THE LATER PAGAN SANCTUARIES IN COUNTY LIMERICK.

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When we travel over the bright seas of Greece and look on spots like Marathon, Thermopylae or Actium, where the fate of our civilization was decided, our feelings and our memory have behind them an element which adds a brightness and a beauty that even the recalling of such great events cannot give. We have not only history but poetry embodied in the features of the country, and we feel as if we were nearer the beauty of the "bright gods" of Hellas as we look on the places of their worship and the snowy peaks on which they dwelt. So, on the solemn Nile, everywhere the presence of Isis and Osiris follows us; nor are we the worse for it, for, like the poet, we feel it is better to be over conscious of the unknown and to desire to hear "the triton blowing his wreathed horn" than to sink into the purely material. Christianity itself did not fear to take over all that was harmless in paganism, nor did St. Paul turn from the altar at Athens, nor rob the temples, nor "blaspheme" even Artemis of Ephesus. Still less in Ireland did its great apostle Patrick refuse to see the good in the belief that proved the hunger for nearness to God among the Gaedhil. If I can lead others to learn to seek out and endow the hills of Munster with recollections of the old deities of the Celts I am only adding a new beauty and interest to our country. If I fail I may at least aid others to attempt it.

There is a strange prejudice against the study of our native mythology and we have not far to look for the cause. Utterly unscientific men (learned in everything but the rudiments of the subject
which they fancied they could teach) held the field in the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the last century. Comparative mythology as yet had hardly commenced, so they dogmatized and laid down every crude fancy as a fact—Baal, they wrote, was worshipped at every "Bally;" Rhea, at Lough Ree; Dverga, at Lough Derg; The Golden Moloch, at Kilmalkedar; Moloch at Kilmalloch. No shade of authority could they produce for all their conjecture, so all their ramparts fell at the first trumpet blast of true archaeology and ridicule was heaped (and deservedly heaped) upon their work. After that everyone feared to speak of an Irish "god" or "sanctuary" and, even when the study of the Gaulish mythology had been advanced to a secure and scientific system in France and Britain, it was left to a great French and a great Welsh scholar (De Jubainville and Rhys) to bring the tales of the Irish gods into comparison with what had been elsewhere established. In Ireland we speak of the "sídhe-mounds" or "folk," why not of "gods" and "shrines" or "temple mounds"? We use terms "demons," or "fairies," of beings who were not malignant spirits or sportive little elves but ancestral gods and personified powers of nature (supermen, such as Lug, an Apollo, and Manannan, a Neptune) and call the "great queens" Badbh, Macha and Nét "banshees," reducing them in thought to mean and dismal hags, not like their sun-bright equivalent, the Valkyries of Northern myth, or Bellona, with whom the ancient Gauls equated their "Badbh of Battle"—Cata Bodva.

Our predecessors never saw that in County Limerick we had a shrine of the first importance, at Knockainey, a mountain replete with supernatural beings in Slieve Reagh, and two cemeteries of the remote prehistoric peoples of Munster, the Ernai and Deirgthene on it" and at Clogher. These I propose to study and, where I err as pioneer, in the misty thicket of Celtic mythology, I crave patience and forgiveness, correction, but not mere prejudice and empty criticism. I use the term "later" in the title because I do not touch upon the great Bronze Age sanctuary of Loch Gur,

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1Proc. R. I. Acad., vol. xxiii., pp. 459-474, especially the section on Cush, pp. 464-7, and (since this paper was written) Knockainey and Clogher, vol. xxxiv., p. 47.
probably, from its extent, the greatest of them all. No trace of
tradition is known to have reached our earliest sources from the
Bronze Age and, so far as can be seen, the beginnings of our legends
did not extend behind the La Tène period. The tales of the gods,
it is true, go back to the abyss of time before they were brought
into Ireland by the first Celts. How far the additions in which
our myths differed from the Celtic mythology of the Continent may
be an accretion taken over from the pre-Celtic tribes has yet to be
studied, having all the disadvantage of there being no side light by
which to test it, only probabilities and analogy.

THE EARLY TRIBES.

First, very briefly, I must say a few words on the early peoples
of our district into whom, possibly in the second century, intruded
tribes, like the Deirghene, the founders of our present races.
Ptolemy, the Alexandrian geographer, whose Atlas seems to have
been brought down to A.D. 150 shows the tribes as fcuernoi, the
Ernai of Munster, Ganganoi, the Gan-Genann, who (as our legends
tell us) were driven by a storm to land at the Inbir Dubhglas (of
Lehinich or Dunbeg) in the present Co. Clare, and the Brigantes,
or Siol Breogain of our legends. He does not name the afterwards
important tribes of the Deirghene or Dairgine, but, far up in the
northern parts of Ireland, he marks the Darinoi and (as there is
evidence in the earliest strata of our legends that more than one
tribe migrated from the North to Munster) it is just possible that
one or other may be so intended by his "Darinoi." When, however,
we find in our ancient code of laws that both the words Dairgine
and Deirghene meant only family divisions, we cannot dogmatize.

5"Crom dubh," connected with it, has no place in the tales of the Tuatha
Dé. His very name is evidently a mere abusive nickname—Borlase's fancy
(Dolmens of Ireland, vol. iii.) of the Calleach Bhera being connected with the
place is only based on the name Ballynagallagh, really named from nuns, traces
of whose convent remains.
6An eclipse in A.D. 148 is cited.
7First Battle of Moytura (Erin, vol. viii., p. 12) "It was the first place where
sheep were brought to Ireland," note coincidence of Inis Caerach or Mutton
Island.
8e.g. the race of Ir under Conaire had migrated to S.W. Munster from Ulster
some generations before Mogh Nuadat, and the Deirghene had some legends
of a northern ancestor (see Battle of Magh Leana and Proc. R. I. Acad., vol.
xxxiii., p. 452.)
It is unfortunate that we only have our earliest Munster legends in very late form, but even so, and even if the details are vague and unreliable they probably preserve a genuine basis, for they evidently precede the importance of the Deirgthene and their offsets, the Eoghanacht of Cashel and the Dal Cais. The legends say that there were three predominant races in Munster, each under a prince. Mogh Neid, father of Eogan Taidleach (or “Mogh Nuadat”) and grandfather of Ailill (or “Oilioll Olom”) ruled the clan Deirgthene, of the race of Eber and Milesius. His territory lay outside Co. Limerick, in Magh Feimhin, east of the Suir Valley. MacNiadh (son of Lughaidh and father of the more famous Lughaidh macCon) ruled over the clan of Daithi Bhruadair, an Ithian race (ancestor of the O'Driscolls), the clann Lughaidh mac Itha mac Breogain, the Brigantes of Ptolemy. The Irian race was non Milesian, it had migrated from Ulster some generations before. It was a very interesting race, probably that which formed the staple of the Corca Dhuibhne, in West Kerry, where Corcaigh still bears their name and its ogham stones commemorate the mythic ancestress and eponymous heroine or goddess, Duben, in the tribal name “Maqi Mucoi Dovinnias,” for “Mucoi” almost certainly connotates a divine ancestry and the frequent mutilation of the name after it probably shows that the early Christians knew it to be a “god of the heathen.” Their prince was Conaire mor, son of Mogh Lamha. The curious legend, with interpolations from the history of Joseph and many transparent anachronisms and corruptions, will be found in the saga of the “Battle of Magh Leana.” The tale of Eogan “Mogh Nuadat” (“devotee of the god Nuada”) whom the late adaptor made his foster father and a mere mortal, more suo; his flight to Spain; his triumph over King Conn “of the hundred battles;” his defeat and death at Magh Leana are familiar. The final victor, Conn, divided Munster between Conaire and Mac Niadh and the glory of the line of Mogh Nuadat seemed lost. The

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1Battle of Magh Leana.
2Their centre in the days of King Fiacha Muillethan, circa A.D. 240 was Knockgraftan.
eclipse passed away and (mightiest of all the southern kings) the
great Ailill, or Oilioll Olom, son of Mogh Nuadat, reigned, married
Mac Niad's widow and ousted her son, Lughaidh Mac Con,
from the kingship. Oilioll is found coming westward from Magh
Feimhin, taking Knockainey and the district from it to Sliabh Claire
and making Dun Claire, on Sliabhriach, his seat. His favourite
son, Eogan, and Art, King of Tara, fell before Lughaidh Mac
Con and his foreign mercenaries, at Magh Muchramha in A.D.
195, but even the victor was unable to oust his line. Oilioll lived
in reduced splendour aided by his son Cormac Cass (from whom
the Dal Cais derive their far-famed name). His grandson, Fiacha
Mullethan, posthumous son of his favourite son Eogan, who fell
at Magh Muchrama, was a strong ruler. His uncle Cormac Cass
succeeded and ruled over "Thomond," which only extended to
Carnarry\(^9\) till Cormac's descendant Lughaidh Meann (about A.D.
360) added to it by conquest the eastern half of Co. Clare up to
Lughid. We are not to suppose that these outstanding tribes were
the sole settlers; in some sort of uncertain subject a crowd of
pre-Mesolithic and Firbolg races subsisted. The Uí Fidhgeinte, the
Corca Oiche and Corca Muichead, whom courtly genealogists affili-
ated to the line of Oilioll, in later centuries; the Clann Asail mac
Umoir, round Dromasail, or Tory Hill; the Maartene in S. W. Co.
Clare and from Knockainey to Emly and their constituents, the Marga-
raighe, Sibenraighe (or Sermraighe) Greccraighe, Ailraighe (Dilraighe)
and the Corraighe, who dwelt at the foot of Crotta Cliach, the Great
Galtees. These (or at least several of them) are given among the
Atech Tuatha,\(^11\) or servile tribes, besides the Corca Muighe, who

\(^8\) O'Donovan's identification of Sliabh Claire with Duntrileague Hill is dis-
proved by the Annals of the Four Masters, 1600, the Tripartite Life and the
Agallamh. He at first identified Sliabh Claire correctly with Ceann More, or
Sliabh riach, but was obsessed by his frantic attempt to find historic traditions
for the dolmens, identifying the Duntrileague monument as the tomb of Oilioll
Olom, it being of course of a vast age before the second century (see Proc.
of the Royal Irish Academy, xxxiv., p. 48.

\(^9\) Carn Fhearaíde; "Carn Fhearaíde" is given as its name in the
Burke's Rental, 1546 (see Proc. R. I. Acad., vol. xxvi., page 88). O'Donovan
absurdly places Carn Fhearaíde on the south border of Thomond (it being
always mentioned as the north limits) and asserts Carnarry to be Cathair
Naraidh merely (as was usual with him) from the modern pronunciation.

were assigned in later documents to the Ui Fidhgeinte line of descent. The Caenraighe of Kenry, the Tradraighe of the Bunratty district, and the Orbhraighe at Moynoe, on Loch Derg, in Co. Clare, were also alien races, and the numerous scattered branches of the Musraignhe (in Cork, among the Ui Fidhgeinte, or near Kilpeacon and also elsewhere in Co. Tipperary) boasted to take their name from Cairbre Musc, as the Corcovaskin of Co. Clare did from his brother, Cairbre Bhaiscoinn and derived their descent from Conaire and from Duben.\textsuperscript{12} The Dal Cais claimed a very interesting (if unsupported) descent from the early King, Nia Segamain (Circa B.C. 100) whose descendants the “Maqi Muoi Netasegammonos,” hold in their name the possible meaning “kinsman” or “nephew”\textsuperscript{13} of Segomo, the war god, marking their divine descent. Their ancestor, Deichead (of the Uí Maic Deicheadh or Maqi Decedda tribe), was evidently (like another Munster ancestor Deda) a native god, who gave his name to a lake, a hill and glen. Deda had had a brother, Febra, who gave his name to Cenn Febrat, on whose slope “fronting the falling sun,” lies the cemetery of Clann Dedad; Garban, son of Dedad, was also supposed to lie there when men began to reverse the ancient process of turning ancestors into gods by making gods mortal.\textsuperscript{14} The great Ernean cemetery was known as Temair Erann in the “Tract on the Cemeteries,” and is described in some detail in the Metrical Dindshenchas of Cenn Febrat. It has been identified, on no authority, with Temair Luachra and placed near Castle Island, far from its true site near Kilfinnane.

THE GODS OF GAUL AND IRELAND.

Before we recall the group of divine persons venerated in oldest Co. Limerick let us study the reduction of the great national gods to

\textsuperscript{12} For this obscure subject see note on Ann. Four MM., A.D. 165; Eriu, vol. vi., pp. 138-143, Sasna Cormaic (for Musraignhe in Ui Fidgente) and a most valuable list of these ancient settlements in O’Huidhrin’s Topographical poem, pp. 109-111 and notes. For the attempts to eliminate the offensive elements of the Duben story see R. Soc. of Antiq., Ir., vol. xi., p. 817.

\textsuperscript{13} Sasna Cormaic gives “Nia” as meaning “Trenhirl,” or champion, but the early meaning is said to be “nephew” who should “champion” his uncle. The date of Nia Segamain is contradictory B.C. 150 to 70, later compilers like Gilla Coemhain made him a high King, but he is no late invention but the hero of an obscure “deer legend” evidently archaic.

\textsuperscript{14} Metrical Dindshenchas (ed. E. Gwynn Todd Lecture Series) vol. x., pp. 230-1.
mortal heroes and even to wizards and demons, for it is a subject of the deepest interest and the greatest importance for a right understanding of our national mythology and the difficulties of its study.

The Norse gods and myths are common property, whether in learned volumes, popular books, or children's tales, while sculptors and artists have illustrated them in nearly every Teutonic nation, but (while one sees hundreds of pictures of the Ash Yggdrasil, Loki bound under the serpent, the death of Baldr, and the last fights of Odin with the wolf, and Thor with the Midgard snake) one rarely sees a picture of any Irish deity or early hero—once I have seen an oil painting of the sea god Mannanan, and once a statue of Cuchullin dying.

Among many outstanding difficulties in Celtic mythology are the endless alias-names of the Gaulish gods and the variant parentage of the same gods in Irish legends. The last probably arises from tribal divergencies, for no "Arch Druid" appears in early source, or any centralized priesthood to insure orthodoxy or consistency. The Celtic religion, less advanced than the Greco-Roman, had not reduced its deities to strictly "departmental gods" and the Celt, over-rich in ideas, did not settle down to specialize and characterize his deities and their attributes so that all could recognize them at first glance. Of the gods common to Ireland and Gaul by far the most individualized is Lug or Lugh, the sun god. In Gaul he gave his name to the towns or duns called Lug-

36 For example in "Bruden da Derga" the war goddess is called Badbh Nemain, Dairine, Aife, Macha, Sinand (the Shannon) and Morrigh, the Great Queen. (Rev. Celt., vol. xxii., p. 58).
37 The utterly unscientific equations stated by the Romans are of as little value as their ideas on the Jewish religion.
dunum—Lyons, Laon and Leyden have still a shadow of his name. Among his epithets are the interesting ones "Dunates, of the Dtin and "Dumiates" or "Dumias" of the (mound) dumha. In Britain we have Dinn Llew. In Gaul his alias, "Grannos" Apollo, recalls our word for the sun; he was also called Toutiorix "the people's King." Ogmias, the Irish Ogma, the inventor of the ogham script, was at first the god of eloquence and spoken lore. The Gauls showed him leading by strings, from his tongue to their ears, a crowd of rejoicing worshippers, and he was armed with a club and lion skin to show the power of oratory. The Romans did not know whether to identify him with Mercury or Hercules. Next to eloquence the Celt loved war; the Gaulish Mars, "Segomo," as we saw, was patron, if not ancestor, of tribes in Waterford and Limerick. He was also "Camulus," some think the Irish name Cumhal, whence Camulodunum, "Smertorix" was another of his titles, and "Rigisamo," his wife "Nemetona," has a votive slab at Bath. She is evidently the Irish goddess Neman, wife of the war god Net. Another war goddess (possibly an alias for Nemetona) was "Catabodua," worshipped in Gaul and equated with Bellona; experts vary slightly as to her title, Catabodua, "victorious in battle," or Catabodva, "the Bodbh of Battle," the fearful war goddess Badbh, who incarnated herself in Irish war tales as the royston crow. "Taranus," the Gaulish Jupiter, a thunder god, "Tarun" or "Terun" was worshipped at Tara as "Etherun;" he is regarded as an ancestor, or patron, of the Ui Torna, of Odorney in Kerry. "Poseidon" was worshipped by the Gauls, his native name is as yet undiscovered, but in Britain he was Manawydan map Lyr, the

19 Lucian describes him thus from a painting in a Gaulish temple.
6 See especially the valuable essay of Mr. W. M. Hennessy in Rev. Celt., vol. 1, p. 33. Neden, Nem and Nemet as well as Catabodva appear in Gaulish inscriptions. The war goddess names see Bruden Da Derga (Rev. Celt., vol. xxii., p. 58, and First Battle of Muytura (Ernu, vol. viii., p. 33.) J. V. Plough Hartung contested it, but often on most erroneous grounds, his views met little acceptance (Rev. Celt., vol. xii., p. 171) see also Zimmer's remarks on early civilization of Tain (Zeitschrift für Deutches Allerthum) there cited favouring the Irish deductions.
familiar Irish sea god and mariner, Manannan Mac Lir. He was the associate of Lughaidh (Lugh) Laidhfóda and the sidh caval-
cadé consisted of his sons and foster brothers.\textsuperscript{22}

Another great god, the god of the ocean abysses, and estuaries, his "silver hands,"\textsuperscript{23} was "Nodens" (or "Ludens") worshipped in Britain, near the Severn (Sahbrann), where his inscription "Devo M. Nudenti" may be read—"the great (?) god Nudens." He is the Welsh "Lludd, the silver-handed," and the Irish "Nuada Arget-
lamh," another outstanding deity—Ludgate in London, probably bears his name but he was, both in Britain and Ireland, euhemerized into an ancient king. "Bélésama," "Minerva," was a goddess of poetry, healing and smiths, like the Irish goddess Brigid, an alias, which in the Gaulish form "Brigend," gave her name to the Irish and British Brigantes, the Gaulish and Spanish Brigantia and the Irish Siol Bréogain (Ptolemy’s Brigantes) in Munster. An inscription is preserved in Gaul\textsuperscript{44} "Segomar . . . made Bélésama this nemetum" (Fidh Nemidh or sacred grove); the places called Bélisama in Britain and France (Blesmes) are called after her. I will only add the mother goddesses in Gaul the "Matres Nemetiales"

\textit{Nemeta} or groves. Dervona (Dara, oak) protector of oak groves like the Galatian Drunemeton; Epona (epp, ech) protector of horses, and Damona (Damh) of cattle.\textsuperscript{55} One of the great \textit{Matres} may be the Irish Ana, or Dana, the mother of the gods, her sons were Brian, Lucharba and Luchair; after her the falls of Doonass (Dun-
easa Daininne) and "the Paps," in Kerry (Da Chich Daininne) "Da Chich Annan" and Da Chich Morrigan," the "two breasts of the great Queen"\textsuperscript{56} are named. Some identify Aine of Knockainey with her, but, if so, the present legends are entirely divergent.

\textsuperscript{22}Feis Tighe Chonáin, preface p. 25. To his fort Caer Sidi (Sidh) in Britain neither disease nor old age could come.
\textsuperscript{23}All who have looked at the silver estuaries will recognize the truth of this most picturesque epithet; it probably originated after crossing the sea from Gaul as it is only found in the two islands.
\textsuperscript{44}Rhy's loc cit, p. 46. cf. Ancient Laws of Ireland (Rolls Series) vol. i., p. 165 for Fidnemid.
\textsuperscript{55}Celtic Review, vol. iii., p. 36, Anwyl.
\textsuperscript{44}Lebor Gabhala (Book of Leinster) MS. T.C.D.H. 217, f. 95, col. 2. Fian-
though Irish goddesses sometimes got strangely transformed, If this be correct Aine's temple was worth the "violation" of Ailill Olom.

THE GODS IN EARLY IRISH LITERATURE.

In Irish literature, the farther back we seek, the plainer is the record of the gods. Peacefully, tactfully, the early missionaries won their way. The old Irish hungered and thirsted for something better than the nature worship that the already dying gods could give. The missionary took over all harmless things, he re-dedicated the well and the pillar, he protected, even at the chief religious centre, Armagh, the sacred grove and the revised laws guarded it from injury, even the sacred fire was kept alight for ages by the nuns of Kildare. Paganism lived longer than some have imagined, down, perhaps to A.D. 634, but it died out and was little danger to Christianity. Even in Iceland and Norway (where the struggle had been fiercer and paganism had its martyrs and persecutors) learned Christian priests laid up the tales and poems of the gods in the priceless Eddas; no wonder if even so pious a Bishop as Cormac and poets of Christian descent, unsoured by pagan violence, cherished the tales and memories of his fathers' forsaken gods.

Cormac, King and Bishop of Cashel, in about A.D. 890-900, employed his scribes to reduce to writing the traditions, genealogies and history of his kingdom. Let us see what he says about the gods after a century of Norse warfare; for the reaction against the Danish paganism of the next Century set the Christian writers to obliterate the divine features and turn the gods into ancient heroes and kings. The process was gradual and may be studied

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27 Their great foundress bore the name of the goddess Brigend or Brigid, patron of the Brigantes.
28 Christianity in Ireland never seems to have disgraced itself and slighted its Founder by persecution, it bettered belief but had no decree against stones or trees like those of the Councils of Arles, A.D. 432 (in the very days of St. Patrick), Tours 587; Nantes, 658; and Toledo, 881, or horrible deeds like the Norse kings inflicted on pagans (Heimskringla, ed. Morris and Magnusson, 1893, pp. 305-313, 320, 328, 332). Charlemagne closed the pagan burial places, "non ad tumulos paganorum," the Irish needed no decree, they willingly laid their friends near the churches, to which they had been won, not driven.
in the works of Senchan, A.D. 650; Cormac, A.D. 890; Eochaidh Hua Flainn, A.D. 984; Cinaed Ua Articain, 975; Cuan Hua Lochain, 1024; Flann of Monaster, 1056, and (chief euhemerists of all) Gilla Cholmhaí and the author of the Agallamh na Senorach.

The "Sanas Chormaic" names the following gods "who o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost Isles" for it, at least, does not hesitate to call god "a god"—"Art, a god" (one will recall the Gaulish name Arthus and the divine title Artaios); "Ana mater deorum Hibernium," "like as Ana was mother of the gods;" Brigid, "a goddess worshipped by poets, her sisters were Brigid, the physician and Brigid the smith, from whom all Irish goddesses were called Brigid;" "The Dagdae" is named; "Diancecht, god of the powers, deus salutis;" Etain was his daughter; Garmuinn was wife of the Dagdae; "Lugnasad, the festival or game of Lug macEithne or MacEithleann;" Manannan macLir "Scoti et Brittones eum deum vocaverunt maris;" Neit or Neid "a god of battle with the pagans of the Gael; and "Nemon, uxor illius" The Glossary abounds in mythological and druidical notes, and the pagan sanctuaries (hill, well, river and tree) are spoken of as such without concealment or aversion. Little doubt now exists that in the Red Branch sagas we have a picture true to life in Ireland at the beginning of our era. The tribes are like those in Ptolemy, Tara has not risen to fame, the Ernai alone of the Munster tribes are prominent. The chariots, weapons, ornaments, manners and customs, the head trophies and innumerable minute details put the tradition behind the conditions of the third century, where the first glimmer of historical tradition seems to begin. The state-


39 For this see the noteworthy "Ulster epic in its relations to History" (Mac Neill) New Ireland Review, vol. xxvi., p. 34; the Preface to Duanaire Finn (Irish Texts Soc.) and Miss Hull's paper (Celtic Review, vol. iii., p. 68). The races of Eber and Eremon do not appear in the Tain Bo Cuailnge, the high kingship of Tara (and indeed the place is of little apparent importance) and the later divisions of Ireland are not named and the Ernai predominate in the South. Tara was probably rather a religious than a political centre till the reign of Cormac mac Airt. The attempts of Borlase and others to make the latter a sun god are quite discredited.
ments of Poseidonius (B.C. 100) and the Greco-Roman writers find correspondence with our sagas. It is also well established that the pagan tradition began to be written by the Christians after A.D. 500, and that the fragments of the Tain Bo Cualnge were edited, by Seanchan Torpeist, about 50 years later and, with some addenda (as a rule easily detached) have reached our times. Being little esteemed, save by the learned, and largely superseded by the Finn cycle of tales, they escaped the utter corruption of the latter and are very archaic. In them Cuchullin is the divine son of Lugh, the sun god, if not his reincarnation; whether an actual warrior lies behind the legends or not, the features are unmistakably solar. He meets even in enmity the war goddess, Nemain, the Badbh and the Morrigan, injuring the last (like the Homeric heroes). He is descended from the gods, Net, Elathan, the Daghdha, Cermait, MacCuill (the husband of Erin herself) and Lir the sea god. He is "son of the goddess Dechtire" and nephew of "the earth god Conchobar." The whole is frankly pagan. The Tain bo Flidhais, equally archaic, is without gods but the Tain Bo Cualnge and the "Death of Cuchullin" abound in such asseverations as "The blessing of gods and non gods on you, "I swear by the god by whom my people swear," "I swear by the god whom I worship;" "the god by whom the Uladh swear;" "the god of my tribes" "the flame of Lugh." "We thank the gods for our return to Erin." Even a work like the "Battle of Moytura Cong," very late in form, tells how the Tuatha Dé had "a god of wizardry of their own" and tells of "Eochaidh Ollathair, the great Daghdha" or "good god." Thus we see that knowledge of Celtic mythology was not suppressed during the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth centuries; only after the Danish wars was an attempt made (self-

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33 See the valuable study in Miss Hull's "Cuchullin Saga," preface, p. lvi., ixii.
32 Book of Leinster f 123 b, Rhys loc. cit., pp. 143, 144. "Dia talmaide Conchobar." in Lebhar na hUidhre f 101b one recalls Tirechans "Viros Sidhe seu Terrenorum deorum."
32 Rev. Celt., vol. iii., p. 175; see also early ninth-century Fleid Bricend (Irish Texta Soc. vol. ii., pp. 57, 61, 95); also Erin, vol. viii., pp. 17, 35, 45
35 Celtic Review, vols. i. to iv.
betraying and clumsy) to euhemerize into kings and heroes the ancient Pantheon, much of whose "history" can, however, be reconstructed. Not till late in the eleventh century did the attempt begin to bring in the conscript gods to eke out that preposterous list of high kings, the joy of the self-styled scholar, a list as contradictory and absurd as if we had a Saxon list of "Bretwaldas" from "Brute, the son of Eneas," in which Camulus, Lud and Lear, Cymbeline, Cassivelaunus and Caractacus. Hengist and Horsa were all found, "labelled and dated!"

THE GODS OF THE SIDH MOUNDS.

It is a very difficult question to solve whether, and if not under what circumstances, the Celtic gods got connected with the earth-works. I myself incline to believe that the intermediate stage arose from the new-come settlers penetrating the Boyne Valley, and coming face to face with imposing remains of unknown earlier race, they placed their sanctuaries (probably open to the sky) on the summits of the great tumuli, or within the pillared circles In some cases local gods, like Boand and Angus, of the Boyne, got taken over, as the Jews took over the worship of the local Baalim, but the more easily that the Gaulish polytheism was not bound to exclude other gods. Two theories have been advanced, one that the sidh folk are nature gods, worshipped by the Celt before he crossed the sea, and some pre-Celtic gods, some, perhaps, ancestral heroes, of the earlier colonists. Another, which has had some support, claims the sidh as an actual race of cave dwellers, arguing from their clearly mortal nature in the early tales. These writers, however, have lumped all Irish literature together very uncritically and never saw that the euhemerizing of the sidh began late in the tenth and became universal only from the late eleventh century. It

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37 It put in the Munster princes Mogh Corb and Fer Corb from the fourth century to a remote past, leaves out Conchobar mac Nesa and then duplicated him; it duplicated Eochaidh who fell in Clu.

38 Note as to the sanctity of the mounds the geasa not to sit on them, in Leabhar na gCeart (The Book of Rights) p. 21, and Agallamh p. 123. A. Nutt supposes that the mounds, at first sacred merely as tombs, became houses of the gods. I use the translation of the Agallamh by Standish Hayes O'Grady in Silva Gadelica.

39 cf Mr. MacRitchie, Royal Soc. Ant., Ir., vol. xxxii., p. 375 and 183, also prefaces and appendices to Mesca Ulad and Imran Brain.
was part of the degradation of the gods after the Danish wars, and almost certainly by a re-action against the militant paganism of the worshippers of the gods of Walhall. I will, therefore, first study the gods of the mounds, and then the degradation of the Gaulish deities and their pre-Celtic associates.

The "departmental gods," common to early "Aryan" mythology, are easily distinguished from the "hill and mound gods" of the earlier races, even though they have the same abodes. If we use Irish literature critically, the change from god to fairy, and from fairy to magician, forms a consistent whole, otherwise the tales land us in a labyrinth and a chaos, without form and void, where the light is darkness.

Greatest of the mound gods, and with no Gaulish equivalent, is Aengus, son of Alladaí (the all-god), who dwelt in the great tumulus of the Brugh with its stone ring and pillars and its carved, domed crypt, on which possibly no Celt had looked till after the Norse broke it open. Men told how his son, Bodbh Dearg (probably a pre-Celtic Munster god) worshipped on Magh Feimhin and Manannan, the sea god, divided among the wandering deities the "pleasant hills," i.e. the ceremonial mounds. Aengus gave a sídh to the sun god Lug; the long-handed (one thinks of the hand-ended long rays of the Egyptian Disc god in the carvings of the "Heretic King") and another to Ogma; he reserved two for himself, in one of which (Brugh) he dwelt with his spouse Board, the goddess of the Boyne, an old nature goddess, "with the silver forearm" of the shining river, like Nuada. He, Bui (sister of Board and consort of Lugh) and Bodan, the shepherd of Elcmair, owned respectively the three great tumuli, Achadh Alladaí (Newgrange), Cnoghbha (Knowth) and Dubadh (or Dowth). The wife of the Smith (pro-

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50 Onomasticon Goedelicium (Hogan) pp. 597-8 for his residences.

bably the god Gobhann) owned the mound of Drogheda, perhaps that utilized for the Mote of Blathach Castle. The Norse opened and plundered these four mounds, A.D. 861. Knowth remained open when the curious poem, where Caoilte ransomed Finn, was written for part of the animal ransom he paid was "two bats from the cave of Cnoghbhao." Boadan's chief sidd, however, was at Sidh Nechtain, on Carbery Hill, Co. Kildare, at the source of the Boyne. There a mound and two rings remain. At it she was also known as "Segais," her husband was Nuada, silver arm, who used to cover her forearm with bracelets, whence the river was "her silver forearm." The triad there worshipped included Nechtan with Boand and Nuada, and thus resembled the triad, Bogbal, Aine and Ferfi, at the rings and cairn of Knockainey. Perhaps the Trinity well, from which the Boyne springs, was a tactful Christian name to win the pagan tribes, for no one has noted how the doctrine of the Trinity must have won the triad-loving heart of the Celt. In the Tain bo Fraich Boand is said to be mother of another triad, Gel, Gen and Saan-tuiges; so we see the triad of mountain gods in Claire, Currech and Febhrat, in Co. Limerick. Cnogba (or Knowth) belonged to Bui, daughter of Elcmaur, a god who possibly once held the Brugh and whose shepherd, Boadan, certainly held Dowth Tumulus; there a Dun Boand was among its monuments. Beibhinn, another daughter of Elcmaur, dwelt in Tebreac's sidd, near Assaroe. In another legend Bui was either the wife or daughter of Nas, a love of the god Lugh, and later writers spoke of her burial at Cnocbacea or Knowth. Her sister loved Angus of the Brugh. Like Aine, the Morrigu, daughter of Ernmas, dwelt in a sidd and stole a cow from the sidd of Cruachan (Rathcroghan) when (like Knockainey and every other

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**Book of the Dean of Lismore, p. 62, and Irish Univ. Magazine, 1854, p**


**Irish MSS. Ser., R. I. Acad., vol. i., p. 141.**

**"Elcmaur will be in the Sidd, the mansion without any arms save a fork of white hazel." Tochnarc Etaine, Rev. Celt., vol. xxvii., pp. 230, 233) telling also much about Angus of the Brugh.**

**Ann. Four M.M. 862. Ulster 861. Metr. Dind., vol. x., p. 50.**


**Metr. Dind., vol. x., p. 115.**
mound of the Tuatha Dé) it opened on Samhain eve. 60 Braccan, a warrior of the divine race, lived "in the glittering brugh," called after his daughter, Almha, and the god Midir dwelt in a sídh. 61

The great Munster mound god was Bodbh Dearth. This epithet is perhaps similar to the "Lord of Red knowledge" applied to the Dagda, which apparently means "royal." So also we hear of "Blood-red Nuada silver arm." Bodbh Dearth dwelt in Siddh Feimhin or Siddh Buidba, at Slievenaman, and is prominent in story from early times to early nineteenth century folk tales and poems. He had a another sídh near Loch Derg, near that of the unnamed goddess Aibhinn, "the lovely," at the Siddh of Craglea, above Killaloe. The sídh near Loch Derg is, so far, unidentified; it was called "Siddh Buidbh meic in Dagda." His third palace, where he entertained one hundred retainers and the Lords of the Dé Danann, was the sídh Benn Edair, or Howth. The Morrigu, Badbh, one of the great goddesses lived at Lismorrigain, or Mullaghmast Fort, and in the promontory fort of Dunseverick, 62 in Antrim. She, or another "Morrigu," Macha, held the sídh Emna, evidently the flat-topped mound in Eman Fort. Derc, son of Ethamar, dwelt with his mother's people in a sídh 63 For space, and not for lack of material, I will only give one more example when Gaidiar the son of Manannan seduced Becuma, the gods banished her from their company and every sídh in Erin closed against her. Art, son of Con of the Hundred Battles, had pity and sent her to the kind-hearted goddess, Aine, in Siddh Eogaballe (Knockainey) who welcomed and protected the disgraced lady, advising and helping her to get the magic wand from Curoi mac Daire. 64 From this we see how very holy the great tumuli (their origin lost in unremembering night) became to the invading Celt. Even before he left Gaul his gods Lugh, Camhul

60 Echtra Neraí, p. 225. For the war goddessesses see also Rev. Celt., vol. 1, p. 37; Triads of Ireland (Todd Lect. Ser., vol. viii., p. 17, p. 120, and Petrie "Tara Hill," p. 214.
61 Agallamh, pp. 224-5.
63 New Grange, p. 26.; Tain bo Fraich (ed. O’Byrne Crowe, Todd Lect. Ser., vol. i.)
and Segomo were gods of the dun and dumha. He feared to sit on
the mounds of the Tuatha Dé, as at Cenn Febrat and the mound of
the wife of Maine, in the old times, as at Croaghpathean in our day.
He exposed his enemies heads as trophies impaled on these mounds.
Thus we are told that, on Sliabhriach, Cain, son of Derc Duralach,
brought the head of Febra, son of Senn, to Cenn Febrat, probably
the famous "three tulachs" there,\(^5\) and that in revenge for this
Garban, son of Deda, brought the Slayer's head to it. So in the
"Aided Chon Chulainn" Cairpre's head was exposed on the Sidh
Nennta and in later times (perhaps a survival of the custom) Con-
gal's head was placed "on the duna of the rath" (A.D. 634) and
the head of "The Cock" (Ua Ruairc) was exposed (A.D. 1100) on the
earthwork at Singland.

**THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS.**

The late so-called historians, "lost in the great abyss of bot-
tomless uncritical learning," in their attempt to build out of genuine
early legends a pre-historic history, betrayed themselves\(^6\) when
they calmly "wrote off" the Tuatha Dé as mortal rulers and dated
their deaths from 1830 to 1750 before Christ. The Christian writers
of the earlier period knew better and the poets bore them out.
Fiacc knew that in the early fifth century "over the people of Erin
reigned darkness, the tribes worshipped the *siih*." St. Patrick and
his train were mistaken for "viros side aut deorum terrenorum"
and he invoked the heavenly virtues between him "and the cruel
merciless power—the incantations of false prophets, the black laws
of heathenry, the false laws of heretics, the craft of idolatry, the
spells of women, smiths and druids"\(^7\)—who tried to set the native
gods upon him. So in the poets, despite the death of the gods at

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\(^5\) Agallamh, p. 251; Metr. Dind, vol. x., p. 230; Rev. Celt., vol. xv., p. 442;
and Erin, vol. v., p. 245.

\(^6\) So where the older tales made the Tuatha Dé ride on the clouds from
the north of the world to Ireland the euhemerists said it was in ships from Norway!
and the yellow clouds were the smoke of their burned ships! The unimaginative
dulness of the pedantic rationalizer could no further go. (Yellow Book of
Lecan, fol. 750). Eriu, vol. viii., p. 17 and iv., p. 143). The chronology is most
absurd and contradictory.

Moytura in the pedant's chronology, Lugh was father of Cuchullin, seventeen centuries later and Manannan begat Mongan in the seventh century of our era. In the reign of Dathi, just before the introduction of the Faith, Sengarman carried off a goddess, Mesca (daughter of the great god Bodh Dearg of Sidh Feimhin) from Sidh Finnchadha before Dathi's sons slew him. The Irish Church in the Stowe Missal, about A.D. 610, prays that the people (apparently of Thomond) may be won “ab idolorum cultu.” Forannán, chief of East Thomond, at Tulla Co. Clare, was evidently a heathenish opponent of St. Mochulla, though married to the pious Guaire's sister, Congal (despite O'Donovan's sneer) was something very like a pagan and “had a compact with Satan.” Those whom O'Donovan attacks were probably near the truth when they considered that the Battle of Magh Rath was the last struggle of expiring Celtic paganism.

But “a blight was on the immortal gods;” let us follow their decline. Nuada Argetlamh, god of the silver arms of the sea, like the Severn, was probably the being from whom Magh Nuadat, or Maynooth is named, for the Battle of Magh Leana is of the decadent period and tried to invent a fosterer of Mogh Nuadat in his place. He was evidently patron of King Eoghan “Mogh ancestor of the Leinster Kings, the Dal Niadh Corb. He is (in a seventh century poem) named as “Nuada silver arm” and the

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89“Compert Chonculainn” and “Compert Mongan,” in “Imran Brain,” vol. i., pp. 44, 45.
87(Ed. Stokes) p. 4. The Irish idols, being either wood or rude pillars have left no intelligible trace.
89For his sanctuary see “Roman Antiquities at Lydney Park (Rev. W. H. Bathurst) and Rhy's loc. cit., pp. 125, 133.
90Metr. Dind., vol. x., pp. 297-401, Nuadat Dearg (like Bodh Dearg) “Blood red Nuada Argetlamh” and the Dagda is certainly this god (Battle of Magh Leana). The dedication names in the Deirghine legends deserve study—Nia Segamain, Mogh Neid, Mogh Nuadat, Mogh Corb, Mogh Lamha and Nia Feibhis, see pedigree in Keating's History, vol. iv., p. 47. For the identity of the various Nuadas see a recent paper read in the Royal Irish Academy.
91Nuadat” and the persons called “Cu Nuadat” and Drai Nuadat and
builder of the *siadh* of Almha. He was a triad, Nuada-Argeltlam-Fionnfail and Cecht. His son, Tadhg, had a daughter, Muiireann, mother of the hero, Finn. In the Agallamh he is degraded to a "pestilent fellow, a magician." He is an ancestor of the Dal Cais and Corca Laeghde.

Lugh, the sun god, "the long-handed"—"Lugh, like the sun is the splendour of his face, and men were not able to look on it for the greatness of his splendour"—was grandson of the horrible god of darkness, Balor ("god of the evil eye," "the Lord of Death")—whom he slew by the brightness of his coming. He was father of Cuchullin, or reincarnated himself in that hero, and was ancestor of the Luighne, near Navan, and of Finn mac Cumbhail. He established the feast of Lugnasad, in August, when his power was greatest. The Bodleian Dindsenchas even ventures to call him "Lord of Hosts." A sandbank in Dublin Bay was (it is said) called after him "Long Logha," Lug's ship or fort. "Lug rode the steed of Manannan (the waves), swift as the bleak cold wind of spring." He was as brilliant as the summer's day; he "rose from Manannan's territory (the sea) in the east to come to Tara and thence to fly against his foes, the Fomoraigh in the western ocean." In the Tain bo Cualnge a charioteer is called Ferloga, Lug's man, and a place Lugmod, or Moda Loga, and he himself came to aid his son Cuchullin. The late eleventh century writers

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65 Agallamh, p. 131-2. The arc no traces on Almha Hill, perhaps it was of dry stone (cairn or ring wall) was easily removed, or the hill (like the rock sidhean and sidhe on Inishturk and Craglea was the *siadh*.
67 Duanaire Finn, pp. xlv.-lii.
68 Agallamh, p. 131.
69 Rhys loc cit, p. 383; Irish Myth Cycle, chapter xiii., p. 171.
71 Irish Myth Cycle, chap. v., p. 63 (from Baile an Scail) and "Leabhar Gabhala."
72 Cuchullin Saga." (Miss E. Hull citing "Compert Choneulainn.")
73 See Rhys pp. 409, 411, 418; Sanas Cormaic p. 99, a divergent account in later Dindsenchas (Rev. Celt., vol. xvi., p. 51). The festival of Lug at Lugdunum in Gaul also fell in August.
74 Metr. Dind., vol. x., p. 483.
75 Perhaps doubtful, see Metr. Dind., vol. x., 496.
76 Fate of Children of Tuireann."
77 p. 66, pp. 182-3. Louth, Lugmadh, preserves an echo of his name as Maynooth does of Nuada.
reduced him to an earthly king who reigned (B.C. 1871) and died (B.C. 1832) and indignant so-called “antiquaries” at times loudly protest against “the pitiable scepticism” of those who claim him to be a god, not a historic king! His worship is the only definite form of paganism mentioned by St. Patrick, who writes in the Confessio “that sun shall not remain forever, nor its splendour continue, and woe to its unhappy worshippers.” Not long before that time King Leoghaire died for violating his oath by the sun and elements. Lugh retained more of his glory than Nuada, but yet medieval scribes put into his mouth the degrading confession—“I am not immortal, I am of the race of Adam.” His grandfather, Balor, “the baleful-eyed,” was worshipped on the hill of Uisnech as God of Darkness and Lord of Death “of the irresistible blows.” He was of the darkness and was slain by the sun god. In later days he became a fairy tale ogre and cattle thief. One traditional pedigree makes Lugh grandfather of Nuada silver hand, and the latter father of Derghene, great grandfather of Oilioll Olom; another make him father of King Conaire, ancestor of the Muscraighe, Clann Dedat and Corcavaskin.

So with all the other gods, the later the story the weaker they became. The Dagda could not raise his favourite hero from the dead, he could only send a strange soul into the corpse to enable it to converse with him. In the Agallamh the sidh folk meet us at every turn, but they have put on mortality and to this stage the legend of Aine of Knockainey belongs. We gather that King Art and his son Cormac were opposed to the druids and worshipped one god

78 Irish Myth Cycle, p. 171; yet this was the god whom Caesar (De Bells Gallico vi., cap. xvii.) when Medbh was young, identifies as “Mercury,” and says that many images of him had been raised in Gaul.
79 In Irish MSS. he is grandson of the wife of Balor; in Welsh ones Lien is seen as grandson of the wife of Beli (Rhys, p. 319).
80 Ulster Journal Arch. (old series) vol. i., 1853 (E. Getty) see Book of Rights, p. 11, and note for Balor’s Hill also see Second Battle of Moytura (Rev. Celt., vol. xii., p. 101) and Fate of Children of Lir (Atlantis, vol. iv., p. 161).
81 The Cormac tale is strongly attested, and (if we accept the legends that Cormac was a “progressive,” introducing water mills to please his British mistress, and organizing a national army on Roman lines) the probability of Christianity getting to Ireland at that time is very great. Even the Norse mythology took over the Christian ideas in the destruction of the world at Ragnarök, and the “New Heavens and the New Earth wherein dwelt Righteousness.”—Forseti and Baldur.)
in the third century, a little later Declan, of Ardmore, and Ciaran, of Cape Clear, were evangelizing Munster folk, and the weakness of opposition to Christianity shows that (at least in the chiefs and ruling classes) the *sidh* faith was sick and dying.

**THE FINAL DEGRADATION.**

The *sidh* became liable in later story to human violence. When the wife of Eochaidh was carried off to the *sidh* mound of Brileith, Eterscel dug his way into its interior and rescued her.\(^8^1\) Her daughter, Mes Buachalla, was mother of King Conaire, the father of the three famous Cairbsres. Ailill and Medbh also dug into Sidh Uaman, the home of Ethal, and were destined to be the destroyers of the *sidh* of Cruachan.\(^8^2\) The Fiana (though less wonderful warriors than the troops of "Medbh of the Cattle forays") dug into the *sidh* of a "fairy" and forced her to rejuvenate Finn.\(^8^3\) Love, as well as war, helped to "mortalize" the divine race. Almha, daughter of Braccan, married Cumhal and died giving birth to her son, she was "buried in the green surfaced mound."\(^8^4\) Etaín, daughter of Edar, of Howth, was young and beautiful for centuries and had many lovers, both gods and men. Her father was "King of the Cavalcade of the *sidh*"; among her lovers were Aengus, son of the Dagda, Mannanan, Eochaidh Feidleach (father of Medbh) and Oscar, yet she was mortal at the last and died of sorrow for another, Aine, of Benn Etair, and (broken-hearted by his death in the carnage of Gabhra) she died and was buried in an earthen hollow in the *sidh* of Edar,\(^8^5\) not in the great dolmen, as in Sir Samuel Ferguson’s beautiful anachronism, "Aideen’s Grave." The sons of men (as we saw) carried off the daughters of gods, as the sons of Findabrach did with the daughters of Elcmair,\(^8^7\) as Oiliol Olom did with Aine at Knockainey, and the gods ever grew more liable to suffer violence. Bogabal, at Knockainey, the *sidh* man at the two mounds.

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\(^{8^1}\)Eriu vol. vi., p. 108.
\(^{8^2}\) Dream of Aengus” (Rev. Celt., vol. iii., p. 347).
\(^{8^3}\)Feis Tighe Chonain, p. 173.
\(^{8^4}\)Agallamh, p. 131.
between the two "Paps" of Luachair, and Cascorach were slain at Samhain night as they issued from their sacred mounds, and the sidih youths of Sna da en were shot. Their pleasure domes shared the blight, "the houses which gave no hostages and could not be burned or plundered," with their golden trees and every luxury. The new generation of writers came very near the truth when they recognised these "windless, fortunate abodes" as tombs of the princes of a remote past. The weapons discovered in such mounds were supposed to be those of the great dead gods and heroes, "with their weapons of war and their swords laid under their heads." Like the heroes in the Greek Hades or the comfortless home of Hela, these once joyous sidih folk declare that the worst lot on earth was better than their "comforts and glories." They became a house divided, fell beneath the weapons of men and were glad to get human help against each other. Brian, Iuchra and Iucharba, "the gods of Tuatha Dé," themselves were slain by Lugh; Bodbh destroyed the sidih of Midir and Sidh Nennta. Eochaidh Ollathair, the Dagda, "got hoist on his own petard," perishing by his wonderful "anvil," made by the god, Godnui the smith, with twenty-seven spits and holes set in motion, by a wing. Their graves were shown amongst men; the Leabhar na Huidhre, about A.D. 1100, tells "where the grey old gods lie buried" at Brugh—the Dagda and his sons, Lugh, De and Ollam; Ogma, Etaín, the Poetess, and her

88 "Boyish exploits of Finn" (Erin vol. i., p. 187).
90 "Bruighion Chaortaín.
92 "Tain bo Fraich," introduction.
93 Atlantis, vol. iii., p. 395, from poem of Flann Mainistrech ante 1056. Silva Gad., pp. 224-5, 131. Their age-long foes, the Fine Fomoraithe, in later tales became "champions of the sidih" (see Rev. Celt., vol. xii., p. 73), from Sidh Nennta. A brooch was brought to Finn, a true archaeological touch (Agallamh, pp. 152, 518).
son Corpre. Cinaed Ua Articain in A.D. 973 tells of the tombs at Cruachan, of MacCuill, MacCecht and MacGreine, and their wives, Erin, Fotla and Banba (a triad personifying Ireland: with the god Midir). Last of all the Feis Tighe Chonain tells how the Tuatha Dé were nearly exterminated by the Fiana.

Worse still, those who survived became vagabonds and magicians; some so far forgot their dignity as to listen to sermons in favour of Christianity with approval, if not with belief! Last of all they became devils! Cormac MacAirt "died on account of the siabhra: a devil attacked him." Aengus, son of the Dagda, told Lugau, on a Samhain eve, that a pestilence in 1084 was caused by demons out of the siadh, each with a sword of fire in its throat. Aoife, the cruel stepmother who turned Lir's children to swans, became a demon of the air. The siabhra were "demons of the air," comments Keating on the death of Cormac macAirt. The once sacred siadh of Cruachan was reputed a gate of hell. The war goddess Badbh survived, a demon confessed. She appeared at Loch Rask, near Ballyvaughan, in Co. Clare, before the fatal battle of Corcomroe, August, 1317, washing severed heads and limbs. Questioned by King Donchadh O'Brien, she replied—"I am of the Tuatha Dé Danann, I abide in the green mounds, but my home is in hell, and thither I invite you all." One angry writer attacked one who had tried to defend the "mutatos deos," by saying "it is false that the banshees are not demons; it is false that the sendega (war goddesses in form of scald crows) are not hellish but airy demons."
AINE OF KNOCKAINLEY.

Three goddesses escaped the degradation of their race and remained as beautiful, gracious and tutelary spirits, in their ancient abodes; these were a triad, Aibhill,196 Cleena and Aine. Having cleared the ground in my long study I will now proceed to collect what is known of the last. She was of the divine race, according to the Sasna Cormac, and daughter of Bogabal.197 A bard of the Ui Ciarmhaic (the later Kirby family), probably in the eleventh century, wrote a poem "Aine's History tell to me" on the legend of the "holy hill."198

Five tribes of the Firbolg—the Dilraigh, Margraigh, Sibnraigh, Calraigh and Garraigh—dwelt round and got fire-wood from the "rampart (cladh) girt Drom Colchoilli (Hazel Ridge) that dominates the Munster tribe called Mairtene." At last Uainidhe and Bogabal, sons of Donn of Uisneach,199 sought to settle on the hill, but the accomplished warriors of the Firbolg prevented them. A serious battle was pending between the gods and the five battalions and the intruders (who had been advised by Nechtan, whose sídh at Carbury, Co. Kildare, we noted) to win "a pleasant hill, cool Cnoc Aine," (by main force) found themselves overmatched by the owners. The fair-haired Aine (Eogabal's daughter) promised to save bloodshed by her spells if the hill were named after her to the end of the world. "Girl, 'tis a huge task," said her kinsfolk, but they pledged their word. Aine, by her magic, drove the Firbolg in to Luchair and the gods divided the hill into four parts. Uainidhe took the north, "facing cold Uisnech," whence they had come; Ferfi, Aine's brother, "was to the south, with his dwelling in a comely cairn." Eogabal was "at the western end," and Aine "at the eastern point." Eogabal probably had his reputed sídh at the ring fort over Kilballyowen. Aine, in the tumulus or cairn over the village. Ferfi's cairn was probably in the effaced ring fort, on

196 Folk Lore, vol. xxii., pp. 186-7, she is put as a prophetess instead of the Sibyl in an Irish version of Dies Irae. See also Introdc Fcis Tighe Chonain, pp. 75, 93, 169, and N. Kearney in R. Soc. of Anti., Ir., vol. ii., p. 39.
198 Silva Gadelica app. p. 575, from Egerton MS. 92, / 37d.
199 Called Dungabal, father of Eogabal in Agaillamb, p. 225.
the south slope, near Bohernaskagh. On the hill also abode the
three queens of the gods, namely, Emer, Cacht and Eter, Aine
being unmarried. I find no other mention of Uainidhe, but only of
Eogabal, Aine and Ferfi, to them probably the three conjoined disc
barrows\(^{110}\) (called “Dumainey” and “the Mullach of three persons”
were dedicated. The cairn at the northern end is probably the Sidh
of Uainidhe.

The next outstanding myth\(^{111}\) tells how Ailill (Oilioll) Olom was
looking after his horses on Cnoc Aine one Samhain (All Hallows)
with his friend, Ferchis, the latter knowing that every sidh opened
that night gave the evil advice to Ailill to wait and attack the mound
folk as they came out, and the king, all too ready, speared Eogabal
and outraged Aine,\(^{112}\) in desperation she bit off his ear, whence his
by-name, Olom or Aulom, “the bare-eared.” Her brother, Ferfi,
avenged their wrongs better. Playing in a magic yew tree at the
waterfall of the Maigue, he let himself be captured by Lughaidh mac
Con, the stepson, and Eoghan the eldest and favorite son of Ailill.
They each claimed him, and the king gave him to his son.
Denouncing the partial judgment of Ailill, Lughaidh got help from the
Ernai and was defeated in a desperate battle, near Kilfinan, under
Cenn Febrat, A.D. 185. He fled to Scotland and eventually got aid,
penetrated to Magh Muchrama, in Co. Galway, A.D. 195, utterly
defeated and slew the High King. Art, and Eogan, and six of his
brothers and took the supreme monarchy. So far as I can find the
family of Eogabal consisted of Fer fi (also called Feri, Fer, and Fer
Fidhail), Aileen, Lu and Fainle, his sons and Aine his daughter. Feri is

\(^{110}\) This conjoined form seems peculiar to Co. Limerick, Doonakenna on Barna
Hill and Ainey having each three rings, Cooloughtragh in Cush on Sliabriach,
four and a later loop. Elsewhere, only two conjoin so far as I know or the
Ordnance Survey indicates. They are one of the latest forms of barrows in
England, rarely pre-Roman of this type were the mounds at Tara dedicated to
Ness and Cuchullin of the same period.

\(^{111}\) In “Battle of Magh Muchrama” (Rev. Celt., vol., xiii., p. 438, Silva Gad.,
p. 349; also see Mesca Ulad, p. 17; Eriu, vol. vi., p. 140. Sources collected

\(^{112}\) A later version said that he killed her too, his spear bent and in straighten-
ing the point with his teeth one was permanently blackened and poisoned
from her venomous blood. With this he poisoned Lughaidh mac Con. The
story is evidently a late aftertought.
still remembered in local legend as having burned Dun Claire. The name Drom Colchoiilli recalls the pleasant hazel ridge of Tara; "pleasant," according to our earliest Law Code, means "place of ceremony." Cnoc Aine too (as we said) was a "pleasant hill." Another hill beside Cenn Febrat, possibly Mortellstown, is mentioned—"a strong dön (fort) on hazel set Mullach Cuillen"—in the Dindsenchas, while the Tochmarc Etaine has a "fort on a hazel ridge." The hazel was of magic significance. Bundles of firewood were cut (as at Knockainey) and offered to the king of the sādh at Cruachan. The Ancient Laws include the hazel (with the yew, oak, holly, ash, pine and apple) among the chief trees, but regards the white hazel as a mere shrub. The last was held in bad repute, it spread a poisonous gas and killed nine workmen in the "Shield of Finn." Manannan went to visit the white hazel mountain; Elcmain in his sādh had no arms but a fork of white hazel, and on such a fork Lugh impaled the head of Balor. The other hazel and its nuts were held in high esteem.

In the pathetic poem attributed to Oilioll, lamenting his seven slain sons, he mourns Boghan thus: "He was my gentle hazel, a yew above the cope, a kingly oak." The Dindsenchas of the Sinann tells of the poets music-haunted hazel, "the hazels of wisdom and inspiration, of science and poetry." The poem "The

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118 So Dr. Douglas Hyde informs me. For Ferfi see *inter alia* Todd Lec Ser., vol. xv., p. 31; Agallamh, p. 248, for his brothers, p. 225.
115 "Book of Acaill" Senchas Mor, vol. iii., p. 296.
118 Echtra Nerai (Rev. Celt., vol. x., p. 219) Cruchan Cave was a menageie of supernatural creatures (see notes Proc. R. I. Acad., vol. xxxiii., p. 48); Preface, Feis Tighe Chonain, pp. 34, 41, 73, &c.
119 Vol. iv., p. 147.
120 Duanaire Finn, p. 136.
123 Metr. Dind., vol. x., p. 287, and "Voyage of Bran."
King and the Hermit” names the hazel along with the *Bile ratha*, the venerated tree of the fort,¹²⁴ and, that nothing should be lacking to honour the hazel, an early Irish hymn describes our Saviour as “Branch of Jesse’s tree, whose blossoms scent the heavenly hazel wood.”¹²⁵

DONN, AINE’S GRANDFATHER.

Donn was a not common name for supernatural beings; besides Donn of Uisnech, we hear, in the Agallamh¹²⁶ and “Cath Finntraghga,” two very late sources, of Donn of the Dabhach (perhaps Dumbach, Dough, at the sandhills of Lehinch), and Donn Firinne, of Knockfrina;¹²⁷ Donn of the Island is named with Bogabal’s sons, Ferc (Ferfi), Aileen, Lu, and Fainle; Donn Fritgrinne (perhaps Firinne), Donn Dumbach, Donn from Sidh Beccuisc, Donn Chnuicandois, Donn Senchuic, Donn King of the Swamps, and Donn of Dubhlinn, from Sidh Aodha, the last being elsewhere Donn Desa, son of Duban, of Sidh Aeda, on the rapids of Ess Ruaidh, or Assaroe.¹²⁸ The Cáth Finntraghga also names Aine as a *sidh*. Lastly we have Donn Uatha and Donn Tetscorach from the *sidh* in the Feis Tighe Chonain and the Bruden Da Derga.¹²⁹ From Aine’s cairn the great cairn-crowned dome of Knockfrina is well seen.

[to be concluded.]

¹²⁴Ed. Meyer, p. 13, it is of the 10th century.
¹²⁸The “Cairn of “Strickeen” on Knockfierna, see Mr. P. J. Lynch (N. Munster Arch. Soc., vol. i, p. 108). Lewis calls it “a conical pile ... the ancient temple of Struraidraican, Topog. Dict., p. 114) Donn Firinne was one of the Munster faires (Introd. Feis Tighe Chonain).