that a reviewer reads a book would indicate that the author has said something which should interest all humanity.

Ireland, like last week's murderess, has passed from the headlines in this country. Even Italy is mentioned principally in the magazine section these days. The consequence is that we are now in a position to consider Fascism and the Irish fight for freedom somewhat objectively. Fortunately, however, Beaslai is not objective enough to be dull. From the *coup* of Easter Week, 1916, until the final triumph of the Irish, he was prominently and dangerously identified with the work of the Irish Volunteers. He writes from the inside looking out. He has a tale to tell. He divulges esoteric information not hitherto made public, and I marvel that he had the nerve to publish his book in England as well as in America. What's more, he writes as well as a man has any business writing.

Michael Collins does not monopolize Beaslai's narrative. As a matter of fact, it seemed to me that Collins was more or less adventitious in the first volume. Beaslai is not a biographer and he has more to explain than the part Collins played in upsetting the