

The Early Legends Of Ireland.

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1. General Remarks.

The legends and historical statements are here examined without submission to the chronology and genealogies framed by Irish historians to connect Noah with the men of their own time, save as a measure of relative antiquity in their opinion. Their systems were drawn from ancient legends, tales, and poems such as appear in abstract in the Dindsenchas, in addition to those which have survived to this day. These I examine so far as they have been translated and published. It is not likely that the remainder will differ widely from the part already published.

My conclusion is that the Fomorach, Firbolg, and Tuatha De Danann were clans of the Gael who fought with each other about the beginning of the Christian era, much as their descendants did in historical times, and that the traditions do not go much farther back except in a very shadowy way.

In dealing with historical legends I keep two points in mind : that the tribal relations of tribes dwelling near each other are fairly correctly represented by their pedigrees, though the early parts of those pedigrees may be obviously false, and that tribes rose over and sank beneath each other as they rose and sank in historical times. Thus the Gregry, Kerry, Conmaicne of Mayo and Galway, and the Corcamoe are closely related in origin, though the pedigrees connecting them with the Irian kings of Ulster cannot be trusted : they stand to the Eremonians as a body in a much less intimate relationship than they do to each other. So the Sodhans and Corcamoe are grouped as of Irian descent in respect of the Hy Many, but as between themselves the Corcamoe are more closely related to the Conmaicne than to the Sodhans.

As to tribes far distant from each other, the pedigrees deserve little credit. The Calry of Connaught and the Corcalee of Munster, the Kerry of Connaught and the Kerry of Munster, cannot be accepted as close relations in the absence of additional evidence.

Taking the historical period from the beginning of the fifth century to the Anglo-Norman Conquest, I find no great displacement of any tribe by a conqueror. Tribes have been made to acknowledge supremacy, but have not been suddenly cleared off a large tract of country. The process was gradual encroachment on the weaker tribes, who remained within narrower limits or in an inferior condition, and by degrees died out or were lost in other names. Thus the descendants of Muredach Mulleathan took new clan names and acquired hereditary estates in Moy Ai and overflowed upon their neighbours, the Kerry, the Delbna of Sid Nenta, the Corcamoe, upon part of Conmaicne, and even into Cruffon, the kingdom of O'Mulrony, a king of the Hy Many race. Later Maelruanaid, son of Tadg of the White Horse, by a partition with O'Conor got the great kingdom of Moylurg, which was made up at the expense of the Kerry of Artech, of the former Calry landowners of Moylurg, and of the Hy Ailella. And this new tribe had a great offshoot in the MacDonoghs. Thus the Hy Fiachrach spread from Carra and Tirawley over Tireragh, obliterating the Calry except in Coolcarney. A similar process of settlement of tribes descended from Torlogh Mor was in operation when Richard de Burgo was put in possession of Connaught. The race of Brian Luignech kept their settlement in Carbury by accepting the FitzGerald supremacy, and eventually became powerful. But for that conquest another hundred years would have shown O'Conor as the chief of a Sil Torley,

to whom the Sil Murray would have occupied the position which the Kerry, Conmaicne, &c., formerly occupied towards them.

Disappearance of a powerful tribe and appearance of another in its place, without legends of great conquests which seem true, lead to suspicion that the new tribe is a transformation, or a clan of the old which has attained supremacy within the tribe. The Hy Many, the Gregry, and the Conmaicne Rein illustrate this.

The case of the Hy Many is very clear, and, like that of the Gregry, is mentioned farther on. The case of the Conmaicne Rein is nearly as clear as that of the Hy Many. The Book of Fenagh is not authority for history, but is very good authority for the legends of the Conmaicne Rein regarding their origin. It tells us that St. Caillin found the Conmaicne of Dunmore quarrelling, and induced them to keep the peace and let him get them more land. He went to Moy Rein, where he converted Aedh Dubh son of Fergna, and procured from him land for the Conmaicne, Aedh Dubh was too black for his own taste, and was by St. Caillin's intercession given the shape of St. Rioc, and became Aedh Find in future. [1] He aspired to the championship of the Glasry, a tribe descended from Niall of Nine Hostages, dwelling in the country of Cairbre, the Barony of Granard. The Attacottic List mentions Glasry as an extinct Milesian tribe and Glasry as an Attacottic tribe. [2] Their own tradition shows that there were no Conmaicne in Moy Rein until the sixth century.

These facts point to adoption by these Conmaicne of a pedigree connecting them with those of Dunmore, probably by identification of one of their ancestors with one of the same name in the Dunmore family pedigree.

The Coir Anmann gives Cu and Lugaid Conmac as alternative names of Conmac, son of Fergus. [3] In the Book of Fenagh, Conmac and Lugaid Conmac are two men separated by several generations. The Irish traditions show that Hy Conmaic, *i.e.* Conmaicne, existed before Fergus's time.

Moreover, Aedh Dubh of the Glasry seems to have been identified with the Aedh Find of Brefne, and the ancient Milesian Glasry to have been treated as Attacots and again as Milesians.

The Attacottic List quoted above is a list of Attacottic tribes taken from the Book of Glendalough with D. MacFirbis's notes thereon, which deserves attention. It seems to be the result of investigation to ascertain what free tribes existed before the Attacottic Revolution, and what Attacottic tribes took their places. The Attacots are said to have distributed themselves over Erin after the extinction of her free men, namely, forty-six tribes who were replaced by forty-seven servile tribes.

I understand that the compiler found that the forty-six tribes came by their relationships into the genealogies of the descendants of Breogan. They became extinct by the operation of the Revolution. Consequently the tribes found in existence in and immediately after the Attacottic period were not recognised as of Milesian descent, because, according to the theory of extinction, the tribes then existing could not be free tribes.

I find among the extinct free tribes Benntraighe, Cathraighe, Condraighe Glasraighe, Bibraighe, and servile tribes of the same name. The Cathraighe of the Domnonian race have certainly been transformed into the Milesian Hy Many.

The free Gabhraighe are not represented among the Attacottic tribes, but in Queen Meav's time there was a Domnonian tribe called Gabhraighe of the Suck, which does not appear

again in later legends. The free Calraighe are not represented among the Attacots, but the Calraighe of history appear at an early date, with an evidently factitious pedigree connecting them with Leinster and Munster tribes.

A tract on Cairpre Cinnchait and the Athach Tuatha [4] gives a different distribution of the Attacots and names only thirty-two tribes, under other names in some cases. The Clann Umoir tribes are wholly omitted by that name. The Tuath Rois is placed in Tirawley and Tireragh. The Life of St. Mochua of Balla [5] quotes an old poem which calls the clans of Fiachra by the name Clanns of Ross, who was a grandson of Ailill Molt, or a son of Erc Culbuido. Those clans in the sixth century had a supremacy over the Hy Fiachrach. Further, it seems to me that what are called in the former tract extinct free tribes are called Attacots in this.

2. The Fomorach, Tuatha De Danann, and Cruithne.

The earliest notices of the Fomorians show them to have been chiefly in the north of Ireland. Partholan defeats them in the north. Nemed defeats them in Ulster and in Connaught, where he kills two of their kings, Gann and Sengann, names which recur as those of kings of the Fir Domnann. The Fomorians get the better of the Nemedians, have their chief fortress on Tory Island, and receive their tributes near the Erne. From Partholan and Nemed descend the Domonians and the Danonians. Irial Faidh defeats them and kills their king in Teanmogh ; and in Teffa defeats and kills Stirn, son of Dubh, son of Fomor. Eochy Mean, Fomorian, king of the northern half of Ireland, kills Sobhairce, King of Ireland. Oengus Olmucada kills Smiorgall, king of the Fomorach, at Ardagh. Sirna kills their king Ceasarn in Breg. Cical, descendant of Uadmoir, a Fomorian, is said to have been in Ireland before Partholan, with whom he fought a battle at Magh Itha in Ulster. [6]

The Tale of the Second Battle of Moytura makes them a northern race and associates them with the Danonians by marriage. [7] The descents given there and those given by Keating differ, but make the connection equally close. Two men were named Bres, son of Elathan, who seem to be sometimes confused. The Tale of the First Battle tells us that Bres, son of Elathan, son of Delbaeth, was killed in the battle, and that Bres, son of Elathan, son of Neid, was elected king of the Danonians after the battle, reigned seven years, and died on Sliabh Gamh, whereupon Nuadat resumed the sovereignty. [8] This Bres seems to be a Fomorian king who established a supremacy after the first battle, lost it, and was killed in the second battle. He is first cousin of Balor.

Emer, wife of Cuchullin, is one of “ the daughters of Tethra’s nephew, i.e. Forgall, the king of the Fomori.” [9]

When Cuchullin reaches the Dun of Ruad, King of the Isles, Conall Cernach and Laegaire have arrived just before him to levy tribute, because the Isles of the foreigners were then under tribute to Ulster. He rescues Ruad’s daughter, who had been assigned as tribute to the Fomori, by killing three Fomori who came for her. [10] Conall Cearnach and Laegaire Buadach were there at that time to levy tribute for Ulster. There seems to be no reason why Conall and Laegaire should be there levying tribute and taking no notice of the payment of tribute to the Fomori. It is like an edition of the story when the Fomori were no longer recognised as Ulstermen. In the Courtship of Ferb, Conor Mac Nessa brings a body of Fomorach against Gerg.

A genealogical table constructed from Keating’s History and the Tale of the Second Battle shows how the Tribes of De Danu break up into Delbhna, Clann Cein or Cianachta, and

Luighne. The Danu from whom the race takes its name is supposed to have been a woman far down in the line. Unless there was an earlier Danu, this clan is improperly named.

De Domnu and De Danu may be gods, but it is most unlikely that they are, and that in these two instances alone Irish tribes are called after a god and not after an ancestor. The Domnu from whom the Fer Domnann took their name does not appear in legend unless Indech Mac De Domnann was his son. Mac De Domnann is more likely to be a surname.

The name Fomor in the Irian genealogy supplies an origin for Fomorach, as Eogan did for Eoganach in the same country. There may have been many Fomors in the clan.

Stirn, son of Dubh, son of Fomor, can hardly be other than the brother of Sorge McDuff, killed by Irial Faidh at the same place. [11] Sorge looks like an English form of Sithrige. Possibly the authority for the Clonmacnoise entry called him only son of Dubh, and the annalist supplies the name. Taking him for the Fomor of the Irian genealogy, the entries are a good illustration of expansion and dislocation of legends in the formation of history of proper duration.

From the death of Irial Faidh to the death of Argetmar was 701 years according to Keating, 932 years according to the Four Masters. Stirn or Sithrige is thus taken 800 or 1000 years before his proper time.

The Fomorach, being Irian, are the same race as the Cruithne of Ulster and Connaught. The Cruithne helped the Domnonian Crimhthann Sciathbhel, the King of Leinster, to subdue the British tribe called Tuath Fidga. They became powerful and were driven away by Eremon, except six families who were let stay in Breg, to whom are attributed necromancy spells and omens, as to the Tuatha De Danann. [12] This attribution has been ground of attribution to the Tuatha De Danann of a higher civilisation, or of greater skill in arts and higher knowledge than the Firbolgs and Milesians possessed. It may point equally to inferiority. The Badagas of the Nilgiris regard the Kurumbar with great awe because they attribute to the Kurumbar extraordinary powers of necromancy. The Badagas are civilised Canarese people who came from Mysore and occupied a great part of the hills. The Kurumbar are a degraded jungle tribe, remnant, it is supposed, of the very early dominant race.

The expelled Cruithne went to Scotland and founded the Pictish kingdom. The "Irish Nennius" describes the Cruithne who came to Leinster as "the race of Geleoin the son of Ercol." [13] When driven out they were given as wives the widows of the sons of Miled, who had been drowned with Donn.

The wife of Crimhthann Nia Nair was Narthuathchaech, daughter of Lotan, of the Pict-people (do Chruithentuaith, "Silva Gadelica"), Narthuathchaech, out of the Sidhes or of the Pict-folk (a Sidaib no do Chruithentuaith). [14]

The Tuatha De Danann are very closely associated with the Cruithne of Leinster. Eremon drives them out like the Cruithne, and the Eremonians intermarry with them. It is evidently the same legend and the same people.

Among the Fomorian allies of Bres are Goll and Irgoll. Ros Guill and Ross Iorguill adjoin in Donegal.

The Cruithne of Leinster are called Sil nGeleoin and Clanna Geleoin and Fir Geleoin. [15] The Tuath Gaileoin appear in the Attacotlic List in Leinster. They survived to later days, and left their name to Morgallion iu Meath. Another branch has left its name to Gallen in Mayo.

In each case Luighne accompany Gailenga, and we find Lune beside Morgallion and Leyny beside Gallen. The Luighne of Meath once occupied the greater part of Meath and parts of Westmeath and Co. Dublin.

The Luighne of Tara were subjects of Cairbre Nia Fer. [16] Tigernach mentions that they killed Cahir Mor. Cormac Mac Art is restored by Tadhg, son of Cian, ancestor of the Cianachta ; the sons of Uirgriu, of the Luighne of Tara, kill Finn Mac Cumal. [17] This seems to represent the rise of the power of the Cianachta, who are mentioned at close of the sixth century by Tigernach.

According to the Attacottic List, a tribe called Crecraige were in the country of Corann, which then extended east to Moytura, and covered the baronies of Corran, Leyny, Gallen, Coolavin, and part of Costello. In St. Patrick's time they seem to have lost Tirerrill and a small part of Corran, then held by Hy Ailella, a cognate tribe or clan. They appear in his life at the Strand of Ballysadare and at Killaraght near Lough Gara. Their name looks like a derivative of Ciric, son of Cruithne, the mythical ancestor of the Cruithne. South of them the Tuath Cruithnech occupied the county of Roscommon south of Lough Gara to Briole beyond Athleague, and the part of Mayo which lies east of the barony of Carra ; they covered the countries of the Ciarraige and of the Delbna of Sid Nenta. In the Dindsenchas of Carnfree the Cruithne of Croghan and the Tuatha Taiden and the Firdomnann accompany Conall of Croghan. According to D. MacFirbis, the Cruithne of Croghan and the Bolgtuath of Badgna are descendants of Genann, that is, are Domnonians. The Irish historians identified the Cruithne of Ulster with the Irians of Ulster. As they allowed the Irians to be of the clan of Miled, the Cruithne are the Gael of Ireland, or have been adopted by the Gael.

The tract on the Corcalaidhe mentions Scal Balbh as either a man of the Olnegmacht or a king of Cruithentuath and Manann. [18] The wife of Tuathal Techtmar is a daughter of Scal Balbh, king of the Fomorach or of Finland. These alternatives suggest that the writers who worked out this history were not aware that the Fomorach were only a clan of the great Cruithne race. The old names and distinctions were not fully understood. It seems to mark the loss of the knowledge of who the ancient Fomorach were, and the beginning of identification with northern sea-pirates, based on a derivation of Fomorach from the word Muir.

Scal Balbh seems to have been a sort of title. If not, it is difficult to understand how the Book of Lecan makes Lugh a son of Cian or of Seal Balbh.

3. The Fir Domnann and the Fir Bolg.

The term Firbolg covers three divisions, Firdomnann, Firgaileoin, and Firbolg. The former two are distinct tribes of great importance. Though the last has given its name to the whole body, it appears only as the Bolgtuath of Badgna, and even there the meaning seems to be general, as it is said to descend from Domnonian chieftains. The Annals mention a Mofemis or Mofebis of the Firbolgs, and his sons Lugh Roth and Mogh Ruith. The names of Mofemis and his son are in the genealogy of the race of Eber.

The Firgaileoin appear as Cruithne of Breg, and as such are of the same race as the Tuatha De Danann, and in the first battle of Moytura as allies of Eochy Mac Erc, King of Connaught and of Ireland, under Slainge's sons, and in later legend, in the battle of Rosnaree as the subjects of the King of Leinster : and still later as the Firbolg inhabitants of the territory in Connaught called Gailenga and Luighne from its later traditional conquerors. The tradition of the foundation of the Fair of Carman by a Danonian Bres further connects Leinster with Danonians and Firgaileoin.

It is important to note that at the period supposed to be that of the arrival of the Firdomnann they have already under them a considerable body of the tribe from which the Tuatha De Danann sprang. The conquest of the Tuath Fidga of Leinster may explain the presence of the Firbolg among the Domnonian forces, if the Firbolg are of the British race called Belgæ, as some have thought. Crimhthan Sciathbhel thus had under him the Belgic Tuath Fidga in the south and the Cruithnech Firgaileoin in the north of Leinster. This tribe appears in the Attacottic List as a division of the Gaileoin north of Gabar — that is, of Leinster excluding Ossory, called south of Gabar. I understand it to mean that the three tribes therein mentioned were tributary to that branch of the Gaileoin. If the true meaning is that the Tuath Fidga and the others were sections of the Firgaileoin, it follows that the Firgaileoin are to be recognised as British. But this is certainly not the view of tribal relations taken by the ancient Irish historians.

The Firbolg, in the restricted application of the term to a section of the adherents of the Domnonian kings, may have been a Belgic race from Britain, or a body of refugees forming a body of soldiers like the Clan Donnell Galloglass in later times, from which the name has been transferred to the whole body. Except by such transfer the Gaelic clans could not have come to be called Belgic. Bolg may not be connected with Belgæ, or the same name may have been used by a Gaelic clan. It certainly covers the whole body of Domnonians and Gailians in the opinion of the Irish historians.

The tradition of the Firbolg invasion and the first battle of Moytura shows the Domnonian kings in supremacy at Tara, whence they are driven by the Danonians. Yet they had previously got the better of the Firgaileoin, of whom the Danonians were a branch, as appears from the presence of the Firgaileoin in King Eochy's army. That the kings of the Firbolg were Domnonians is certain from the fact that the Domnonian kings of Connaught were recognised as descendants of the sons of Dela.

Though the use of broad heavy spears is the characteristic of the Firbolg army, and the use of thin pointed spears is that of the Danonian army, another legend shows that such spears were introduced in the time of Rinnal, Eochy Mac Erc's grandfather. [19] Tacitus remarks that the army of Galgacus used slashing swords without points. That army must have been largely composed of Domnonians of the north and other Cruithne of Scotland. The remark suggests that the Britons of England used pointed swords which were not used by the northern tribes. Likewise, at the battle of Muytuaia, about a hundred years earlier according to my computation, pointed spears were not yet in general use in Ireland.

Ptolemy places Dumnonii in Cornwall and Devonshire next to Belgæ, and in Scotland north and south of the Forth. As the Irish Domnall was pronounced Duvnall in the twelfth century, Devon shows a similar change from the original of Dumnonii, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Firdomnann are the same race as the Dumnonii of Great Britain. If the Firdomnann came from Britain with a body of Belgæ after the establishment of Belgic tribes in South Britain, the term Firbolg might cover them in the view of the Irish.

In the second battle of Moytura, Indech MacDomnann or Mac De Domnann is one of the Fomorian kings who oppressed the Danonians. His name looks Domnonian, but an Ulster king's father may have been named Domnu, and some Domnoians were on the Fomorian side. The Clan Umoir was said to be among them after the first battle. The names Morc, son of Dela, and Gann and Sengann, kings of the Fomorians, show that there was no wide difference between Fomorians and Domnonians, if indeed those were truly Fomorians and not Domnonians wrongly classed like Cical. The statement that Cical landed in Irrusdomnann tends to identify him with the Clan Umoir, who occupied the whole western coast of that kingdom. O'Flaherty includes Clan Umoir among the Domnonians. But the early annalists, or

early compilers of systematic history, finding Cical mentioned in legends which according to their chronology related to events earlier than the arrival of the Firbolg, classified him and his people as Fomorach. As the Clan Umoir do not appear again in the legends until the time of Queen Meav, they were treated as absent among the Fomorach.

The tradition that Queen Meav's Clan Umoir were evicted tenants of her brother-in-law has perhaps some foundation. The great extent of country held by the clan must have given it a high position. Some therefore are likely to have acquired land in Breg when the Domnonians were in supremacy there. Cairbre Nia Fer is said to have surrendered three cantreds to Conor Mac Nessa when he married Conor's daughter. This is like a peace after a war in which Conor won ; or as if, after the murder of Conaire I., Cairbre and Conor divided Breg. They would naturally turn out Clan Umoir lords. Tigernach seems to recognise some such result in his entry after the accession of Conor Mac Nessa. " Thereafter Ireland was parted into five, after the slaughter of Conaire the Great, son of Etarscel, in the Hostel of Da Derga, among Conchobar, son of Nessa, and Cairbre Nia Fer, and Tigernach Tetbannach, and Dedad, son of Sen, and Ailill, son of Mága."

The clan is attacked by a coalition of Conall Cernach and Cuchullin, Ulstermen, Curoi Mac Daire, a Munsterman, or, according to Professor Rhys, a Leinsterman, [20] cet Mac Magach, one of the Gamanry, when they are in Connaught after their quarrel with Cairbre. Can this be the turning of the race of Fiac out of Tara, those who left their name to the " Ferta Fer Féic," the legend of settlement on land given by Meav being the historians' way of accounting for their appearance afterwards in possession of great territories? It is not unlikely that Curoi MacDaire is confused with Curaidh, father of Tinni, King of Connaught. Dare and Degad are also Olnegmacht names. Ferdiad was a grandson of Dare of the Clan Dega.

The forms Mac De Domnann used indifferently with Mac Domnann, and Tuath Domnann used as equivalent to Fir Domnann in the Attacottic List, show that the Fir Domnann might be called Tuatha De Domnann.

Though meaning literally " Tribes of Goddess Danu," I think that the term Tuatha De Danann meant only " Tribes of De Danu." De occurs as Deo in names of Pictish kings, Deo Ardivois, Deo Ord, Deo Cillimon. [21] It seems to be used much as the Sanskrit Deva, a god, is used in combination with Hindu names as a title. Such a use is expressly stated in the Tain Bo Cuailgne. [22] "' The full blessing of both dée and andée be upon thee !' he said. Now ' the people of power' at that time they rated as dée, ' gods,' and ' the people of ploughing' as andée, ' non-gods.'" This is practically the use in Orissa now, among the Urya lords. As far as so small an indication justifies any argument, the use of De with Domnann connects the name in form with the Cruithne of Scotland.

Domnu appears often in Britain in men's names, Dumnoveros, Dumnocoveros, Cogidumnos, Togodumnos. These seem to be Latin equivalents of Domnubar, Domnucubar, Cugidomnu, Tugodomnu in Irish spelling. They occur in connection with Belgic tribes, and the word Domnu is not inflected. " Dumnonii" seems to represent such a form as Tuath or Fir Domnonn.

As the Irish writers included the certainly Cruithne race of Ir among the Clanna Breogain, no weight attaches to their refusal of the name of Gael to the Domnonians. More weight is due to the name of Firbolg, but the term covers also the Firgaileoin, who were Cruithne. The legends on the whole do not justify a distinction between the Domnonians and the other great tribes. They seem to have been all Gaelic.

The position of the Domnonians in Leinster, Tara, and Connaught, cutting the tribes of Ulster and Munster in two, overlying the Firgaileoin in Leinster and Breg, and their position in legend detached from the other tribes, mark some considerable difference, which is most likely due to their being the last great body of colonists in Ireland, who came from Britain after the first Gaelic settlers had been long established, and were an intrusive body, associated at least in later times with other foreign bodies who never became powerful, and consequently were absorbed and lost their identity. A body of Gaelic Domnonians leaving Britain under pressure of Belgic invasion would meet the conditions. So would a branch of the first colonists reinforced from Britain. The legends indicate some such expansion. In spreading over Leinster, Breg, and Connaught they subdue Fomorach clans with the help of foreign soldiers. Then the Irian clans get the upper hand at times in Breg and north-central Ireland, perhaps owing to quieter times in Britain. A period of confused warfare follows, in which a large part is played by tribes under the name of Aithechtuatha, who left Britain in consequence of the Roman conquest. Tuathal Techtmar emerges as king of a great kingdom of Meath formed largely of the territory of Danonian clans. His descendants, if he and they are not the Domnonian kings of Connaught, get rid of or adopt those kings and conquer Ulster.

4. Identification of Tuatha De Danann with Luighne, Delbhna, and Cianacht.

The table of Danonian kings is open to objection only as to length of some reigns, not as to relationship and succession. Three generations, eighty to one hundred years, comprises their period. But for identification of some with gods and all with fairies, they would probably have gained a certain recognition. Mr. Alfred Nutt has cleared the way for recognition of their reality by his exposition of early Celtic religious views in the "Voyage of Bran." He shows that the doctrine of rebirth allowed the Irish to believe at the same time —

- (a) That certain persons were gods.
- (b) That they were men.

The belief that certain Danonians were rebirths of gods accounts for growth of myth about the clan. The chief men and gods had two names, as Lugh or the Samildana, Eochaidh Ollathair or the Daghdha, Oengus or MacInd Oc, Orbsen or Manannan. When the Danonians were no longer recognised as ancestors of existing families, it was an easy step to make them all gods and fairies.

The Luighne of Connaught are also known as Clann Cein, tribal names applicable to the descendants of Cian, son of Diancecht, and of Lugh. Their alternative name Gailenga associates them with the Firgaileoin, who included the Danonians. Gailenga in a narrower sense was applied to the family of O'Gara, kings of Sliabh Lugha, as Luighne was applied to the O'Hara branch of the Clann Cein. The place-names of their territory are largely attributed to the Danonians, as Magh Corann, Loch Cé, Sliabh Lugha, Maigh Luirg of the Daghdha, Magh Ai, &c., which, though not all in it, are in the territory the Danonians should have occupied during their supremacy in Connaught.

According to their recent tradition, the Luighne of Meath and Connaught acquired their territories under Cormac Mac Art in the middle of the third century. But they were in Meath as Cairbre Nia Fer's subjects some two hundred years before. According to Tigernach and Cahir Mor's will, they killed Cahir Mor and Finn MacCumal in the second and third centuries. O'Flaherty's account of Cormac Mac Art and his relations with the ancestors of the Luighne and Gailenga are confused. The important point is that Cormac Mac Art was fostered by Lugni Firtri at Keshcorran, and took refuge with him when driven from Tara by Fergus. Lugni was there before Cormac's time. [23]

The Delbhna claimed descent from a Lughaid called Delbh Aodh, son of the Cas from whom came the Dalcais. As Cas's father, Conall Echluath, was King of Munster A.D. 366, the occupation of Meath and Connaught by the Delbhna cannot have begun before the close of the fourth century. An intrusive Munster family could not have established itself so extensively in Meath and in Connaught at so late a period without leaving marks in history. History does not support the tradition. The tale abstracted by O'Curry [24] could not have arisen over a tribe established so close to the historic period. It is evidently invented to tack existing families to one of the great royal families. They could not annex themselves to the Eremonian families under whom they lived. These two descents of Luighne and Delbhna from Cian and Delbh Aodh place them in the race of Ailill Olum in the same relative positions as the descendants of Lugh and a Delbaeth in the Danonian race.

Territorially, Tuatha De Danann Luighne and Delbhna are closely connected. Luighne Gailenga Firgaileoin occupy the same country in Meath and in Connaught. As Luighne and Delbhna are side by side in Meath, so in Connaught Luighne lie north and Delbhna south of Magh Ai. Luighne and Cianacht, who claimed descent from the same Cian, son of Tadhg, occupied nearly all the county of Meath except Tara and the country of the Delbhna, and part of the county of Dublin ; they had Breg except Tara, that is, from the Liffey to Dromiskin, which, according to the Tripartite Life, [25] was in the country of the Delbhna. Unless Delbhna and Cianacht are tribal names of the same race, it follows that one replaced the other. The Cianacht were there in historical times. According to their own tradition, the Delbhna could not have got there before the Cianacht. I see no reason to doubt the entry. It follows that Cianacht and Delbhna are the same, or that an older race of Delbhna occupied the country, which is not likely.

As the Cianacht are over the Delbhna about Dromiskin, so the Delbhna are over the Luighne in Delbhna Mor and Beg, according to the position of the Luighne in the Attacottic List. Ancient and modern Luighne, Gailenga, Cianacht, Delbhna, and Firgaileoin are inextricably mixed.

The ascertained possessions of the Delbhna show that they were once a very great race. Their position in the kingdom of Meath agrees with the tradition that the Milesians ousted them from supremacy at Tara, and is parallel with that of the Conmaicne and their relatives the Kerry and others in respect of the Hy Briuin of Ai.

5. The Gregrai and the Calraige.

These tribes appeared between the period of Queen Meav and the fifth century. The Gregry of St. Patrick's time seem to occupy what they held according to the Attacottic List, that is, the historical kingdom of the Luighne and Tirerrill as far east as Moytura and Sliabh Da En, excepting Tirerrill and a small part of Corran. Hereafter the Annals mention kings of Gailenga and of Corcofirtri and of Luighne in that country, which at last is known as Luighne and Gailenga, and the Gregry are confined to the small tract called now the barony of Coolavin. As I understand these legends and history, Corcofirtri and Luighne are but sections of the Gaileoin who were under the supremacy of the Gregry at first, but who rose over them. I take the Gregry to have been the dominant clan in St. Patrick's time, because they are mentioned about Lough Gara and at the Strand of Ballysadare, and because the other tribes do not appear until later. In the Book of Rights they pay a tribute equal to that of the Kerry, about half that of the Luighne. This seems to mark a stage in their declension.

They claimed descent from Oengus Fionn, son of Fergus Mac Roig, but the claim does not bear close investigation. They do not appear in the usual lists of his descendants, the Conmaicne and others not acknowledging the claim, I am inclined to think that their Oengus

Fionn may be the king of Connaught of the Fircraibe race, who would suit in point of time fairly well, if they were of that race at all, which I doubt.

They and the Calry are so far alike that the Attacottic List acknowledges an extinct free race of Calry. The names of the tribal ancestors Crec and Cal seem Cruithne in character, and the Calry almost surround the Gregry territory, except where the Kerry adjoin. These facts dispose me to look upon Gregry and Calry as of earlier origin than Kerry and Conmaicne, in accordance with the family legend of the Calry descent from Ith.

The Calry must have been a very powerful race at one time, judging from the great extent of territory occupied by them. There were Calry called of Moy hEleog in the parish of Crossmolina. In St. Patrick's time Calry of Coolcarney and of Innse Nisc occupied the eastern bank of the Moy in Tireragh. [26] The Calry of Murrisk had the rest of Tireragh eastwards. Under the names of Calry of Dartry, of Three Plains, [27] and of Lough Gill, they held in St. Patrick's time all North Leitrim, and in Sligo the barony of Carbury except the peninsula of Coolerra. The Calry held out in Moylurg against the Hy Briuin for many generations. Calry were in Corran, and I suspect that when St. Patrick worked near Kesh that country was in possession of Calry under Hy Ailella, as the Calry all received him well except those of Tireragh. Important families of Calry remained till later times at Bri Leith, near Ardagh, in the Co. Longford, with a branch in the barony of Brawney in Westmeath. After making allowance for petty families having attached themselves to a tribe of greater reputation, it is evident that they once were a great ruling family.

6. Queen Medb and the Ailills.

Queen Meave of the legends may be taken to stand to the real Queen Meave as Grace O'Malley of the nineteenth century legends and novels stands to the Grainne ni Maille of the sixteenth century.

Grace has become the chieftainess of the mighty Clan Malley, wielding imperial sway over the western seaboard, and visiting Queen Elizabeth as a sister sovereign. Her history and character are given in an article in the *Journal of the Galway Arch, and Hist. Society*, vol. iv. p. 65.

Meave has been given several husbands, of whom the chief was Ailill Mor. It is not quite clear who he was, but he may be identified as a king of the Tuatha Taiden kingdom.

The Ailills were numerous, and have been much mixed. Ailill Mac Mata was brother of Cairbre Nia Fer and Finn File, sons of Rossa Ruadh, King of Leinster. Ailill Mac Magach, King of the Gamanry, was his uncle, Mata being a daughter of that Magu of Murrisk. These two Ailills are distinguished in the Tale of the Cherishing of Conall Cernach and in other tracts. [28] But the Ailill Mac Magach killed by Conall Cernach is not the Ailill Find killed by Fergus Mac Roigh, a full brother of Cet Mac Magach. Magu may have had more than one son called Ailill. There may have been several women named Magu. Names are much confused in these legends.

According to O'Flaherty and Keating, Meave's first husband was Tinni, son of Conra or Curaidh. Conra or Conry or Curaidh I take to be the same name with the Cu inflected or uninflected. After his death she married Ailill Mor, and after his death lived with Ailill Find the Domnonian, and with Fergus. Tinni was King of the Tuatha Taiden, and became King of Connaught by killing Eochy Allat, King of the Gamanry, Meave's Ailill is the person recognised as King of Connaught after Tinni, and their son Maine is set up as King of Connaught after Ailill by the Tuatha Taiden and their allies. [29] MacFirbis gives the names Tinni

and Ailill, sons of Conra Cais, son of Cuirrech, King of the Firbolgs. MacFirbis is quoted as stating that Ailill Mac Conraidh was of Kilmore Diutreb, which is the Kilmore in the barony of Ballintubber North in the Co. Roscommon, [30] and this Ailill is identified as a brother of Tinni, Meave's husband. The transactions are all intelligible if her husband was King of the Tuatha Taiden, but not if he was a brother of the King of Leinster imported to marry a Connaught king's widow. Such a King of Connaught is out of harmony with all Irish history.

The tract on Carpre Cindchait [31] and the Athach Tuatha describes Cairpre as " mac Dubtaig mic Thothreachta mic Lughair mic Oilella mic Maghach mic Gaill." This makes Magu to be a man. But it shows that the Attacots were the royal tribes of Connaught, and that the early traditions and the early genealogists did not distinguish much between Milesians and Athachtuatha and mixed one Ailill readily with another. If this is correct, Cairbre Mac Main and Cairbre Cinnchait cannot be the same person. But Cairbres may be confused as well as Ailills.

7. The Olnegmacht.

Keating and O'Flaherty agree in the division of Connaught into three great kingdoms which did not extend east of the Shannon.

I. From Limerick to the Palace of Fidach, or Fidach, under the Fir Craibe or Fir na Craibe.

II. From the Palace of Fidach, or Fidach, eastwards towards Temair an Broga Nia in Leinster (*i.e.* Tara), under a clan of the Tuatha Taiden.

III. From the River of Galway to Duff and Drowes, the kingdom of Irrusdomnann, under the Gamanraige.

The Fir Craibe, Tuatha Taiden, and Gamanraige are the Olnegmacht. Cruachan was the possession of their chief king.

The Fir Craibe are the chief clan of the Clann Umoir, who occupied nearly all their kingdom and a considerable part of Irrusdomnann.

The group of tribes comprised by the term Tuatha Taiden is not definitely stated, but O'Flaherty says that they were of the septs of Sliabh Furri, which is in the parish of Killoran. From O'Flaherty's list of supporters of Maine I infer that their kingdom was almost exactly that of the Hy Maine in its greatest traditional extent up to Sliabh Badhghna. The Palace of Fidach, being a bound for them and for the Fir Craibe, should be somewhere near the border of the ancient Aidhne.

The Gamanry were the reigning clan of Connaught when this Olnegmacht period opens. They built Rath Eochaidh, afterwards called Cruachan, which I suspect to have become a general name for a royal fort. It seems to have taken its name from Eochaidh Allat, King of the Gamanry of Irrusdomnann and King of Connaught, who was killed by Meave's husband Tinni. It is not necessary to suppose that this was the first occupation of that neighbourhood, only that the great fort was attributed to him. The Releg seems to be much older.

Their kingdom of Irrusdomnann comprised the Clan Umoir tribes north of Galway and all the counties of Mayo and Sligo and North Leitrim, the countries of the Gregry and Calry. It may have included Roscommon nearly up to Cruachan. Ailill Find was living in his fort in Crich Cairbre in the north of the district of the Kerry, when Fergus went to attack him. [32] Fergus reached the Dun immediately after passing over Ath Feni. Ath Fen was in Kerry ter-

ritory, and I incline to think that it was a ford of the river Lung, and that Ailech Mor of the Kerry, close to Castlemore Costello, is the place meant. It answers the description. The proper country of the Gamanry themselves seems to have been much the same as that of the Hy Fiachrach, whom I take to be their descendants. But this is vague and uncertain.

As the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* contains articles in vols. XXX. and XXXI. giving in detail the reasons for the unusual views expressed in the text regarding the relations of the Conmaicne, Ciarraige, and Corcamoga, the Connachta, the Domnonians, and Eremonians, the connections of royal tribes with the great cemeteries of the Brugh, &c., the circumstances and period of the battles of Moytura, they are not repeated here.

The conclusions are : —

1. The legends of migration are vague, and in their present form inconsistent with the general result of the legends, and cannot be relied on for the period or course of migration.
2. At the beginning of the definite legendary period the Fomorach, Ferdornann, and Tuatha De Danann were all long established in Ireland. The Ferdornann were the last comers, if they did not all come together, as is most probable. They were all of the Gaelic tribes.
3. Small bodies came from time to time from Britain and the Continent in aid of the Domnonians. They were absorbed in the Gaelic population if not themselves Gael.
4. These tribes did not differ appreciably in manners or culture.
5. They are not clearly connected with the great galleried cairns. The evidence rather excludes a connection within this legendary period.
6. The period begins not long before the Christian era.

[1] “ Book of Fenagh,” pp. 83, 119, 179-191.

[2] Introduction to O’Curry’s “ Lectures on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish,” p. xxvii.

[3] “ Irische Texte,” 3rd series, p. 274.

[4] *Revue Celtique*, xx. p. 335.

[5] Book of Lismore in “ Anecdota Oxoniensia.”

[6] Keating, 116, 124, 125, 219, 225 ; A.Cl. 31, 36 ; F.M., A.M.. 3790.

[7] *Revue Celtique*, xii.

[8] O’Donovan’s Translation, O.S.I.M.

[9] “ Cuchullin Saga.”

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

[11] A Cl., p. 31.

[12] “ Irish Nennius,” pp. 123-125.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 121, 131.

- [14] *R.S.A. I.*, 1893, p. 378.
- [15] “ Irish Nennius,” pp. 120, 130.
- [16] “ Battle of Rosnaree,” Todd Lecture Series, vol. iv.
- [17] *Revue Celtique*, vol. xvii. p. 7, 16, 21.
- [18] *Celtic Society's Miscell*, p. 25.
- [19] “ Irische Texte,” 3rd Series, Coir Anmann, p. 401.
- [20] *R.S.A.I.*, 1891. p. 655.
- [21] “ Irish Nennius,” p. 159.
- [22] “ Cuchullin Saga,” p. 168.
- [23] “ Ogygia,” p. 334.
- [24] “ Manners and Customs,” ii. p. 320.
- [25] *S.T.L.*, i. p. 77.
- [26] *S.T.L.*, p. 251.
- [27] *Ibid.*, 145, 328.
- [28] *Zeitschrift fur Celtische Philologie*, vol. i. p. 106.
- [29] O’Flaherty, “ Ogygia,” pp. 267, 269, 277.
- [30] *R.S.A.I.*, vol. xii. p. 354.
- [31] *Revue Celtique*, vol. xx. p. 335.
- [32] “ Irische Texte,” 2nd Series, Part II Tain Bo Flidais.

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