

# **The Voyage of Bran Son of Febal**

**to the Land of the Living**

**AN OLD IRISH SAGA NOW FIRST EDITED, WITH  
TRANSLATION, NOTES, AND GLOSSARY, BY**

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## INTRODUCTION

THE old-Irish tale which is here edited and fully translated <sup>1</sup> for the first time, has come down to us in seven MSS. of different age and varying value. It is unfortunate that the oldest copy (U), that contained on p. 121a of the *Leabhar na hUidhre*, a MS. written about 1100 A.D., is a mere fragment, containing but the very end of the story from *lil in chertle dia dernaind* (§ 62 of my edition) to the conclusion. The other six MSS. all belong to a much later age, the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries respectively. Here follow a list and description of these MSS.:--

By R I denote a copy contained in the well-known Bodleian vellum quarto, marked Rawlinson B. 512, fo. 119a, 1-120b, 2. For a detailed description of this codex, see the Rolls edition of the Tripartite Life, vol. i. pp. xiv.-xlv. As the folios containing the copy of our text belong to that portion of the MS. which begins with the *Baile in Scáil* (fo. 101a), it is very probable that, like this tale, they were copied from the lost book of Dubdálethe, bishop of

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[paragraph continues] Armagh from 1049 to 1064. See Rev. Celt. xi. p. 437. The copy was made by a careful and accurate scribe of the fifteenth or possibly the fourteenth century. The spelling is but slightly modernised, the old-Irish forms are well preserved, and on the whole it must be said that, of all MSS., R supplies us with the best text. Still, it is by no means perfect, and is not seldom corrected by MSS. of far inferior value. Thus, in § 4 it has the faulty *cethror* for *cetheoir*; in § 25 *dib* for the dissyllabic *diib*; in § 61, the senseless *namna* instead of *nammá*. The scribe has also carelessly omitted two stanzas (46 and 62).

The MS. which comes next in importance I designate B. It is contained on pp. 57-61 of the vellum quarto classed Betham 145, belonging to the Royal Irish Academy. I am indebted to Mr. P. M. MacSweeney for a most accurate transcript of this MS. When I had an opportunity of comparing his copy with the original, I found hardly any discrepancies between the two. B was written in the fifteenth century, I think, by a scribe named Tornae, who, though he tells us in a marginal note <sup>1</sup>. that he had not for a long time had any practice in writing, did his task remarkably well. He modernises a good deal in spelling, but generally leaves the old-Irish forms intact. Thus we owe to him the preservation of such original forms as the genitives *fino* (13), *datho* (8. 13), *glano* (3. 12), of *étsecht* (13), etc.

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H denotes a copy contained in the British Museum MS. Harleian 5280, fo. 43a--44b. For a description of this important MS., which was written in the sixteenth century, see *Hibernica Minora* (Anecdota Oxoniensia, Mediæval and Modern series--Part VIII.), pp. v and vi. In this copy the spelling and forms are considerably, but by no means consistently, modernised. In a few cases H has preserved the original reading as against the corruptions of all or most of the other MSS. Thus it has *cetheoir* (4), *muir glan* (35), *moitgretha* (8), etc.

E is a copy contained on fo. 11b, 2--13a, 2 of the British Museum MS. Egerton 88, a small vellum folio, written in the sixteenth century. The text is largely modernised and swarms with mistakes and corruptions. By sheer good luck the scribe sometimes leaves the old forms intact, as when he writes *órdi* 14, *adig* 21, *Ildadig* 22, *mrecht* 24.

S is contained in the Stockholm Irish MS., p.p. 2-8. I am indebted to Mr. Whitley Stokes for a loan of his transcript of the whole MS. S is deficient at the end, breaking off with the words *amhal bid atalam nobeth tresna hilcetaib bliadan* (65). It is of very inferior value, being modernised almost throughout in spelling and forms, and full of corrupt readings, which I have not always thought it worth while to reproduce in ray footnotes.

L is the copy contained in the well-known MS. belonging to Trinity College, Dublin, marked H. 2. 16, and commonly called the Yellow Book of Lecan, col. 395-399 This MS. dates from the fourteenth century. It is of most unequal

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value. The scribe, in his endeavour to make the original, mostly unintelligible to him, yield some sense, constantly alters in the most reckless and arbitrary manner. At other times he puts down whole lines of mere gibberish. A good instance of his method is the following rendering of the 34th quatrain:

Is ar muir nglan dochú innoe  
inata Bran bres agnæ  
is mag mell dimuig a scoth  
damsa i carput da roth.

As in the case of S, I have not thought it necessary to give all the variants of L. Yet in a few instances even L has by a mere chance preserved original readings abandoned by the other scribes, e.g. *isa tír* (6a), *ind nathir* (45), *bledhin* (62).

The six MSS. here enumerated, though frequently varying in details, offer on the whole an identical text, and have clearly sprung from one and the same source. For even the vagaries of L turn out on closer inspection to be mere variants of the same original text. Under these circumstances it was a comparatively easy task to reconstruct a critical text. In nearly every case the original reading was preserved by one MS. or another. Thus almost every form in my edition is supported by MS. authority. In the very few cases where I have thought it right to deviate from all the MSS., this has been pointed out in the notes. Still I am far from flattering myself that I have succeeded in restoring

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the text to its original purity. In some cases, fortunately not many, the readings of all the MSS. seemed hopelessly corrupt. See *e.g.* my remarks on *dorearuasat*, 48; *aill erfind*, 22; *cach ági*, at *sáibsi ceni*, 45. In other cases it is doubtful whether I have preferred the right reading. Thus, in to, I may have been too rash in adopting the reading of L, *cen indgás* instead of *fri indgás* of the rest. Considering the tendency of L to alter a less common expression into a familiar one, as well as the consensus of all the other MSS., I would now retain *fri* and translate it by 'with.' For this use of the preposition, cf. *fri imfóchid*, p. 85, 3. Again, I cannot claim that the text, as it now stands, represents the actual language of any particular period, containing as it does middle-Irish forms by the side of old-Irish ones. Such a mixture of linguistic forms is, however, not of my own making, but is an inherent peculiarity of most of our older texts, fully explained by the way in which they have been handed down.

But before I speak of this, I will try to determine as nearly as possible the time at which the Voyage of Bran was originally written down.

If we had any investigations into the history of the Irish language besides the excellent history of the Deponent lately published by Professor Strachan, it would probably be possible to determine with accuracy the time in which a particular text was composed. At present we must be content with much less certain and definite statements, often leaving a margin of a century on either side.

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[paragraph continues] In the case of old-Irish, it is mainly by comparing the language of a given text with that of the continental glosses that we arrive at anything like a trustworthy conclusion, and this I propose to do in the present case.

There are a large number of forms in the Voyage of Bran as old as any to be found in the Würzburg glosses. The oldest part of these glosses, Professor Thurneysen, the most careful and cool-headed of observers, does not hesitate to ascribe to the seventh century. <sup>1</sup>

I now subjoin a list of these oldest forms, leaving aside anything of a doubtful or unexplained nature.

First. as to sounds and their representation, the following archaic forms and spellings are noticeable:

Final *e*, early broadened to *æ*, *ae*, later *a*: *sube*, 8; *comamre*, so: *móramre*, 29; *labre*, 29; *blédne* (later *blíadna*), 55, 58.

Final *i*, early broadened to *ai*: *adamri*, *cadli*, 11; *órdi*, 14; *crédumi*, 14; also *bléidin* (later *bliadain*), 62; *adig* (later *adaig*), 24; *athir*, 45, 57; *i* for infected *a*: *Ildadig*, 24.

Initial *m* before *r*: *mrath*, 9; *mrecht*, 23, 24; *mruig*, 9, 23, 24, 54.

*Id* for later *ll*: *meld*, 14, 39; *inmeldag*, 41.

*éu* for *éo*: *céul*, 9, 18, etc.

*ói* for later *óe*: *cróib*, 3; *óin*, 13 *tróithad*, 30.

Also, perhaps, *b* for *f* in *graibnid*, 23; *airbitiud*, 18; and *oa* for *úa*: *sloag*, 17 (R), *cloais*, 9, etc.

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In the declension, notice the neuter nouns *a rígtech*, 1; *a céol*, 2; *am-mag*, 5; *am-muir*, 12; *muir glan*, without nasal infection later added by analogy with neuter *o*-stems, 17, 28, 30; *fris' tóibgel tonnat*, 2; *cusa cluchemag*, 20; *isa tír*, 62, etc. The following genitives sing. of *i*-stems occur: *glano*, 3, 12; *mora*, 37; of *u*-stems: *betho*, 27; *fedo*, 42; *fino*, 13: *datho*, 8, 13; the datives sing. of *o*-stems: *láur*, 1; *Braun*, 2; the accusatives plural: *rúna*, 52; *nime*, 28; *muire*, 48; *tedman*, 21; the genitive plural: *dúle*, 44.

In the article the full form *inna* is of constant occurrence. In the poetry it is twice shortened to *'na* in the gen. plur. (26, 30).

Among prepositions, notice such a form as *dóu*, 29, 32, 51; the use of *íar* with the dative. 26, 32; the careful distinction between *di* and *do*.

But it is in the verbal system that the archaic character of the language appears to greatest advantage. The distinction between conjunct and absolute as well as between dependent and independent forms is preserved throughout.

Present indicative, sg. 1: *atchú*, 15--sg. 2: *immerái*, 37; *forsn-aicci*, 38; *nad aicci*, 19; *nofethi*, 49--sg. 3: *mescid*, 16; *canid*, 18; *graibnid*, 23; *forsnig*, 6, 12; *dosnig*, 12, 22; *comérig*, 17; *tormaig*, 18; *foafeid*, 22; *immaréid*, 33; *frisbein*, 16; *frisseill*, 59; *forosna*, 16; *consna*, 5; *immustimerchel*, 19; *taigni* (dep.), 6; *tibri* (dep.), 35; *donaidbri*; 17--pl. 3: *lingit*, 38; *bruindit*, 36; *taircet* (dep.), 14, 40; *ní frescet*, 18, 23 *immataitnet*, 4; *taignet* (dep.), 40; *taignet*

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[paragraph continues] (independent!), 8, 36; *congairret*, 7; *forclechtat*, 5; *foslongat*, 4; *frisferat*, 21; *forsngairret*, 7.

Present subjunctive, sg. 3: *tróithad*, 30; *imraad*, 60 ; *étsed*, 29.

T-preterite, sg. 3: *dorúasat*, 27 *ronort*, 46.

Reduplicated preterite, sg. 3: *ruchúala*, 20.

S-future, sg. 3: *silis*, 55; *conlee*, 51; *adfí*, 52. Secondary s-fut., sg. 2: *rista*, 30.

Reduplicated future, sg. 1: *fochicher*, 56; *arungén*, 57--sg. 3: *gébid*, 26; *adndidma*, 51; *timgéra*, 59.

E-future, sg. 2: *ricfe*, 60--sg. 3: *glanfadh*, 28; *dercfid*, 55; *ticfa* (independent!). 26, 48; *rothicfa*, 49; *móithfe*, 52; *fuglóisfe*, 48; *ícfes*, 28.

Imperative, sg. 2: *tuit*, 30; *tinscan*, 30.

Verbal nouns: *étsecht*, 13, 24; *óol*, 13; *imram*, 17; *airbitiud*, 18.

The following passive forms occur: pres. ind. pl., *agtar*, 54; sec. pers. sg., *atchetha*, 12, 39; red. fut. sg., *gébthir*, 57; *gérthair*, 51; pret. sg., *adfét*, 29; *atfess*, 29; s-fut. sg., *festar*, 26.

As to old syntactic usage, notice the adjective and substantive attributes placed before the noun, 4, 13, 19, 29, 43.

Lastly, I would draw attention to the use of the following words as dissyllabic, though as most of them continue to be so used as late as the tenth century, such use is not in itself proof of great antiquity.

*bíj*, 9; *bíaid*, 50, 53, 55; *bías*, 27. Cf. Salt. na Rann, ll. 8021, 8202; Trip. Life, pp. 70, 22; 222, 4, 6, etc. But

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their use as monosyllables is far more frequent in Salt. na Rann. See ll. 835, 1076, 1599, 1951, 1952, 2043, 2047, 3275, 3320, 3353, 5046, 6255, 6325.

*cía*, 'mist,' 11.

*criad*, gen. of *cré*, 'clay,' 50, as in the dat. *criaid*, Salt. 7683, 7769. Monosyllabic in Salt. 394 (leg. *criaid*), 8230.

*día*, 'God,' 48. Cf. l. 18 in Sanctán's hymn:

*friscéra Día dúlech.*

and Salt. 1905, 2013, 2685, 5359, 7157, 7969, 8074. Monosyllabic in Salt. 649, 1917, 1950, 2742, 3121, 3308, 7976.

*diib*, 'of them,' 25; as in Salt. 375 (*sic leg.*), 437. But monosyllabic in Salt. 4975, 4985, 5461, 5417, 5869, 7704.

*fia*, 11.

*fóe*, 'under her,' 6.

*óol*, 'drinking,' 13. Cf. *oc óul* in the Milan glosses (Ascoli); *d'óol*, Salt. 1944.

*úain*, 'lambs,' 38.

It will be observed that the above forms are taken almost exclusively from the poetry. The prose, though it preserves a large number of undoubtedly old-Irish forms, also contains a good deal of what is clearly of middle-Irish origin, more particularly in the verbal forms. The use of preterites without the particle *ro* has been recognised by Thurneysen, <sup>1</sup> whom I mainly follow here, as a decidedly later phenomenon. It occurs in *birt*, 31; *asbert*, 62, 63 (bis), 64, instead of old-Ir. *asrubart*, and in a large number of

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s-preterites such as *fóidis*, 61; *gabais*, 63; *scríbais*, 66; *celebrais*, 66; *sloindsj*, 62. We find *dobert* 2, instead of old-Ir. *dorat*, and *dobreth* 62, instead of *doratad*. The late *cachain* occurs three times (2. 32, 65), for old-Ir. *cechuin*.

Such Middle-Irish forms, which all MSS. without exception contain, show that the original from which our MSS. are in the first instance derived, cannot have been written much earlier than the tenth century. Bearing this in mind, together with the occurrence of the seventh century old-Irish forms side by side with these later ones, as well as with the fact that the poetry contains none of the latter, we arrive at the following conclusions as to the history of our text.

The Voyage of Bran was originally written down in the seventh century. <sup>1</sup> From this original, sometime in the tenth century, a copy was made, in which the language of the poetry, protected by the laws of metre and assonance, was left almost intact, while the prose was subjected to a process of partial modernisation, which most affected the verbal forms. From this tenth century copy all our MSS. are derived.

In conclusion, I would draw attention to the loan-words occurring in our tale. These are all of Latin origin. <sup>2</sup> They naturally fall into two groups, an older one of words

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borrowed at the period of the first contact of the Irish with Roman civilisation, before the introduction of Christianity; a later one of words that came into Irish with Christianity. To the first group belong *aball*, 'abella'? 23; *arggat*, 'argentum,' 23, 14, 22; *drauc*, 'draco,' 13; *dracon*, 'dracontium,' 12. 58; *fín*, 'vinum,' 13, 14; *fine*, 'ab eo quod est vinea.' Corm., 43; *port*, 'portus,' 62.

Of words of the second group we find: *cór*, 'chorus,' 18; *corp*, 'corpus,' 46, 50; *líth*, 46, through Welsh *llith* from Lat. *lectio*; *mías*, 'mensa,' with the meaning 'dish,' 62; *peccad*, 'peccatum,' 41; *praínd*, 'prandium,' 62; *ocean*, 'oceanus,' 25; *scríbaim*, 'scribo,' 66.

It remains for me to express my gratitude to those who have taken a friendly interest in the production of this little book, and who have in various ways given me advice and assistance; above all to Mr. Whitley Stokes, to whom I am indebted for many weighty suggestions, as well as for the loan of valuable transcripts; to the Rev. Richard Henebry, Mr. Alfred Nutt, and Mr.

P. M. MacSweeney, and to my kind friends and colleagues, Mr. John Sampson, and Prof. John Strachan.

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### Footnotes

vii:1 An abstract and partial translation of the Voyage of Bran was given by Professor Zimmer in the *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum*, vol. xxxiii. pp. 257-261.

viii:1 This note is found at the bottom of p. 57 and runs thus: *Messe Tornae 7 ni fetur ca fad o doscriuhus oenlini roime sin, i.e.* I am Torre, and I do not know how long ago it is since I wrote a single line.

xii:1 'Die Vorlage der Würzburger Glossen kann unbedenklich ins 7. Jahrh. datiert werden.'--Rev. Celt. vi. p. 319.

xv:1 See Rev. Celt. vi., pp. 322 and 328.

xvi:1 Prof. Zimmer also claims our text for this century. His words are (l.c., p. 261): 'Der Text gehört zum ältesten was uns von irischer profanlitteratur erhalten ist: seine sprache ist sicher so alt wie die ältesten altirischen glosses; er kann also noch dem 7. jh. angehören.'

xvi:2 With reference to Prof. Zimmer's well-known theory as to the Norse origin of Ir. *fían* and its derivatives, I may mention that the word *fénnid* occurs in 56.

## The Voyage <sub>1</sub> of Bran son of Febal, and his Expedition <sub>2</sub> here below

1. 'Twas fifty quatrains the woman from unknown lands sang on the floor of the house to Bran son of Febal, when the royal house was full of kings, who knew not whence the woman had come, since the ramparts were closed.

2. This is the beginning of the story. One day, in the neighbourhood of his stronghold, Bran went about alone, when he heard music behind him. As often as he looked back, 'twas still behind him the music was. At last he fell asleep at the music, such was its sweetness. When he awoke from his sleep, he saw close by him a branch <sub>3</sub> of

silver with white blossoms, nor was it easy to distinguish its bloom from that branch. Then Bran took the branch in his hand to his royal house. When the hosts were in the royal house, they saw a woman in strange raiment on the floor of the house. 'Twas then she sang the fifty <sub>1</sub> quatrains to Bran, while the host heard her, and all beheld the woman.

## Imram Brain maic Febail, agus a Echtra andso sí

1. CÓICA rand rogab in ben a tírib ingnath for láur in tige do Bran mac Febail, arrobói a rígtech lán de rígaib, annadfetatar can dolluid in ben, órobatar ind liss dúntai.

2. Is ed tossach in sceóil. Imluid Bran laa n-and a óinur i comocus dia dún, cocúala, a ceól far íarna chúl. A n-donécad tar a éissi, ba íarna chúl beus nobíth a ceól. Contuil asendath frissa ceól ar a bindi. A n-dofúsig asa chotlud, conacca in cróib n-arggait fua bláth find ina farruth, na bu hasse etarscarath a bláthe frissin cróib ísin. Dobert íarum Bran in cróib ina láim dia

ríghig. Órobatar inna sochuidi isind ríghig conaccatar in mnái i n-étuch ingnuth for láur in tige. Is and cachain in cóicait rand so do Braun arranchúale in slóg, agus adchondarcatar uili in mnái.

Onus asbert:

3. 'Cróib dind abaill a hEmain dofed samail do gnáthaib, gésci findarggait fora,

And she said:

3. 'A branch of the apple-tree 2 from  
Emain 3  
I bring, like those one knows;  
Twigs of white silver are on it,  
Crystal brows with blossoms.

4. 'There is a distant isle,  
Around which sea-horses 4 glisten:  
A fair course against the white-  
swelling surge, 5--  
Four feet uphold it. 6

5. 'A delight of the eyes, a glorious  
range,  
Is the plain on which the hosts hold  
games:  
Coracle contends against chariot  
In southern Mag Findargat. 7

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6. 'Feet of white bronze under it  
Glittering through beautiful ages. 1  
Lovely land throughout the world's  
age,  
On which the many blossoms drop.

7. 'An ancient tree there is with  
blossoms,  
On which birds call 2 to the Hours. 3  
'Tis in harmony it is their wont  
To call together every Hour.

8. 'Splendours of every colour glisten  
Throughout the gentle-voiced plains.  
Joy is known, ranked around music,  
In southern Mag Argatné. 4

9. 'Unknown is wailing or treachery 5  
In the familiar cultivated land,  
There is nothing rough or harsh, 6

abrait glano co m-bláthaib.

4. 'Fil inis i n-eterchéin  
immataitnet gabra réin,  
rith find fris' tóibgel tondat,  
cetheóir cossa foslongat.

5. 'Is lí súla, sreth íar m-búaid,  
am-mag forclechtat ins slúaig:  
consna curach fri carpat  
isin maig tess Findargat.

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6. 'Cossa findrune fóe,  
taitni tré bithu gnóe:  
cáin tír tría bithu bátha,  
forsnig inna hilblátha.

7. 'Fil and bile co m-bláthaib  
forsngairet eóin do thráthaib:  
is tré cocetul is gnáth  
congairret uili cech tráth.

8. 'Taitnet líga cech dathó  
trésna maige móithgretho,  
is gnáth sube, sreth imm chéul,  
isin maig tess Arggatnéul.

9. 'Ní gnáth écóiniud na mrath  
hi mruig dénta etargnath,  
ní bíi nach gargg fri crúais,  
acht mad céul m-bind frismben

But sweet music striking on the ear.

10. 'Without grief, without sorrow,  
without death,  
Without any sickness, without  
debility, z  
That is the sign of Emain g--  
Uncommon is an equal marvel.

p. 8

11. 'A beauty of a wondrous land,  
Whose aspects are lovely,  
Whose view is a fair country,  
Incomparable is its haze.

12. 'Then if Aircthech 1 is seen,  
On which dragonstones 2 and  
crystals drop  
The sea washes the wave against the  
land,  
Hair of crystal drops from its mane. 3

13. 'Wealth, treasures of every hue,  
Are in Ciuin, 4 a beauty of freshness,  
Listening to sweet music,  
Drinking the best of wine. 5

14. 'Golden chariots in Mag Réin, 6  
Rising with the tide to the sun,  
Chariots of silver in Mag Mon, z  
And of bronze without blemish.

15. 'Yellow golden steeds are on the  
sword there,  
Other steeds with crimson hue,  
Others with wool upon their backs  
Of the hue of heaven all-blue.

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16. At sunrise there will come  
A fair man illumining level lands;

clúais.

10. 'Cen brón, cen duba, cen bás,  
cen nach n-galar cen indgás,  
is ed etargne n-Emne,  
ní comtig a comamre.

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11. 'Cáine tíre adamri,  
ata comgnúsi cadli,  
asa rodarc find fia,  
ní fríthid bíd a cia.

12. 'Má adcetha Aircthech íar tain  
forsnig dracoin ocus glain,  
dosnig am-muír fri tír toind,  
trilsi glano asa moing.

13. 'Móini, dússi cach dathó  
hi Ciúin, cáine étdtho,  
étsecht fri céul co m-bindi,  
óol fíno óingrindi.

14. 'Carpait órđi hi Maig Réin,  
taircet la tule don gréin,  
carpait arggait i Maig Mon  
ocus crédumi cen on.

15. 'Graig óir budi and fri srath  
grraig aile co corcardath,  
grraig aile ualann tar ais  
co n-dath nime huleglais.

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16. 'Dofeith la turcbáil n-gréne  
fer find forosna réde,

He rides upon the fair sea-washed <sup>1</sup>  
plain,  
He stirs the ocean till it is blood.

17. 'A host will come across the clear  
sea,  
To the land they show their rowing;  
Then they row to the conspicuous  
stone,  
From which arise a hundred strains.

18. 'It sings a strain unto the host  
Through long ages, it is not sad,  
Its music swells <sup>2</sup> with choruses of  
hundreds--  
They look for neither decay nor  
death.

19. 'Many-shaped Emne <sup>3</sup> by the sea,  
Whether it be near, whether it be  
far,  
In which are many thousands of  
motley <sup>4</sup> women,  
Which the clear sea encircles.

20. 'If he has heard the voice of the  
music,  
The chorus of the little birds from  
Imchiuin, <sup>5</sup>  
A small band of women will come  
from a height  
To the plain of sport in which he is.

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21. 'There will come happiness with  
health  
To the land against which laughter  
peals,  
Into Imchiuin at every season  
Will come everlasting joy.

22. 'It is a day of lasting weather  
That showers silver on the lands, <sup>1</sup>

rédid mag find frismbein muir,  
mescid fairggi co m-bí fuíl.

17. 'Dofeith in slúag tar muir glan,  
don tír donaidbri imram,  
imráid íarum dond licc léur  
asa comérig cét céul.

18. 'Canid airbitiud dont slóg  
tré bithu sír, nat bí tróg,  
tormaig céul co córib cét,  
ní frescet aithbe ná éc.

19. 'Emne ildelbach fri rían,  
bésu ocus, bésu chían,  
i fil ilmíli m-brec m-ban,  
immustimerchel muir glan.

20. 'Má ruchúala lúad in chiúil,  
esnach énan a hImchiúin,  
dofeith banchorén di haa  
cusa cluchemag itaa.

p. 13

21. 'Dofeith sóire la sláini  
don tír frisferat gáiri,  
is i n-Imchiúin cach ági  
dofeith búaine la háni.

22. 'Is lá suthaine síne  
dosnig arggat i tíre,  
aill erfind for idna réin

A pure-white cliff on the range of the sea,  
Which from the sun receives its heat

23. 'The host race along Mag Mon, <sup>2</sup>  
A beautiful game, not feeble,  
In the variegated land over a mass  
of beauty  
They look for neither decay nor  
death.

24. 'Listening to music at night,  
And going into Ildathach, <sup>3</sup>  
A variegated land. splendour on a  
diadem of beauty,  
Whence the white cloud glistens.

25. 'There are thrice fifty distant  
isles  
In the ocean to the west of us;  
Larger than Erin twice  
Is each of them, or thrice. <sup>4</sup>

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26. 'A great birth <sup>1</sup> will come after  
ages,  
That will not be in a lofty place, <sup>2</sup>  
The son of a woman whose mate will  
not be known,  
He will seize the rule of the many  
thousands.

27. 'A rule without beginning,  
without end, <sup>3</sup>  
He has created the world so that it is  
perfect,  
Whose are earth and sea,  
Woe to him that shall be under His  
unwill! <sup>4</sup>

28. 'Tis He that made the heavens,  
Happy he that has a white heart,

foafeid a gríss a gréin.

23. 'Graibnid in slóg iar Maig Mon,  
cluche n-álaind, nad indron,  
i mruig mreacht úas maisse mét,  
ní frescat aithbe ná éc.

24. 'Étsecht fri céul i n-adig,  
ocus techt i n-Ildathíg,  
mruig mreacht, líg úas maisse mét,  
asa taitni in nél find.

25. 'Fil trí cóictea inse cían  
isind oíon frinn aníar;  
is mó Érin co fa dí  
cach ái díib nó fa thrí.

p. 15

26. 'Ticfa már-gein iar m-bethaib  
nad bía for a forclethaib,  
mac mná nad festar céle,  
gébid flaith na n-ilmíle.

27. 'Flaith cen tossach cen forcenn  
dorúasat bith co forban,  
isai talam ocus muir,  
is mairgg bías fua étuil.

28. 'Is hé dorigni nime,  
cénmair dia m-ba findchride,  
glanfid slúagu fua linn glan,  
is hé ícfes for tedman.

29. 'Ni dúib uili mo labre,  
cia atfess a móramre:  
étsed Bran de betho bróu

He will purify hosts under pure  
water, <sup>5</sup>  
'Tis He that will heal your sicknesses.

29. 'Not to all of you is my speech,  
Though its great marvel has been  
made known:  
Let Bran hear from the crowd of the  
world  
What of wisdom has been told to  
him.

30. 'Do not fall on a bed of sloth,  
Let not thy intoxication overcome  
thee,  
Begin a voyage across the clear sea,  
If perchance thou mayst reach the  
land of women.'

p. 16

31. Thereupon the woman went from  
them, while they knew not whither  
she went. <sup>1</sup> And she took her branch  
with her. The branch sprang from  
Bran's hand into the hand of the  
woman, nor was there strength in  
Bran's hand to hold the branch.

32. Then on the morrow Bran went  
upon the sea. The number of his  
men was three companies of nine.  
One of his foster-brothers and  
mates <sup>2</sup> was set over each of the  
three companies of nine. When he  
had been at sea two days and two  
nights, he saw a man in a chariot  
coming towards him over the sea.  
That man also sang thirty <sup>3</sup> other  
quatrains to him, and made himself  
known to him, <sup>4</sup> and said that he was  
Manannan the son of Ler, and said  
that it was upon him to go to Ireland

a n-di ecnæ adfét dóu.

30. 'Ná tuit fri lige lesce,  
nachit-tróithad do mesce,  
tinscan imram tar muir glan,  
dús in rista tír na m-ban.'

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31. Luid in ben úadib íarom  
annadfetatar cia luid, agus birt a  
cróib lee. Leblaing in chróib di láim  
Brain co m-bóí for láim inna mná,  
ocus ní bóí nert i láim Brain do gabáil  
inna cróibe.

32. Luid Bran íarom arabárach for  
muir. Trí nonbuir a lín. Óinfer  
forsnaib tríb nonburaib dia  
chomaltaib agus comáisib. Ó robóí dá  
lá agus dí aidchi forsin muir, conacci  
a dochum in fer isin charput íarsin  
muir. Canaid in fer hísín dano trichait  
rand n-aile dóu, agus sloindsi dóu  
ocus asbert ba hé Manannán mac Lir,  
ocus asbert bóí aire tuídecht i n-  
Érinn íar n-aimseraib cíanaib, agus  
nogigned mac úad .i. Mongán mac  
Fíachnai, ised foridmbíad. Cachain  
íarom in trichait rand sa dóu:--

33. 'Caine amre lasin m-Bran

after long ages, and that a son would be born to him, even Mongan son of Fiachna--that was the name which would be upon him.

So he sang these thirty quatrains to him:

33. 'Bran deems it a marvellous beauty  
In his coracle across the clear sea:  
While to me in my chariot from afar  
It is a flowery plain on which he rides about.

p. 18

34. 'What is a clear sea  
For the prowed skiff in which Bran is,  
That is a happy plain 1 with profusion  
of flowers  
To me from the chariot of two  
wheels.

15. 'Bran sees  
The number of waves beating 2  
across the clear sea:  
I myself see in Mag Mon 3  
Red-headed flowers without fault.

36. 'Sea-horses glisten in summer  
As far as Bran has stretched his  
glance:  
Rivers pour forth a stream of honey  
In the land of Manannan son of Ler.

37. 'The sheen of the main, on which  
thou art,  
The white hue of the sea on which  
thou rowest about,  
Yellow and azure are spread out,  
It is land, and is not rough. 4

ina churchán tar muir glan;  
os mé im' charput di chéin,  
is mag scothach immaréid.

p. 19

34. 'A n-as muir glan  
don nóí broinig itá Bran,  
is mag meld co n-immut scoth  
dam-sa a carput dá roth.

35. 'Atchí Bran  
lín tond tibri tar muir glan:  
atchíu cadéin i Maig Mon  
scotha cennderga cen on.

36. 'Taitnet gabra lir i sam  
sella roisc rosíri Bran,  
bruindit srotha srúaim de mil,  
i crích Manannáin maic Lir.

17. 'Lí na fairgge foratái,  
geldod mora immerái,  
rasert bude ocus glass,  
is talam, nad écomrass.

38. 'Lingit ich bricc ass de brú  
a muir find forsnaicci-siu  
it lóig, it úain co n-dath,  
co cairddi, cen immarbad.

38. 'Speckled salmon leap from the  
womb  
Of the white sea, on which thou  
lookest:  
They are calves, they are coloured  
lambs  
With friendliness, without mutual  
slaughter. <sub>5</sub>

p. 20

39. 'Though (but) one chariot-rider is  
seen  
In Mag Mell <sub>1</sub> of many flowers,  
There are many steeds on its  
surface, <sub>2</sub>  
Though them thou seest not.

40. 'The size of the plain, the  
number of the host,  
Colours glisten with pure glory,  
A fair stream of silver, cloths <sub>3</sub> of  
gold,  
Afford a welcome with all abundance.

41. 'A beautiful game, most  
delightful,  
They play (sitting) at the luxurious <sub>4</sub>  
wine,  
Men and gentle women under a  
bush,  
Without sin, without crime.

42. 'Along the top of a wood has  
swum  
Thy coracle across ridges,  
There is a wood of beautiful fruit <sub>5</sub>  
Under the prow of thy little skiff.

43. 'A wood with blossom and fruit,  
On which is the vine's veritable  
fragrance,  
A wood without decay, without

p. 21

39. 'Cé atchetha óinchairptech  
i Maig Meld co n-immut scoth,  
fil mór d'échaib for a brú,  
cen suidi nad aicci-siu.

40. 'Met in maige, lín int slúaig,  
taitnet líga co n-glanbúaid,  
finnsruth arggait, drepa óir,  
taircet fáilti cech imróill.

41. 'Cluche n-óimin n-inmeldag  
aigdit fri fín n-imborbag  
fir is mná míne fo doss,  
cen peccad, cen immorboss.

42. 'Is iar m-barr fêdo rosná  
do churchán tar indrada.  
fil fid fo mess i m-bí gnóe  
foa braini do beccnóe.

43. 'Fid co m-bláth oculus torud,  
forsmbí fíne fírbolud,  
fid cen erchre, cen esbad,  
forsfil duilli co n-órdath.

defect,  
On which are leaves of golden hue.

p. 22

44. 'We are from the beginning of  
creation  
Without old age, without  
consummation 1 of earth, 2  
Hence we expect not that 3 there  
should be frailty,  
The sin has not come to us.

45. 'An evil day when the Serpent  
went  
To the father to his city! 4  
She has perverted the times 5 in this  
world,  
So that there came decay which was  
not original.

46. 'By greed and lust he 6 has slain  
us,  
Through which he has ruined his  
noble race:  
The withered body has gone to the  
fold of torment,  
And everlasting abode of torture. 7

47. 'It is a law of pride in this world  
To believe in the creatures, to forget  
God, 8  
Overthrow by diseases, and old age,  
Destruction of the soul through  
deception.

48. 'A noble salvation 9 will come  
From the King who has created,us,  
A white law will come over seas,  
Besides being God, He will be man.

p. 23

44. 'Fil dún ó thossuch dúle  
cen áiss, cen foírbthe n-úre,  
ní frescam de mbeth anguss,  
níntaraill int immorbus.

45. 'Olc líth dolluid ind nathir  
cosin n-athir dia chathir,  
sáib sí céni i m-bith ché  
co m-bu haithbe nad búe.

46. 'Ronort a cróis agus saint,  
tréasa n-derbaid a sóirrhiaind,  
ethais corp crín cró péne  
agus bithaittreb rége.

47. 'Is recht úabuir i m-bith ché  
cretem dúle, dermat n-Dé,  
tróithad n-galar, agus áiss,  
apthu anma tría togáis.

48. 'Ticfa tessarcon úasal  
ónd rí g dorearúasat,  
recht find fuglóisfe muire,  
sech bíd Día, bíd duine.

49. 'This shape, he on whom thou  
lookest,  
Will come to thy parts; 1  
'Tis mine to journey to her house, 2  
To the woman in Line-mag. 3

50. 'For it is Moninnan, the son of  
Ler,  
From the chariot in the shape of a  
man,  
Of his progeny will be a very short  
while  
A fair man in a body of white clay. 4

51. 'Monann, the descendant of Ler,  
will be  
A vigorous bed-fellow 5 to  
Caintigern: 6  
He shall be called to his son in the  
beautiful world,  
Fiachna will acknowledge him as his  
son.

52. 'He will delight 7 the company of  
every fairy-knoll,  
He will be the darling of every goodly  
land,  
He will make known secrets--a  
course of wisdom--  
In the world, without being feared.

53. 'He will be in the shape of every  
beast,  
Both on the azure sea and on land,  
He will be a dragon before hosts at  
the onset, 8  
He will be a wolf of every great  
forest.

49. 'In delb hé nofethi-su  
rothicfa it' lethe-su,  
arumthá echtre dia tig  
cosin mnái i Linemaig.

50. 'Sech is Moninnán mac Lir  
asin charput cruth ind fír,  
bíaid dia chlaind densa angair  
fer cáin i curp críad gil.

51. 'Conlee Monann maccu Lirn  
lúthlige la Cáintigirn,  
gérthair dia mac i m-bith gnóu,  
adnidma Fíachna mac n-dóu.

52. 'Móithfe sognáiss cach síde,  
bíd tretel cach dagthíre,  
adfii rúna, rith ecni,  
isin bith cen a ecli.

53. 'Biaid i fethol cech míl  
itir glasmuir ocus tír,  
bíd drauc ré m-buidnib i froiss,  
bíd cú allaid cech índroiss.

54. 'He will be a stag with horns of silver  
In the land where chariots are driven,  
He will be a speckled salmon in a full pool,  
He will be a seal, he will be a fair-white swan.

55. 'He will be throughout long ages 1  
An hundred years in fair kingship, 2  
He will cut down battalions, 3--a lasting grave--  
He will redden fields, a wheel around the track.

56. 'It 4 will be about kings with a champion  
That he will be known as a valiant hero,  
Into the strongholds of a land on a height  
I shall send an appointed end 5 from Islay. 6

57. 'High shall I place him with princes,  
He will be overcome by a son of error; 7  
Moninnan, the son of Ler,  
Will be his father, his tutor.

58. 'He will be--his time will be short-- 1  
Fifty years in this world:  
A dragonstone from the sea will kill him 2

54 'Bíd dam co m-bendaib arggait  
i mruig i n-agar carpait,  
bíd écne brecc il-lind lán,  
bíd rón, bíd ela findbán.

55. 'Bíaid tré bithu síri  
cét m-blédne hi findrígi,  
silis lergga, lecht imchían,  
dercfid róí roth imm rían.

56. 'Bíd imm rígu la fénnid  
bíd láth gaile fri aicni,  
i n-dindach mroga for aa  
fochicher airchend a Íli.

57. 'Art arungén la flaithi,  
gébthir fa mac n-imraichni,  
sech bíd Moninnán mac Lir  
a athir, a fíthithir.

58. 'Bíed, bes n-gairit a ree,  
cóicait m-blédne i m-bith chee,  
oircthi ail dracoin din muir  
isind níth i Seniabuir.

59. 'Timgéra dig al-Loch Lâu  
intan frisseill sidan cráu,

In the fight at Senlabor. 3

59. 'He will ask a drink from Loch  
Ló, 4  
While he looks at the stream of  
blood,  
The white host 5 will take him under  
a wheel 6 of clouds  
To the gathering where there is no  
sorrow.

60 . 'Steadily then Iet Bran row,  
Not far to the Land of Women,  
Emne 7 with many hues 8 of  
hospitality  
Thou wilt reach before the setting of  
the sun.'

61. Thereupon Bran went from him.  
And he saw an island. He rows round  
about it, and a large host was gaping  
and laughing. They were all looking  
at Bran and his people, but would  
not stay to converse with them. They  
continued to give forth gusts 9 of  
laughter at them. Bran sent one of  
his people on the island. He ranged  
himself with the others, and was  
gaping at them like the other men of  
the island. He 10 kept rowing round

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about the island. Whenever his man  
came past Bran, his comrades would  
address him. But he would not  
converse with them, but would only  
look at them 1 and gape at them.  
The name of this island is the Island  
of Joy. Thereupon they left him  
there.

62. It was not long thereafter when

gébtha in drong find fu roth nél  
dund nassad, nad etarlén.

60. 'Fossad airsin imraad Bran,  
ní chían co tír inna m-ban,  
Emne co n-ildath féle  
ricfe ré fuiniud gréne.'

61. Luidi Bran úad íarum co n-acci in  
n-insi. Immeraad immeúairt, agus  
slóg mór oc ginig agus gáirechtaíg.  
Doecitís uili Bran agus a muintir,  
agus ní antís fria n-accaldaim.  
Adaigtís treftecha gáire impu. Fóidís  
Bran fer dia muintir isin n-insi. Reris  
lia céliu agus adaiged ginig fóu amal  
dóini inna hinse

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olchene. Immeraad in n-inis  
immeúairt. Intan dothéged a fer  
muintire sech Bran, adgaitís a  
chocéili. Nísnaiccilled san immorru,  
acht dusnéced nammá agus adaiged  
ginig fóu. Is ed ainm inna hinse so  
Inis Subai. Funacabsat and íarum.

62. Ní bu chían íarsin coráncatar tír  
inna m-ban, co n-accatar braine inna  
m-ban isin phurt. Ashert tóisech inna

they reached the Land of Women. They saw the leader of the women at the port. Said the chief of the women: 'Come hither on land; O Bran son of Febal! Welcome is thy advent!' Bran did not venture to go on shore. The woman throws a ball of thread to Bran straight over his face. Bran put his hand on the ball, which clave to his palm. The thread of the ball was in the woman's hand, and she pulled the coracle towards the port. Thereupon they went into a large house, in which was a bed for every couple, <sup>2</sup> even thrice nine beds. The food that was put on every dish vanished not from them. It seemed a year to them that they were there,--it chanced <sup>3</sup> to be many years. No savour was wanting to them. <sup>4</sup>

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63. Home-sickness seized one of them, even Nechtan the son of Collbran. <sup>1</sup> His kindred kept praying Bran that he should go to Ireland with him. The woman said to them their going would make them rue. However, they went, and the woman said that none of them should touch the land, and that they should visit and take with them the man whom they had left in the Island of Joy.

64. Then they went until they arrived at a gathering at Srub Brain. <sup>2</sup> The men asked of them who it was came over the sea. Said Bran: 'I am Bran the son of Febal,' saith he. However, the other saith: 'We do not know such a one. though the Voyage of

m-ban: 'Tair ille isa tír, a Brain made Febail! Is fochen do thichtu.' Ní lamir Bran techt isa tír. Dochuirethar in ben certli do Braun tar a gnúis cach n-dírech. Focheird Bran a láim for in certli. Lil in chertle dia dernainn. Bói snáthe inna certle hil-láim inna mná, consreng in curach dochum puirt. Lotir íarum hi tegdais máir. Arránic imde ceche lánamne and .i. trí nói n-imdæ. In praind dobreth for cech méis nír'irchran dóib. Ba bléidin donarfás dóib buith and. Ecmaing bátir ilblédni. Nístesbi nach mlass.

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63. Gabais éulchaire fer n-díib .i. Nechtán mac Collbrain. Aitcheda a chenél fri Bran aratíasad leis dochom n-Érenn. Asbert in ben robad aithrech ind fáboll. Dolotar cammæ, ocus asbert in ben arnatuinsed nech díib a tír ocus arataidlitís leú in fer fodnácaibset i n-Inis Subai tar éssi a chéli.

64. Dollotar íarum condatornachtatar in dáil i Sruib Brain. Iarmifóchtatar side dóib cía dolluide a muir. Asbert in fer: 'Messe,' ar sé, 'Bran mac Febail.' 'Ní beram aichni inní sin,' ol a chéle didiu. 'Atá hi senchasaib linni chene Imram Brain.'

65. Dochuirethar úadib in fer assin

Bran is in our ancient stories.'

65. The man 3 leaps from them out of the coracle. As soon as he touched the earth of Ireland, forthwith he was a heap of ashes, as though he had been in the earth for many hundred years. 'Twas then that Bran sang this quatrain:

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'For Collbran's son great was the folly  
To lift his hand against age,  
Without any one casting a wave of  
pure water 1  
Over Nechtan, Collbran's son.'

66. Thereupon, to the people of the gathering Bran told all his wanderings from the beginning until that time. And he wrote these quatrains in Ogam, and then bade them farewell. And from that hour his wanderings are not known.

THE END

churuch. Amal conránic side fri talmain inna Hérenn, bá lúathred fochétóir amal bíd i talmain nobeth triasna hilchéta blíedne. Is and cachain Bran in rand so:

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'Do macc Chollbrain ba mór báiss turcbáil a láme fri áiss,  
cen nech dobir toind usci glain  
for Nechtán for mac Collbrain.

66. Adfét íarsin Bran a imthechta ulí ó thossuch cotici sin do lucht ind airechtais, ocus scríbais inna rundu so tré ogum. Ocus celebrais dóib íarsin, ocus ní fessa a imthechta ónd úair sin.

FINIT

## Footnotes

2:1 Imram, lit. 'rowing about,' denotes a voyage voluntarily undertaken, as distinguished from *longes*, 'a voyage of exile.'

2:2 *Echtre*, f. (a derivative of *echtar* = Lat. *extra*), lit. 'outing,' specially denotes expeditions and sojourns in Fairy-land, as in *Echtra Bresail Bricc maic Briuin* (LL. p. 170 b, 25), who stayed fifty years under Loch Láeg; *Echtra Cormaic i Tír Tairngiri*, Ir. Texte iii. p. 202; *Echtra Nerai* (Rev. Celt. x. p. 212), *Echtra Nectain maic Alfroinn* (LL. p. 189 b, 59) = Nechtán mac Collbrain, infra § 63, etc.

2:3 That it was the branch that produced the music, when shaken, appears from a similar incident in *Echtra Cormaic*, Ir. Texte iii. p. 212.

4:1 All the MSS. contain only twenty-eight quatrains.

4:2 *aball*, f., which glosses Lat. *malus* in Sg. 61 b, has come to denote any fruit-tree, as in *fic-abull mór arsata*, 'a large ancient fig-tree,' LBr. 158 a, 55. CL Stokes, Rev. Celt. x. p. 71, n. 3.

4:3 *i.e.* nomen regionis (gloss).

4:4 A *kenning* for 'crested sea-waves.' Cf. *groig maic Lir*, 'the Son of Ler's horses,' Rev. Celt. p. 104. Zimmer misrenders: 'um welche die rosse des meeres spielend auftauchen.'

4:5 Lit. 'white-sided wave-swelling.'

4:6 Zimmer, following the corrupt reading of *R* (*cethror* instead of *cetheoir*), renders: 'dem wohnsitz auf fussen von vier mann!'

4:7 *i.e.* nomen regionis (gloss), 'White-Silver Plain.'

6:1 *i.e.* here below (gloss).

6:2 *gairim* is often used of the notes of birds, e.g.: *int én gaires isint sail*, 'the bird that sings in the willow,' Ir. Texte iii. p. 19.

6:3 *trátha*, the canonical hours, an allusion to church music. Zimmer, wrongly, 'zu den zeiten.'

6:4 *i.e.* nomen regionis (gloss), 'Silver-Cloud Plain.'

6:5 Zimmer, wrongly, 'vor den gerichten.'

6:6 Lit. 'with harshness.' Zimmer, 'für die kehle'?

6:7 Cf. *i lobrai ocus i n-ingás*, Serogl. Conc. 10.

6:8 *i.e.* nomen regionis (gloss).

8:1 *i.e.* regio (gloss), 'Bountiful Land.'

8:2 *dracoin* = Lai. *dracontiae*.

8:3 'Mane' and 'hair' are frequent kennings in Irish poetry for the crest and spray of a wave, e.g.: *in n-ed maras mong for muir*, 'while a 'ested wave remains on the sea,' Ir. Texte iii. p. 16. Cf. also the adj. *tibrech*, 'hairy' (from *tibre .i. finda na grúaide flacbas in altan dia hése*, Harl. 5280, fo. 41 a) in *úas tuind tibrig*, LL. 17 b, 2 = *fri tuinn tibhrigh*, wrongly explained by O'Clery, s.v. *tibhrigh*.

8:4 *i.e.* insola (gloss), *i.e.* nomen regionis (gloss), 'Gentle Land.'

8:5 Cf. Sg. 122 b, where *céitegrinne fíno* glosses 'nectar.'

8:6 'Plain of the Sea.'

8:7 *i.e.* regio (gloss), 'Plain of Sports.'

10:1 Lit. 'against which the sea beats.'

10:2 Lit. 'it increases music.'

10:3 Here and in § 60 the nominative Emne is used instead of Emain (§§ 3, 10).

10:4 Ir. *brec*, 'variegated,' probably referring to their dress. Cf. *cóica ingen ildathach*, Serogl. Conc. 45.

10:5 *i.e.* nomen regionis (gloss), 'Very Gentle Land.'

12:1 Or, perhaps, if we read *la suthaini síne*, 'It is through lasting weather (lit. lastingness of weather) that silver drops on the lands.'

12:2 *i.e.* mare, 'Plain of Sports.'

12:3 *i.e.* nomen regions, 'Many-coloured Land.'

12:4 This quatrain reappears in a somewhat modified form in a poem (Laud 615, p. 18) addressed to Colum Cille by Mongan, who had come from the Land of Promise (*Tír Tairngiri*) to meet the saint at Carraic Eolaírg on Lough Foyle. See Appendix, p. 88.

14:1 *i.e.* Christ (gloss).

14:2 Lit. 'upon its ridge-poles or roof-trees,' alluding probably to the lowly birth of Christ.

14:3 Cf. *ar attú cen tosach cen forcenn* gl. qui ante creaturæ exordia idem esse non desinas, Ml. 110 d, is.

14:4 Cf. Stokes, Goid. p. 182: *beith fo étoil mac Maire*, 'to he under the unwill of Mary's Son.'

14:5 An allusion to baptism.

16:1 Zimmer renders 'ob sin gegangen.' But *cía* here means 'whither' (=Doric πεί, Strachan). Cf. *noconfess cía deochatar*, LL. 290 a, 27. *ni fetatar cía deochaid nó can donluid*, Serigl. Conc. 12, etc. In the sense of 'whether,' *cía* occurs only in the phrase *cía . . . cenco*, 'whether . . . or not,' e.g.: *fó leiss cía nothiasta ass, fó leiss cenco tiasta*, LL. 109a, 30; *cía fogabad cenco fagbad, rabeindse ar a chind*, LL. 51 b, 17.

16:2 Lit. 'men of the same age.'

16:3 The MSS. again contain only twenty-eight quatrains.

16:4 Ir. *slonnud* means to make known one's name, or patronymic, as in Rawl. B. 502, fo. 73 a, 2: *Buchet a ainm, mac hui Inblæ a slonnud*, or one's native place, as in LU. 15 b, 5: *ro íarfaig Finnan a slonniud de. Asbert friu: de Ultaib dam-sa*.

18:1 Or *Mag Mell* may here be a place-name. Cf. § 39. It is the most frequent designation of the Irish elysium.

18:2 This seems to be the meaning of the verb *tibrim*, another example of which occurs in Rev. Celt. xi. p. 130: *ni fuil tráich nach tiprai tonn*, which I ought to have rendered 'there is no strand that a wave does not beat'

18:3 'Plain of Sports,' glossed by 'mare' above, § 23.

18:4 This I take to be the meaning of *écomras*, the negative of *comras*, 'smooth,' which occurs in *cornaiB sruachaib comrasaib* (LL. 276 a, 6), 'with hooped smooth horns.' Stokes conjectures *-ras* to be cognate with W. *rhathu*, 'to file.'

18:5 *i.e.* The salmon which Bran sees are calves and are lambs (gloss).

20:1 'Pleasant, or Happy Plain.' See note on § 34.

20:2 *i.e.* There were many hosts near him, and Bran did not see them (gloss).

20:3 This rendering rests on the very doubtful connection of *drepa* with Lat. *drappus*, from which it might be a loan. Should we compare the obscure line *drengaitir* (*sic legendem?*) *dreppa daena*, Goid. p. 176?

20:4 A mere guess at the meaning of *imrborbach*.

20:5 Lit. 'a wood under mast (acorns) in which is beauty.'

22:1 I take *foirbthe* to be the neuter form of the passive participle of *forbenim* used as a substantive.

22:2 *i.e.* of the grave.

22:3 I take *mbeth* to be the 3rd sing. injunctive of *biu*, with the relative *n* prefixed.

22:4 *i.e.* to Adam in Paradise.

22:5 This rendering of *saibse* (*saibsi*) *ceni* is not much better than a guess. Perhaps *sáibse* is a noun derived from *sáib*, 'false.'

22:6 *viz.* Adam.

22:7 Cf. LU. 17 b; 26: *do bithaitreb péne ocus rége cen nach crích etir* = LL. 281 a, 38: *do bithaittreb péne ocus régc cen nach n-díl etir*.

22:8 *i.e.* worshipping idols (gloss).

22:9 *i.e.* Christ (gloss).

24:1 *i.e.* to Ireland.

24:2 *i.e.* to the wife of Fiachna, king of the Ulster Dalriada, whose royal seat was Rathmore, in Moylinny (Linemag), co. Antrim.

24:3 *i.e.* 'the Conception of Mongan' (gloss).

24:4 *i.e.* Mangan son of Fiachna (gloss).

24:5 Lit. 'will lie a vigorous lying.'

24:6 'Fair Lady,' the name of Fiachne's wife. Gilla Modutn, in his poem *Senchas Ban* (LL. 140 a, 37), written in 1147 A.D., makes her the daughter of Demmán Dublacha's son.

24:7 This is a guess at the meaning of *moithfe*. I take it to stand for *móithfe*, from *móithaim*, mod. *maothaim*, 'I soften.'

24:8 *i froiss* may mean 'in a shower'; but *fross* is also used metaphorically in the sense of 'attack, onset.' Cf.

26:1 *i.e.* post mortem (gloss).

26:2 *i.e.* famous, without end (*anforcnedach?* cf. LU. 26 b, 27), *i.e.* in futuro corpore (gloss).

26:3 Cf *nosilis róí*, LU. 66 b, 26.

26:4 The translation of this quatrain is very uncertain, as the Irish text is hopelessly corrupt in several places.

26:5 As to this meaning of airchend see Windisch, *Bea. d. sächs.* Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, 19.7. 1890.

26:6 *i.e.* proprinm iloch (gloss). Here *iloch* is obscure to me. One expects a word for 'island.' Islay is also referred to in Boirche's poem on the death of Mongan (Four Masters, A.D. 620). According to Cinaed ua Hartacáin (+975), Mongan was killed by a host from Cantire (*la féin Cindtíre*, LL. 31 b, 42).

26:7 This refers to Mongan's death at the hands of Artur mac Bicoir.

28:1 *i.e.* in corpora (gloss).

28:2 *i.e.* this is the 'Death of Mongan,' a stone from a sling was thrown at him (gloss); *i.e.* a stone at the fight in Mongan's stronghold (gloss).

28:3 *i.e.* a stronghold (gloss). Senlabor has not been identified.

28:4 Not identified.

28:5 *i.e.* the angels.

28:6 *i.e.* in a chariot

28:7 Cf. note on § 19.

28:8 The Irish *dath*, 'colour,' is often used in the sense of 'kind, sort.'

28:9 *treftech*, a derivative from *trefet*, 'blowing.' Cf. *trefet i. séitedh, ut est: for trefet a tóna* H. 3, 18, p. 51, and see O'Dav. p. 122, s.v. *treifet*. In *Laws i.* p. 126, 5 (cf. p. 144, 1) it means 'bellows.'

28:10 viz. Bran.

30:1 Zimmer, adopting the corrupt reading of *R* (*na mná* instead of *nammá*) renders: 'sondern blickte die frauen an.' No women have been mentioned.

30:2 Zimmer renders 'ehenaar.' But there is no reason for being so particular.

30:3 For this use of *écmaing* = 'it really was,' cf. *Ir. Texte iii.* p. 17:

'Andarlíum ba slúaided fer,  
Góidil co ler iar n-gail gaing:  
eccmuing ba rí. Midi máir  
doluid do dáim óenaig aird.'

'Methought it was a hosting of men,  
Gaels in numbers after fierce prowess;  
But it was the king of great Meath,  
Going to the company of a noble gathering.'

30:4 *i.e.* every man found in his food and drink the taste that he especially desired, a common incident in Irish story-telling.

32:1 He was the hero of a tale, the title of which figures in the list of sagas in LL. p. 170 b as *Echtra Nectain maic Alfroinn*. This tale is not now known to exist; it probably contained the incidents here narrated.

32:2 O'Curry, *MS. Mat.* p. 477, note 15, says that there are two places of this name--one in the west of Kerry, the other, now called Staoove or Shruve Brin, at the entrance to Lough Foyle, a little to the south of Inishowen Head. As the ancient Irish imagined Mag Mell to be in the south or south-west of Ireland (see Stokes, *Rev. Celt.* xv. p. 438), it seems natural that Bran coming from there should arrive at a place in Kerry. Otherwise, from Bran's connection with Lough Foyle, so called from his father Febal, the latter place might seem to be meant. See its dindsenches in *Rev. Celt.* xv. p. 450, where *Srub Brain* is said to mean 'Raven's Stream.' Stokes thinks that this *Srub Brain* is the place in Donegal; but, considering that numbers 50 to 53 of the *Rennes Dindsenchas* all refer to places in Kerry, I believe the West Kerry place is meant.

32:3 viz. Nechtan mac Collbrain.

34:1 *i.e.* holy water.

## NOTES

1. *a tirib ingnath*. This curious use of what is, apparently, the undeclined adjective after the noun is also found in the phrase *tré bithu sír*, iS. See Windiseh, s.v. *sír*.

ib., *for láur*. The old dative form *láur* is found in *H* alone, while all the other MSS. have the later form *lár*. Similarly, in § 2 *R*, and in *F* 62, *B* alone have preserved the dative form *Braun*.

ib., *robátar ind liss dúntai*. The plural of the word *less*, which generally means either the space enclosed by earthen ramparts, or the buildings in the centre of the enclosure, seems here to be used of the ramparts themselves. That this may have been the original meaning, the analog of Ir. *ráith* and Teutonic *tún* seems to show.

a. *ar a bindi*. I do not know what to make of the form *bindem* or *bindim* which most of the MSS. have.

ib., *ísin*. Most of the MSS. leave out this Old Irish form.

ib., *cacháin*. None of the MSS. have preserved the Old Irish form *cechuin*.

3. This quatrain is composed in the metre called *rannaigecht cetharchubaid recomarcach* (Thumeysen, *Mittelir. Verslehren*, p. 143). There is internal assonance in *Emain: semail, fora: glano*.

ib., *abaill*. It is possible that *abaild* is the older form; at least this may be concluded from *abailt*, the spelling of *E*, and *apuillt*, that of *H*. An Old Ir. *abald* would agree well with the A.S. *apuldr*.

ib., *dofed*. This I take to be the 1st sing. of the present indicative of *dofedim*, 'I bring,' ex *to-ved-ó*.

ib., *glano*. Here and in 12 (*trilsi glano*) *B* alone preserves this old form, the genitive sing. of the i-stem *glain*. Other MSS. write *glana* as if it were the nom. plur. of *glan*, 'pure.'

4. This and all the following quatrains are composed in various kinds of *debidc*. There are two examples of *debide garit* in 34, 35; 36

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but the stricter laws of poetical composition, as formulated in the *córus bard cana bardni* (Thumeysen, *Mittelir. Versl.*) and by O'Molloy, are not

consistently observed in this old poetry. The rule, e.g., that the final words of the second and fourth lines should exceed those of the first and third by one syllable, is not carried through. A hiatus is allowed to stand where, according to O'Molloy's rule (Thumeysen, l.c., p. 127), synzesis should take place, e.g., *asa taitni | in nél find, 24, os mé | im' charput di chéin, 33*, etc. Again, there are many lines in which alliteration is entirely wanting. This rudimentary character of the poetry seems to speak for its age.

ib., *gabra réin*. The 'kenning' *groig mic Lir* referred to on p. 4, note 5, also occurs in a quatrain quoted in H. 3. 18, p. 6½: *cuthal .i. tlaith, ut dixit in file*:

*'Dia m-[bad] cuthal craidí tlaith,  
rombuthad for mortuind muaith,  
matain mir dochoid, ba moch,  
groidh [leg. groig] mic Lir iar loch fot[h]uaid.'*

ib., *tóibgel tondat*. The adjective attribute is put before the noun, as in *ilmíli m-brecc m-ban, 19*.

ib., *cetheóir cossa*. The old feminine form *cetheóir* being no longer used or understood, the MSS., with two exceptions (*HB*), have either misread or altered it. As to the four feet on which the island rests, cf. 'The Voyage of Mael Duin,' Rev. Celt. x. p. 63, as translated by Stokes: 'Then they see another island (standing) on a single pedestal, to wit, one foot supporting it. And they rowed round it to seek a way into it, and they found no way thereinto; but they saw down in the base of the pedestal a closed door under lock. They understood that that was the way by which the island was entered.'

5. *Findarggat*. The use of the undeclined form is curious. In 8, *Arggatnéul* stands in apposition to the dative *maig*.

6. *findrune*. It is possible that *findbruine* (*B*) is the older form.

7. In the description of Mag Meld in *Serglige Conculaind* (Ir. Texte, p. 218) a similar quatrain occurs without reference to the Hours.

*'Atát ar in dorús sair  
tri bile do chorcorglain,  
dia n-gair in énláith búan bláith  
don macraid assin rigráith.'*

8. *datho*. Here, and in 13, *B* alone preserves this old form of the gen. sg. of the u-stem *dath*.

ib., *móithgretho*. Most of the MSS. have *moiter gretha*--a blunder, having arisen from confusing the mark of aspiration over the first *t* with the horizontal stroke used as a compendium for *er*. *B* and *S* have preserved the final *o*.

9. *écóiniud*. Perhaps *écóine* (*B, H*) is the right reading.

ib., *etargnath* rhyming with *mrath* shows that through loss of stress *gnáth* has become short. Compare such rhymes as *tan: crithlam*, Salt, 1456.

ib., *ní bíi nach garg fri crúais*. I have no doubt that *crois, croais* of the MSS. stands for *crúais*, just as *clois, cloais* in the next line is for *clúais*; *oa* evidently was the spelling of the archetypus for the more usual *úa*; cf. *oas, daroasat, oad, load*, etc., infra. *L*, reading *bíi* as a monosyllable, inserts *guth* to make up the seven syllables.

11. *fía*. My rendering is taken from O'Reilly *fia* (for *fiadh?*), and is very doubtful. Perhaps *fía* is cognate with W. *gwy*, and means 'water.'

ib., *ní fríthid bíd a cía*. The same phrase occurs in LU. 64 a, 23: *ní fríthid bid essine em .i. ní inund ocus én dogabáil*, 'This is not the same as carrying (lit. taking) birds,' says Medb, referring to the way in which Láeg carries the head of an enemy on his back. As to *cía*= *céo*, meaning 'haze' or perhaps 'hue,' cf. O'Cl. *deann céidheamhain .i. lí nó do amhail chéo bealtaine*.

12. *trilsi glano*. Cf. the note on *glano*, 3.

13. *étatho*, if I read rightly, seems the gen. of *é-tath*, the opposite of *tath .i. searg*, 'dryness, decay, consumption,' O'Cl. and P. O'C.

ib., *fíno óingrindi*. The genitive attribute is put before the noun, as in *de betho bróu*, 29, *fíne fírbolud*, 43. See Rev. Celt. v. 350-51.

15. In the description of Mag Meld quoted above from *Serglige Conculaind* a similar quatrain occurs:

*'Atát ar in dorus tíar  
isind áit hi funend grían  
graig n-gabor n-glas, brec a mong,  
is araile carcordond.'*

ib., *ualann*. I have taken this to be a sister-form of *oland*, 'wool' Cf. *uamun* and *ǫmun*, 'fear.' But it might be a word cognate with *ualach*, 'burden.'

16. *dofeith*. This seems cognate with *dofaith*, 'ivit' (Wind. s.v.),

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*dufaid* (*dofoid*), 'venit,' Trip. Life, p. 72, 16, and *táidim*, 'I come,' Féil. Index. *L* changes to *dofaeth*, 'will fall.'

17. *dond licc leur*. Another such musical stone is mentioned in the following lines from *Togail Bruidne Dá Chocæ* (H. 3. 18, p. 711):

*'do thimpán créda is fiu máin,  
binnithir lic Locha Láig.'*  
'thy timpani of bronze, it is worth a treasure,  
more melodious than the stone of Loch Láig.'

19. *bésu*. This form occurs twice in the Würzburg glosses, 6 b, 23: *bésu dagduine*, 'who may be a good man,' ib. 24: *bésu maith*. It should be compared with *césu*, 'although it be,' and seems to be made up of the 3rd pers. sing. injunctive of *bíu*, with an unexplained pronominal suffix *-su*.

20. *esnach*, if I read rightly, may be cognate with *esnad*, 'music, song,' which is sometimes used of the notes or cries of animals, as, e.g., *esnad daim*, 'the bellowing of the stag.'

21. *cach ági*. Though this is the reading of none of the MSS., *R* alone coming near it, yet it seems to me highly probable. *áge*, 'period,' seems a masc. iō-stem; cf. LU. 134 b, 13: *tánic de int áge hísín*.

22. *erfind*. This is a very doubtful reading, based upon the *ailler find* of *L*.

24. *i n-adig*. This old spelling of *adaig*, preserved by *R* and *E*, caused *L* to alter into *ina tig* = mod. *ina dtigh*.

25. *diìb*. Though none of the MSS. offers it, this old dissyllabic form is demanded by the metre, just as in Salt. 375: *samlaim cech dí[i]b fo feib*. Cf. Salt. 437.

28. *findchride*. The spelling of the archetypus was no doubt *finchride*, which most of the MSS. retain.

29. *de betho bróu*. The only one among the many meanings of *bró* that seems to fit here is one given by O'Clery, .i. *iomad*.

32. *isin charput iarsin muir*. Thus in *Serglige Conculaind* (Ir. Texte, p. 225) Manannán comes in a chariot across the sea:

'*Atchíu dar in muir ille--  
nínacend nach meraige--  
marcach in mara mongaig,  
ní lenand do sithlongaib.*'

ib., *nogigned mac úad*. See Compert Mongáin, printed infra, p. 42.

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35. *cennderga*. *L* reads *cen terca*, a good example of the wilful alterations of this version.

41. *óimin*. Cf. the spelling *áimin*, Goid. p. 20, 11.

43. *duilli co n-órdath*. Cf. the following quatrain in the description of Mag Meld quoted above:

'*Atá crand i n-dorus liss,  
ní hétig cocetul friss,  
crand airgit ristatin grian,  
cosmail fri hór a roníam.*'

48. *dorearúasat* seems corrupt. It does not rhyme with *húasai*. I have translated it as if it were *dorúasat* with the pronoun of the 1st pers. plural (-*r*-) infixed.

49. *In delb hé*. Cf. *combad hé Find Mac Cumaill Mongán*, LU. 133 a, 25. This construction reminds one of a similar one in Anglo-Saxon.

50. *Moninnán*. A hypocoristic form of Manannán, also found in LU. 133 a, 24. Cf. Monann, 51.

ib., *i curp criad gil*. Cf. LU. 18, 22: *Héle 7 Énóc ina corpaid críad etir ainglib nimc* = LL. 280 a, 51.--*B*, reading *criad* as a monosyllable, alters *gil* into *ad-gil* to make up the seven syllables.

51. *coniec*. This old form, the 3rd sing. of the s-future of *con-ligim*, was no longer understood by the glossator. From our passage the word with the gloss got into Cormac's GLOSSARY (Transl. p. 49).

ib., *maccu*. None of the MSS. have preserved this Old Ir. word, which seems to have become obsolete very early.

ib., *Lirn*. The *n* is here a merely graphic addition to have complete assonance for the eye.

ib., *adndidma*, 3rd sg. of the red. future of *ad-damim*, with infixed pronoun. CL *alumdidmæ*, 'Thou wilt acknowledge me,' Féil. Epil. 494.

52. *adfii*, 3rd sg. of the s-future of *adfiadaim*. CE *adfias-[s]a*, 'I shall relate,' Salt. 1785.

55. *suis ???*, 3rd sg. Of the s-future of *sligim*.

56. I have not been able to restore this quatrain, which has been handed down in a very corrupt form in all MSS. Most of them leave out *bid* in the first line, which may be right.

ib., *fochischer airchend a Íli*. Stokes thinks that *airchend* here= W. *arbenn*, 'a chieftain.' The translation would then be, 'I shall send a chieftain out of Islay,' which would refer to Artur Mac Bicoir.

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57. *arungén*. This I take to be the 1st sg. of the red. future of *argnú*, with infixed pron. of the 3rd person.

58. *bes n-guirit*. As to *bes* with following relative *n*, cf. ML 54 a, 4: *bes n-duthrachtach .i. duarngir-som beta n-duthrachaig a gnímai-som do dia*.

ib., *oircthi*. This seems the 3rd sg. pres. ind. of *vircim* with affixed personal pronoun.

59. *Loch Láu*. In the glossed copy of Cinaed húa hArtacáin's poem beginning *Fianna bátar i n-Emain* (Eg. 1752, fo. 53 a, 2) I find the following gloss on the line mentioning Mongin's death (see above, p. 26, note 5): *.i. fian Chind-Tíri romarb Mongan ar brú Locha Lo nó Locha Inncil (Mencii?)*. A Loch Ló is also repeatedly mentioned in *Togail Bruidne Dá Chocæ*.

ib., *gébtha*. This looks like the 3rd sg. of the red. future of *gabim* (*gébid*) with an affixed personal pronoun.

61. *oc ginig*. Most of the MSS. have *gignig*, which is obscure to me. *Gínig* seems the dat. fem. of a word *ginach*, a derivative of *gin*, 'mouth.'

ib., *reris*. This seems the 3rd sg. of the s-pref. of a verb *rerim*, the 3rd sg. rel. of the pres. ind: of which occurs in LU. 133 a, 10: *intan reras in cath díaraiiu*, 'When one army is drawn up (ranged) against the other.'

63. *éulchairc*. Though this word sometimes has the general sense of 'longing,' as in Echtra Condla, 4 (*gabais eólchaire íarom inní Condla immon mnái atchonnairc*) it seems originally to have denoted 'longing for home, home-sickness'; from *éol*, 'home,' and *-caire*=W. *-caredd*. As to this meaning of *éol*, cf. the following gloss from Harl. 5280, fo. 49 b, 2: *eol .i. gnáth, ut est*:

*'Ránic coa euol fén an fer  
tar gach ler co n-ilur glond,'*

and see Rev. C. xiii. p. 2. In LL 170 b, 30, for *coa seol* read *cos eol*, 'to his home,' as in BB. 402, 47. *dia eol*, ib. 403 a, 2.

65. *cen nech dobir toind usci glain*. The line has one syllable in excess. Perhaps *dorat*, 'who gave,' is a better reading than *dobir*, 'who gives.'

## I. The Conception of Mongán.

Fiachna Lurga, the father of Mongán, was sole king of the province. <sup>1</sup> He had a friend in Scotland, to wit, Aedán, <sup>2</sup> the son of Gabrán. A message went from him to Aedán. A [5] message went from Aedán to him that he would come to his aid. He was in warfare against Saxons. <sup>3</sup> A terrible warrior was brought by them for the death of Aedán in the battle. Then Fiachna went across. He left his queen at home.

While the hosts were fighting in Scotland, a noble-looking [10] man went to his wife in his stronghold in Rathmore of Moylinny. At the time he went there were not many in the stronghold. He asked the woman to arrange a place of meeting. The woman said there were not in the world possessions or treasures, for which she would do anything to disgrace her [15] husband's honour. He asked her whether she would do it to save her husband's life. She said that if she were to see him in danger and difficulty, <sup>4</sup> she would help him with all that lay in her might. <sup>5</sup> He said she should do it then, <sup>6</sup> 'for thy husband is in great danger. A terrible man has been brought against [20] him on whom they cannot . . . , and he will die by his hand. If we, I and thou, make love, thou wilt bear a son thereof. That son will be famous; he will be Mongán. I shall go to the battle which will be fought to-morrow at the third hour, so that I shall save him, and I shall vanquish <sup>7</sup> the warrior before the

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eyes of the men of Scotland. And I shall tell thy husband our adventures, and that it is thou that hast sent me to his help.'

It was done thus. When army was drawn up against army, the hosts saw something---a noble-looking man before the army of Aedán and Fiachna. He went towards Fiachna in [5] particular, and told him the conversation with his wife the day before, and that he had promised to come to his help at that hour. Thereupon he went before the army towards the other, and vanquished the soldier. And the battle was routed before Aedán and Fiachna. [10]

And Fiachna returned to his country. And the woman was pregnant and bore a son, even Mongán son of Fiachna. And he thanked his wife for what she had done for him, and she confessed all her adventures. So that this Mongán is a son of Manannán mac Lir, though he is called Mongán son of [15] Fiachna. For when he went from her in the rooming he left a quatrain with Mongán's mother, saying:

'I go home, 1  
The pale pure morning draws near: 2  
Moninnán son of Ler [20]  
Is the name of him who came to thee.'

## Footnotes

44:1 As such he is enumerated in the list of the kings of Ulster in LL. p. 41 C.

44:2 King of the Scotch Dalriada (574-606).

44:3 As to Aedin's wars with the Saxons, see Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 36, and Bede, *Hist. Eccl.* i. 34.

44:4 Lit 'if he were to see in danger anything that were difficult.'

44:5 Lit. 'with anything she were able.'

44:6 I read *dagné*, 3rd sg. of the present subjunctive with infixed pronoun.

44:7 *fes*, 1st sg. of the s-fut. of *fichim*, Lat. *vinco*. Cf. *fessaiter* .i. *fichfitir*, LL. 188 b, 6.

45:1 I take *daim* to stand for *doim*, date sg. of *dom*. f. = Lat. *domus* (gen. *na domo*, Rev. C. xiv. p. 454, l. 15). Or should we compare *dia daim* i. *dia deoin*, which occurs in Torhmarc Emire, Rev. C xi. p. 444, l. 38: *luid Cúchulind dia daim huadaib*, 'C. went of his (own) will from them'?

45:2 As to the construction of *dofil* with following acc., see Glossary.

Gaelic omitted. . .

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## **II. A Story from which it is inferred that Mongán was Find mac Cumail, and the cause of the death of Fothad Airgdech. <sup>1</sup>**

Mongán was in Rathmore of Moylinny in his kingship. To him went Forgoll the poet. Through him many a married [5] couple was complaining to Mongán. <sup>2</sup> Every night the poet would recite a story to Mongán. So great was his lore that they were thus from Halloween to May-day. He had gifts and food from Mongán.

One day Mongán asked his poet what was the death of [10] Fothad Airgdech. Forgoll said he was slain at Duffry in Leinster. <sup>3</sup> Mongán said it was false. The poet said he would satirise him with his lampoons, and he would satirise his father and his mother and his grandfather, and he would sing (spells) upon their waters, so that fish should not be caught in their [15] river-mouths. He would sing upon their woods, so that they should not give fruit, upon their plains, so that they should be barren for ever of any produce. Mongán promised him his will of precious things as far as (the value of) seven handmaids, or twice seven handmaids, or three times seven. At last he offers [20] him one-third, or one-half of his land, or his whole land; at last (anything) save only his own liberty with (that of) his wife Breóthigernd, unless he were redeemed before the end of three days. The poet refused all except as regards the woman. For the sake of his honour Mongán consented. Thereat the [25]

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woman was sorrowful. The tear was not taken from her cheek. Mongán told her not to be sorrowful, help would certainly come to them.

So it came to the third day. The poet began to enforce his [5] bond. Mongán told him to wait till evening. He and his wife were in their bower. The woman weeps as her surrender drew near and she saw no help. Mongán said: 'Be not sorrowful, woman. He who is even now coming to our help, I hear his feet in the Labrinne.' <sup>4</sup>

[10] They wait a while. Again the woman wept. 'Weep not, woman ' He who is now coming to our help, I hear his feet in the Máin.' 2

Thus they were waiting between every two watches of the day. She would weep, he would still say: 'Weep not, woman, [15] He who is now coming to our help, I hear his feet in the Laune, in Lough Leane, 3 in the Morning-star River between the Úi Fidgente and the Arada, 4 in the Suir on Moy-Fevin 5 in

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[paragraph continues] Munster, in the Echair, 1 in the Barrow, in the Liffey, 2 in the Boyne, in the Dee, 3 in the Tuarthesc, 4 in Carlingford Lough, in the Nid, 5 in the Newry river, in the Larne Water in front of Rathmore.'

When night came to them, Mongán was, on his couch in his palace, and his wife at his right hand, and she sorrowful. The [5] poet was summoning them by their sureties and their bonds. While they were there, a man is announced approaching the rath from the south. His cloak was in a fold around him, and in his hand a headless spear-shaft that was not very small. By that shaft he leapt across the three ramparts, so that he was in [10] the middle of the garth, thence into the middle of the palace, thence between Mongán and the wall at his pillow. The poet was in the back of the house behind the king. The question is argued in the house before the warrior that had come. 'What is the matter here?' said he. 'I and the poet yonder,' said [15] Mongán, 'have made a wager about the death of Fothad Airgdech. He said it was at Duffry in Leinster. I said that was false.' The warrior said the poet was wrong. 'It will be . . .,' said Forgoll, '. . .' 6 'That were not good,' said the warrior. 'It shall be proved. 'We were with thee, with Find,' said the [20] warrior. 'Hush!' said Mongán, 'that is not fair.' 'We were with Find, then,' said he. 'We came from Scotland. We met with Fothad Airgdech here yonder on the Larne river. There we fought a battle. I made a cast at him, so that it passed

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through him and went into the earth beyond him and left its iron head in the earth. This here is the shaft that was in that spear. The bare stone from which I made that cast will be found, and the iron head will be found in the earth, and the [5] tomb of Fothad Airgdech will be found a little to the east of it. A stone chest is about him there in the earth. There, upon the chest, are his two bracelets of silver, and his two arm-rings, and his neck-torque of silver. And by his tomb there is a stone pillar. And on the end of the pillar that is in the earth [10] there is Ogam. This is what it says: "This is Eochaid Airgdech. Cailte slew me in an encounter against Find."

They went with the warrior. Everything was found thus. It was Cálite, Find's foster-son, that had come to them. Mongán, however, was Find, though he would not let it be told.

## Footnotes

49:1 Fothad Airgdech, also called Oendé, was one of the three Fothads, brothers, who reigned together over Ireland for one year (A.D. 284): see LL. 24 a, 29, 190 b, 10.

49:2 Forgoll seems to have been an overbearing and exacting *fili* of the type of Athirne and Dallán Forgaill.

49:3 In the barony of Scarawalsh, co. Wexford. Forgoll's statement perhaps rests on a confusion of this Leinster Dubthar with another Dubthar in Dál Aráide, mentioned in *Silva Gadelica*, i. p. 118, 30.

50:1 According to Hennessy (Jubainville, *Le Cycle Mythologique*, p. 339) the river Caragh, which flows into Dingle Bay, co. Kerry. O'Donovan, who gives a wrong nominative, Labhrann instead of Labrainne (F.M., A.M., 3751), supposed it to be the Cashen in the north of co. Kerry; but that would not suit. Cf. *tomaidm Fleisce 7 Mane 7 Labrainne*, LL. 17 b, 45.

50:2 This must be the name of some small stream between the Caragh and the Laune. It cannot be the Maine, the Irish name of which is Maing, gen. Mainge. If Máin stands for an older Móin, we have here the Irish equivalent of the Gaulish Moinos, the German Main.

50:3 The great Lake of Killarney.

50:4 'The Ui-Fidhgeinte and the Aradha were seated in the present county of Limerick, and their territories were divided from each other by the river Maigge and the stream now called the Morning-star River.' O'Don. F. M., A.D. 666, note. Samáir has been corrupted into Camáir, now Camhaoir, which means 'daybreak.' Hence the English name.

50:5 A plain in the present barony of Iffa and Offa East, south of SIievenaman, co. Tipperary.

51:1 Not identified. It should be in co. Kilkenny. One would expect the Nore to have been mentioned, which Cálite had to cross. Perhaps Echuir is an old name for the Nore.

51:2 Ruirthech, for *ro-rethech*, 'the strong running,' an old name for the Liffey. Badly spelt Ruirech by O'Reilly.

51:3 Níth, now the Dee in the bar. of Ardee, co. Louth. Cf. the river-name Nith in Dumfries.

51:4 Not identified. Perhaps the Glyde or Fane in co. Louth.

51:5 Not identified. Some river or stream in co. Down. Cf. Nid-nari, the name of a Pictish tribe in Galloway (Bede, *Vit. Cuthb.* c. xi.), and the Greek river-name Neda.

51:6 I cannot translate this passage.

Gaelic omitted...

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### III. A Story of Mongán.

Now once upon a time when Forgoll the poet was with Mongán, the latter at a certain hour of the day went before his [10] stronghold, where he found a bardic scholar 1 learning his lesson. 2 Said Mongán:

'All is lasting  
In a cloak of sackcloth; 3  
In due course thou shalt attain  
The end of thy studies.' 4 [15]

[paragraph continues] Mongán then took pity on the scholar, who was in the cloak of sackcloth. He had little of any substance. In order to know whether he would be a truthful and good messenger, 5 he said to hint, promising him . . .: 'Go now,' said Mongán, 'until

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thou reach the fairy knoll of Lethet Oidni, 1 and bring a precious stone which I have there, and for thyself take a pound of white silver, in which are twelve ounces. Thou shalt have help from them. 2 This is thy journey 3 from here, to Cnoc Bane. 4 Thou wilt find welcome in the fairy knoll of Cnoc [5] Bane for my sake. Thence to Duma Granerit. 5 Thence to the fairy knoll of Lethet Oidni. Take the stone for me, and go to the stream of Lethet Oidni, where thou wilt find a pound of gold, in which are nine ounces. Take that with thee for me.'

The man went on his journey. In the fairy knoll of Cnoc [10] Bane he found a noble-looking couple 6 to meet him. They gave great welcome to a messenger of Mongán's. It was his due. He went further. He found another couple in Durna Granerit, where he had the same welcome. He went to the fairy knoll of Lethet Oidni, where again he found another couple. [15] They gave great welcome to a man of Mongán's. He was most hospitably entertained, as on the other nights. There was a marvellous chamber 7 at the side of the couple's house. Mongán had told him that he should ask for its key. He did so. 8 The key was brought to him. He opens it. He had been told [20] not to take anything out of the house except what he had been sent for. He does so. The key he gave back to the couple;

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his stone, however, and his pound of silver he took with him. Thereupon he went to the stream of Lethet Oidni, out of which he took his pound of gold. He went back to Mongán, to whom he gave his stone and his gold. He himself takes his silver. [5] These were his wanderings.

## Footnotes

54:1 *i.e.* one of Forgoll's pupils.

54:2 *Aiciucht*, from Lat. *acceptum*. Perhaps this refers to the tract called *Uraicept ma n-écsine*, which formed part of the first year's studies of the aspiring poet. See Thurneysen, *Mittelir. Versl.*, p. 115.

54:3 *i.e.* to a beginner it seems as if he would never reach the end of his studies. The cloak of sackcloth was probably the professional garb of the bardic student.

54:4 Lit. 'thou wilt reach according to proper order the sections (*dréchtu*) concerning *druimmne*.' The course of study was divided into *dréicht* or portions (see Thurneysen, *l.c.*, p. 115). According to one authority this course extended over 12 years, and in the last year certain metres were taught, which were called *druimmne súithe*, 'height (lit. ridge) of wisdom.' (See Thurneysen, *l.c.*, p. 119.)

54:5 *lit.* whether his journey would be truthful and good.

55:1 Not identified, so far as I know.

55:2 *i.e.* from the people of the *síd*, the fairies.

55:3 *lit.* these are thy journeys, the stages of thy journey.

55:4 'The name of a hill situated in the plain of Magh-Leamhna, otherwise called Clossach, in Tyrone,' O'Don. F.M., A.D. 111, note. Cf. Cnoc Báne la Airgiallu, LL. 24 a, S.

55:5 Not identified, so far as I know; but see Trip. Life; p. 311.

55:6 *sainredach* *lit.* special, seems sometimes, like *sain* itself, to have the meaning of 'specially fine, distinguished, excellent,' as in *inna cáine sainredchæ* 'of singular beauty,' Ml. 37 b, to. Or does it here mean 'a special couple,' *i.e.* separate, by themselves?

55:7 *airecol* n., borrowed from Lat. *oraculum*, has come to mean any detached house of one chamber; here it is a treasure-house.

55:8 Lit. it was done so.

Gaelic omitted...

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#### **IV. These are the events that brought about the telling of 'Mongan's Frenzy.'** <sup>1</sup>

Findtigernd, <sup>2</sup> Mongán's wife, besought Mongán to tell her the simple truth of his adventures. He asked of her a respite of seven years. It was granted. Then that period arrived. The [15] men of Ireland had a great gathering at Usnech in Meath, the year of the death of Ciarán the son of the Carpenter, and of the slaying of Túathal Maelgarb, <sup>3</sup> and of the taking of the kingship by Diarmait. <sup>4</sup> The hosts were on (the hill of) Usnech. A great hail-storm came upon them there. Such was its greatness [20] that the one shower left twelve chief streams in Ireland for ever. Mongán with seven men arose and went from the cairn aside, and his queen and his shanachie Cairthide, son of Marcán. Then they saw something, a prominent stronghold

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with a frontage of ancient trees. They go to it. They went into the enclosure. They go into a marvellous house there. A covering of bronze was on the house, a pleasant bower over its windows. Seven conspicuous men were there. Within [5] the house there was a marvellous spread of quilts and covers, and of wonderful jewels. Seven vats of wine there were. Mongán was made welcome in the house. He stayed there. He became intoxicated. It was then and there that Mongán sang the 'Frenzy' to his wife, since he had [10] promised he would tell her something of his adventures. It seemed to them it was not very long they were in that house. They deemed it to be no more but one night. However, they were there a full year. When they awoke, they saw it was Rathmore <sup>1</sup> of Moy-Linny in which they were.

#### **Footnotes**

57:1 lit. The occasion of Mongán's 'Frenzy' this here. *Baile Mangáin* or Mongán's 'Frenzy' or 'Vision' was the title of a tale which is now lost; though one MS. (*H*) gives this title to the present tale. As to other tales called *Baile*, see O'Curry, MS. Materials, F. 385.

57:2 *i.e.* 'Fair Lady.' In the tale printed above, p. 46, 14, she is called *Breótigernd* 'Flame-Lady.'

57:3 According to the Four Masters these two events happened A-D. 538.

57:4 Diarmait, the son of Cerball or Cerrbél, became king of Ireland A.D. 539 (F.M).

58:1 Monggán's own palace in co. Antrim.

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**[Compert Mongáin ocus Serc Duibe-Lacha do Mongán.]**

Cf. D'Arbois de Jubainville, *Catalogue*, p. 206. MS. Book of Fermoy, p. 131 a.

Gaelic omitted...

## **[The Conception of Mongán and Dub-Lacha's Love for Mongán.]**

[25] 1. Once upon a time Fiachna Finn, son of Baetán, son of Murchertach, son of Muredach, son of Eogan, son of Niall, went forth from Ireland, until he came to Lochlann, over which Eolgarg Mór, son of Magar, was at that time king. There he found great respect and love and honour. And he

was not long there, when a disease seized the king of Lochlann, who asked of his leeches and physicians what would help him. And they told him there was in the world nothing that would help him, save a red-eared shining-white cow, which was to be boiled for him. And the people of Lochlann [5] searched for the cow, and there was found the single cow of Caillech Dub (Black Hag). Another cow was offered to her in its stead, but the hag refused. Then four were offered to her, viz., one cow for every foot, and the hag would not accept any other condition but that Fiachna should become [10] security. Now this was the hour and the time that messengers came for Fiachna Finn, the son of Baetán, and he went with those messengers, and took the kingship of Ulster, and was king for one year.

2. One day at the end of a year he heard cries of distress in [15] front of the fort, and he told (his men) to go and see who made those cries, and to let the person that made them into the house. And there was the hag from Lochlann come to demand her security. Fiachna knew her and bade her welcome and asked tidings of her. 'Evil tidings I have,' said the hag. 'The king [20] of Lochlann has deceived me in the matter of the four kine that were promised to me for my cow' 'I will give thee four kine on his behalf, O hag,' said Fiachna. But the hag said she would not take them. 'I will give twenty kine on his behalf' said Fiachna. 'I shall not take them,' said the hag. 'I will give [25] four times twenty kine,' said Fiachna, 'twenty kine for each cow' 'By my word,' said the hag, 'if all the kine of the province of Ulster were given to me, I should not take them, until thou come thyself to make war upon the king of Lochlann. As I have come to thee from the east, so do thou come on [30] a journey with me.'

3. Then Fiachna assembled the nobles of Ulster until he had ten equally large battalions, and went and announced battle to the men of Lochlann. And they were three days a-gathering unto the battle. And combat was made by the king of Lochlann [35] on the men of Ireland. And three hundred warriors fell

by Fiachna in the fight. And venomous sheep were let out of the king of Lochlann's tent against them, and on that day three hundred warriors fell by the sheep, and three hundred warriors fell on the second day. and three hundred on the third [5] day. That was grievous to Fiachna, and he said: 'Sad is the journey on which we have come, for the purpose of having our people killed by the sheep. For if they had fallen in battle or in combat by the host of Lochlann, we should not deem their fall a disgrace, for they would avenge themselves. Give me,' saith [10] he, 'my arms and my dress that I may myself go to fight against the sheep.' 'Do not say that, O King,' said they, for it is not meet that thou shouldst go to fight against them.' 'By my word,' said Fiachna, no more of the men of Ireland shall fall by them, till I myself go to fight against the sheep; and if I [15] am destined to find death there, I shall find it, for it is impossible to avoid fate; and if not, the sheep will fall by me.'

4. As they were thus conversing, they saw a single tall warlike man coming towards them. He wore a green cloak of one [20] colour, and a brooch of white silver in the cloak over his breast, and a satin shirt next his white skin. A circlet of gold around his hair, and two sandals of gold under his feet. And the warrior said: 'What reward wouldst thou give to him who would keep the sheep from thee?' 'By my word' said Fiachna, '[whatever [25] thou ask], provided I have it, I should give it' 'Thou shalt have it (to give),' said the warrior, and I will tell thee the reward.' 'Say the sentence,' said Fiachna. 'I shall say it,' said he; 'give me that ring of gold on thy finger as a token for me, when I go to Ireland to thy wife to sleep with her.' 'By my word,' [30] said Fiachna, 'I would not let one man of the men of Ireland fall on account of that condition.' 'It shall be none the worse for thee; for a glorious child shall be begotten by me there, and from thee he shall be named, even Mongan the Fair (Finn), son of Fiachna the Fair. And I shall go there in thy shape, so [35] that thy wife shall not be defiled by it. And I am Manannan, son of Ler, and thou shalt seize the kingship of Lochlann and of

the Saxons and Britons.' Then the warrior took a venomous hound 1 out of his cloak, and a chain upon it, and said: 'By my word, not a single sheep shall carry its head from her to the fortress of the king of Lochlann, and she will kill three hundred of the hosts of Lochlann, and thou shalt have what will come of [5] it.' The warrior went to Ireland, and in the shape of Fiachna himself he slept with Fiachna's wife, and in that night she became pregnant. On that day the sheep and three hundred of the nobles of Lochlann fell by the dog, and Fiachna seized the kingship of Lochlann and of the Saxons and Britons. [10]

5. Now, as to the Cailleach Dubh, Fiachna gave her her due, viz., seven castles with their territory and land, and a hundred of every cattle. And then he went into Ireland and found his wife big-bellied and pregnant, and when her time came, she bore a son. Now Fiachna the Fair had an attendant, whose [15] name was An Damh, and in that (same) night his wife brought forth a son, and they were christened together, and the son of Fiachna was named Mongan, and the son of the attendant was named Mac an Daimh. And there was another warrior reigning together with Fiachna the Fair, to wit Fiachna the Black, [20] son of Deman, <sup>2</sup> who lay heavily on his <sup>3</sup> rule. And to him in the same night a daughter was born, to whom the name Dubh-Lacha (Black Duck) White-hand was given, and Mongan and Dubh-Lacha were affianced to each other. When Mongan was three nights old, Manannan came for him and took him [25] with him to bring him up in the Land of Promise, and vowed that he would not let him back into Ireland before he were twelve years of age.

6. Now as to Fiachna the Black, son of Demsm, he watched his opportunity, and when he found that Fiachna the Fair, son [30] of Baedan, had with him but a small host and force, he went up to his stronghold, and burnt and destroyed it, and killed

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Fiachna himself, and seized the kingship of Ulster by force. <sup>1</sup> And all the men of Ulster desired Mongan to be brought to them when he was six years old, but Manannan did not bring him to Ulster till he had completed sixteen years. And then [5] he came to Ulster, and the men of Ulster made peace between themselves and Fiachna the Black, to wit, one-half of Ulster to Mongan, and Dubh-Lacha to be his wife and consort in retaliation for his father. And it was done so.

7. One day while Mongan and his wife were playing *fidchell*, [10] they saw a dark black-tufted little cleric at the door-post, who said: 'This inactivity <sup>2</sup> in which thou art, O Mongan, is not an inactivity becoming a king of Ulster, not to go to avenge thy father on Fiachna the Black, son of Deman, though Dubh-Lacha may think it wrong to tell thee so. For he has now but [15] a small host and force with him; and come with me thither, and let us burn the fortress, and let us kill Fiachna.' 'There is no knowing what luck <sup>3</sup> there may be on that saying, O cleric,' said Mongan, 'and we shall go with thee.' And thus it was done, for Fiachna the Black was killed by them. <sup>4</sup> Mongan seized [20] the kingship of Ulster, and the little cleric who had done the treason was Manannan the great and mighty.

8. And the nobles of Ulster were gathered to Mongan, and he said to them: 'I desire to go to seek boons <sup>5</sup> from the provincial kings of Ireland, that I

may get gold and silver and [25] wealth to give away.' 'That is a good plan,' said they. And he went forth into the provinces of Ireland, until he came to Leinster. And the king of Leinster at that time was Brandubh

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mac Echach. And he gave a hearty welcome to the king of Ulster, and they slept that night in the place, and when Mongan awoke on the morrow, he saw the fifty white red-eared kine, and a white calf by the side of each cow, and as soon as he saw them he was in love with them. And the king of [5] Leinster observed him and said to him: 'Thou art in love with the kine, O king,' saith he. 'By my word,' said Mongan, 'save the kingdom of Ulster, I never saw anything that I would rather have than them.' 'By my word,' said the king of Leinster, 'they are a match for Dubh-Lacha, for she is the one [10] woman that is most beautiful in Ireland, and those kine are the most beautiful cattle in Ireland, and on no condition in the world would I give them except on our making friendship without refusal.'

9. They did so, and each bound the other. And Mongan [15] went home and took his thrice (*sic*) fifty white kine with him. And Dubh-Lacha asked: 'What are the cattle that are the most beautiful that I ever saw? and he who got them,' saith she, '. . . , for no man got them except for . . . .' And Mangan told her how he had obtained the kine. And they [20] were not long there when they saw hosts approaching the place, and he that was there, even the king of Leinster. 'What hast thou come to seek?' said Mongan. 'For, by my word, if what thou seekest be in the province of Ulster, thou shalt have it.' 'It is, then,' said the king of Leinster. 'To seek Dubh-Lacha [25] have I come.'

10. Silence fell upon Mangan. And he said: 'I have never heard of any one giving away his wife.' 'Though thou hast not heard of it,' said Dubh-Lacha, 'give her, for honour is more lasting than life.' Anger seized Mangan, and he allowed the king of [30] Leinster to take her with him. Dubh-Lacha called the king of Leinster aside and said to him: 'Dost thou know, O king of Leinster, that the men and one half of Ulster would fall for my sake, except I had already given love to thee? And by my word! I shall not go with thee until thou grant me the sentence of my [35] own lips.' 'What is the sentence?' said the king of Leinster.

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[paragraph continues] 'Thy word to fulfil it!' saith she. The king of Leinster gave his word, with the exception of his being left . . . 1 'Then, said Dubh-Lacha, 'I desire that until the end of one year we be not brought for one night into the same house, and if in the [5] course of a day thou comest into the same

house with me, that thou shouldst not sit in the same chair with me, but sit in a chair over against me, for I fear the exceeding great love which I have bestowed upon thee, that thou mayst hate me, and that I may not again be acceptable to my own husband; for if we [10] are a-courting each other during this coming year, our love will not recede.'

11. And the king of Leinster granted her that condition, and he took her to his house, and there she was for a while. And for that while Mongan was in a wasting sickness continually. [15] And in the night in which Mongan had taken Duhh-Lacha, Mac an Daimh had taken her foster-sister, who was her trusty attendant, and who had gone into Leinster with Dubh-Lacha. So one day Mac an Daimh came into the house where Mongan was, and said: 'Things are in a [20] bad way with thee, <sup>2</sup> O Mongan,' saith he, 'and evil was thy journey into the Land of Promise to the house of Manannan, since thou hast learnt nothing there, except consuming food and practising foolish things, and it is hard on me that my wife has been taken into Leinster, since I have not made [25] "friendship without refusal" with the king of Leinster's attendant, as thou didst with the king of Leinster, thus being unable to follow thy wife.' 'No one deems that worse than I myself,' said Mongan.

12. And Mongan said to Mac an Daimh: 'Go,' saith he, [30] 'to the cave of the door, in which we left the basket of . . ., <sup>3</sup> and a sod from Ireland and another from Scotland in it, that I may go with thee on thy back; for the king of Leinster will

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ask of his wizards news of me, and they will say that I am with one foot in Ireland, and with the other in Scotland, and he will say that as long as I am like that he need not fear me.'

13. And in that way they set out. And that was the hour and time in which the feast of Moy-Liffey was held in Leinster, [5] and they came to the Plain of Cell Chamain in Leinster, and there beheld the hosts and multitudes and the king of Leinster going [10] past them to the feast, and they recognised him. 'That is sad, O Mac an Daimh,' said Mongan, 'evil is the journey on which we have come.' And they saw the holy cleric going so past them, even Tibraide, the priest of Cell Charnain, with his four gospels in his own hand, and the . . . <sup>1</sup> upon the back of a cleric by his side, and they reading their offices. And wonder seized Mac an Daimh as to what the cleric said, and he kept asking Mongan: 'What did he say?' Mongan said [15] it was reading, and he asked Mac an Daimh whether he understood a little of it. 'I do not understand,' said Mac an Daimh, 'except that the man at his back says "Amen, amen."'

14. Thereupon Mongan shaped a large river through the midst of the plain in front of Tibraide, and a large bridge eo across it. And Tibraide marvelled at that and began to bless himself 'Tis here,' he said, 'my father was born and my grandfather, and never did I see a river here. But as the river has got there, it is well there is a bridge across it.' They proceeded to the bridge, and when they had reached [25] its middle, it fell under them, and Mongan snatched the gospels out of Tibraide's hand, and sent them 2 down the river. And he asked Mac an Daimh whether he should drown them. 'Certainly, let them be drowned!' said Mac an Daimh 'We will not do it,' said Mangan. 'We will let them down the [30] river the length of a mile, till we have done our task in the fortress.'

15. Mongan took on himself the shape of Tibraide, and gave Mac an Daimh the shape of the cleric, with a large

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tonsure on his head, and the . . . on his back. And they go onward before the king of Leinster, who welcomed Tibraide and gave him a kiss, and "Tis long that I have not seen thee, O Tibraide,' he said, 'and read the gospel to us and [5] proceed before us to the fortress. And let Ceibhin Cochlach, the attendant of my chariot, go with thee. And the queen, the wife of the king of Ulster, is there and would like to confess to thee.' And while Mongan was reading the gospel, Mac an Daimh would say 'Amen, amen! The hosts said they [10] had never seen a priest who had but one word except that cleric; for he said nothing but 'amen.'

16. And Mongan went onward to the front of the fortress in which Dubh-Lacha was. And she recognised him. And Mac an Daimh said: 'Leave the house all of ye, so that [15] the queen may make her confession.' And her nurse or foster sister ventured out of boldness to stay there. Mac an Daimh closed his arms around her and put her out, and said that no one should be with the queen except the woman that had come with her. And he closed the bower after them [20] and put the glazen door to it, and opened the window of glass. And he lifted his own wife into bed with him, but no sooner than Mongan had taken Dubh-Lacha with him. And Mongan sat down by her shoulder and gave her three kisses, and carried her into bed with him, and had his will and pleasure [25] of her. And when that had been done, the hag who guarded the jewels, who was in the corner, began to speak; for they had not noticed her until then. And Mongan sent a swift magical breath at her, so that what she had seen was no longer clear to her. 'That is sad,' said the hag, 'do not rob [30] me of Heaven, O holy cleric! For the thought that I have uttered is wrong, and accept my repentance, for a lying vision has appeared to me, and I dearly love myfoster-child.' 'Come hither to me, hag!'

said Mongan, 'and confess to me.' The hag arose, and Mongan shaped a sharp spike in the chair, [35] and the hag fell upon the spike, and found death. 'A blessing on thee, O Mongan,' said the queen, 'it is a good thing for us

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to have killed the woman, for she would have told what we have done.'

17. Then they heard a knocking at the door, and 'tis he that was there, even Tibraide, and three times nine men with him. The doorkeepers said: 'We never saw a year in [5] which Tibraides were more plentiful than this year. Ye have a Tibraide within and a Tibraide without' 'Tis true,' said Mongan. <sup>1</sup> 'Mongan has come in my shape. Come out,' said he, 'and I will reward you, and let yonder clerics be killed, for they are noblemen of Mongan's that have been [10] put into the shape of clerics.' And the men of the household came out and killed the clerics, and twice nine of them fell. And the king of Leinster came to them and asked them what course they were on. 'Mongan,' said they, 'has come in Tibraide's shape, and Tibraide is in the place.' And the king [15] of Leinster charged them, and Tibraide reached the church of Cell Chamain, and none of the remaining nine escaped without a wound.

18. And the king of Leinster came to his house, and then Mongan departed. And the king asked: 'Where is Tibraide?' [20] saith he. 'It was not Tibraide that was here,' said the woman, 'but Mongan, since you will hear it.' 'Were you with Mongan, girl?' said he. 'I was,' said she, 'for he has the greatest claim on me.' 'Send for Tibraide,' said the king, 'for . . . <sup>2</sup> we have chanced to kill his people.' And Tibraide was brought to them, and Mongan went home and did not come again until the end of a quarter, and during that time he was in a wasting sickness.

19. And Mac an Daimh came to him and said to him: 'Tis wearisome to me,' said he, 'to be without my wife through a clown like myself, since I have not made "friendship without [30] refusal" with the king of Leinster's attendant.' 'Go thou for me,' said Mongan, 'to get news to Ráith Descirt of Bregia, where Dubh-Lacha of the White Hand is, for I am not myself

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able to go.' <sup>1</sup> Thereafter Dubh-Lacha said: 'Let Mongan come to me,' said she, 'for the king of Leinster is on a journey around Leinster, and Ceibhin Cochlach, the attendant of the king's chariot, is with me and keeps telling me to escape, and [5] that he himself would come with me. And Mongan behaves in a weak manner,' <sup>2</sup> said she. And Mac an Daimh went to incite Mongan.

20. Thereupon Mongan set out to Raith Descirt of Bregia, and he sat down at the shoulder of the girl, and a gilded chess-board [10] was brought to them, and they played. And Dubh-Lacha bared her breasts to Mangan, and as he looked upon them, he beheld the great paps, which were soft and white, and the middle small and shining-white. And desire of the girl came upon him. And Dubh-Lacha observed it. Just then the [15] king of Leinster with his hosts was drawing near the fortress, and the fortress was opened before him. And the king of Leinster asked of the girl whether Mongan had been in the house. She said he had been. 'I wish to obtain a request of thee, girl,' said the king of Leinster. 'It shall be granted. [20] Except thy being with me till the year is ended, there is nothing that thou mayst ask which I will not grant thee.' 'If that be so,' said the king, 'tell me when thou longest for Mongan son of Fiachna; for when Mangan has gone, thou wilt long for him.'

[25] 21. At the end of a quarter Mongan returned, and he was longing for her; and all the hosts of the place were there at the time. Then the hosts of the place came out, and Mongan turned back from the fortress and went home. And that quarter he was in a wasting sickness. And the nobles of Ulster [30] assembled into one place and offered Mongan to go with him to make battle for the sake of his wife. 'By my word,' said Mongan, the woman that has been taken from me through my own folly, no woman's son of the men of Ulster shall fall for

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her sake in bringing her out, until, through my own craftiness, I myself bring her with me.'

22. And in that way the year passed by, and Mongan and Mac an Daimb set out to the king of Leinster's house. There were the nobles of Leinster going into the place. and a great [5] feast was being prepared towards the marriage of Dubh-Lacha. And he 1 vowed he would marry her. And they came to the green outside. 'O Mongan,' said Mac an Daimh, 'in what shape shall we go?' And as they were there, they see the hag of the mill, to wit, Cuimne. And she was a hag as tall as a [10] weaver's beam, 2 and a large chain-dog with her licking the mill-stones, with a twisted rope around his neck, and Brothar was his name. And they saw a hack mare with an old pack-saddle upon her, carrying corn and flour from the mill.

23. And when Mongan saw them, he said to Mac an Daimh: [15] 'I have the shape in which we will go,' said he, 'and if I am destined ever to obtain my wife, I shall do so this time.' 'That becomes thee, O noble prince,' [said Mac an Daimh]. 'And come, O Mac an Daimh, and call Cuimne of the mill out to me to converse with me.' 'It is three score years [said Cuimne] [20] since any one has asked me to converse with him.' And she came out, the dog

following her, and when Mongan saw them, he laughed and said to her: 'If thou wouldst take my advice, I would put thee into the shape of a young girl, and thou shouldst be as a wife with me or with the King of Leinster.' 'I [25] will do that certainly,' said Cuimne. And with the magic wand he gave a stroke to the dog, which became a sleek white lap-dog, the fairest that was in the world, with a silver chain around its neck and a little bell of gold on it, so that it <sub>3</sub> would have fitted into the palm of a man. And he gave a stroke to [30] the hag, who became a young girl, the fairest of form and make of the daughters of the world, to wit, Ibbell of the Shining Cheeks,

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daughter of the king of Munster. And he himself assumed the shape of Aedh, son of the king of Connaught, and Mac an Daimh he put into the shape of his attendant. And he made a shining-white palfrey with crimson hair, and of the pack-saddle [5] he made a gilded saddle with variegated gold and precious stones. And they mounted two other mares in the shape of steeds, and in that way they reached the fortress.

24. And the door-keepers saw them and told the king of Leinster that it was Aed the Beautiful, son of the king of [10] Connaught. and his attendant, and his wife Ibbell of the Shining Cheek. daughter of the king of Munster, exiled and banished from Connaught. that had come under the protection of the king of Leinster, and he did not wish to come with a greater host or multitude. And the door-keeper made the announcement, [15] and the king came to meet them, and welcomed them. And the king of Leinster called the son of the king of Connaught to his shoulder. 'That is not the custom with us' said the son of the king of Connaught, 'but that *he* should sit by the side of the king who is the second best man in the palace, and [20] next to thee I am the second best in the house, and by the side of the king I will be.'

25. And the drinking-house was put in order. And Mongan put a love-charm <sub>1</sub> into the cheeks of the hag, and from the look which the king of Leinster cast on her he was filled with her [25] love, so that there was not a bone of his of the size of an inch, but was filled with love of the girl. And he called his attendant to him and said to him: 'Go to where the wife of the king of Connaught's son is, and say to her "the king of Leinster has bestowed great love upon thee, and that a king is better than [30] a king's heir."' And Mongan understood the whispering, and said to Cuimne: 'There is an attendant coming from the king of Leinster with a message to thee, and I know the secret message which he brings, and if thou wouldst take my advice, thou wouldst not be with a worse man than myself or the king

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of Leinster.' 'I have no choice <sub>1</sub> of bridegroom, whichever of you will be husband to me.' 'If that be so,' said Morgan, 'when he comes to thee, say that by his gifts and precious things thou wilt know him who loves thee, and ask him, for the drinking-horn which he brings thee.' [5]

26. And the king of Leinster's attendant came to converse with her, and said: 'Here is a noble horn brought to thee.' We should know him who loves us by gifts and precious things.' And the king of Leinster said to the attendant: 'Give her my horn.' But the king's household said: 'Do not [10] give thy treasures to the wife of the King of Connaught's son.' 'I will give them,' said the king of Leinster, 'for the woman and my treasures will come to me.' And Mac an Daimh takes the horn from her and whatever else she got of treasures till the morning. [15]

27. And Mongan said to Cuimne: 'Ask the king of Leinster for his girdle.' And the girdle was of such a nature that neither sickness nor trouble would seize the side on which it was. And she demanded the girdle, and the king of Leinster gave it her, and Mac an Daimh forthwith took it from her. [20] 'And now say to the king of Leinster's attendant, if the (whole) world were given thee, thou wouldst not leave thy own husband for him.' And the attendant told that to the king of Leinster, who said: 'What is it you notice?' 'Are you in the house . . .?' said they. 'You know this woman by my side, to wit, [25] Dubh-Lacba of the White Hands, daughter of Fiachna Dubh son of Deman. I took her from him on terms of "friendship without refusal," and if thou like, I would exchange with thee.' And great anger and ferocity seized him, <sub>2</sub> and he said: 'If I had brought steeds and studs with me, it would be right to ask [30] them of me. However, it is not right to refuse a lord . . ., though I am loath it should be so, take her to thee.' And as they made the exchange, Mongan gave three kisses to the girl,

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and said: 'Every one would say that we did not make the exchange from our hearts, if I did not give these kisses.' And they indulged themselves until they were drunk and hilarious.

28. And Mac an Daimh arose and said: 'It is a great shame [5] that no one puts drink into the hand of the king of Connaught's son.' And as no one answered him, he took the two best steeds that were in the fortress, and Mongan put swiftness of wind into them. And Mongan placed Dubh-Lacha behind him, and Mac an Daimh his own wife, and they set forth. And when on [10] the morrow the household of the king of Leinster arose, they saw the cloak of the hag, and the grey tall hag on the bed of the king of Leinster. And they saw the dog with a twisted halter round his neck, and they saw the hack mare and the pack-saddle. . . . And the people laughed and awoke the

king [15] of Leinster, who saw the hag by his side and said: 'Art thou the grey-backed hag of the mill?' 'I am,' said she. 'Pity that I should have slept with thee, O Cuimne!'

### Footnotes

73:1 *brot-chú*, perhaps a mastiff. See Glossary.

73:2 He was ruler of the *Dál Fiatach*. See the Four Masters, A.D. 597 and 622.

73:3 *i.e.* Fiachna Finn's.

74:1 I can make nothing of *ulagh* in the phrase *don ulagh sin*. As to this final battle between the two Fíachnas, see the Four Masters, A.D. 622.

74:2 lit. silence (*tocht*).

74:3 I read *ca sén*.

74:4 According to the Four Masters Fiachna the Black was slain A.D. 624 by Condad Cerr, lord of the Scotch Dál Riada in the battle of Ard Corainn.

74:5 *faighdhe*, O. Ir. *foigde ex \*fo-guide*.

76:1 I doubt whether to read *co tibhradh* or *co tí bráth* 'till judgment.'

76:2 Cf. '*Cindus atáthar annsin indiú?*' 'How are things with thee (lit. over there) to-day?' Aislinge MeicConglinne, p. 61, 1.

76:3 *gualaigh*, perhaps from *gúala*, a shoulder-basket?

77:1 I cannot translate *sceota na n-aidhbheagh* or *aidhbheadh*.

77:2 *i.e.* Tibraide and his attendant.

79:1 The MS. has Tibraide.

79:2 I do not understand *mur aith*.

80:1 The MS. has *sinsiubhail*, the dot over the first s being a punctum delens.

80:2 *lit.* it is weak what M. does.

81:1 *i.e.* the king of Leinster.

81:2 *lit.* a weaver's beam (*garmnach*) of a tall hag.

81:3 *viz.* the dog.

82:1 Instead of *blicht* I read *bricht*.

83:1 For *túgha* Father Henebry conjectures *togha*.

83:2 *viz.* Mongan.

## VI. From the Annals

(a)

Mongán mac Fíachna Lurgan ab Artur filio Bicoir Pretene lapide percussus interit, unde dictum est--Bec Boirche [20] dixit:

'Is fúar in gáeth dar 'Ile,  
dosfuil ócu Cind-Tire:  
dogénat gním n-amnas de,  
mairbfit Mongán mac Fíachnæ.

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Land Chlúana Airthir indíu,  
amra in cethrar forsriudad:  
Cormac Cáem fri imfochid,  
ocus Illand mac Fiachach.

Ocus in dias ele [5]  
dia fognad mór de thúathaib:  
Mongán mac Fiachnai Lurgan,  
ocus Rónán mac Túatheil.'

(b)

From the Annals of Clonmacnois.

Quoted by O'Donovan, FM. vol. i. p. 243, note z.

A.D. 624. Mangan mac Fiaghna, a very well-spoken man, and much given to the wooing of women, was killed by one ??? [Arthur ap] Bicoir, a Welshman, with a stone.

## VII

### Irische Texte iii. page 89.

'A Mongáin, a Manandáin,  
ní minec bar merugud  
  isin brug co m-beócraidi  
ó Tuind Clidna comfada  
is torachta in tebugud [20]  
  co Trácht n-álaind n-Eóthaili.'

'O Monagán, O Manannán,  
Your wandering is not frequent  
  In the land with living heart  
From Tonn Clidna of even length [25]  
The . . . is winding  
To the beautiful strand of Eothaile.'

Quoted as an example of the metre called Casbairdne seisedach (šedradhach). Tonn Clidna (Toun Cleena) is a loud surge in the bay of Glandore, co. Cork. See its dinnshenchas, Rev. [30]

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[paragraph continues] Celt. xv. p. 437. Tracht Eóthaili (Trawohelly) is on the coast of Sligo.

## VIII

### Irische Texte iii. p. 87.

[5] 'I m-Bendchur  
atá Mongán mac Fíachna:  
is le[is] atá Conchobur  
ar grafaind scáilte scíathcba.'

'In Bangor  
[10] Is Mongán son of Fiachna:  
With him is Conchobur  
At the contest of shield-splitting.'

Quoted as an example of the metre called *ae freslíge becc*. *Is leis* is Stokes' conjecture for *isle* of the *isle* of the MS.

## IX

**From Gilla Modutu's poem *Senchas Ban*, written A.D. 1141,  
Book of Leinster, p. 140 a, 29.**

'Ingen do Chammáin Dub-Lacha,  
lennán Mongáin, maith a ciand,  
[20] Colgo, Conall, ba lucht láthair,  
Cáintigern a máthair mall:  
ingen maic Demmáin Dub-Lacha  
na n-gellám cen tacha thall.'

Cammán's daughter was Dub-Lacha,  
[25] The beloved of Mongán, their offspring was good,  
Colgo, Conall, that were folk of strength,  
Cáintigern was his gentle mother.  
Daughter of Demmán's son was Dub-Lacha  
Of the white arms, without fault, of yore.'

[30] Cammán Dub, the daughter of Furudrán mac Bécce, of the royal race of the Ui Turtri, was the wife of Fiachna Dub mac Demmáin (LL: 140 a, 27).

Unless *máthair mall* may mean 'grandmother,' we must translate as I have done, and refer the *a* 'his' to Mongán.

[35] As to Dub-Lacha being called 'of the white arms,' cf. her by-name Láimhghel, p. 61, 10 above.

## X

### From Ms. Laud 613, p. 21.

Mura cecinit.

'Coinne Mongain is Coluim caim  
maic Feidlimthe an ardnaoim [5]  
a Carraic Eolairg co m-bloidth  
canuid eoiagh a leabruib.

De dardain tainic gan mairg  
Mongan co Carruic Eolairg  
d' acallaim Coluim Cille [10]  
a Tir tredaig Tairngaire.

Ni fúair Mongan do tognam  
ag techt do d' fechain nime  
acht a cenn--mor in soc[h]ar--  
fa cochall Coluim Cille.' [15]

Muru (of Fothain <sub>1</sub>) cecinit

The meeting of Mongan and beloved Colum  
The son of Fedlimid, the noble saint,  
At Carraic Eolairg <sub>2</sub> with fame  
Wise men sing in books. [20]

On a Thursday without woe  
Mongan came to Carrait Eolairg  
To converse with Comm Cille,  
From the flock-abounding Land of Promise.

Mongan found not any help [25]  
When he went to see Heaven,  
But his head--great the profit!  
Under Cohan Cille's cowl.'

### Footnotes

87:1 Now Fahan, co. Donegal. Muru died about 650.

87:2 On Lough Foyle.

**From MS. Laud 615, p. 18.**

**Mongan cecinitdo Colum Cille.**

Caomh-Colum cáidh ciuin cubaid cobsaid comdalach com ramach  
cumachtach Cille mirbuilech,

[5] ag nach fail gradh ilselba,  
cabras da mainib gan dimda  
gach dam imda ilarda,  
nach fail *tarut* na <sub>1</sub> fich na ferg,  
gnais derg lethan lainerdha,  
[10] corp gel ar n-derbad a rúin,  
ocus clú gan imharbus,  
rosg glas gan locht is gan lasg  
ocus folt cas coinnelda. <sub>2</sub>

Foghar gotha Coluim Cille,  
[15] lor a binne os gach cleir,  
co tend cuig *fichet déc* ceimenn,  
aidble remenn, sedh ba reil.

Mac Eit[h]ni is Fei[d]limid finn  
cuigi romcinn Dia do cein  
a Tir Tarrngaire na finn,  
[20] mar a cantar fír gan bréig.

Tri caoguit inis rea rim  
ma docuired on rig *réd*, <sub>3</sub>  
in gach innsi dar mo leighend  
tri coibheis Eirenn fodein.

[25] Mar domsdíur mac De gu haghmar,  
om tir fein tang ane  
gu Carraig Eolairg gan mebail,  
cu bord Locha Febail fein. p. 89  
Loch Febail fial nocho míbladh  
ag *dílad* aidhed <sub>1</sub> o Néill.

Colum Cille cáin gan gó,  
briathra an laoich gersat ra ló,  
anté nach cabair na fainn [5]

noca carann 2 caom-Choluim.  
Caomh-Cholum caidh.

Beloved, chaste, gentle, just, firm, disputant, combative, powerful,  
miraculous Colum Cille,

'Who loveth not many possessions, [10]  
Who with his gifts without displeasure  
Helpeth every numerous multitudinous band.  
Over thee there is neither wrath nor anger.  
Red broad radiant face,  
White body that hath proved mysteries, [15]  
And fame without sin,  
Grey eye without fault and without . . . ,  
And curly luminous hair.

The sound of Colum Cilia's voice--  
Abundant its sweetness above every train, [20]  
To the end of fifteen score paces,  
Vastness of courses! it was clear. 3

The son of Ethne and of Fedlimid the Fair,  
To him God sent me from afar,  
From the Land of Promise of the blessed, [25]  
Where truth is sung without falsehood.

Thrice fifty isles are counted,  
As they were set by the bright King;  
In every isle, by my lore!  
There is three times the size of Erin herself. [30]

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As the Son of God directed me prosperously,  
From my own land I have come yesterday  
To Carraic Eolairg without disgrace,  
To the edge of Lough Foyle itself.  
[5] Loch Foyle, hospitable without ill-fame,  
Contenting the guests of the Ui Néill.

Colum Cille, fair without falsehood,  
Though the words of the warrior were . . .  
He that doth not help the weak,  
[10] He is no friend of beloved Colum.'

## Footnotes

88:1 This *na* is superfluous; it spoils the metre.

88:2 [30] In the notes on Féline Oengusso, p. ci., these lines are as follows:

"Colam cáincruth cumachtach,  
drech derg lethan lainderda,  
corp geal, clú cen imarba,  
folt cass, suil glas chaindelta.

88:3 Read *réil*.

89:1 Read *áighadh*.

89:2 Read *cara*.

89:3 This quatrain is also found in Three Middle-Irish Homilies, p. 102, in Félire Oengusso, p. ci, and in Goidelica, p. 163. Instead of *cóic fichet déc* read *cóic cét déac*. *Déac* having become a monosyllable, *cét* was changed into *fichet* to make up the seven syllables.