

conspiracy from the abbacy¹, though it was under Cuimine Ailbhe, the seventh abbot of Iona, that Colman actually came to England. He is made archbishop of all England, but is expelled by the prelates and clergy, who conspire against him as a foreigner. He goes to Ireland, and is followed by Gerald and his brothers. Gerald's mother had died, and his father had contracted an illicit union with another woman²; and this was one reason why Gerald desired to leave England. But the Irish chronology is as confused as the English history. Gerald's connexion with Mayo³ makes it possible that he was an English follower of Colman. Colman's first monastery in Ireland, Inishboffin, was not, however, founded till 668. Yet Gerald is represented as already abbot of Mayo when he attended a meeting at Tara which preceded the outbreak of the plague in which the two kings, Blathmac and Diarmait, St. Fechin of Fore, and others with whom Gerald is brought into relation, perished, whose deaths are assigned to 665 or 668. He is also brought into relations with Raghallach of Connaught, who died in 649 or 656. The Aillill and Cathal mentioned in §§ 4-6 are probably the son and grandson of Donnchadh Muirisce of the Hy-Fiachrach line, who died in 681, while Donnchadh, son of Cathal, died in 768⁴. This would be about right. Gerald's own death is placed in 732; so that if he really followed Colman from Britain after the events of 664, he must have lived to a very great age. This, however, is not impossible; but it is impossible that Adamnan, who died in 704, should have ruled the abbey of Mayo for seven years after the death of Gerald.

The life has no special mythological significance, but there are some curious and interesting things in it, especially as to the relations between the Druids and the Christian teachers.

The extraordinary story of Fechin's death is discreetly omitted by the biographers of that saint. It is found, however, in the *Liber Hymnorum*⁵.

*Vita Sancte Ite Virginis*⁶. This life is from M f. 109^c. It pro-

¹ This may be an echo of the troubles of Adamnan at Iona over the Easter question, and his sojourn in Ireland, 697-704, possibly in consequence of those troubles, Bede, H. E. v. 15, 21 and notes; Reeves, Adamn. pp. liii f.

² This sounds like a reminiscence of the incestuous marriage of Eadbald of Kent, Bede, H. E. ii. 5.

³ Magh Eo na Saxan, i. e. Mayo of the Saxons.

⁴ See the genealogical table in O'Donovan's Hy Fiachrach.

⁵ L. H.² i. 25; Fechin's death in the plague is mentioned in the Irish life of Molaisse, Silva Gad. i. 20-1. So in the Cypria, Zeus consults Themis as to sending a war to diminish the superfluous population, Monro's Odyssey, p. 347.

⁶ There are pedigrees of Ita in LL. 348^c, Laud 610 ff. 40^d, 41^h, Féil.² p. 44; cf. BB. 231^b. Her day in the Calendars is Jan. 15. According to the Bollandists some authorities, which I have not identified, give her day as Jan. 14, others as Jan. 25. The Mart. Don. at Jan. 15 cites lines 41-4 of Cuimin's poem, which lay stress on her rôle as foster-mother of the saints of Ireland. It also gives

bably existed also in T, but is lost owing to the mutilation of that MS. There is another Latin life of Ita in R² f. 169^d, F p. 212. In R¹ it has been lost owing to the mutilation of that MS. at the end, but the table of contents shows that R¹ once contained this life. The M version was printed by Colgan, A. S. pp. 66 ff., who seems to have taken more than his usual liberties with the text. It was also printed by the Bollandists, Jan. i. 1062 ff., who have corrected some of Colgan's mistakes. They also give readings from a copy of the R text supplied by Hugh Ward.

M and R cover much the same ground, though R is shorter¹ and certainly less original. M itself may be an abbreviation of a longer life (cf. § 1: 'breuiter enarrare cupimus,' 'alia . . . propter breuitatem omittimus'). It professes to have been written in the second generation after St. Ita (§ 28 'cuius filius adhuc viuit'). In its present form the life cannot be so old; but it may be based on earlier materials. I know no Irish life. Ita, in Irish Ite, or (with the endearing prefix *mo* 'my') Mite or Mide², belonged by birth to the Deisi³, but her active life was spent among the Ui Conaill Gabra, whose patron-saint she is (§§ 8, 33, 36), and whose name survives in the baronies of Conello, co. Limerick. For her death and the almost coincident death of Aengus or Oenu of Clonmacnois the Ann. Ult. give two alternative dates, 570 and 577. For the death of her foster-son Brendan the same authority also gives two dates, 577 and 583. Her other famous foster-child, St. Mochoemog, did not die till 656⁴. The battle of § 33 was fought in 552, v. s. Ita is also made contemporary with St. Columba, † 597⁵. The life seems to aim chiefly at exalting her powers as a prophetess⁶. There also seem to be solar touches⁷ about her legend (cf. §§ 2, 23, 31).

the story of her asceticism which is found separately in the Book of Lecan, f. 166 v^o, col. 2, and Féil.² p. 44, where occurs the story (told of other saints, Moling § 24; Mart. Don. p. 254 [= Z. C. P. v. 495]; Féil.² p. 102; Aur. Leg. p. 46), how Christ used to appear to her as a little child. Her angel, §§ 3, 6, 10, 11, is called Mithiden, Féil.² p. 182. The war of § 33 and the prayers of Ita are recorded in the Annals, Tig. R. C. xvii. 140; Ann. Ult. 551 (= 552); F. M. 546; cf. Keating, iii. 56. Ita's mother, Necht, is mentioned, LL. 372^b 38; her father's name in the pedigrees is Cennfaelad. These names do not occur in the lives.

¹ It omits altogether §§ 12, 13, 26, 35.

² In the simple form her name appears in the name of her church, Killeedy, i. e. Cell Ide; in the compound form it appears in Rosmead, co. Westmeath, i. e. Ros M'ide. Cf. Colgan, A. S. p. 71^b; F. M. ii. 1147.

³ The life opens with a short account of the migration of the Deisi from Tara, of which a long version is given in the life of Declan.

⁴ She is mentioned frequently in the lives of both, see Index s. v. Ita.

⁵ Colgan would identify the Columbanus of § 24 with Colman Ela († 611). Certainly the latter was associated with Columba, v. s. p. lvi, note 1.

⁶ In Mochoem. § 15 she is called 'beatissima prophetissa, sancta Yta'.

⁷ In the Féilire she is called 'in grian bán', i. e. the white or fair sun.

There is a brief life of Ita in *Noua Legenda Anglie*, ii. 543-4. I do not think it is derived either from M or R. It has preserved the saint's original name: 'Deritheia, que alio nomine Itta uocatur.' So the Martyrology of Donegal says: 'Deirdri a céd ainm,' i. e. Deirdre was her first name (Jan. 15). Deirdre was the name of the heroine of the 'Sorrowful Tale' of the sons of Usnech.

*Vita Sancti Lasriani seu Molassi Daminese*¹. This life is here printed for the first time² from R¹ f. 94^b collated with R² f. 135^a. It exists also in F p. 31; but this has not been compared in the present case, as no question arises here as to the genesis of any printed edition. The life was evidently compiled as a homily to be read on the saint's festival, Sept. 12 (§ 1); and it seems to be an abbreviation of a longer life (§ 34). But though abbreviated, it is more substantial than some other lives of the R recension. Its chief interest is, however, mythological. The saint shows unmistakable characteristics of a solar or fire deity (§§ 1, 7, 11-13, 17, 21-2, 25, 27, 29). The accretion of this element is probably due to the saint's name, Lasrén, which means 'flamelet', a diminutive of 'lassar', flame. And this element comes out even more strongly in the Irish life printed by O'Grady³ in *Silva Gadelica*, i. 17 ff.

In the historical setting of the life there is little to object to. Lasrén or Molaisse⁴ himself died in 564 or 571. He is made contemporary with Ciaran of Clonmacnois and Finnian of Clonard, who both died in 549; with Becc Mac Dé, † 553 or 558; Brendan of Clonfert, † 577 or 583; Columba⁵, † 597; Baithin, † 598 or 600⁶. The only point to criticize is the statement that he was a fellow pupil ('collactaneus') of Maedoc of Ferns who survived till 626 (§ 20). I know of no other Latin life of Molaisse of Devenish⁷.

¹ There are pedigrees of Molaisse, LL. 348^a, LBr. 15^e, BB. 218^d (cf. ib. 232^b), Rawl. B. 502 f. 51^o, Laud 610 ff. 38^d, 40^e, Fé^{l.} 2 p. 206. His day in the Calendar is Sept. 12. The account in Mart. Don. at that date is taken from the Irish life, *Silva Gad.* i. 17, 22. It also cites ll. 33-6 of Cuimin of Connor's poem. For the shrine and bachall of Molaisse cf. *Silva Gad.* i. 87.

² Colgan printed § 20 in A. S. p. 222^a.

³ From Brit. Mus. Add. 18205; it exists also in Brussels MS. 4194 f. 96; and there is a bad paper copy by O'Reilly in R. I. A. 23 A 43. The life is clearly incomplete. It has appended to it a curious account of the wanderings of the Dartraighe, which has no real connexion with it.

⁴ On these hypocoristic names see the Prefatory Note to the Index Nominum.

⁵ According to other authorities the Molaisse who decided that Columba must leave Ireland on account of his share in causing the battle of Cuil Dremne was not our saint, but his namesake of Inismurray, Reeves, *Adamnan*, pp. 252, 287; cf. R. C. xx. 254, 434.

⁶ The Conallus Rubeus of § 14 is possibly intended for Conall Derg mac Daimine of Oriel († 609), who has been foisted into the pedigrees of St. Enda, and that is the view of the Irish life, and of Fé^{l.} 2 p. 206; but see p. Ixiv, note 3.

⁷ In L. H.² ii. 220-1, C. S. c. 791 is referred to; but this is a life of Molaisse of Leighlin, as the very first sentence shows; it is also implied (wrongly) that R. I. A. 23 A 43 is a different life from that printed by O'Grady.

*Vita Sancti Edani siue Moedhog episcopi de Ferna*¹. This life is here printed from M f. 51^o (M). In T this life has been lost owing to mutilation. This recension was printed by Colgan, A. S. pp. 208 ff., and by the Bollandists, A. S. Jan. ii. 1111 ff. Colgan's text is certainly taken from M or a transcript of M (cf. the reading 'biculei² et anli' in § 54); and the same may be said of the Bollandist text. The latter is, however, not a mere reprint of Colgan, for many of his errors are corrected, though one or two new ones are also introduced. Another life of Maedoc, nearly coincident in matter and arrangement with M, exists in MS. Cotton, Vespasian A. xiv.³ f. 96 (V). It is, however, an earlier recension⁴, and out of it the M text was probably developed⁵. It has been printed in Rees' *Lives of the Cambro-*

¹ There are pedigrees of Maedoc in LL. 347^b, LBr. 14^e, BB. 217^a (cf. ib. 231^a), Rawl. B. 502 f. 51^o, Laud 610 ff. 38^b, 40^e, Fé^{l.} 2 p. 54. His mother, Ethne, is mentioned LL. 272^b ad calcem. His day in the Calendar is Jan. 31 (prid. Cal. Feb.), which is the day of his death. Even V, which wrongly gives 'prid. Cal. Mart.' as the day of his death and festival, witnesses to the other date by the story in § 56 (= M § 57), which turns on the nearly coincident dates of the festivals of Maedoc and Brigit, the latter being on Feb. 1. But in two Welsh Calendars used by Baring-Gould and Fisher (*British Saints*, i. 70) Maedoc occurs both at Jan. 31 and Feb. 28, and by a duplication of his name he is called Aeddán Foeddog. The account in Mart. Don. Jan. 31 seems to be taken from the Brussels Irish life, cc. 3, 4. A curious local legend as to his birth and baptism is given by Reeves in Proc. R. I. A. viii. 441 ff. He has dedications both in Wales, *British Saints*, u. s. i. 126, and in Scotland, Forbes, *Calendars*, p. 403; Reeves, u. s. He is mentioned in the Litany in LL. 373^o 60: 'in da ailthir déc dollotar la Moedóc Ferna dar muir,' i. e. the twelve pilgrims who went with Maedoc of Ferns across the sea; perhaps a reference to the journey in § 11 of our life. On his shrine see Miss Stokes, *Early Christian Art*, pp. 106-7.

² V's reading 'brensei' is still more enigmatical.

³ This is a MS. containing chiefly lives of British saints. The occurrence in it of a life of St. Maedoc is accounted for by the intimate connexion of Maedoc with St. David's, cf. §§ 11-13, 17, 19, 20, 32. Similar considerations account for the occurrence of lives of St. David in Irish MSS., c. g. R¹ and R². This connexion is also illustrated by the curious and obscure story given in Fé^{l.} 1 p. xxxix from LBr., and in Fé^{l.} 2 p. 54 from Rawl. B. 512. It occurs separately in LL. 285^b.

⁴ The MS. also is a good deal earlier, being dated by Dr. Warner c. 1200. Marks of the earlier character of V are to be found (a) in the preservation of various Irish names of places which M has omitted, e. g. Brentrocht, Fothart campi Itha § 19, Dail Aradii, Dail Riata § 54, Echdruim § 29, &c.; (b) older forms and expressions, e. g. Daro cella § 56, as against the Kyll dara of M. 'Saxones' is used for the Teutonic inhabitants of Britain, according to general Celtic usage, §§ 17-18; M has the much later 'Anglici'; (c) the conception of the manner in which Maedoc checked the advance of the northern army, § 24, is much more primitive in V than in M. The curing of the paralytic by saliva, V § 55, is obliterated in M. The 'clericus quidam' of V § 57 has become a 'canonicus' in M § 58. If we could fix the date when canons were introduced at Ferns, we might have a terminus a quo for the date of the M recension.

⁵ There is interesting textual evidence that the M text was developed from a text like V in § 31. There V has: '[bos] tribus uicibus clamauit . . . et tribus mensibus ueris apud illos arauit.' M has altered 'tribus uicibus' into 'ter', yet