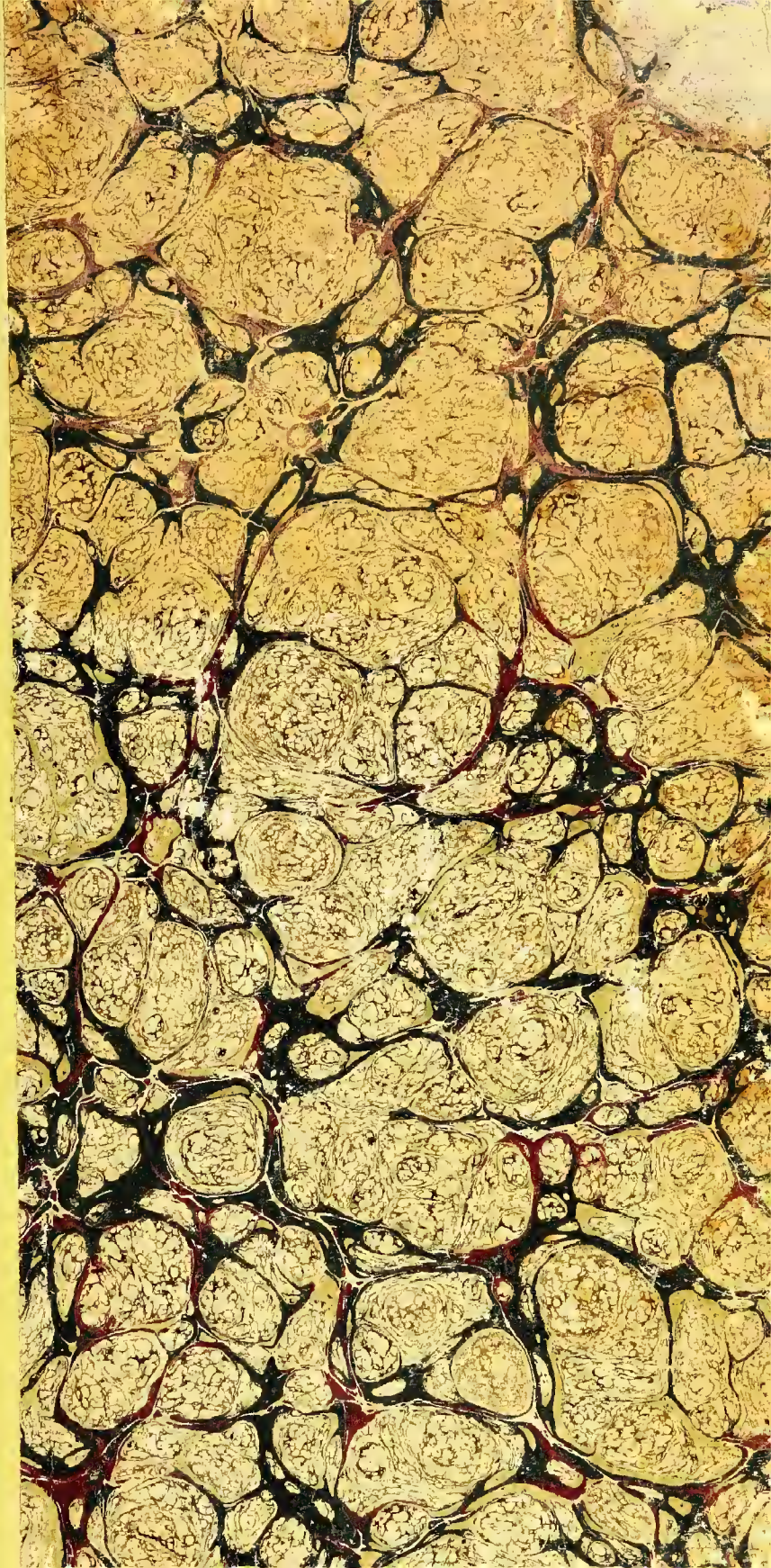
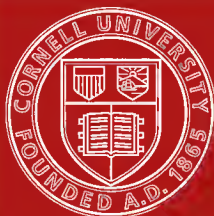


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LEARNING IN IRELAND
IN THE
FIFTH CENTURY
AND THE
TRANSMISSION OF LETTERS

A LECTURE

Delivered before the School of Irish Learning in Dublin
on September 18th, 1912

BY

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LEARNING IN IRELAND IN THE FIFTH CENTURY

AND THE TRANSMISSION OF LETTERS

THE part played by Ireland in the transmission of letters during the seventh and following centuries is known to all. But neither the way in which letters first reached this country, nor the causes which led to that remarkable outburst of classical learning suddenly confronting us at the end of the sixth century have as yet been definitely established.

Those who have read Zimmer on the Celtic Church will remember that one of his contentions, on which he dwelt more than once, is that the learning for which Ireland was celebrated during the sixth and following centuries could not have been the result of the labours of St. Patrick.¹ Most people familiar with the personality of the saint as revealed in his own writings will admit this. In the words of his latest biographer: "A rueful consciousness of the deficiencies of his education weighed upon him throughout his career; we can feel this in his almost wearisome insistence upon his *rusticitas*. Nor has he exaggerated the defect of his culture; he writes in the style of an ill-educated man. His Latin is as rustic as the Greek of St. Mark and St. Matthew."² He, at any rate, was not likely to have introduced the study of Virgil or Cicero into Ireland. Nor is it at all probable, as Roger suggests,³ that any of the Gauls or Britons who accompanied Patrick brought these studies to Ireland. Indeed, we may go farther than Zimmer and dismiss altogether the idea of any missionaries, whether Gaulish or British, having introduced or promoted classical learning in Ireland. The origin of that wide culture embracing not only the study of Plautus, Horace, Ovid, Persius, Sallust, &c., but also grammar, metrics, and other sciences such as astronomy, must be traced to a much deeper and broader influence.

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And yet it must have been during the lifetime of Patrick at latest that the foundations were laid in schools and seminaries throughout large parts of the country of this erudition, which soon drew the eyes of all Europe upon Ireland as the heiress of classical learning. Within a generation or two from Patrick's death, there sprang up those famous schools founded not by foreigners but by Irishmen, who must have received their own training within the fifth century. Where then did they receive this training? And who taught them? Whence came the books which stocked their libraries? Did Irishmen go to the high schools of Gaul? Hardly; for Gaul was not in the fifth century the place for quiet study. To Great Britain? Zimmer has shown⁴ that there was not in Britain at this time any classical learning wide and profound enough to have produced such results. No answer to these questions has met with general acceptance. Most writers either express themselves in a vague way or assume that various influences emanating both from Britain and Gaul had somehow reached Ireland,⁵ but at what time and by what channels precisely, they have not been able to establish.

It is to Zimmer again that we owe the solution of this problem. He who so often wielded the axe of the iconoclast has also done most by constructive criticism and research to lay the foundations of our knowledge. Ever on the look-out for new material, for fresh facts upon which he could raise his theories, the most difficult and apparently hopeless problems had a special attraction for him. During his last years, whenever the dread disease undermining his life allowed him a little respite, the early history of Western Europe, in which the Celts play so important a part, was the chief subject of his investigations. His projected work, with notes and sketches of some of the chapters, which were found among his papers, will be published in the forthcoming number of the *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*.

In the course of his researches Zimmer had come to occupy himself more closely with the question with which we are now concerned. Among other things he had studied the influence of the writings of the Gaulish grammarian calling himself Virgilius Maro upon Irish learning and literature.⁶ This curious writer had hardly before been taken seriously. Even his age was a matter of vague

surmises. While some scholars put him as late as the ninth century, none placed him earlier than the end of the sixth. Zimmer proved that he lived in the fifth century, and was an elder contemporary of his countryman Ennodius (473-521), who wrote scathing epigrams upon him, which characterise him well as a *fatuus homullus* and censure him for having dared to usurp the name of the great Latin poet—*tam sanctum nomen*.⁷ Zimmer showed further that the works of Virgilius were well-known in ancient Ireland, and that his absurd theories as to the twelve different kinds of Latin, arrived at by clipping words, turning them upside down, adding or inserting syllables, were imitated by Irish scholars. Indeed they had a lasting vogue in this country, and led ultimately to the invention of a language which you may still hear spoken in the streets of Dublin—Shelta, an artificial jargon discovered by Leland and more fully described and traced to its Irish origin by my friend John Sampson and myself.⁸

With his wonted sagacity Zimmer first made use of a document, the importance of which for the early history of Ireland it is impossible to overrate. It is only one simple sentence, but a sentence packed with information. Though published so long ago as 1866, this document has escaped the notice of most Irish historians. The reason is probably that it was buried in a German periodical⁹ with a title ("Sammelsurien") which does not sound promising. Under that heading the late well-known German Latinist Lucian Müller, then professor at Leyden, drew attention to a number of late Latin texts, among others "quaedam excerpta utilium verborum" from a Leyden MS. of the 12th century. This is a glossary of Latin words in the midst of which the scribe abruptly introduces a note on the barbarian invasions of Gaul, as follows :

"*Huni qui ex nephario concubitu† progeniti sunt, scilicet demonum, postquam praeheunte cerva viam inuenerunt per Meotides paludes, inuaserunt Cothos, quos nimium terruerunt ex inproviso mostro quod in illis erat. Et ab his depopulatio totius imperii exordium sumpsit, quae ab Unis et Guandalis, Gotis et Alanis peracta est, sub quorum uastatione omnes sapientes cismarini fugam ceperunt,*

† concubitum MS.

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et in transmarinis, uidelicet in Hiberia et quocumque se receperunt, maximum profectum sapientiae incolis illarum regionum adhibuerunt."

The Huns, who were infamously begotten, i.e., by demons, after they had found their way by the guidance of a hind through the Maeotic marshes, invaded the Goths, whom they terrified exceedingly by their unexpectedly awful appearance. And thanks to them, the depopulation of the entire Empire commenced, which was completed by the Huns and Vandals and Goths and Alans, owing to whose devastation all the learned men on this side of the sea fled away, and in transmarine parts, i.e., in Hiberia and wherever they betook themselves, brought about a very great advance of learning to the inhabitants of those regions.

Zimmer regards this entry as originally written not later than the sixth century in the West of Gaul.¹⁰ As the form *Guandalis* shows, the writer belonged to a Romance-speaking nationality. The remark on the fabulous origin of the Huns and the terror they struck into the Goths is derived from Jordanis,¹¹ who wrote about 550. The whole tenor of the passage on the depopulation of the Empire makes it probable that it was written not long after that date. But in so important a document every detail must be carefully considered.

There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the writer's statements, both as to the exodus of Gaulish scholars, the cause assigned for it, and its effect upon learning in Ireland. It could have no other purpose than to convey an interesting piece of information. But the chief interest of the writer was evidently the account given by Jordanis about the Huns; everything else is added as it came to his memory in connection with the invasion of Gaul by these "unlooked-for monstrosities." After the Huns, who first appeared in Gaul early in the fifth century,¹² came the Vandals and Alans, who overran Western Gaul on their way to Spain between 406 and 409; lastly, the Visigoths, who founded their kingdom of Toulouse in 418. So the exodus of Gaulish scholars must be placed in the first and second decades of that century. "Omnes sapientes" is no doubt an exaggeration, but whatever deduction we may make, it was evidently an exodus on a large scale. The form *Hiberia* for the usual *Hibernia* is undoubtedly a mere confusion by the late scribe of the more familiar name for Spain with that of Ireland, so that we should correct it to *Hibernia* with

LUCIAN MÜLLER. At any rate, Spain cannot be meant; apart from all other considerations the use of "in transmarinis"¹³ forbids that. By *quocumque* I would understand Great Britain and the adjacent islands, especially the Scilly Islands, which were a station for traders between Western Gaul and Ireland, and where also in 386 Priscillian heretics were sent into banishment.¹⁴

The concluding part of the sentence on the great advance in learning (*maximus profectus sapientiae*) accruing to the Irish from the settlement of the Gaulish professors among them must have been written at a time when the fame of Ireland as a home and centre of classical studies was well established.

This passage makes clear what was before obscure and vague. A flood of light is thrown upon one of the darkest yet most important periods in Irish history, and a new starting-point for investigation is provided. We have at last firm soil under our feet, and can proceed with greater assurance. For while the origin and early development of Irish learning and civilisation is now accounted for, the influence of the newly acquired learning upon native literature will also have to be examined. But, above all, it must interest us to consider what inferences may be drawn from this novel piece of information as to the state of Irish civilisation at that early period. And here the first question to answer is, why it was in Ireland rather than any other country that these fugitives sought an asylum. It is true that Ireland was not likely to be exposed to such invasions as those from which they were fleeing; but there must have been other reasons which directed the steps of the emigrants in the first instance to this distant island.

Ireland was not a *terra incognita*. As the researches of Mr. George Coffey, Zimmer and Mrs. A. S. Green have shown,¹⁵ intercourse and commerce between Gaul and Ireland had been constant and regular for centuries before the fifth. Again, the Irish were not outside that great unity of the Celtic world, which is one of the most remarkable facts in ancient Celtic history, so well illustrated—to mention a striking instance—by the Greek coins given by Alexander in the East to Celtic ambassadors, finding their way to Great Britain and becoming the model of its earliest coinage.

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It was a *Celtic* country to which these Gaulish fugitives came, inhabited by a kindred people of similar temper and character, speaking a closely related language. Nor were these Gauls the first of their nation to come to Ireland. Apart from the traders, there were Gaulish mercenaries in the service of Irish kings during the early centuries of our era.¹⁶ Again, Irishmen were even at that time familiar figures on the Continent. Zimmer contended that Pelagius was an Irishman. Whether this was so or not, his faithful henchman, Caelestius, he of the plausible tongue, certainly was. And there were others.¹⁷ The grammarian Virgilius was to a certain extent acquainted with Irish speech. In his chapter *de nomine*, where he treats of the order of words in the Latin sentence,¹⁸ he remarks that, while the Irish put the verb first in the sentence, both in the spoken language and in composition, in Latin on the other hand the noun comes first.* If he knew no Irish himself—and Zimmer, had he remembered this passage, would no doubt have used it as a powerful argument for his contention that Virgilius had himself emigrated to Ireland¹⁹—he must have known Irishmen who informed him on this point. One of these I believe he actually mentions by name. It was a certain *Bregandus Lugenicus*, or as I would read *Lucenicus*,²⁰ i.e., of the tribe of the Luceni, who were settled at that time on the south coast of Ireland, as Orosius, the well-known Christian historian of the 5th century, informs us.²¹ This Bregandus wrote Latin poetry, rhythmical hexameters, one of which Virgil quotes.²²

If Ireland had been the barbarous country which so many Irish historians assume it to have been at this and later times, some indeed at all times, these scholars fleeing from the inroads of barbarians would hardly have selected it for a place of refuge. We see again that no one can understand the history of Ireland who does not once and for all dismiss this absurd barbarian theory,

* I must not omit to mention in connection with this passage on the Irish verb that we may draw an interesting conclusion from it. If the verb had held the first place in the Gaulish sentence also, as it did and still does in Irish, surely Virgil, a Gaul, and naturally familiar with Gaulish speech, would have drawn his example from that language. We may then conclude that in Gaulish, unlike Irish and Welsh, the verb did not begin the sentence.

which Mrs. Green has lately exposed so eloquently.^{22a} No history of Ireland based upon such an assumption can be true, or even intelligible. Froude with his "mob of armed savages," Mahaffy and others with their "Zulus" or "Redskins," prove and explain nothing.²³

Our Gaulish scholars must have been assured of a friendly and hospitable reception, of obtaining in their new home the necessities and some at least of the decencies and comforts of the life to which they had been accustomed, and of being enabled to carry on their studies and to exercise their profession. They were the first of a long line of fugitives who, no matter what their nationality or creed may have been, were hospitably received by the Irish people : Britons fleeing from the Saxon invasion ; Angles, to whose generous reception Bede bears such warm testimony²⁴ ; foreign students of all nations,²⁵ and, in later times, Flemings, Quakers, and others,²⁶ so that the proud boast of the Vita S. Albani (Acta SS. Hib. col. 505) "hospitatem plus ceteris nationibus sectantur" is fully justified.

Ireland was well-known on the Continent as a rich, fertile and prosperous country, with a salubrious climate. Such has been its reputation abroad at all times, and the verses written by Donatus, the Irish bishop of Fiesole, 400 years later, in which he eulogises his native land as *optima tellus, dives opum, commoda corporibus, aere, putre solo*, etc., were no doubt as true at this earlier period as then.

Again, if Ireland had been wholly pagan it would hardly have been chosen by Christian men as a safe asylum. There were no doubt, as we shall see later on, pagans among these Gaulish scholars ; but by the beginning of the fifth century paganism was rapidly disappearing in Gaul, where about A.D. 450 all positions of trust or honour were in the hands of Christians. The South of Ireland, then, cannot have been a country in which a Christian would be received with hostility or subjected to persecution.²⁷ The Christians among the fugitives must have known that they could there follow undisturbed the practice of their religion and would find Christian communities and places of worship.

The successive bands of these emigrant scholars would naturally cross to Ireland in the trading vessels plying between the mouths of the Loire and Garonne and the south and east coast of Ireland.

They would be landed in one of those harbours of which Tacitus tells us that they were better known to commerce than those of Britain, and some of which Ptolemy enumerates.

Now sceptics might ask, if this influx of foreign scholars was on such a large scale and had such an influence upon Ireland, how comes it that we have no reference to it in early Irish records. We have practically no records going back to such early times. The Annals, of local origin and rarely referring in their oldest portions to national events,²⁸ are very meagre in their information about the fifth century. If we had Lives of the early saints and founders of the oldest monasteries and schools, written soon after their deaths, we might reasonably expect to hear something about the training they had received. For men like Finnian, Buite, Kevin and many others, who early in the sixth century founded schools which turned out in the course of that century such accomplished scholars as Columbanus, must themselves have received their training well within the fifth. Unfortunately the lives of the early saints are mostly compositions of a much later age, and contain very little exact or trustworthy information on actual events and circumstances. Still, it is not impossible that a closer critical study than they have as yet received may after all yield some positive results.²⁹

There is, however, *one* reference to these Gaulish scholars in Ireland in an early document of undoubted authenticity, known to most educated Irishmen. It is the passage in the "Confession" of Patrick, where the saint cries out against certain pagan "rhetorici" hostile to him: "You rhetoricians who do not know the Lord, hear and search who it was that called me up, fool though I be, from the midst of those who think themselves wise, and skilled in the law, and mighty orators, and powerful in everything."³⁰ This passage has always hitherto been a difficulty to commentators, who have put the most diverse constructions upon it.³¹ It is clear now, I think, that Patrick here refers to pagan rhetors from Gaul resident in Ireland, whose arrogant presumption, founded upon their superior learning, looked with disdain and derision upon the unlettered saint. His few brief but forcible epithets well describe a type of rhetorician common in Gaul.

Having now planted our Gaulish professors safely on Irish soil,

we are unfortunately left almost wholly to surmises as to their subsequent career and fate amid their new surroundings. We may assume that they settled mainly in the south and east—*i.e.*, in Munster and Leinster, the two provinces which by their position facing the Continent and Great Britain, were undoubtedly always the centres of civilisation in Ireland. Perhaps a closer study of ancient Irish place-names will teach us something as to the districts where they chiefly settled. There was a place called *Bordgal* in ancient West Meath.³² This is the Irish form of the name of the chief university of Gaul, *Burdigala*, now Bordeaux, where perhaps some of these exiles had taught as professors until driven out by the Visigoths. The Irish "Bordeaux" in West Meath may have been one of their settlements, perhaps the seat of a school of learning named after their lost home. For this much is certain, these men taught, and found willing and eager pupils.³³ Whatever they may have left behind in their flight, one thing they would be sure to have taken with them—their books. The Irish now became for the first time familiar with the arts of writing and reading books, which they soon applied to their own language. Palaeographers will have to investigate the origin and early history of Irish writing in this new light. In the library of St. Gall, a monastery founded in 610 by the Irishman Gallus, there is a fragment of Virgil dating from the 4th or 5th century. It is not written in Irish script, but in a Continental hand. Brought there by Irish missionaries, may it not have been one of the books carried originally into Ireland by one of the Gaulish scholars? The first libraries were now formed in Ireland, containing both Latin and Greek manuscripts. That it was the libraries of Ireland as much as the teaching to be got there which attracted students in the 7th and following centuries is shown, *e.g.*, by the remark of the writer known as Aethicus Ister,³⁴ who pretends to have crossed from Spain to Ireland and spent some time there "*eorum volumina volvens*," just as Bede tells us of Agilbert of Paris that he went there "*legendarum gratia scripturarum*."

Now the most important thing with regard to the new learning brought to Ireland is to remember that it was still to the full extent the best tradition of scholarship in Latin grammar, oratory and poetry, together with a certain knowledge of Greek,³⁵ in fact the full

classical lore of the 4th century.³⁶ For our fugitives must all of them have received their training well within that century. And they came just at the right time. For the decay of learning on the continent set in almost immediately after their departure. Indeed one wonders whether their flight and disappearance from Gaul may not have had something to do with this general decay of learning, may not have hastened it. In 470 Sidonius Apollinaris laments that owing to the terrible devastations of the barbarians he could only call to mind one person at Treves—Arvogastis was his name—able to speak and write Latin in its purity, and the same state of things no doubt prevailed in many districts of Gaul.

Irish scholars having thus received classical learning at a time when it was still the natural study of every educated person were not like their Continental brethren troubled by any scruples as to the unfitness of that literature for the Christian, by that "lurking uneasiness of conscience which haunted the Continental monk who loved his Virgil."³⁷ While John Cassian cursed and bemoaned himself that the devilish witchery of Virgil's lines interfered with his pious meditations;³⁸ while the Council of Carthage (436) decreed that no bishop should read the books of the Gentiles (*ut episcopus gentilium libros non legat*); while Augustine and Ennodius laid it down that the liberal arts were but the handmaids of theology, the Irish continued to study and love the classics for their own sake. They were monks and priests by profession, but in reality, scholars and humanists: *Doctos grammaticos presbiterosque pios* Sedulius Scottus designates himself and his fellow-countrymen at Liege.³⁹ And when, late in the sixth century, they carried back this learning to the Continent, they found to their astonishment that they and their pupils were almost its only representatives. What Mullinger in his 'Schools of Charles the Great' says of Charlemagne and the little group of ecclesiastics promoted by him applies with still greater force to the Irish. "Thanks to them Europe was never again plunged into intellectual darkness quite as profound as that of the Merovingian period." The schools and libraries of St. Gall and Bobbio, that home of letters, the very mention of which, says Norden, makes the heart of the classical scholar throb; Péronne, Corbie, St. Riquier, and scores of other

centres, founded and conducted for a long time by Irishmen ; the foundations of their pupils, Angles, Saxons and Franks ; the palace school of Charlemagne of Aix-la-Chapelle under Alcuin, the pupil of Colgu of Clonmacnois ; that of his own pupil, Hrabanus Maurus at Fulda ; the school of Charles the Bald under John Scottus Eriugena—these are some of the stages by which the torch of learning was handed on from one generation to another.

Let me now turn to another aspect of my subject, which will be of even greater interest to the students of this school, the question, namely, whether we can trace any influence of the art of the rhetor in the oldest vernacular literature of Ireland.

It was not book-Latin, to use Bede's expression, but a living speech and a literature in the making that was now heard in many parts of Ireland, oratory practised by these Gaulish rhetors, poets and professors in recitations, declamations and debates. Now we must remember that the Irish too had their native schools of oratory and poetry, in which their brehons and *filid* were trained. And as we see that in the seventh century the Irish bards came gradually to adopt the metrical system of the Latin hymns which they heard sung at church, and introduced rhyme and a regularly recurring number of syllables into their native poetry,³⁹ so we may well imagine that at this earlier period the technique of the rhetorical style exerted some influence upon the art of the *fili*.

The style of the Gaulish rhetors of the fifth century is well known and has repeatedly been studied of late by eminent scholars. In briefly sketching its chief characteristics I can do no better than follow Norden's masterly treatment in his 'Antike Kunstprosa'⁴⁰ and Wilhelm Meyer's various essays on rhythm, alliteration and rhyme in mediaeval Latin prose and poetry⁴¹.

The *rhetoricus sermo*, as Sedulius calls it,⁴² may be characterised as rhythmical prose divided into sections or periods (*cola*) which are linked up by parallelism and *homoioteleuta*, i.e., the recurrence of a rhythmical cadence at the end of each section, the *cursus* or *clausula* of the earlier prose. It shows a complete transfusion of the style of prose with that of poetry. A largely artificial order of words, a fondness for antithesis, for archaisms as well as neologisms, and especially for foreign words, are some of its most prominent characteristics. Alliteration and assonance

make their appearance, and rhyme (echo) begins to crop up both within the period and in the rhythmical cadences at the end. Norden traces this style in the Latin Christian sermon from the third century onward, in Cyprian,⁴³ Augustine, Faustus of Riez († ca. 500) and Caesarius of Arles († 542). He shows that nowhere did this new style find so fertile a soil or was handled with such skill and brilliance as in Gaul, where the romanised Celts carried the 'argute loqui' into the new idiom. The *eloquentia gallicana* (Venantius Fortunatus), the *ubertas gallici nitorque sermonis* (Jerome) and the *concinnae declamationes* of the Gaulish rhetors were famous throughout the Empire. This was the style taught by eminent professors at Bordeaux and other high-schools.

As a good example of such rhythmical prose I will quote from Norden's book the exordium of a Christmas sermon by Augustine :⁴⁴

*" Ipse apud patrem praecedit cuncta spatia saeculorum,
ipse de matre in hac die cursibus se ingessit annorum.*

*Homo factus hominum factor,
ut sugeret ubera regens sidera,
ut esuriret panis,
ut sitiret fons,
dormiret lux,*

*ab itinere via fatigaretur,
falsis testibus veritas accusaretur,
iudex vivorum et mortuorum a iudice mortali iudicaretur,
ab iniustis iustitia damnaretur,
flagellis disciplina caederetur,
spinis botrus coronaretur,
in ligno fundamentum suspenderetur,
virtus infirmaretur,
salus vulneraretur,
vita moreretur."*

As examples of alliteration Cyprian's "*hos eosdem denuo Dominus designat et denotat dicens*" may serve⁴⁵, or the following quotation from the grammarian Virgil: "*ecce equus ex suo silit repagulo* (i.e. the sea) *totum percurrrens campum, quoad idem equile reversuro mulae* (i.e. the moon) *cum pullis* (i.e. the stars) *locum dat siliendi in campo caelorum*."⁴⁶

Both alliteration and rhyme are found in the following passage from Querolus⁴⁷ (beginning of the 5th cent.): "*O fortuna, o fors fortuna, o fatum sceleratum atque impium,*" and in the following 'lusculus' from Virgil, though I have to confess with its editor 'neque sensus extricare neque verba emendare possum': "*leto lectisque lux oro suis solim in trono trino uno omni praesim potente deo digna regna regnatura torii per cuncta cunctorum aeterno aeuo efandi saecula.*"⁴⁸

This then was the style with which the Irish now became familiar, which was taught in the schools established by the Gaulish rhetors, and which those among their pupils who tried their hand at Latin composition no doubt imitated. Unfortunately very little only has come down to us of the Latin writings of Irishmen of the 5th and 6th centuries. Much has undoubtedly been lost. Apart from Patrick's writings only church hymns composed in rhymed metres have survived. But with the 7th century our sources begin to flow more freely. A good deal both of Latin prose and poetry written by Irishmen has been preserved, and that more existed is shown by the occasional mention of titles such as *Rhetorica Alerani*, a lost book by Ailerán the Wise, a celebrated Irish saint and scholar, who died in 665.⁴⁹ From this literature of the 7th century I select two specimens of rhythmical prose. They occur in the notes on the Life of Patrick written by the well-known ecclesiastic Muirchú mocu Machthéni.⁵⁰

Having spoken of certain prophecies made by two Irish druids about the coming of Christianity ("*morem quendam externum futurum in modum regni cum ignota quadam doctrina molesta*") he continues in the true style of the rhetor:

*"longinquo trans maria advectum,
a paucis dictatum,
a multis susceptum,
ab omnibusque honoratum,
regna subversurum,
resistentes turbas seducturum,
omnes eorum deos distructurum,
et iectis omnibus illorum artis operibus
in saecula regnaturum."*

And in another passage, having mentioned a certain pagan,

"*valde impius, saevus tyrannus, ut Cyclops nominaretur,*" he proceeds to describe him as follows :

*"cogitationibus pravus,
verbis intemperatus,
factis malignus,
spiritu amarus,
animo iracundus,
corpore scelestus,
mente crudelis,
vita gentilis,
conscientia immanis."*

It will be seen that we have here the same style of which specimens have been given above. Now the first of these extracts was translated almost *verbatim* from the Irish which has fortunately been preserved⁵¹. Nor does it stand alone. From the end of the 6th century onward we possess hundreds of poems in the Irish language, which show in their composition every one of the characteristics enumerated above: antithesis, parallelism, rhythmical cadence, the beginnings of alliteration and rhyme, an artificial order of words, with a lavish use both of archaisms and neologisms, and of foreign words. And when we now find that the technical name for this kind of composition in the Irish language has at all times been *retoric*,⁵² can there remain any doubt that it owes its origin to the familiarity of the Irish *filid* with the art of the rhetor?

Unfortunately, few of these rhetorics have been edited, still fewer have been thoroughly studied, and the whole subject bristles with linguistic and textual difficulties. Still, we know enough to be able to say that this kind of poetry or rhythmical prose was not indigenous and that it existed in various forms from about the 6th century onwards till it was gradually superseded by the syllabizing rhymed poetry which follows the metrical system of the Latin Church hymns.

I will now give a few specimens of Irish rhetorics, beginning with one of undoubtedly pagan origin in spite of the Christian tag at the end. It is called *cétnad n-áise* which we may render 'The Song of Long Life.'⁵³ Among the final cadences the dactylic (i.e. a

stressed syllable followed by two unstressed ones) is the most frequent, but we also find $\acute{\text{—}} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$ (v. 1, 7, 19), $\acute{\text{—}} \text{—} \text{—}$ (v. 8, 11, 18) and $\acute{\text{—}} \text{—} \text{—}$ (v. 6, 9).

*Admuiniur secht n-ingena trethan
dolbtais snáthi mac n-áesmar.*

Trí bás úaim rohucaiter !

trí áes dam dorataiter !

⁵ *secht tonna tacid dam dorodalter !*

Nímchollet messe fom chúairt

i llúrig lasren cen léiniud !

ni nascar (?) mo chlú ar chel !

domthí áes, nímthí bás corba sen !

* * *

¹⁰ *Admuiniur Senach sechtamserach
conaltar mná síde for bruinnib būais.*

Ni báiter mo secht caindel !

Am dūn ndithogail,

am ail ansuichthe,

¹⁵ *am lia lūagmar,*

am sēn sechtmainech.

Roba cētach cētblādnach,

cech cēt dīb ar ūair !

cotagaur cucum a lessa.

²⁰ *Robē rath in spiritu nōib form-sa !*

“ I invoke the seven daughters of the sea
Who fashion the threads of the sons of long life.
May three deaths be taken from me !
May three periods of age be granted to me !
May seven waves of good fortune be dealt to me !
May no evil spirits harm me on my circuit
In flashing (?) corslet without hindrance !
May my fame not perish !
May old age come to me, may death not come to me till I am old !

* * *

I invoke Senach of the seven periods of time,
Whom fairy women have reared on the breasts of plenty.
May my seven candles not be extinguished !*

* Literally ‘drowned.’

I am an indestructible stronghold,
 I am an unshaken rock,
 I am a precious stone,
 I am the luck of the week.
 May I live a hundred times a hundred years,
 Each hundred of them apart !
 I summon their boons to me.
 May the grace of the Holy Spirit be upon me ! ”

In the following poetical description of mid-winter⁵⁵ the trisyllabic (dactylic) cadence varies with a creticus (— ◡ —). Alliteration is here fully developed and serves also to link the several lines together.

*Dubaib rathib rogemrid
 robarta tonn turgabar
 iar tóib betha blái.
 Brónaig eoin cach iathmaige
 acht fiaich fola forderge
 fri fúaim gemrid gaírg.*

“ In the dark seasons of deep winter
 heavy seas are lifted up
 along the side of the world’s region.
 Sorrowful are the birds of every meadow-field,
 except the ravens of dark-red blood,
 at the uproar of fierce winter-time.”

Another example of dactylic cadence alternating with a creticus which comes first after three verses, and then after six, is seen in the following poem on Columb Tíre Dá Glass (Terryglas), ascribed to Mongán éces mac Echach :⁵⁵

*Ní bu cráeb crínfedo
 Columb mac nár Nainnedo,
 úa Nastair co sóerachtaib,
 úais úa Crimthain Bicc,
 maic Echach maic Óenguso,
 maic Crimthain Ain airegdai.
 Ar ba bunad firflatho,
 fid freóin fidnemid,*

*cáin Catháir comarbus,
már mess cona iblassaib
úas chiunn chuiri chráeb.*

“ He was no branch of a withered tree,
Colum, the holy son of Nannid,
grandson of Nastar with noble deeds,
lofty descendant of Crimthan the Small,
son of Echu, son of Oengus,
distinguished son of Crimthan the Noble.
For it was the stock of a true prince,
a wood of the root of a forest sanctuary,
the fair heirs of Catháir,
a great harvest with fruit of many tastes
on the top of a multitude of branches.”

In the following poem we can trace the beginnings of rhyme. Its subject is the fort of Rathangan in county Kildare, once the seat of the kings of the Uí Berraide, and its theme common to Celtic bards of all ages—that man must perish while his works remain : ⁵⁶

*Ind ráith i comair in dairfedo,
ba Bruidgi, ba Cathail,
ba Áedo, ba Ailello,
ba Conaing, ba Cuilíni,
ocus ba Máile-Dúin :
ind ráith dar éis cáich ar úair,
ocus ind rí g fóait i n-úir.*

“ The fort opposite the oak-wood,
once it was Bruidge’s, it was Cathal’s,
it was Aed’s, it was Ailill’s,
it was Conaing’s, it was Cuilíne’s,
and it was Maeldúin’s—
The fort remains after each in his turn,
and the kings asleep in the ground.”

Lastly, as an example of the most common form of *retoric* with dactylic cadence throughout, I select from the *Longes mac*

*nUsnig*⁵⁷ the prophecy of the druid Cathbad regarding Deirdre :

*Fot chriol bronn bēcestar
 bē fuilt buidi buidechass
 sēgdaib sūlib sellglassaib,
 sian a grūadi gormchorcrai.
 Fri dath snechta samlamair
 sēt a dētgein dīanim.
 Nīamdai a beōil partaingdeirg
 bē dia mbīat ilartbe
 eter Ulad erreda.*

“ Within the cradle of thy womb
 a maiden yellow-haired, curly-headed has cried,
 with hawk-like blue-starred eyes.
 Like foxglove are her dark-crimson cheeks.
 To the hue of snow I liken
 the range of her faultless teeth.
 Her coral-red lips are radiant—
 A woman through whom there will be many slaughters
 among the chariot-chiefs of Ulster.”

Here I must conclude for the present. A field of study is opened up which needs skilled workers to explore it. I have endeavoured to point out the various directions in which further research will, I think, have to proceed ; and I hope that the students of this School will continue to contribute to the solution of these as of many other problems connected with ancient Ireland. To this end the one thing needful is

volvère volumina Hiberniae.

NOTES

1. See e.g., 'The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland,' p. 31. This is also Roger's opinion ('L'enseignement des lettres classiques,' p. 220): "Il est évident que saint Patrice n'apparaît pas comme ayant personnellement contribué à répandre la culture classique." Patrick's literary influence was in all likelihood confined to teaching the more gifted among his converts to read and to study the Bible. Six times in the 'Tripartite Life' the stereotyped phrase "scripsit ei abgitorium" or "alphabetum" recurs. Such alphabets were probably written by the early missionaries on waxed tablets or cut into wood or even on stone, as in the case of the 'alphabet stone' of Gallerus, figured in Petrie's 'Christian Inscriptions' II pl. v. This stone is now unfortunately almost illegible. A strong appeal should be made to the Board of Works to preserve this unique ancient monument from further injury. After giving the 22 letters of the Latin alphabet including *k*, *y* and *z* it adds the compendium for *et*. The stone also contains the inscription *dni*, which is almost palaeo to the ancient territory of Kerry and the adjacent islands. When will palaeographers study these inscriptions and throw light on their age and origin?

2. See J. B. Bury, 'The Life of St. Patrick,' p. 206.

3. l.c., p. 222.

4. See Sitzungsber. d. kgl. preuss. Akademie 1909, p. 562.

5. Thus Sandys in his 'History of Classical Scholarship' I p. 451 simply says that "Ireland reaped the benefit of its remoteness from barbarian incursions" and passes on to St. Patrick. Taylor, 'The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages' p. 44 is equally vague. Roger ventures on no definite opinion. As regards classical studies in Ireland the 5th century, he concludes: "Il n'y a donc pas d'impossibilité absolue à ce que les Irlandais, ou plutôt à ce que certains d'entre eux aient étudié les lettres au IV^e et au V^e siècle, bien qu'actuellement aucun document n'en fournisse une preuve analogue à celles que nous rencontrons pour le siècle suivant"; and like most other writers he seeks the origins of classical culture in Ireland in the history of the Irish Church (ib. p. 216). D'Arbois de Jubainville is so far as I know the only scholar who believed in an emigration of Gaulish scholars to Ireland during the early fifth century. In Rev. Celt. XXI p. 339 he explains the knowledge of Greek in Ireland in the 8th and 9th centuries as due to "l'émigration des professeurs de grec qui, après la suppression de leur traitement lors de la conquête barbare, se transportèrent en Irlande," and ib. XIX, p. 73 he assumes this emigration to have taken place in the fifth century. It looks as if he had been familiar with the passage from the Leyden MS., but he does not so far as I can see quote it or refer to it anywhere. Perhaps what had originally been a mere surmise had in later life become a certainty with him. For in his 'Introduction à l'étude de la littérature celtique' (1883), p. 367 he had expressed himself less positively as follows: "La culture des lettres grecques et latines a cessé en Gaule depuis la conquête germanique, au cinquième siècle; l'Irlande, qu'à cette époque n'ont pas encore envahie les barbares des contrées situées au nord-ouest de la Gaule, paraît avoir donné asile aux hommes d'étude chassés de la Gaule par les armes et la domination sauvage des Burgundes, des Wisigoths et des Francs." And yet, on p. 370, he follows this up by saying: "C'est à la fondation d'Armagh, métropole religieuse de l'Irlande chrétienne, que l'on peut faire remonter les premiers débuts d'une organisation de l'enseignement de la théologie chrétienne et des lettres classiques en Irlande." Nothing could illustrate better the confusion of ideas hitherto prevailing on this subject. Another writer, R. Dunlop in his 'Origins of the Irish Race,' Quarterly Review 1906, p. 96 assumes, if I understand him rightly, an exodus of monks, scholars and artists fleeing before the invading Frank at the end of the fifth century, first to Britain, and thence, during the Saxon invasion, to Ireland. To such Gaulish exiles he would trace the origin of Irish art. Zimmer was at one time inclined to trace classical

learning in Ireland to Gaulish missionaries of the end of the 4th century (Sitzungsber. 1909, p. 563); at another to scholars emigrating from Gaul in the second half of the 5th (1910, p. 1085).

6. In the fourth part of his *'Handelsverbindungen Westgalliens mit Irland: Der Gascogner Virgilius Maro grammaticus in Irland'* (Sitzgsber. 1910), especially p. 1066. To the evidence regarding the knowledge and influence of Virgil's work in Ireland which Zimmer has collected I may add the following. In Cormac's Glossary (9th cent.) we find: béist a bestia; bés ab eo quod est besus .i. bés, "béist 'beast' comes from *bestia*; bés 'habit' from *besus*, i.e., 'habit.'" This is evidently taken from Virgil (ed. Huemer p. 85, 15): "*bestia dicitur de bessu, hoc est more feritatis.*"

Another trace of the influence of Virgil occurs in the old-Irish commentary on the Psalter (8th cent.), where *bess* 'vita' is quoted as an "unusual word in the fourth kind of Roman eloquence" (*ainm n-écomtig isin chethramad cheniul na sulbaire rómántae*). See my 'Hibernica Minora,' p. 13, l. 439. Here the reference is evidently to one of Virgil's 'duodecim latinitates' (Huemer, pp. 5 and 88).

In the preface to O'Mulconry's Glossary, which Stokes unaccountably put in the 13th or even 14th century, while it contains much that belongs undoubtedly to the old-Irish period, the Virgilius mentioned together with Isidore, Priscian and Comminianus as one of the authorities used is unquestionably our grammarian, not the Mantuan. The quotation in § 138: *beo ab eo verbo quod venit a bes*,* which agrees with Hib. Min. l. 442, may be traced to him.

Lastly, an influence of Virgil's Latinity on Irish writers may be seen in the use of the word *suapte* in the sense of 'well-fitting.' Virgil evidently regarded this word as compounded of Gaul. *su-* (=Ir. *su-*, W. *hy-*, *ev-*) and the Latin adverb *apte*. So he uses it on p. 116, 11: "*domus, in qua scolastici uiri suapte ac suauiter scripta uel dicta componunt.*" Now Cumineus Longus or Cummine Fota († 662) in his hymn 'Celebra Iuda' employs the word in the same sense when he says of the apostle Simon "*Simonis dicti suapte Cannanei*" i.e., "Simon who was most fitly called the Cannanean," i.e., Zelotes; for *cana*, a gloss on the passage informs us, means 'zelus.' (Cf. Isid. VII 9, 18.)

7. See *Zeitschrift für celt. Phil.* IX, p. 118. It seems to me that the only reason for the late date assigned to Virgil is the erroneous notion of his having taken many of his etymologies from Isidore. Manitius, who devotes a long chapter to Virgil in his '*Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*' (I, pp. 119-127) has tabulated these supposed borrowings (p. 121). When they are examined it will be seen that though the actual etymology is the same, nowhere is there any literal agreement such as we might reasonably expect to find if there had been borrowing either way. When Virgil says e.g. (Stangl, '*Virgiliana*,' p. 63, 20): *auris eo quod auditus cordis sermones internis hauriat*,¹ and Isidore (XI, 1, 46): *aurium inditum nomen a vocibus auriendis*; or again (Stangl, p. 63, 19): *oculus dicitur eo quod occulta pervideat ac perlustrat*, and Isidore (XI, 1, 36): *oculi vocati sive quia eos ciliorum tegmina occultant . . . siue quia occultum lumen habeant* the difference in expression forbids any idea of borrowing. We may assume that these etymologies were commonly taught in the schools of Gaul and Spain.

8. See C. Godfrey Leland, 'The Gypsies,' pp. 354-72; J. Sampson 'Tinkers and their Talk,' in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, Old Series II, pp. 204-20; K. Meyer, 'On the Irish Origin and the Age of Shelta,' *ib.* pp. 257-66; the same, 'The Secret Languages of Ireland,' *ib.* new series, 1909.

9. '*Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik*,' vol. 93, p. 389. The glossary of Latin words in which our passage is inserted begins on fol. 79 with *aurio* (*haurio*). After the last example of this word (*aurio* .i. *sumo*,

* Stokes prints *ab es*.

1. Stangl proposes an emendation of this passage, but none is needed. The sense surely is 'because the hearing imbibes speech by means of internal chords.'

sicut legimus in euangelio : Uenit mulier de Samaria aurire aquam) the scribe proceeds without a break *Huni qui*, &c., down to *adhibuerunt*, after which the glossary is resumed (*Allec est genus piscis*, &c.)

So far as I know, Roger l. c. p. 203, note 2, is the only one who refers to this document, though without quoting it or making any use of it. Indeed, on p. 216 he says: "aucun document, nous tenons à le dire tout d'abord, ne prouve qu'elle (viz. Ireland) ait connu les lettres classiques au IV^e et au V^e siècles." It is very likely that Zimmer owed his knowledge of our passage to the reference in Roger's book.

10. See *Zeitschr. f. celt. Phil.* IX, p. 119.

11. *Getica*, XXIV. Both Jordanis and Procopius took their information from Priscus.

12. See Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* VII, 30, whose account of the first attack of the Huns upon the Burgundians on the left bank of the Rhine must be dated before 430.

13. As to the use of *cismarinus* and *transmarinus* from the point of view of a Gaul, cf. the following quotation from Hericus of Auxerre (9th cent.) which I find in Norden's 'Kunstprosa,' II p. 633 note. Hericus calls Lugdunum (Lyons) in the 5th century "quantum ad scholas publicum citramarini orbis gymnasium," evidently in contrast to Ireland and its schools, which were *transmarinae*.

14. See *Sitzungsber.* 1909, p. 565.

15. See G. Coffey, 'Archæological Evidence for the intercourse of Gaul with Ireland before the first century' (*Proc. of the R.I.A.* 1910, pp. 96-106); Mrs. A. S. Green, 'The Trade Routes of Ireland' in her 'Old Irish World,' pp. 63-99.

16. See my paper 'Gauls in Ireland' in 'Eriu' IV, p. 208.

17. Among the manuscripts left by Zimmer there is a large bundle of papers much damaged by fire, containing a connected account of the introduction of Christianity into Ireland and a life of St. Patrick. As most of this has already been published by him in some form or other, I decided not to print it. But on a closer inspection I have found two chapters, which contain some new and important contributions to our knowledge. One of these deals with Irishmen on the Continent during the early centuries of our era. He mentions first Mansuetus, bishop of Toul about 350, of whom a writer of the 12th century (see Martène and Durand, 'Thesaurus novus anecdotorum,' Paris 1717, III p. 991) says: "fuit idem venerandus pater, sicut relatu maiorum didicimus, nobili Scotorum genere oriundus," a statement which is confirmed by the 'Metrum Adsonis' (ib. p. 1013) composed in the 10th century:

"Inclyta Mansueti claris natalibus orti
progenies titulis fulsit in orbe suis.
Insula Christicolæ gestabat Hibernia gentes,
unde genus traxit et satus inde fuit."

Mansuetus, I take it, is probably a Latinisation of the Irish name Fethgno, which was so latinised in the case of a bishop of Armagh in the 9th century. See Mart. Don., p. 417. In such Latinisations, as in Cormac's etymologies, no attention was paid to the quantity of vowels. For though *Fethgno*, answering to the Welsh *Gwyddno*, is compounded with *fid* 'wood,' the rendering 'mansuetus' is based upon the assumption that the first syllable represents the noun *fêth* 'calm.'

Another early Irishman on the continent is mentioned in the appendix to Heric's versified Life of Germanus: "discipulus qui sanctum virum de Hibernia fuerat prosecutus, cui Michomeri vocabulum fuit." He lived in Auxerre about 430 and died in the neighbourhood of Tonnerre in Champagne. Zimmer makes no attempt to identify the name. I would suggest that it is a corruption of *Michomairle*, either a nickname or a self-depreciatory name meaning 'he of evil counsel,' such as *Fid-airle*, *Sneid-airle*, &c., though

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I have no other instance of the name. Names compounded with *mi-* are not uncommon, cp. e.g. *ua Mithrebtha*, AU 731.

Lastly Zimmer also looks upon Corcodemus, mentioned in Constantius' Life of Germanus, as an Irishman. As he is said to have lived at the time of Peregrinus of Auxerre, a martyr in the Aurelian persecution, this would place him very early, at the end of the 3rd century. The name may be compared with *Corco-nutan*, a saint commemorated in the Festologies on Nov. 3rd. He is however enumerated with other 'Romans' in LL 373c 13: "Tri chóicait curach di ailithrib Rómán gabsat h*Erinn* im Éile, im Notal, im Neman cáid, im Chorconutain." Perhaps like Corcodemus he was a Gaul. He was settled in Daire na Flann, near Killenaule, Co. Tipperary. See Fel.² p. 240. Another Corconutan 'frater Murdebuir' is mentioned LL 373b.

18. See Huemer's edition, p. 26. For the corrupt *Hibonorum* of the MSS. we should undoubtedly read *Hibernorum*. "cum in Hibernorum elocutione et compositione primatum estimatur uerbum."

19. Zimmer founds his theory of Virgil's visit to Ireland upon the identification of the Irish name Ferchertne with Virgil (p. 1056 ff.). To this he was led by a wrong derivation of the Irish name, which he takes to stand for *fer certne* 'man of art,' while it is a genuine compound with *fer* (= Gaul. *viro-*) and should be printed *Ferchertne*. The meaning of this bahuvrīhi compound is 'one possessing a man's, or a manly, art or trade.' As *certne* is a feminine noun, the name, although applied to male persons, is always feminine in old-Irish (e.g. *na teora Fercertne*, CZ. III 15). In Tochmarc Ferbe, l. 761 the father of a certain Ferchertne is called Dergerdne, i.e., *Der-gcerdne* 'one possessing a woman's art or trade.'

20. The MSS. all read *Lugenici* (Huemer, p. 162). *Bregand* is an ancient Irish name which occurs as that of one of the mythical ancestors of the Gaels, the father of Bile, (*Bile mac Bregaind*, O'Mulc. 417).

21. "Ab eo promunturio, ubi Scenae fluminis ostium est (now the Kenmare river) et Velabri Lucenique consistunt," Oros. I 2, 81.

22. "Solus Cato miles, populus turbatus, in acie stetit." Virg. ed. Huemer, p. 162.

22^a. See the 5th chapter in her 'Old Irish World,' pp. 168-197.

23. Of all epithets applied to the ancient Irish "nomadic" is probably the most absurd. It seems to have been first used by the late C. Litton-Falkiner who speaks of "the pastoral and in a great measure nomadic Celts, who stood for the Irish people before the twelfth century," and was forthwith adopted by Mr. R. Dunlop according to whom at the end of the 15th century "two-thirds of the inhabitants of Ireland led a wild and half nomadic existence," a statement which he follows up with the most grotesque details. If ever there was a people attached to the soil by custom, institutions and laws, as well as by sentiment, it was the Irish.

24. See Hist. Eccl. III, ch. 27.

25. Unfortunately we have only comparatively late records of such early foreign settlements in Ireland. Our chief document is the so-called Litany of Oengus, which has come down to us in two copies, one in the Book of Leinster (12th cent.) p. 373c and another in Lebor Brecc, p. 23b. Also in B. M. add. B 9512, f. 23 b. It was probably composed in Cork. In the absence of decisive linguistic forms it is not easy to date this document; but as none of the persons or events mentioned in it are later than the seventh century, and as its recital was to protect against the epidemics called *bolgach* and *buidechair*, which visited Ireland in 664 and 680, it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was originally drawn up in that century. The various nationalities here mentioned are *Rómánaig* (Romans), *Gaill* (Gauls), sometimes, with later terminology, called *Frainc* 'Franks,' as *Affinus Franc sacart*, LL 373b43, *manaig Egipte* 'monks of Egypt,' *Saxain* 'Saxons' or rather 'Angles,' *Bretnaig* 'Britons.' As to the presence of Romans in Ireland the well-known stone inscription, VII romani in the churchyard

of S. Breacan's in Aranmore (Petrie, *Christian Inscriptions*, II pl. XIV) is there to testify at the present day.

26. Even the Norse, Giraldus Cambrensis tells us, when they did not come as sea-rovers but as traders and builders were hospitably received and got permission from the Irish chiefs to build towns on the coast ("de assensu principum terrae civitates in ipsis variis construxerunt." *Top. Hib.* III 43).

27. In his posthumous papers quoted above Zimmer has summed up some of the arguments for pre-Patrician Christianity in the south-east of Ireland. He draws them mainly from the Latin Lives of the five early saints Declán, Ailbe, Ibar, Ciarán of Saigir and Abbán mocu Chormaic.† "None of these Lives, he says, can be earlier than the ninth century, as they all speak of Patrick as *archiepiscopus Hiberniae*, and endeavour to adapt later tradition to an earlier state of things. They draw both upon popular tradition and on ancient records, which are sometimes contrasted ("vulgus dicit . . . sed in veteribus scriptis non invenimus," *Vita Decl.* XV.). They reveal a state of things in which a mixture of Christianity and paganism prevails, the latter being driven back slowly and without force. The saints are localised as follows: Declán in Ardmore near Lismore in Waterford; Ailbe in Emly, Co Tipperary; Ibar in the isle of Begeri in Wexford harbour; Ciaran in Saigir, now Serkieran, King's Co., and Abbán, whose mother is said to have been Ibar's sister, in Moyarney, near New Ross on the borders of Wexford and Kilkenny. They thus all belong to the south-east, where in the natural course of things Christianity would first be introduced from south-western Britain, Waterford and Wexford being at all times the chief harbours for trade and intercourse with the sister island. The Lives supplement one another: Declán and Ailbe are friends; and both they and Ciaran and Abbán are contemporaries. Ibar belongs to an older generation. The following dates suggest themselves naturally: 320-350 as the floruit of Ibar, and 330-350 as the period within which the others were born, Declán between 330 and 340, Ciaran about 350. Declán belonged to the tribe of the Déssi, a sub-division of whom, the *Ui Liatháin*, were seated partly in south Britain and partly in south Ireland, in the present baronies of Barrymore and Kinnataloon." Zimmer then quotes a number of passages from the Lives, which he believes to give a true account of the first introduction of Christianity. "Tunc iam Hibernia gentilitati dedita erat et eo tempore raro singuli Christiani inveniri solebant nec poterant ibi esse sine persecutione" (*Vit. Decl.* III). Of Ibar we read "ipse unus erat egregius dispensator divini dogmatis de prioribus praedicatoribus, quos elegit Deus ut Hibernenses ad fidem Christi converterent" (*Vita Abbani IX*), and again: "sanctum Ibarum episcopum, qui seminator fidei in multis locis in Hibernia fuit ante beatissimum Patricium" (*Vita Brigittae*). Declán's death is thus described: "sanctus senex noster Declanus et patronus, delubris et ydolis destructis, gentilibus ad fidem conversis, populis plurimis Christo acquisitis, ecclesiis Deo institutis, ecclesiasticis ordinibus consecratis, sanctissime et felicissime in venerabili senectute migravit" (*Vit. Decl.* XXXIX).

Both according to the Life of Ailbe (VIII-XIII) and Declán, Ailbe is said to have been a pupil of bishop Hilary. The latter Life is most explicit: "eodem tempore sanctus Albeus erat Romae multis annis in discipulatu sancti Hilarii episcopi, ex cuius iussione atque rogatu a beato Papa Albeus ordinatus est episcopus" (*Vit. Decl.* IX). This was evidently not Pope Hilary (461-468), as the Bollandists assume, but the bishop of Poitiers (350-366).

Zimmer concludes that about A.D. 330 south Ireland was still mainly a pagan country, in which isolated Britons, mostly probably slaves,‡ lived and

† Compare with the following arguments Plummer's Introduction to his '*Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*,' from whose edition of the separate Lives I quote.

‡ Here he quotes a passage from *Vit. Albei I*: "Lochanus hic filius Lugir quibusdam Britonibus Christianis, qui in famulatu fuerunt, dedit sanctum puerum et ipsi diligenter nutrierunt eum." Cf. my 'Early Relations between Brython and Gael,' *Cymmrodorion Transactions* 1895-6, pp. 64 and 77.

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taught; but that in the course of that century Christianity obtained a firm footing in the south-east through the labours of some prominent Irish converts, of whom the five named above were the most successful.

28. See on this A. G. van Hamel, "De oudste keltische en angelsaksische Geschiedbronnen," p. 193.

29. Such results may be expected mainly from a thorough investigation of the place-names and personal names mentioned. How accurate Irish tradition can be in these matters is shown by the following instance. In the list of holy pilgrims (*ailithri*) who came to Ireland in early times the Book of Leinster, a MS. of the 12th century, mentions on p. 373c a certain "Cerrui ab Armenia," bishop of Cell Achid (now Killeigh, King's Co.). As my learned colleague Professor Marquart tells me, *Cerrui* would be a good transcription of a possible old Armenian name *Krvi* 'the warlike,' an adjective derived from *kriv* 'war.'

30. "Et vos Domini ignari rhetorici, audite et scrutamini, quis me stultum excitavit de medio eorum qui videntur esse sapientes et legis periti et potentes in sermone et in omni re." This seems the best reading.

31. Zimmer ('Celtic Church,' p. 53) thought that the reference might be to 'Irish rhetoricians,' i.e., to Irish Christians converted at the end of the 4th century and imbued with classical learning. Roger (pp. 220 and 222) thinks of Patrick's Gaulish or British companions whose culture was superior to his own, or of Irish *filid*.

32. As to Bordgal in West Meath see the note on § 59, l. 22 in my edition of *Betha Colmáin meic Liatháin*. Seven bishops of Bordgal are mentioned in the oldest Irish liturgical document generally called the 'Litany of Oengus' (LL 374^b15=LB 24a67). As all other bishops in this long list (over 150 are enumerated) are from Ireland, Bordgal here is not Bordeaux, but the place in West Meath.

33. In the Life of the British saint Catoc the Elder (ca. 440-490) we read of a "famosus rhetoricus," also styled "dogmatista," "doctor," Bachan by name, lately (i.e., about 440) come from Italy to Britain and teaching Latin "more Romano." Catoc, although already instructed "in sacris apicibus disciplinisque liberalibus," hastened to him desiring "Romano more Latinitate doceri." See Rees, 'Cambro-British Saints,' p. 36.

34. See Wuttke's edition p. 14: Hiberniam properavit et in ea aliquandiu commoratus est eorum volumina volvens.

35. As to knowledge of Greek in Ireland see Traube 'O Roma nobilis' pp. 57 [353] ff. and Norden, 'Kunstprosa' p. 666, note 1. The most remarkable evidence is that of Aldhelm who in a letter to Eahfrid fresh from the high schools of Ireland finds fault with him for having gone to the 'didascali Argivi' of that country rather than stayed in England, where Theodore of Tharsos and Hadrian of Nisida (Bede, IV 1) had introduced Greek studies (Giles, Aldhelmi Opera, p. 94). Much further evidence is to be expected from a closer study of Irish sources. Thus Dallán says in his eulogy of Colum Cille: *atgaill grammataig gréic* "he learned Greek grammar" (ACC 123). The early glossaries swarm with Greek words quoted for etymological purposes. We must remember that in these late compilations we have but the last remains of an earlier learning, often horribly disfigured by ignorant scribes. It will be a subject for future investigation to ascertain how far the Greek learning displayed in such glossaries as Cormac's and O'Mulconry's, in the *Dúil Dromma Ceta* (Egerton 1782, 15a ff. =H. 3. 18, 63 a ff.) and other glossaries and grammatical treatises is of an independent kind or derived from such writers as Isidore. Such etymologies of Irish words e.g. as that of *apad* from *ἀποδός* (O'Mulc. 49), of *lám* from *λάβε* (ib. 633), of *apprinn* from *ἀπορία* (ib. 51), of *apaill* from *ἀπολύεις* (ib. 90), or the quotation of the Aeolic *ἑπάρπα* (ib. 160) seem to speak for a wider knowledge of Greek than Roger and others seem inclined to allow. Zimmer (Sitzungsber. 1909, p. 561) has pointed out that Irish Greek was evidently not mere bookish learning, but that Greek was a living speech to these early scholars.

*Eahfrid is the spelling in Giles. But such a compound is scarcely possible
The name must be Ealhfrid = Alhfrid*

The following tabulation of the transcription of Greek practised by the Irish will confirm this :

ai was pronounced *āe* or *ē*. Thus we have *fulaae* (O'Mulc. 592)=*φυλή*; *ethnae* (ib. 468)=*ἔθνη*; *cae* (ib. 213) for *καί*; *gennome* (ib. 217)=*γένομαι*; *ema* (Corm. 502, 574)=*αἶμα*; *ega* (ib. 542, 561)=*αἶγα*; *eris* (O'Mulc. 412)=*αἰρεῖς*; *eresis* (ib. 419)=*αἵρεσις*, &c.

ei was pronounced *i*: *cires* (O'M. 222)=*χεῖρες*; *cilia* (Corm. 613)=*χείλεα*; *dilos* (H. 3. 18, 81a)=*δελός*, &c.

η was pronounced *ē*: *ge* (O'M. 478)=*γῆ*; *bole* (ib. 172)=*βολή*; *ploce* (Corm. 202)=*πλοκή*; *egemon* (O'M. 375)=*ἡγεμών*. But *rissis* (O'M. 626)=*ῥῆσις* and perhaps *cichis* (Corm. 227), if it stands for *κηκίς* and not for *κίκυς*, seem to point to itacism.

The spiritus asper was not pronounced: *etera* (O'M. 457)=*ἐταίρη*; *eros* (H. 3. 18, 81a)=*ἥρως*; *ema* (Corm. 574)=*αἶμα*; *idor* (H. 3. 18, 79c)=*ὔδωρ*.

ou was pronounced *u*: *cruma* (O'M. 284)=*κρούμα*.

u was pronounced *i*: *grinios* (O'M. 697)=*Γρύνεις*; *doriforos* (ib. 318)=*δορυφόρος*; *glicin* (H. 3. 18, 82a)=*γλυκύν*; *idor* (H. 3. 18, 79c)=*ὔδωρ*. But sometimes it is written *u* as in *eluo* (Corm. 557)=*ἐλύω*; *gune* (ib. 773)=*γυνή*; *fulaae* (O'M. 592)=*φυλή*.

au is spelt *ao* in *faolos* (O'M. 601)=*φαῦλος*.

Initial *θ* is rendered by *t* in *trenon* (O'M. 874)=*θρήνον*; *antropos* (ib. 86)=*ἄνθρωπος*. But in inlaut *th* (or *d*) is written: *cathero* (O'M. 611)=*καθαίρω*; *ethnae* (ib. 468)=*ἔθνη*; *lidos* (Corm. 810)=*λίθος*.

Similarly, initial *χ* is rendered by *c*: *cara* (O'M. 627)=*χαρά*; *cilia* (Corm. 613)=*χείλεα*; *arcos* (ib. 65)=*ἄρχός*. Of medial *χ* I have no instance.

φ=*ph*: *philo* (O'M. 572)=*φιλέω*; *f*: *faolos* (ib. 601)=*φαῦλος*.

γχ=*nc*: *brancos* (Corm. 177)=*βρόγχος*.

For *ξ* and *γξ* we have *s* in *silon* (O'M. 858)=*ξύλον*, and in *psaltis* (Hib. Min. 1. 35)=*ψάλτις*.

36. It happens occasionally that the names of lost Latin authors and quotations from them are preserved in Irish literature. Thus I have been unable to find out who the Seregius or Seregius (Sergius?) quoted in the old-Irish Treatise on the Psalter-l. 434 was, who explains *beatus* as "quasi vivatus"; or what name the suspension *Sap*—(ib. l. 142) stands for, who from the quotation "certum est David auctorem esse omnium psalmorum, licet per convenientiam operum alii psalmi aliis personis deputantur" must have been the author of a commentary on the psalms. Nor do I know to which poet of the 4th or 5th century to ascribe the pentameter quoted by Cormac s. v. *cochal* (§262):

"Nunc retinet summum sola cuculla locum,"

nor the quotation (ib. § 447) from a Latin grammarian: "unus non est numerus, sed ab eo crescunt numeri." The "meritoriae tabernae" in H. 3. 18, p. 82 which had long puzzled me, I have traced to Isidore X 182. The supposition *Hono* in the St. Gall glosses (Thes. Pal. II 59) stands for *Honoratus*.

37. A quotation from Rashdall's 'Universities of Europe.'

38. I cannot refrain from reprinting here from my 'Selections from Ancient Irish Poetry' an Old-Irish poem, dating probably from the tenth century, which treats the same subject, though in a different spirit. I call it "On the Flightiness of Thought."

" Shame to my thoughts how far they stray from me !
 I fear great danger from it on the day of eternal Doom.
 During the psalms they wander on a path that is not right :
 They fash, they fret, they misbehave before the eyes of great God.
 Through eager crowds, through companies of wanton women,
 Through woods, through cities—swifter they are than the wind.
 Now through paths of loveliness,
 Anon of riotous shame.
 Without a ferry or ever missing a step they go across every sea :
 Swiftly they leap in one bound from earth to heaven.
 They run a race of folly anear and afar :
 After a course of giddiness they return to their home.
 Though one should try to bind them or put shackles on their feet,
 They are neither constant nor mindful to take a spell of rest.
 Neither sword-edge nor crack of whip will keep them down strongly :
 As slippery as an eel's tail they glide out of my grasp.
 Neither lock nor firm-vaulted dungeon nor any fetter on earth,
 Stronghold nor sea nor bleak fastness restrains them from their course.
 O beloved truly chaste Christ, to whom every eye is clear,
 May the grace of the sevenfold Spirit come to hold them, to check them !
 Rule this heart of mine, O dread God of the elements,
 That Thou mayst be my love, that I may do Thy will.
 That I may reach Christ with His chosen companions, that we may be
 They are neither fickle nor inconstant—not as *I* am. [together !]

39. See Thurneysen, *Rev. Celt.* VI pp. 336-347, and K. Meyer, 'A Primer of Irish Metrics,' p. 5.

40. E. Norden, 'Die Antike Kunstprosa vom VI. Jahrh. v. Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance,' esp. pp. 631-642.

41. Wilh. Meyer, 'Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur mittellatein. Rhythmik.'

42. In the preface to his prose version of the *Carmen Seculare* (Huemer, p. 171).

43. See E. W. Watson, *The Style and Language of St. Cyprian* (*Studia biblica et ecclesiastica*, vol. IV, Oxford, 1896).

44. l.c., p. 622.

45. ib., p. 620.

46. Huemer's edition, p. 176.

47. Norden, l.c., p. 630.

48. Huemer's edition, p. 177.

49. See the *Annals of Ulster* under the year 664.

50. See Stokes' edition of the 'Tripartite Life,' pp. 274 and 286.

51. The original Irish of this druidical prophecy has been preserved in the Egerton version of the *Life of Patrick* (*Trip. Life*, ed. Stokes, p. 32 l. 30 ff.) In order to show how closely Muirchú's version follows the Irish, I place them side by side.

Trip. 32, 31.
 forcetal n-anetarcnaid lista molach
 tremdea tar muir anall
 úathad dodmbérad
 ⁊ sochaide aridfeimfed
 ⁊ fogébad grád ⁊ ermitin la firu
 hÉirenn
 ⁊ noláfed na ríga ⁊ na flatha asa rígu
 ⁊ no choscérad na huili arrachta na
 n-ídal
 ⁊ no feidligfed a mbéscna ticfed ann
 tre bithu betha isinn hÉiríann

Trip. 274, 2.
 cum ignota quadam doctrina molesta
 longinquo trans maria advectum
 a paucis dictatum
 a multis susceptum
 ab omnibusque honoratum.
 regna subversurum
 omnes eorum deos distructurum
 in saecula regnaturum

For similar Irish prophecies about the advent of Christianity see Trip., p. 32, 30 and 34, 5, *Baile in Scáil* § 20 (CZ III p. 463).

52. The Irish word *retoric* f. (LU 91a43) or *rethoric* (LL 124b27, 254b22) is a learned form taken over from Latin *rhetorica* (*ars*). There are however popular forms influenced by folk-etymology, such as *rithairec* (Fél. clxxii, 26. RC VI 176, 63), as if from *rith* 'cursus' and *airec* 'invention.' The latest form is *rithleirg* (RC XX 45, note 5: *do chum in rithleirg mbig sea tre glúnsnáithi* (= *glósnáithi*) *filidechta*; Hy Fiachr. p. 26).

53. See Ir. Texte III, p. 53.

54. See LL 118a and Harl. 5280, fol. 77a.

55. See Rawl. B 502, 122^b26 and LL 315a.

56. See Rawl. l. c. 48 and LL 314b.

57. See Ir. Texte I, p. 69.

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