

# Laoithe Fiannuigheachta

Or

## Fenian Poems

Edited by  
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*The main object of the Society is to publish manuscripts, consisting of Poems, Tales, and Romances, illustrative of the Fenian period of Irish History ; and other documents illustrative of the Ancient History of Ireland in the Irish language and character, with literal translations, and notes explanatory of the text.*

### Introduction.

FROM the most reliable and best accredited documents respecting the ancient Irish handed down to us, it appears certain that, not only the monarchy itself but likewise all posts of honor and profit, had become hereditary in different septs and families. Purity of blood was held, of course, a national object of the first importance ; and the *literati*, therefore, the conservators of historical evidence, were regarded as of the highest authority ; as they alone could prove the descent and determine the rank and station of the people ; hence the necessity of the great number of antiquaries, whom we find supported by national endowments. The monarch and the provincial kings, as well as the nobility and the state officers of the crown, being alike of the royal line of Milesius, great care was taken of their genealogy and descent ; and every candidate for these various offices was obliged to give : — 1st. proof of descent ; 2ndly, of his having been a knight, (for in each of the provinces there was an equestrian order) ; 3rdly, that he had no remarkable deformity or blemish ; so that his person might command respect, suitable to his birth and education. No wonder, then, that the genealogies of the different families of the kingdom, of the Milesian race, were preserved with the utmost care. To secure the *literati* from any temptation to abuse their trust, honorable provision was made for them by the state. From their rank they were presumed to be beyond the reach of corruption ; and the Laws secured their persons and properties inviolate ; so that, from the foundation to the overthrow of the monarchy, a single instance does not occur of any violence being offered to this body of men. Abuses, however, gradually crept into the bardic institution, mainly arising from the number of idlers who enlisted themselves under its banner ; during two or three successive reigns the kingdom was found to be greatly impoverished by their exactions, until it was found necessary to reduce the number.

Though the monarchy as well as all other posts of honor, was elective, yet, to prevent as much as possible, any inconveniences which litigated elections might produce, the successor of the monarch was appointed in his lifetime, and was called Righdhomhna, and this, it is observable, is at this day, we believe, the practice in China and other foreign countries. The Ollamhs or Doctors in the various sciences, who were of the most noble families, had also their successors declared in their own lifetime ; and he that was to fill the post of honor, or have command in the state, had his Tanaiste appointed to succeed him in office. This arrangement prevented the evils of incompetency occasionally arising from direct lineal succession.

The provincial kings in their own position, were equal to the monarch in his exalted station. Each had his order of chivalry, of which he was himself the chief, he had his Ard-draoi or high priest, to superintend religion, his marshal, standard-bearer, chief-treasurer, &c, all these appointments were hereditary in families, to which the most distinguished alone in each was chosen by election.

The different military forces of the kingdom were the particular guards of each province. They were a species of standing militia, composed of trained bands called Curaidhe (champions), an order of knighthood into which none were admitted without exhibiting unexceptionable proofs of birth, learning, generosity, valour, and activity.

The particular militia or knights of every province held their head-quarters, or were located near the residence of their chiefs : thus the militia, or knights of Ulster, called Curaidhe-na-Craoibhe-Ruaidhe (champions or heroes of the Red Branch), were stationed at the Royal Fort at Eamhuin (Emania), near Armagh. They were of the Rudrician race, and were commanded in the reign of Conchobhar Mac Nessa, by the famous champion Cuchullin [1], who, according to the annals of Clonmacnoise, and the Chronicon Scotorum, died in the second year of the Christian era ; and was succeeded in command by his cousin Conall Cearnach.

Vestiges of the ancient palace of Eamhuin, or Emania, and of the house of Craoibh Ruadh (Red Branch), adjacent to the palace are still extant, two miles to the west of Armagh, the site retaining the name of the fort of Navan.

The militia or knights of Leinster, were called Curaidhe Ghamhanruighe, or the Damnonians of Gailian, seated at Dun Aellinne, about twelve miles south-east of Almhui, the place of their head-quarters in that province previous to the time of Fionn's appointment to this post of honour. On his receiving the command, he removed with his force to Almhui, a place in the county of Kildare, bordering on Hy-Failghe, now Ophaly, which with the adjoining territory he possesses in right of his mother, Murrain Munchaoimh (the fair haired), daughter of Teige Mac Nuadhat. Here he fixed his seat on the far famed hill of Almhui as a more central point ; and the knights of Leinster were from thenceforth called Curaidhe na h-Almhuine, or the heroes of Almhui. [2]

The militia or knights of Connaught, whose chiefs were the Clanna Morna, of the old Belgian or Firbolg race, have been distinguished by the appellation of Curaidhe Iorrais Dun Domhnainn ; a territory in the county of Mayo, their head quarters. The ruins of the Fort of Dun Domhnainn are still extant in Iorras or Erris, the most western part of that county. Goll Mac Morna, according to O'Flaherty (see *Ogygia*), commanded the Clanna Morna, at the famous battle of Magh Lena, A.D.192, and was detached by Conn Cedchathach as the most able and expert champion to oppose in person his great competitor Mogh Nuadhat. In that engagement Conan Mac Morna, who is said to have been the grandson of Goll, commanded the Clanna Morna in turn ; and ever since the fall of Fionn Ua Baoiscne, A.D. 283, at Rath

Breogha, near the Boyne, by the treacherous hands of Athlach Mac Duibhdreïn, had frequent contentions with the Clanna Baoiscne for the captain-generalship of the Fians.

The defection of the Clanna Morna from the rest of their corps at the battle of Gabbra, may be attributed not only to their rivalry for the general command, but also, and more particularly to the murder of Conan, their late captain, by the Clanna Baoiscne or Fianna Finn. In many epic poems written by the bards on the achievements of the Fianna Eireann, this Conan is indiscriminately described by the appellations of Conan Maol Mallachtach Mac Morna, and Conan Mac Garraidhe, and might have been brother to Aedh the son of Garadh, the son of Neamen, the son of Morna, from whom the Clanna Morna were named. He was then king of Connaught, and the last of the Firbolg race who governed that province.

The militia, or knights of Desmond, or South Munster, were called Curaidhe Clanna Deaghaidh, or Ua Deaghaigh, a tribe of the Ernaidhs, of the Heremonian race, who, on being expelled from Ulster by the Clanna Rughraidhe, obtained a principality in South Munster. [3] These, some time before the birth of Christ, obtained great power in Munster under their leader Deaghadh, who afterwards became king of that province. His posterity succeeded him in power, in West Munster particularly, and were the champions of Desmond. The territory of Luachair Deaghaidh, in the county of Kerry, was their patrimony. There still remain on the western extremity of Sliabh Mis, the foundations of an enormous cyclopean structure, supposed to be the palace begun by Conrigh Mac Daire, whose history we have briefly glanced at. This part of the mountain commands, perhaps, one of the finest prospects in the world, and still retains the name of Cathair Chonrigh. Fionghlaise, as already stated, runs down the steep hill on which this ruin is based, and discharges itself into the bay of Tralee, a short distance to the north, corresponding exactly with the description given by history of the fort of Dun Deaghaidh. Mac Luigheach, a famous champion of this sept, commanded the Clanna Deaghaidh at the battle of Gabbra, and was slain in that engagement, according to the annals of Innisfallen.

The militia, or knights of Thomond or North Munster, were the Clanna Baoiscne, [4] so called from Baoiscne, their principal ancestor, who, according to the Book of Ballimote, now deposited in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, was the second son of Nuada Necht of the royal race of Leinster, and fifth direct ancestor of Fionn the son of Cumhall, the son of Treanmor, the son of Salt, the son of Elton, the son of Baoiscne.

Fionn soon afterwards received the investiture of Formaol na bh-Fian, a district in Hy-Kinsellagh, [5] concerning which there has been much conjecture, by the donation of his cousin and relative Fiachadh Baiceadha, [6] then king of Leinster and youngest son of Cathaoir Mor. The Clanna Baoiscne were also called Fianna Finn, whilst Fionn Ua Baoiscne was their leader and before he took the general command. Oisín the son of Fionn was their chief at the battle of Gabhra, in which his son Oscur fell in an ambush, laid for him by Cairbre Liffeachair, monarch of Ireland, A.D. 277.

It is probable that, inasmuch as Ireland was in these early days much exposed to the descents of African and Northern pirates, a strong necessity existed for the formation of these corps of militia — one in each province, which Pinkerton has ingeniously conjectured, may have been modelled on the plan of the Roman legions in Britain. According to the Cath Fhinn-tragha, their stations were distributed along the coasts, in the most elevated and inaccessible positions ; and in distant view of each other — so as to communicate by signals, the approach of an enemy, and thereby enable them to come to the succour and relief of the fort invaded. Thus, the forts of Iorras Dun Domhnainn in Mayo, and of Cahir Conrigh on Sliabh Mis, in Kerry, though the distance cannot be less than 100 miles were made available ; and

the one at Eas Aedh Ruaidh mhic Badharn, (now Assaroe), near Ballyshannon, in the county of Donegal, wherein was always posted a strong detachment of the Ulster militia, was brought in view of that of Iorras Dun Domhnainn. These were the coasts most exposed to the southern and northern invaders. But besides this duty as “ coast guards,” these military orders were charged with the preservation of “ law and order” in the interior of the country ; they were bound to send certain detachments yearly to protect the persons of their respective kings. Thus, the guards of Eoghan Mor, were called *teaghlach*, or household troops. Cormac Mac Airt, whose reign shines so refulgent in Irish history, had for his body-guards, one hundred and fifty of the principal knights of the kingdom, besides one thousand household troops to guard his palace. The guards of the kings of Munster, or Leath Mhogha, were the people of Ossory, whose country formed the extreme boundaries of that kingdom ; and according to the Book of Rights, ascribed to St. Benignus, we find the duty imposed on this people, by the king of Munster was to wait on him constantly, with a certain number of armed troops. The guards of the king of Desmond, or South Munster, were the Clanna Deaghaidh, as has been already stated, and those of the kings of Thomond, or North Munster, were a detachment of the Clanna Baoiscne ; but in latter times for these were substituted the Dal Cais, a most intrepid body of men. The palace of Brian Boroimhe at Killaloe was called Tigh Chinn Coradh, or the house at the head of the weir. It was the duty of the hereditary standard-bearer to preserve the royal banner ; to be amongst the foremost of the troops in action, and in the rear on a retreat — for the troops ever kept their eye on the standard, and when the prince was killed (for he seldom or ever survived a defeat), the standard was struck, which was the signal for a retreat : thus, in the sanguinary battle of Magh Mucruimhe, fought between the monarch Art and Mac Con ; on the death of Art we are told by the poet : —

“ Do thuit meirge catha Chuind.”  
Conn’s battle standard fell.

Next to this officer sat the hereditary treasurer, whose duty it was to see the king’s contributions and taxes regularly paid ; which was always done on the first of November. These taxes were fixed, and a register kept of them ; so that the particular duties, imposed on the different portions of the kingdom, may be the more easily known. [7]

Besides these state officers, there were a chief justice or brehon, to expound the laws, a poet or ollamh, an historian, antiquary, physician, surgeon or liagh, and chief musician ; and three stewards of the household with their attendants constantly residing at court. All these different offices were retained in Ulster, and in parts of Munster and Connaught, until the accession of James I. to the throne of England : thus, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Anno 1601, O’Neill, Prince of Ulster, visited London, in consequence of a promise made by him the previous year to the Queen ; and Camden tells us that “ he appeared at court with his guards of Gall-oghlachs [Gallowglasses] bare-headed, armed with hatchets, their hair flowing in locks on their shoulders, on which were yellow shirts dyed with saffron, with long sleeves, short coats, and thrum jackets ; at which strange sight the Londoners marvelled much.”

The hereditary marshals of Ulster were the O’Gallaghers ; the Mac Cafferries the standard-bearers ; the Mac Sweenys captains of the guards, and the O’Gnives the poets.

The hereditary marshals of Leinster were the O’Connors, princes of Ui Fhailge ; the standard-bearers were the O’Gormans or Mac Gormans, princes of Hy Mairge or Margy ; the O’Dempseys, lords of Clanmalier, were the captains of the guards ; the Mac Keoghs were the historiographers ; the O’Dorans the brehons ; and the O’Mores were the hereditary treasurers.

The hereditary marshals of Connaught were the Mac Dermods ; the O'Flaherties were the standard-bearers ; the O'Kellys of Hy Many were the treasurers ; the Maelconaires the historiographers, [8] &c. We do not find who the other state officers were ; but the Mac Firbises were the physicians.

The hereditary marshals of Desmond, or South Munster, were the O'Keeffes ; the O'Falveys were the admirals ; for we find in " Torraigheacht Cheallachain Chaisil," announced for publication by the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, that the fleet was commanded by Failbhe Fionn. We do not find who the standard-bearer and treasurer were ; but the Mac Egans were the hereditary chief justices or brehons, the O'Daly's the poets, and the O'Callanans the physicians, in which family leechcraft is still a favorite profession.

The hereditary marshals of Thomond, or North Munster, were the Mac Namaras ; the standard-bearers the O'Deas, and the O'Gradys were the captains of the guards until about A.D. 1200, at which time they were succeeded in that trust by the O'Gormans or Mac Gormans, who, being compelled by the Danish or English invaders to abandon their principality of Hy-Mairge in Leinster, removed to Owney and Shingal in the county of Limerick, from whence they were invited to Ibh Breacain (now Ibricane), and were granted that lordship under feudal tenure by Donogh Cairbreach O'Brian, king of Thomond, who appointed them captains of his guards, and adopted them as his chief favorites and counsellors, by the style and title of *Fir ghrádh Ui Bhriain*, by which appellation they are constantly styled in our annals, and in the writings of the Mac Brodins, historiographers of Thomond. Cumheadha (Covey) Mor Mac Gormain was, according to Seaan Mac Rughraidhe Mac Craith, (see *Caithreim Thoirdhealbhaidh*, or Triumphs of Turlogh), one of Donogh O'Brien's Life Guards in the wars of Thomas de Clare in Thomond, and his son Cumheadha, succeeded him after his death in 1310.

The Mac Clanchies were the hereditary chief justices or brehons of Thomond, the Mac Craiths the historiographers and poets. The O'Nealons and the O'Hickies were the hereditary physicians. All these public officers of the state had sufficient estates allotted to them for their maintenance.

In the Book of Ballimote, it is stated that Nuada Neacht, who reigned monarch of Ireland one year, was the fourth son of Setna Sithbhaic (the peaceable) son of Lughaidh Loithfinn, the progenitor of the royal Lagenian race, and second son of Breasal Breac, or the speckled. From this Nuada Neacht is descended the stock of the Lagenians ; he was king of Tara : and it was he who slew Eidirgeoil Mor, or the Great, the son of the descendant of Iarnaillin, which deed he committed in opposition to Lughaidh Riamhdhearg, and thereupon he became king of Ireland. From the aforesaid Nuada Neacht descended Fionn Ua Baoiscne and the celebrated Caoiltc Mac Ronain.

Some of our Scottish antiquaries have sought from the mere name to represent Fionn as of Scandinavian or rather Finnish origin ! but the attempt is so devoid of proof or evidence, as to be worthy merely of notice as an ingenious paradox. His death occurred, according to the annals of Innisfallen, in A.D. 283, in the fourth year of the reign of Cairbre Liffeachair, when, says our veracious chronicler, fell the celebrated general of the Irish militia, Fionn the son of Cumhall, by the treacherous hand of a fisherman named Athlach, son of Dubhdrenn, who slew him with his fishing spear at Rath Breogha, near the Boyne, whither he had retired in his old age to spend the remainder of his life in tranquillity from the noise and tumult of war.

The collection of poems, which forms the present volume, are taken from copies made by the following scribes : —

The Agallamh is taken from a copy made in 1780 by a Mr. Laurence O'Foran, who kept a village school at Killeen, near Portlaw, in the county of Waterford. It contains besides, many other interesting poems and prose matters relative to the Fenian period of our history.

The battle of Cnoc-an-air, or Hill of Slaughter, was taken from a large volume compiled about the year 1812, by Clare scribes, for the Rev. Thomas Hill, of Cooreclure, a member of our Society ; it now belongs to Mr. Blake Foster of Knockmoy, county of Galway, who kindly lent it, with permission to make any use the Society required of its contents. Those that follow were taken from a manuscript volume of Fenian poems made in 1844, by Mr. Martin Griffin, an intelligent blacksmith who resides at Kilrush in the county of Clare. The poem entitled Tir na n-Og, or Land of Youth, is accounted for by Mr. O'Looney ; and Dr. O'Donovan has said all that was necessary regarding the curious and valuable tract which he has, *suo more*, himself so ably edited.

In conclusion, we feel it our duty, ere we close, to tender the warmest thanks of the Society to the President and Council of the Royal Irish Academy, for the facility they have afforded us in collating our proofs with their valuable collection of manuscripts, whilst our book was passing through the press : also to the Committee of Publication, for their kindness in revising the same.

The English reader will excuse the style, consequent upon our being obliged to adhere as closely as the idioms of the English language would admit to our originals ; and although the translation may be occasionally a little rugged and uneven — yet, on close comparison with the original, it will, we think, be found a faithful and correct rendering.

JOHN O'DALY.  
*Dublin, March 17th, 1859.*

### Agallamh Oisin Agus Phatraic

Osin is fada do shuan  
éirigh suas a's éist an t-salm,  
do thréig tu do lúth 's do neart,  
gidh chuirtheá cath a's gleó garbh.

- O. Do tréigeas mo lúth 's mo neart,  
ó nach maireann cath ag Fionn ;  
anns an g-cléir ní'l mo spéir,  
ceól dá éir ní binn liom.
- P. Ní chuala tu cómh-maith do cheól, [a]  
ó thús an domhain 'gus aniugh ;  
gidh taoi ársadh, aimhghlic, liath,  
is maith do riarfá cliar ar chnoc.
- O. Do riarainnsi cliar ar chnoc  
a Phátraic is docht rún ;  
is maire dhuit do cháin mo chruth,  
a's nach bh-fuaras guth ar d-túis.

## THE DIALOGUE OF OISIN AND PATRICK.

OISIN ! long is thy slumber,  
Rise up and hear the psalm ;  
Thy agility and valor have forsaken thee,  
Though thou didst engage in battles and fierce conflicts.

O. I have lost my agility and strength,  
Since no battalion survives to Fionn ;  
In the clerics is not my pleasure,  
Music after him is not sweet to me.

P. Thou hast not heard music equally good,  
Since the beginning of the world until this day ;  
Tho' thou art aged, silly, and grey [haired],  
Well wouldst thou attend a host on a hill.

O. I used to attend a host on a hill,  
Patrick of the morose disposition ;  
Ill it becomes thee to traduce my form,  
As I have never been aspersed till now.

O. Do chualas ceól bá bhinne ná bhur g-ceól  
gidh mór mholas tu an chliar ;  
sgaltarnach loin leitreach laoi, [b]  
's an faoidh do ghnídh an Dord Fhiann.

Smólach ro-bhinn ghleanna Sgail, [c]  
nó mongáir na m-barc ag buain re tráigh ;  
ba bhinne liom trosd na g-con  
ná do sgol-sa, a chléirigh cháidh.

Cnú [d] dheireoil, Cnu mo chuirp,  
an t-abhac beag do bhí ag Fionn  
an uair do rheinneadh cuir a's puirt,  
do chuireadh sinn a d-tiorchim suain.

Bláthnaid an inghean óg,  
nach d-tug móid d'fhear faoi 'n n-gréin ;  
acht amháin do Chnú dheireoil  
och! A Pháthraic ba bhinn a béal

An dá ghadhar déag do bhí ag Fionn,  
'n uair do léigtí iad fô ghleann Ráth ; [e]  
ba bhinne na ádhbha ciuil  
's a n-aghaidh ó'n t-Siuir [f] amach.

- O. I have heard music more melodious than your music,  
Tho' greatly thou praisest the clerics ;  
The song of the blackbird of Letter Lee,  
And the melody which the Dord Fiann made.

The very sweet thrush of Gleann-a-sgail,  
Or the dashing of the barks touching the strand ;  
More melodious to me was the cry of the hounds,  
Than of thy schools, chaste cleric.

Little Cnu, Cnu of my heart,  
The small dwarf who belonged to Fionn :  
When he chaunted tunes and songs,  
He put us into deep slumbers.

Blathnaid, the youthful maid,  
Who was never betrothed to man under the sun,  
Except to little Cnu alone,  
O, Patrick, sweet was her mouth.

The twelve hounds which belonged to Fionn,  
When they were let loose through Glen Rath ;  
Were sweeter than musical instruments,  
And their face outwards from the Suir.

[a] *Ceól, music*. The musical instruments peculiar to the ancient Irish were the harp and bagpipes. The *Dord Fiann* was used on hunting excursions, and may be considered the Fenian horn of the chase, like the hunter's horn of our own day ; but it must be looked upon as a very simple musical instrument, inasmuch as it was only adapted for the above purpose. But it is believed by Seanchuidhes or reciters of Fenian tales that the *Dord* was also used as a war-trumpet to summon the Fenian chiefs to battle. We are not aware that any specimen of it is preserved in our national museums. For a learned dissertation on ancient Irish musical instruments, see *Cambrensis Eversus*, Vol. I., Ch. IV., edited by the Rev. M. Kelly, D.D., for the Celtic Society.

[b] *Sgaltarnach loin leitreach laoi, the song of the blackbird of Letter Lee*. The blackbird, the thrush, the seagull, the eagle and the raven, are the birds most often commemorated by the Fenian muse. The *míol muighe* (our hare), the *fiadh ruadh*, or red deer, the buck and doe, the *torc*, or wild boar, and the *cú allta*, or *Faol-chú*, the wolf, were the objects of their chase. Letter Lee is not yet identified.

[c] *Gleann an Sgail*, i.e., *the glen or vale of Scal*. In the *Miscellany* of the Celtic Society, p. 24, the following note appears : —  
“ *Scal Balbh*, i.e., Seal the Stammerer. O'Flaherty says that Bania, daughter of Seal Balbh, king of Finland, was the Queen of Tuathal Teachtmhar, monarch of Ireland, A. D. 130. A personage of the same name seems to have flourished in Ireland, from the many places named after him, as Gleann-an-Scail in the county of Antrim, Leac-an-Scail, a great Cromleac in the county of Kilkenny, and Leacht-an-Scail, i.e., Scal's monument, in the barony of Corcaguiny, county of Kerry.”  
There is also *Gleann an Scail*, and *Abhainn an Scail*, about ten miles west of Dingle.

*Leacht an Scail*, is still in existence. By accenting the letter *a* in the word *Scail* these localities would mean the glen of the shade or shadow.

[d] *Cnú*. Dr. O'Donovan says that *Cnu* was taken by Fionn near a *Sith* (a fairy haunt) in Magh Feimhean, an extensive plain situated near Sliabh-na-m-ban in the county of Tipperary, (see *leabhar na g-Ceart, Book of Rights*, p. 18, note b), and that he was scarcely tall enough to reach the strings of the harp. From the frequent allusion made to him in Ossianic Poetry, in connection with Fionn, he seems to have been his chief musician, by whose soothing strains the Fenians were lulled into deep and heavy slumbers. *Cnú* or *Cnó*, also signifies a nut or kernel ; and one of the prettiest ballads ever written by the late Edward Wash, was entitled “ *Mo Chraoibhin Cno* ” (my cluster of nuts) commencing thus :—

“ My heart is far from Liffey's tide.  
And Dublin town ;  
It strays beyond the Southern side  
Of Cnoc Maol Donn :  
Where Ceapa Chuinn hath woodlands green,  
Where Abhuin Mhor's waters flow ;  
Where dwells unsung, unsought, unseen,  
Mo Chraoibhin Cno.  
Low clustering in her leafy green.  
Mo Chraoibhin Cno. ”

[e] *Gleann Ráth, Glen of the Rath*s. Not traceable in the Four Masters, nor in the publications of the *Irish Archaeological Society*.

[f] *Suir, the river Suir*. This river has its source in *Sliabh Ailduin*, better known as *Greim an Diabhail*, (the Devil's Bit mountain), in the county of Tipperary. It takes a circuitous rout by Thurles, Holy-cross, Caher, Ardfinan, Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir, and Waterford ; and, being joined by the rivers Nore and Barrow, *An Fheoir agus an Bhearbha* (hence the appellation “ Sister Rivers ”), at Cheek Point, six miles below Waterford, falls into the British Channel. *Donnchadh Ruadh Mac Conmara*, a Munster Poet of great celebrity, describes its waters thus, (see *Poets and Poetry of Munster*, p. 48) ; —

“ Uisge an Siuire ag brúchtadh 'na shlóghaidh  
Cois bán-chnoic Eireann Oig.”

While the waves of the Suir, noble river ! ever flow,  
Near tho fair Hills of Eire, O !

The poet Spenser, in his *Faerie Queen*, describes the scenery of these rivers (with which we happen to be familiarly acquainted), thus. See Book IV., Canto XL, Verse XLIII. : —

“ The first, the gentle Shure, that making way  
By sweet Clonmell, adornes rich Waterforde ;  
The next, the stubborne Newre, whose waters gray.  
By fair Kilkenny and Rosaoponte board ;

[1] At the time that Cuchullin was chief of the knights of Ulster, in the reign of Conchobhar Mac Nessa, (a celebrated prince of the Rudrician race, king of Ulster, and monarch of Ireland), Conrigh Mac Daire, a renowned champion, and chief of the Clanna Deaghaidh in Munster, was treacherously slain by Cuchullin, in revenge of an indignity which Conrigh offered him, by cutting off his hair when asleep, and taking from him the object of their contention — the beautiful Blanaid, a lady whom they brought captive from Scotland. She showed greater attachment to Cuchullin than to Conrigh, and consequently contrived for him an opportunity of perpetrating a horrid and treacherous murder in the palace of Cahirconry, the ruins of which are still extant on Sliabh Mis in Kerry, near which runs the rivulet called Fionn-Ghlaise. For a fuller account of this transaction, see *Keating's Ireland*, and *Smith's Kerry*, p. 156, &c.

[2] *Almhuin*. The ruins of the fort of Almhuin are still extant on the west end of the Curragh of Kildare ; and what we corruptly call the “ Bog of Allen” at this day, was formerly the forest of Almhuin, in which the knights were accustomed to enjoy the pleasures of the chase.

[3] Vide O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, vol. II., pp. 142, 143.

[4] *Clanna Baoiscne*. For further particulars of this tribe and their territory, see *leabhar na g-Ceart* (Book of Rights), p. 48, *n. g.*

[5] *Hy Kinsellagh*. Ibid, p. 208, *n. g.*

[6] *Fiachadh Baiceadha*. See Book of Rights, pp. 200, 203.

[7] In the reign of Cuchorb, king of Leinster, in the first century, Laighsech, of the progeny of Conall Cearnach, progenitor of the present O'Moras, or O'Mores, obtained from that king a territory, in Leinster, i.e. Laoighis or Leix, called after him, on account of his personal bravery and services. He was at the same time appointed treasurer of Leinster, and privileged to take the fourth place at the council board.

[8] See a paper on the Inauguration of Cathal Crobhdhearg, king of Connaught, A.D. 1244, published in the Transactions of the Kilkenny Archæological Society for 1853, in which all these offices are noticed.

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