

Life of St. Declan of Ardmore and Life of St. Mochuda of Lismore eBook

Life of St. Declan of Ardmore and Life of St. Mochuda of Lismore

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PREFACE.

It is solely the historical aspect and worth of the two tracts herewith presented that appealed to their edition and first suggested to him their preparation and publication. Had preparation in question depended for its motive merely on considerations of the texts' philologic interest or value it would, to speak frankly, never have been undertaken. The editor, who disclaims qualification as a philologist, regards these Lives as very valuable historical material, publication of which may serve to light up some dark corners of our Celtic ecclesiastical past. He is egotist enough to hope that the present "blazing of the track," inadequate and feeble though it be, may induce other and better equipped explorers to follow.

The present editor was studying the Life of Declan for quite another purpose when, some years since, the zealous Hon. Secretary of the Irish Texts Society suggested to him publication of the tract in its present form, and addition of the Life of Carthach [Mochuda]. Whatever credit therefore is due to originating this work is Miss Hull's, and hers alone.

The editor's best thanks are due, and are hereby most gratefully tendered, to Rev. M. Sheehan, D.D., D.Ph., Rev. Paul Walsh, Rev. J. MacErlhean, S.J., M.A., as well as to Mr. R. O'Foley, who, at much expense of time and labour, have carefully read the proofs, and, with unselfish prodigality of their scholarly resources, have made many valuable suggestions and corrections.

P.P.

INTRODUCTION.

I.—GENERAL.

A most distinctive class of ancient Irish literature, and probably the class that is least popularly familiar, is the hagiographical. It is, the present writer ventures to submit, as valuable as it is distinctive and as well worthy of study as it is neglected. While annals, tales and poetry have found editors the Lives of Irish Saints have remained largely a mine unworked. Into the causes of this strange neglect it is not the purpose of the present introduction to enter. Suffice it to glance in passing at one of the reasons which has been alleged in explanation, scil.:—that the "Lives" are uncritical and romantic, that they abound in wild legends, chronological impossibilities and all sorts of incredible stories, and, finally, that miracles are multiplied till the miraculous becomes the ordinary, and that marvels are magnified till the narrative borders on the ludicrous. The Saint as he is sketched is sometimes a positively repulsive being—arrogant, venomous, and cruel; he demands two eyes or more for one, and, pucklike, fairly revels in mischief! As painted he is in fact more a pagan deity than a Christian man.

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The foregoing charges may, or must, be admitted partially or in full, but such admission implies no denial of the historical value of the Lives. All archaic literature, be it remembered, is in a greater or less degree uncritical, and it must be read in the light of the writer's times and surroundings. That imagination should sometimes run riot and the pen be carried beyond the boundary line of the strictly literal is perhaps nothing much to be marvelled at in the case of the supernatural minded Celt with religion for his theme. Did the scribe believe what he wrote when he recounted the multiplied marvels of his holy patron's life? Doubtless he did—and why not! To the unsophisticated monastic and mediaeval mind, as to the mind of primitive man, the marvellous and supernatural is almost as real and near as the commonplace and natural. If anyone doubts this let him study the mind of the modern Irish peasant; let him get beneath its surface and inside its guardian ring of shrinking reserve; there he will find the same material exactly as composed the mind of the tenth century biographers of Declan and Mochuda. Dreamers and visionaries were of as frequent occurrence in Erin of ages ago as they are to-day. Then as now the supernatural and marvellous had a wondrous fascination for the Celtic mind. Sometimes the attraction becomes so strong as seemingly to overbalance the faculty of distinguishing fact from fancy. Of St. Bridget we are gravely told that to dry her wet cloak she hung in out on a sunbeam! Another Saint sailed away to a foreign land on a sod from his native hillside! More than once we find a flagstone turned into a raft to bear a missionary band beyond the seas! St. Fursey exchanged diseases with his friend Magnentius, and, stranger still, the exchange was arranged and effected by correspondence! To the saints moreover are ascribed lives of incredible duration—to Mochta, Ibar, Seachnal, and Brendan, for instance, three hundred years each; St. Mochaemog is credited with a life of four hundred and thirteen years, and so on!

Clan, or tribe, rivalry was doubtless one of the things which made for the invention and multiplication of miracles. If the patron of the Decies is credited with a miracle, the tribesmen of Ossory must go one better and attribute to their tribal saint a marvel more striking still. The hagiographers of Decies retort for their patron by a claim of yet another miracle and so on. It is to be feared too that occasionally a less worthy motive than tribal honour prompted the imagination of our Irish hagiographers—the desire to exploit the saint and his honour for worldly gain.

The "Lives" of the Irish Saints contain an immense quantity of material of first rate importance for the historian of the Celtic church. Underneath the later concoction of fable is a solid substratum of fact which no serious student can ignore. Even where the narrative is otherwise plainly myth or fiction it sheds many a useful sidelight on ancient manners, customs and laws as well as on the curious and often intricate operations of the Celtic mind.



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By “Lives” are here meant the old *Ms.* biographies which have come down to us from ages before the invention of printing. Sometimes these “Lives” are styled “Acts.” Generally we have only one standard “Life” of a saint and of this there are usually several copies, scattered in various libraries and collections. Occasionally a second Life is found differing essentially from the first, but, as a rule, the different copies are only recensions of a single original. Some of the MSS. are parchment but the majority are in paper; some Lives again are merely fragments and no doubt scores if not hundreds of others have been entirely lost. Of many hundreds of our Irish saints we have only the meagre details supplied by the martyrologies, with perhaps occasional reference to them in the Lives of other saints. Again, finally, the memory of hundreds and hundreds of saints additional survives only in place names or is entirely lost.

There still survive probably over a hundred “Lives”—possibly one hundred and fifty; this, however, does not imply that therefore we have Lives of one hundred or one hundred and fifty saints, for many of the saints whose Acts survive have really two sets of the latter—one in Latin and the other in Irish; moreover, of a few of the Latin Lives and of a larger number of the Irish Lives we have two or more recensions. There are, for instance, three independent Lives of St. Mochuda and one of these is in two recensions.

The surviving Lives naturally divide themselves into two great classes—the Latin Lives and the Irish,—written in Latin and Irish respectively. We have a Latin Life only of some saints, and Irish Life only of others, and of others again we have a Latin Life and an Irish. It may be necessary to add the Acts which have been translated into Latin by Colgan or the Bollandists do not of course rank as Latin Lives. Whether the Latin Lives proper are free translations of the Irish Lives or the Irish Lives translations of Latin originals remains still, to a large extent, an open question. Plummer (“*Vitae SSm. Hib.*,” *Introd.*) seems to favour the Latin Lives as the originals. His reasoning here however leaves one rather unconvinced. This is not the place to go into the matter at length, but a new bit of evidence which makes against the theory of Latin originals may be quoted; it is furnished by the well known collection of Latin Lives known as the *Codex Salmanticensis*, to which are appended brief marginal notes in mixed middle Irish and Latin. One such note to the Life of St. Cuangus of Lismore (recte Liathmore) requests a prayer for him who has translated the Life out of the Irish into Latin. If one of the Lives, and this a typical or characteristic Life, be a translation, we may perhaps assume that the others, or most of them, are translations also. In any case we may assume as certain that there were original Irish materials or data from which the formal Lives (Irish or Latin) were compiled.

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The Latin Lives are contained mainly in four great collections. The first and probably the most important of these is in the Royal Library at Brussels, included chiefly in a large *Ms.* known as 'Codex Salmanticensis' from the fact that it belonged in the seventeenth century to the Irish College of Salamanca. The second collection is in Marsh's Library, Dublin, and the third in Trinity College Library. The two latter may for practical purposes be regarded as one, for they are sister MSS.—copied from the same original. The Marsh's Library collection is almost certainly, teste Plummer, the document referred to by Colgan as Codex Kilkenniensis and it is quite certainly the Codex Ardmachanus of Fleming. The fourth collection (or the third, if we take as one the two last mentioned,) is in the Bodleian at Oxford amongst what are known as the Rawlinson MSS. Of minor importance, for one reason or another, are the collections of the Franciscan Library, Merchants' Quay, Dublin, and in Maynooth College respectively. The first of the enumerated collections was published 'in extenso,' about twenty-five years since, by the Marquis of Bute, while recently the gist of all the Latin collections has been edited with rare scholarship by Rev. Charles Plummer of Oxford. Incidentally may be noted the one defect in Mr. Plummer's great work—its author's almost irritating insistence on pagan origins, nature myths, and heathen survivals. Besides the Marquis of Bute and Plummer, Colgan and the Bollandists have published some Latin Lives, and a few isolated "Lives" have been published from time to time by other more or less competent editors.

The Irish Lives, though more numerous than the Latin, are less accessible. The chief repertorium of the former is the Burgundian or Royal Library, Brussels. The *Ms.* collection at Brussels appears to have originally belonged to the Irish Franciscans of Louvain and much of it is in the well-known handwriting of Michael O'Clery. There are also several collections of Irish Lives in Ireland—in the Royal Irish Academy, for instance, and Trinity College Libraries. Finally, there are a few Irish Lives at Oxford and Cambridge, in the British Museum, Marsh's Library, &c., and in addition there are many Lives in private hands. In this connection it can be no harm, and may do some good, to note that an apparently brisk, if unpatriotic, trade in Irish MSS. (including of course "Lives" of Saints) is carried on with the United States. Wealthy, often ignorant, Irish-Americans, who are unable to read them, are making collections of Irish MSS. and rare Irish books, to Ireland's loss. Some Irish MSS. too, including Lives of Saints, have been carried away as mementoes of the old land by departing emigrants.



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The date or period at which the Lives (Latin and Irish) were written is manifestly, for half a dozen good reasons, a question of the utmost importance to the student of the subject. Alas, that the question has to some extent successfully defied quite satisfactory solution. We can, so far, only conjecture—though the probabilities seem strong and the grounds solid. The probabilities are that the Latin Lives date as a rule from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when they were put into something like their present form for reading (perhaps in the refectory) in the great religious houses. They were copied and re-copied during the succeeding centuries and the scribes according to their knowledge, devotion or caprice made various additions, subtractions and occasional multiplications. The Irish Lives are almost certainly of a somewhat earlier date than the Latin and are based partly (i.e. as regards the bulk of the miracles) on local tradition, and partly (i.e. as regards the purely historical element) on the authority of written materials. They too were, no doubt, copied and interpolated much as were the Latin Lives. The present copies of Irish Lives date as a rule from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries only, and the fact that the Latin and the Irish Life (where there is this double biography) sometimes agree very perfectly may indicate that the Latin translation or Life is very late.

The chief published collections of Irish Saints' Lives may be set down as seven, scil.:—five in Latin and one each in Irish and English. The Latin collections are the Bollandists', Colgan's, Messingham's, Fleming's, and Plummer's; the Irish collection is Stokes' ("Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore") and the English is of course O'Hanlon's.

Most striking, probably, of the characteristics of the "Lives" is their very evident effort to exalt and glorify the saint at any cost. With this end of glorification in view the hagiographer is prepared to swallow everything and record anything. He has, in fact, no critical sense and possibly he would regard possession of such a sense as rather an evil thing and use of it as irreverent. He does not, as a consequence, succeed in presenting us with a very life-like or convincing portrait of either the man or the saint. Indeed the saint, as drawn in the Lives, is, as already hinted, a very unsaintlike individual—almost as ready to curse as to pray and certainly very much more likely to smite the aggressor than to present to him the other cheek. In the text we shall see St. Mochuda, whose Life is a specially sane piece of work, cursing on the same occasion, first, King Blathmac and the Prince of Cluain, then, the rich man Cronan who sympathised with the eviction, next an individual named Dubhsulach who winked insolently at him, and finally the people of St. Columba's holy city of Durrow who had stirred up hostile feeling against him. Even gentle female saints can hurl an imprecation too. St. Laisrech, for instance, condemned the lands of those who refused her tribute, to—nettles, elder shrub, and corncrakes! It is pretty plain that the compilers of the lives had some prerogatives, claims or rights to uphold—hence this frequent insistence on the evil of resisting the Saint and presumably his successors.



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One characteristic of the Irish ascetics appears very clear through all the exaggeration and all the biographical absurdity; it is their spirit of intense mortification. To understand this we have only to study one of the ancient Irish Monastic Rules or one of the Irish Penitentials as edited by D'Achery ("Spicilegium") or Wasserschleben ("Irische Kanonensamerlung"). Severest fasting, unquestioning obedience and perpetual self renunciation were inculcated by the Rules and we have ample evidence that they were observed with extraordinary fidelity. The Rule of Maelruin absolutely forbade the use of meat or of beer. Such a prohibition a thousand years ago was an immensely more grievous thing than it would sound to-day. Wheaten bread might partially supply the place of meat to-day, but meat was easier to procure than bread in the eighth century. Again, a thousand years ago, tea or coffee there was none and even milk was often difficult or impossible to procure in winter. So severe in fact was the fast that religious sometimes died of it. Bread and water being found insufficient to sustain life and health, gruel was substituted in some monasteries and of this monastic gruel there were three varieties:—(a) "gruel upon water" in which the liquid was so thick that the meal reached the surface, (b) "gruel between two waters" in which the meal, while it did not rise to the surface, did not quite fall to the bottom, and (c) "gruel under water" which was so weak and so badly boiled that the meal easily fell to the bottom. In the case of penitents the first brand of gruel was prescribed for light offences, the second kind for sins of ordinary gravity, and the "gruel under water" for extraordinary crimes (vid. Messrs. Gwynne and Purton on the Rule of Maelruin, &c.) The most implicit, exact and prompt obedience was prescribed and observed. An overseer of Mochuda's monastery at Rahen had occasion to order by name a young monk called Colman to do something which involved his wading into a river. Instantly a dozen Colmans plunged into the water. Instances of extraordinary penance abound, beside which the austerities of Simon Stylites almost pale. The Irish saints' love of solitude was also a very marked characteristic. Desert places and solitary islands of the ocean possessed an apparently wonderful fascination for them. The more inaccessible or forbidding the island the more it was in request as a penitential retreat. There is hardly one of the hundred islands around the Irish coast which, one time or another, did not harbour some saint or solitary upon its rocky bosom.



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The testimony of the “Lives” to the saints’ love and practice of prayer is borne out by the evidence of more trustworthy documents. Besides private prayers, the whole psalter seems to have been recited each day, in three parts of fifty psalms each. In addition, an immense number of Pater Nosters was prescribed. The office and prayers were generally pretty liberally interspersed with genuflections or prostrations, of which a certain anchorite performed as many as seven hundred daily. Another penitential action which accompanied prayer was the ‘cros-figul.’ This was an extension of the arms in the shape of a cross; if anyone wants to know how difficult a practice this is let him try it for, say, fifteen minutes. Regarding recitation of the Divine Office it was of counsel, and probably of precept, that it should not be from memory merely, but that the psalms should all be read. For this a good reason was given by Maelruin, *i.e.* that the recitation might engage the eye as well as the tongue and thought. An Irish homily refers to the mortification of the saints and religious of the time as martyrdom, of which it distinguishes three kinds—red, white, and blue. Red martyrdom was death for the faith; white martyrdom was the discipline of fasting, labour and bodily austerities; while blue martyrdom was abnegation of the will and heartfelt sorrow for sin.

One of the puzzles of Irish hagiology is the great age attributed to certain saints—periods of two hundred, three hundred, and even four hundred years. Did the original compilers of the Life intend this? Whatever the full explanation be the writers of the Lives were clearly animated by a desire to make their saint cotemporary and, if possible, a disciple, of one or other of the great monastic founders, or at any rate to prove him a pupil of one of the great schools of Erin. There was special anxiety to connect the saint with Bangor or Clonard. To effect the connection in question it was sometimes necessary to carry the life backwards, at other times to carry it forwards, and occasionally to lengthen it both backwards and forwards. Dr. Chas. O’Connor gives a not very convincing explanation of the three-hundred-year “Lives,” *scil.*:—that the saint lived in three centuries—during the whole of one century and in the end and beginning respectively of the preceding and succeeding centuries. This explanation, even if satisfactory for the three-hundred-year Lives, would not help at all towards the Lives of four hundred years. A common explanation is that the scribe mistook numerals in the *Ms.* before him and wrote the wrong figures. There is no doubt that copying is a fruitful source of error as regards numerals. It is much more easy to make a mistake in a numeral than in a letter; the context will enable one to correct the letter, while it will give him no clue as regards a numeral. On the subject of the alleged longevity of Irish Saints Anscombe has recently been elaborating in ‘Eriu’

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a new and very ingenious theory. Somewhat unfortunately the author happens to be a rather frequent propounder of ingenious theories. His explanation is briefly—the use and confusion of different systems of chronology. He alleges that the original writers used what is called the Diocletian Era or the “Era of the Martyrs” as the ‘terminus a quo’ of their chronological system and, in support of his position, he adduces the fact that this, which was the most ancient of all ecclesiastical eras, was the era used by the schismatics in Britain and that it was introduced by St. Patrick.

As against the contradiction, anachronisms and extravagances of the Lives we have to put the fact that generally speaking the latter corroborate one another, and that they receive extern corroboration from the annals. Such disagreements as occur are only what one would expect to find in documents dealing with times so remote. To the credit side too must go the fact that references to Celtic geography and to local history are all as a rule accurate. Of continental geography and history however the writers of the Lives show much ignorance, but scarcely quite as much as the corresponding ignorance shown by Continental writers about Ireland.

The missionary methods of the early Irish Church and its monastic or semi-monastic system are frequently referred to as peculiar, if not unique. A missionary system more or less similar must however have prevailed generally in that age. What other system could have been nearly as successful amongst a pagan people circumstanced as the Irish were? The community system alone afforded the necessary mutual encouragement and protection to the missionaries. Each monastic station became a base of operations. The numerous diminutive dioceses, quasi-dioceses, or tribal churches, were little more than extensive parishes and the missionary bishops were little more in jurisdiction than glorified parish priests. The bishop’s ‘muintir,’ that is the members of his household, were his assistant clergy. Having converted the chieftain or head of the tribe the missionary had but to instruct and baptise the tribesmen and to erect churches for them. Land and materials for the church were provided by the Clan or the Clan’s head, and lands for support of the missioner or of the missionary community were allotted just as they had been previously allotted to the pagan priesthood; in fact there can be but little doubt that the lands of the pagan priests became in many cases the endowment of the Christian establishment. It is not necessary, by the way, to assume that the Church in Ireland as Patrick left it, was formally monastic. The clergy lived in community, it is true, but it was under a somewhat elastic rule, which was really rather a series of Christian and Religious counsels. A more formal monasticism had developed by the time of Mochuda; this was evidently influenced by the spread of St. Benedict’s Rule, as Patrick’s quasi-monasticism, nearly two centuries previously, had been influenced by Pachomius and St. Basil, through Lerins. The real peculiarity in Ireland was that when the community-missionary-system was no longer necessary it was not abandoned as in other lands but was rather developed and emphasised.



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II.—ST. DECLAN.

“If thou hast the right, O Erin, to a champion of battle to aid thee thou hast the head of a hundred thousand, Declan of Ardmore.” (Martyrology of Oengus).

Five miles or less to the east of Youghal Harbour, on the southern Irish coast, a short, rocky and rather elevated promontory juts, with a south-easterly trend, into the ocean. Maps and admiralty charts call it Ram Head, but the real name is Ceann-a-Rama and popularly it is often styled Ardmore Head. The material of this inhospitable coast is a hard metamorphic schist which bids defiance to time and weather. Landwards the shore curves in clay cliffs to the north-east, leaving, between it and the iron headland beyond, a shallow exposed bay wherein many a proud ship has met her doom. Nestling at the north side of the headland and sheltered by the latter from Atlantic storms stands one of the most remarkable groups of ancient ecclesiastical remains in Ireland—all that has survived of St. Declan's holy city of Ardmore. This embraces a beautiful and perfect round tower, a singularly interesting ruined church commonly called the cathedral, the ruins of a second church beside a holy well, a primitive oratory, a couple of ogham inscribed pillar stones, &c., &c.

No Irish saint perhaps has so strong a local hold as Declan or has left so abiding a popular memory. Nevertheless his period is one of the great disputed questions of early Irish history. According to the express testimony of his Life, corroborated by testimony of the Lives of SS. Ailbhe and Ciaran, he preceded St. Patrick in the Irish mission and was a co-temporary of the national apostle. Objection, exception or opposition to the theory of Declan's early period is based less on any inherent improbability in the theory itself than on contradictions and inconsistencies in the Life. Beyond any doubt the Life does actually contradict itself; it makes Declan a cotemporary of Patrick in the fifth century and a cotemporary likewise of St. David a century later. In any attempted solution of the difficulty involved it may be helpful to remember a special motive likely to animate a tribal hystorographer, scil.:—the family relationship, if we may so call it, of the two saints; David was bishop of the Deisi colony in Wales as Declan was bishop of their kinsmen of southern Ireland. It was very probably part of the writer's purpose to call attention to the links of kindred which bound the separated Deisi; witness his allusion later to the alleged visit of Declan to his kinsmen of Bregia. Possibly there were several Declans, as there were scores of Colmans, Finians, &c., and hence perhaps the confusion and some of the apparent inconsistencies. There was certainly a second Declan, a disciple of St. Virgilius, to whom the latter committed care of a church in Austria where he died towards close of eighth century. Again we find mention of a St. Declan who was a foster son of Mogue of Ferns, and so on. It is too much, as Delehaye (“*Legendes Hagiographiques*”) remarks, to expect the populace to distinguish between namesakes. Great men are so rare! Is it likely there should have lived two saints of the same name in the same country!



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The latest commentators on the question of St. Declan's period—and they happen to be amongst the most weighty—argue strongly in favour of the pre-Patrician mission (Cfr. Prof. Kuno Meyer, "Learning Ireland in the Fifth Century"). Discussing the way in which letters first reached our distant island of the west and the causes which led to the proficiency of sixth-century Ireland in classical learning Zimmer and Meyer contend that the seeds of that literary culture, which flourished in Ireland of the sixth century, had been sown therein in the first and second decades of the preceding century by Gaulish scholars who had fled from their own country owing to invasion of the latter by Goths and other barbarians. The fact that these scholars, who were mostly Christians, sought asylum in Ireland indicates that Christianity had already penetrated thither, or at any rate that it was known and tolerated there. Dr. Meyer answers the objection that if so large and so important an invasion of scholars took place we ought have some reference to the fact in the Irish annals. The annals, he replies, are of local origin and they rarely refer in their oldest parts to national events: moreover they are very meagre in their information about the fifth century. One Irish reference to the Gaulish scholars is, however, adduced in corroboration; it occurs in that well known passage in St. Patrick's "Confessio" where the saint cries out against certain "rhetoricians" in Ireland who were hostile to him and pagan,—“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.” Who were these “rhetorici” that have made this passage so difficult for commentators and have caused so various constructions to be put upon it? It is clear, the professor maintains, that the reference is to pagan rhetors from Gaul whose arrogant presumption, founded on their learning, made them regard with disdain the comparatively illiterate apostle of the Scots. Everyone is familiar with the classic passage of Tacitus wherein he alludes to the harbours of Ireland as being more familiar to continental mariners than those of Britain. We have references moreover to refugee Christians who fled to Ireland from the persecutions of Diocletian more than a century before St. Patrick's day; in addition it is abundantly evident that many Irishmen—Christians like Celestius the lieutenant of Pelagius, and possibly Pelagius himself, amongst them—had risen to distinction or notoriety abroad before middle of the fifth century.

Possibly the best way to present the question of Declan's age is to put in tabulated form the arguments of the pre-Patrician advocates against the counter contentions of those who claim that Declan's period is later than Patrick's:—

For the Pre-Patrician Mission.

I.—Positive statement of Life, corroborated by Lives of SS. Ciaran and Ailbhe.

II.—Patrick's apparent avoidance of the Principality of Decies.

III.—The peculiar Declan cult and the strong local hold which Declan has maintained.



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Against Theory of Early Fifth Century period.

I.—Contradictions, anachronisms, &c., of Life.

II.—Lack of allusion to Declan in the Lives of St. Patrick.

III.—Prosper's testimony to the mission of Palladius as first bishop to the believing Scots.

IV.—Alleged motives for later invention of Pre-Patrician story.

In this matter and at this hour it is hardly worth appealing to the authority of Lanigan and the scholars of the past. Much evidence not available in Lanigan's day is now at the service of scholars. We are to look rather at the reasoning of Colgan, Ussher, and Lanigan than to the mere weight of their names.

Referring in order to our tabulated grounds of argument, pro and con, and taking the pro arguments first, we may (I.) discard as evidence for our purpose the Life of St. Ibar which is very fragmentary and otherwise a rather unsatisfactory document. The Lives of Ailbhe, Ciaran, and Declan are however mutually corroborative and consistent. The Roman visit and the alleged tutelage under Hilarius are probably embellishments; they look like inventions to explain something and they may contain more than a kernel of truth. At any rate they are matters requiring further investigation and elucidation. In this connection it may be useful to recall that the Life (Latin) of St. Ciaran has been attributed by Colgan to Evinus the disciple and panegyrist of St. Patrick.

Patrick's apparent neglect of the Decies (II.) may have no special significance. At best it is but negative evidence: taken, however, in connection with (I.) and its consecraria it is suggestive. We can hardly help speculating why the apostle—passing as it were by its front door—should have given the go-bye to a region so important as the Munster Decies. Perhaps he sent preachers into it; perhaps there was no special necessity for a formal mission, as the faith had already found entrance. It is a little noteworthy too that we do not find St. Patrick's name surviving in any ecclesiastical connection with the Decies, if we except Patrick's Well, near Clonmel, and this Well is within a mile or so of the territorial frontier. Moreover the southern portion of the present Tipperary County had been ceded by Aengus to the Deisi, only just previous to Patrick's advent, and had hardly yet had sufficient time to become absorbed. The whole story of Declan's alleged relations with Patrick undoubtedly suggests some irregularity in Declan's mission—an irregularity which was capable of rectification through Patrick and which de facto was finally so rectified.



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(III.) No one in Eastern Munster requires to be told how strong is the cult of St. Declan throughout Decies and the adjacent territory. It is hardly too much to say that the Declan tradition in Waterford and Cork is a spiritual actuality, extraordinary and unique, even in a land which till recently paid special popular honour to its local saints. In traditional popular regard Declan in the Decies has ever stood first, foremost, and pioneer. Carthage, founder of the tribal see, has held and holds in the imagination of the people only a secondary place. Declan, whencesoever or whenever he came, is regarded as the spiritual father to whom the Deisi owe the gift of faith. How far this tradition and the implied belief in Declan's priority and independent mission are derived from circulation of the "Life" throughout Munster in the last few centuries it is difficult to gauge, but the tradition seems to have flourished as vigorously in the days of Colgan as it does to-day. Declan's "pattern" at Ardmore continues to be still the most noted celebration of its kind in Ireland. A few years ago it was participated in by as many as fourteen thousand people from all parts of Waterford, Cork, and Tipperary. The scenes and ceremonies have been so frequently described that it is not necessary to recount them here—suffice it to say that the devotional practices and, in fact, the whole celebration is of a purely popular character receiving no approbation, and but bare toleration, from church or clergy. Even to the present day Declan's name is borne as their praenomen by hundreds of Waterford men, and, before introduction of the modern practice of christening with foolish foreign names, its use was far more common, as the ancient baptismal registers of Ardmore, Old Parish, and Clashmore attest. On the other hand Declan's name is associated with comparatively few places in the Decies. Of these the best known is Relig Deaglain, a disused graveyard and early church site on the townland of Drumroe, near Cappoquin. There was also an ancient church called Killdeglain, near Stradbally.

Against the theory of the pre-Patrician or citra-Patrician mission we have first the objection, which really has no weight, and which we shall not stop to discuss, that it is impossible for Christianity at that early date to have found its way to this distant island, beyond the boundary of the world. An argument on a different plane is (I.), the undoubtedly contradictory and inconsistent character of the Life. It is easy however to exaggerate the importance of this point. Modern critical methods were undreamed of in the days of our hagiographer, who wrote, moreover, for edification only in a credulous age. Most of the historical documents of the period are in a greater or less degree uncritical but that does not discredit their testimony however much it may confuse their editors. It can be urged moreover that two mutually incompatible genealogies of the saint are given. The genealogy given by MacFirbisigh seems in fact to disagree in almost every possible detail with the genealogy in 23 M. 50 R.I.A. That however is like an argument that Declan never existed. It really suggests and almost postulates the existence of a second Declan whose Acts and those of our Declan have become mutually confused.

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(II.) Absence of Declan's name from the Acts of Patrick is a negative argument. It is explicable perhaps by the supposed irregularity of Declan's preaching. Declan was certainly earlier than Mochuda and yet there is no reference to him in the Life of the latter saint. Ailbhe however is referred to in the Tripartite Life of Patrick and the cases of Ailbhe and Declan are "a pari"; the two saints stand or fall together.

(IV.) Motives for invention of the pre-Patrician myth are alleged, scil.:—to rebut certain claims to jurisdiction, tribute or visitation advanced by Armagh in after ages. It is hard to see however how resistance to the claims in question could be better justified on the theory of a pre-Patrician Declan, who admittedly acknowledged Patrick's supremacy, than on the admission of a post-Patrician mission.

That in Declan we have to deal with a very early Christian teacher of the Decies there can be no doubt. If not anterior to Patrick he must have been the latter's cotemporary. Declan however had failed to convert the chieftain of his race and for this—reading between the lines of the "Life"—we seem to hear Patrick blaming him.

The monuments proper of Declan remaining at Ardmore are (a) his oratory near the Cathedral and Round Tower in the graveyard, (b) his stone on the beach, (c) his well on the cliff, and (d) another stone said to have been found in his tomb and preserved at Ardmore for long ages with great reversion. The "Life" refers moreover to the saint's pastoral staff and his bell but these have disappeared for centuries.

The "Oratory" is simply a primitive church of the usual sixth century type: it stands 13' 4" x 8' 9" in the clear, and has, or had, the usual high-pitched gables and square-headed west doorway with inclining jambs. Another characteristic feature of the early oratory is seen in the curious antae or prolongation of the side walls. Locally the little building is known as the "beannacan," in allusion, most likely, to its high gables or the finials which once, no doubt, in Irish fashion, adorned its roof. Though somewhat later than Declan's time this primitive building is very intimately connected with the Saint. Popularly it is supposed to be his grave and within it is a hollow space scooped out, wherein it is said his ashes once reposed. It is highly probable that tradition is quite correct as to the saint's grave, over which the little church was erected in the century following Declan's death. The oratory was furnished with a roof of slate by Bishop Mills in 1716.

"St. Declan's Stone" is a glacial boulder of very hard conglomerate which lies on a rocky ledge of beach beneath the village of Ardmore. It measures some 8' 6" x 4' 6" x 4' 0" and reposes upon two slightly jutting points of the underlying metamorphic rock. Wonderful virtues are attributed to St. Declan's Stone, which, on the occasion of the patronal feast, is visited

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by hundreds of devotees who, to participate in its healing efficacy and beneficence, crawl laboriously on face and hands through the narrow space between the boulder and the underlying rock. Near by, at foot of a new storm-wall, are two similar but somewhat smaller boulders which, like their venerated and more famous neighbour, were all wrenched originally by a glacier from their home in the Comeragh Mountains twenty miles away.

“St. Declan’s Well,” beside some remains of a rather large and apparently twelfth century church on the cliff, in the townland of Dysert is diverted into a shallow basin in which pilgrims bathe feet and hands. Set in some comparatively modern masonry over the well are a carved crucifixion and other figures of apparently late mediaeval character. Some malicious interference with this well led, nearly a hundred years since, to much popular indignation and excitement.

The second “St. Declan’s Stone” was a small, cross-inscribed jet-black piece of slate or marble, approximately—2” or 3” x 1 1/2”. Formerly it seems to have had a small silver cross inset and was in great demand locally as an amulet for cattle curing. It disappeared however, some fifty years or so since, but very probably it could still be recovered in Dungarvan.

Far the most striking of all the monuments at Ardmore is, of course, the Round Tower which, in an excellent state of preservation, stands with its conical cap of stone nearly a hundred feet high. Two remarkable, if not unique, features of the tower are the series of sculptured corbels which project between the floors on the inside, and the four projecting belts or zones of masonry which divide the tower into storeys externally. The tower’s architectural anomalies are paralleled by its history which is correspondingly unique: it stood a regular siege in 1642, when ordnance was brought to bear on it and it was defended by forty confederates against the English under Lords Dungarvan and Broghil.

A few yards to north of the Round Tower stands “The Cathedral” illustrating almost every phase of ecclesiastical architecture which flourished in Ireland from St. Patrick to the Reformation—Cyclopean, Celtic-Romanesque, Transitional and Pointed. The chancel arch is possibly the most remarkable and beautiful illustration of the Transitional that we have. An extraordinary feature of the church is the wonderful series of Celtic arcades and panels filled with archaic sculptures in relief which occupy the whole external face of the west gable.

St. Declan’s foundation at Ardmore seems (teste Moran’s Archdall) to have been one of the Irish religious houses which accepted the reform of Pope Innocent at the Lateran Council and to have transformed itself into a Regular Canonry. It would however be

possible to hold, on the evidence, that it degenerated into a mere parochial church. We hear indeed of two or three episcopal successors of the saint,



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scil.:—Ultan who immediately followed him, Eugene who witnessed a charter to the abbey of Cork in 1174, and Moelettrim O Duibhe-rathre who died in 1303 after he had, according to the annals of Inisfallen, “erected and finished the Church” of Ardmore. The “Wars of the Gaedhil and Gall” have reference, circa 824 or 825, to plunder by the Northmen of Disert Tipraite which is almost certainly the church of Dysert by the Holy Well at Ardmore. The same fleet, on the same expedition, plundered Dunderrow (near Kinsale), Inisshannon (Bandon River), Lismore, and Kilmolash.

Regarding the age of our “Life” it is difficult with the data at hand to say anything very definite. While dogmatism however is dangerous indefiniteness is unsatisfying. True, we cannot trace the genealogy of the present version beyond middle of the sixteenth century, but its references to ancient monuments existing at date of its compilation show it to be many centuries older. Its language proves little or nothing, for, being a popular work, it would be modernised to date by each successive scribe. Colgan was of opinion it was a composition of the eighth century. Ussher and Ware, who had the Life in very ancient codices, also thought it of great antiquity. Papebrach, the Bollandist, on the other hand, considered the Life could not be older than the twelfth century, but this opinion of his seems to have been based on a misapprehension. In the absence of all diocesan colour or allusion one feels constrained to assign the production to some period previous to Rathbreasail. We should not perhaps be far wrong in assigning the first collection of materials to somewhere in the eighth century or in the century succeeding. The very vigorous ecclesiastical revival of the eleventh century, at conclusion of the Danish wars, must have led to some revision of the country’s religious literature. The introduction, a century and-a-half later, of the great religious orders most probably led to translation of the Life into Latin and its casting into shape for reading in refectory or choir.

Only three surviving copies of the Irish Life are known to the writer: one in the Royal Library at Brussels, the second in the Royal Irish Academy Collection (M. 23, 50, pp. 109-120), and the third in possession of Professor Hyde. As the second and third enumerated are copies of one imperfect exemplar it has not been thought necessary to collate both with the Brussels *Ms.* which has furnished the text here printed. M. 23, 50 (R.I.A.) has however been so collated and the marginal references initialled B are to that imperfect copy. The latter, by the way, is in the handwriting of John Murphy “na Raheenach,” and is dated 1740. It has not been thought necessary to give more than the important variants.



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The present text is a reproduction of the Brussels *Ms.* plus lengthening of contractions. As regards lengthening in question it is to be noted that the well known contraction for “ea” or “e” has been uniformly transliterated “e.” Otherwise orthography of the *Ms.* has been scrupulously followed—even where inconsistent or incorrect. For the division into paragraphs the editor is not responsible; he has merely followed the division originated, or adopted, by the scribe. The Life herewith presented was copied in 1629 by Brother Michael O’Clery of the Four Masters’ staff from an older *Ms.* of Eochy O’Heffernan’s dated 1582. The *Ms.* of O’Heffernan is referred to by our scribe as “seinleabar,” but his reference is rather to the contents than to the copy. Apparently O’Clery did more than transcribe; he re-edited, as was his wont, into the literary Irish of his day. A page of the Brussels *Ms.*, reproduced in facsimile as a frontispiece to the present volume, will give the student a good idea of O’Clery’s script and style.

Occasional notes on Declan in the martyrologies and elsewhere give some further information about our saint. Unfortunately however the alleged facts are not always capable of reconciliation with statements of our “Life,” and again the existence of a second, otherwise unknown, Declan is suggested. The introduction of rye is attributed to him in the Calendar of Oengus, as introduction of wheat is credited to St. Finan Camm, and introduction of bees to St. Modomnoc,—“It was the full of his shoe that Declan brought, the full of his shoe likewise Finan, but the full of his bell Modomnoc” (Cal. Oeng., April 7th). More puzzling is the note in the same Calendar which makes Declan a foster son of Mogue of Ferns! This entry illustrates the way in which errors originate. A former scribe inadvertently copied in, after Declan’s name, portion of the entry immediately following which relates to Colman Hua Liathain. Successive scribes re-copied the error without discovering it and so it became stereotyped.

III.—ST. MOCHUDA.

“It was he (Mochuda) that had the famous congregation consisting of seven hundred and ten persons; an angel used to address every third man of them.” (Martyrology of Donegal).

In some respects the Life of Mochuda here presented is in sharp contrast to the corresponding Life of Declan. The former document is in all essentials a very sober historical narrative—accurate wherever we can test it, credible and harmonious on the whole. Philologically, to be sure, it is of little value,—certainly a much less valuable Life than Declan’s; historically, however (and question of the pre-Patrician mission apart) it is immensely the more important document. On one point do we feel inclined to quarrel with its author, scil.: that he has not given us more specifically the motives underlying Mochuda’s expulsion from

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Rahen—one of the three worst counsels ever given in Erin. Reading between his lines we spell, jealousy—'invidia religiosorum.' Another jealousy too is suggested—the mutual distrust of north and south which has been the canker-worm of Irish political life for fifteen hundred years, making intelligible if not justifying the indignation of a certain distinguished Irishman who wanted to know the man's name, in order to curse its owner, who first divided Ireland into two provinces.

Three different Lives of Mochuda are known to the present writer. Two of them are contained in a *Ms.* at Brussels (*C/r.* Bindon, p. 8, 13) and of one of these there is a copy in a *Ms.* of Dineen's in the Royal Irish Academy (Stowe Collection, A. IV, I.) Dineen appears to have been a Cork or Kerry man and to have worked under the patronage of the rather noted Franciscan Father Francis Matthew (O'Mahony), who was put to death at Cork by Inchiquin in 1644. The bald text of Dineen's "Life" was published a few years since, without translation, in the 'Irish Rosary.' The corresponding Brussels copy is in Michael O'Clery's familiar hand. In it occurs the strange pagan-flavoured story of the British Monk Constantine. O'Clery's copy was made in January, 1627, at the Friary of Drouish from the Book of Tadhg O'Ceannan and it is immediately followed by a tract entitled—"Do Macaib Ua Suanac." The bell of Mochuda, by the way, which the saint rang against Blathmac, was called the 'glassan' of Hui Suanraig in later times.

The "Life" here printed, which follows the Latin Life so closely that one seems a late translation of the other, is as far as the editor is aware, contained in a single *Ms.* only. This is M. 23, 50, R.I.A., in the handwriting of John Murphy, "na Raheenach." Murphy was a Co. Cork schoolmaster, scribe, and poet, of whom a biographical sketch will be found prefixed by Mr. R. A. Foley to a collection of Murphy's poems that he has edited. The sobriquet, "na Raheenach," is really a kind of tribal designation. The "Life" is very full but is in its present form a comparatively late production; it was transcribed by Murphy between 1740 and 1750. It is much to be regretted that the scribe tells us nothing of his original. Murphy, but the way, seems to have specialised to some extent in saint's Lives and to have imbued his disciples with something of the same taste. One of his pupils was Maurice O'Connor, a scribe and shipwright of Cove, to whom we owe the Life of St. Ciaran of Saighir printed in "Silva Gadelica." The reasons of choice for publication here of the present Life are avowedly non-philological; the motive for preference is that it is the longest of the three Lives and for historical purposes the most important.

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The Life presents considerable evidence of historical reliability; its geography is detailed and correct; its references to contemporaries of Mochuda are accurate on the whole and there are few inconsistencies or none. Moreover it sheds some new light on that chronic puzzle—organisation of the Celtic Church of Ireland. Mochuda, head of a great monastery at Rahen, is likewise a kind of pluralist Parish Priest with a parish in Kerry, administered in his name by deputed ecclesiastics, and other parishes similarly administered in Kerrycurrihy, Rostellan, West Muskerry, and Spike Island, Co. Cork. When a chief parishioner lies seriously ill in distant Corca Duibhne, Mochuda himself comes all the way from the centre of Ireland to administer the last rites to the dying man, and so on.

The relations of the people to the Church and its ministers are in many respects not at all easy to understand. Oblations, for instance, of themselves and their territory, &c., by chieftains are frequent. Oblations of monasteries are made in a similar way. Probably this signifies no more than that the chief region or monastery put itself under the saint's jurisdiction or rule or both. That there were other churches too than the purely monastic appears from offerings to Mochuda of already existing churches, v.g. from the Clanna Ruadhan in Decies, &c.

Lismore, the most famous of Mochuda's foundations, became within a century of the saint's death, one of the great monastic schools of Erin, attracting to his halls, or rather to its boothies, students from all Ireland and even—so it is claimed—from lands beyond the seas. King Alfrid [Aldfrith] of Northumbria, for instance, is said to have partaken of Lismore's hospitality, and certainly Cormac of Cashel, Malachy and Celsus of Armagh and many others of the most distinguished of the Scots partook thereof. The roll of Lismore's calendared saints would require, did the matter fall within our immediate province, more than one page to itself. Some interesting reference to Mochuda and his holy city occur in the Life of one of his disciples, St. Colman Maic Luachain, edited for the R.I.A. by Professor Kuno Meyer.

There are many indications in the present Life that, at one period, and in the time of Carthach, the western boundary of Decies extended far beyond the line at present recognised. Similar indications are furnished by the martyrologies, &c.; for instance, the martyrology of Donegal under November 28th records of "the three sons of Bochra" that "they are of Archadh Raithin in Ui Mic Caille in Deisi Mumhan" and Ibid, p. xxxvii, it is stated "i ccondae Corcaige ataid na Desi Muman." Not only Imokilly but all Co. Cork, east of Queenstown [Cobh] and north to the Blackwater, seems to have acknowledged Mochuda's jurisdiction. At Rathbreasail accordingly (teste Keating, on the authority of the Book of Cloneneigh) the Diocese of Lismore is made to extend to Cork,—probably over

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the present baronies of Imokilly, Kinatallon, and Barrymore. That part, at least, of Condons and Clangibbon was likewise included is inferrible from the fact that, as late as the sixteenth century visitations, Kilworth, founded by Colman Maic Luachain, ranked as a parish in the diocese of Lismore. Further evidence pointing in the same direction is furnished by Clondulane, &c., represented in the present Life as within Carthach's jurisdiction.

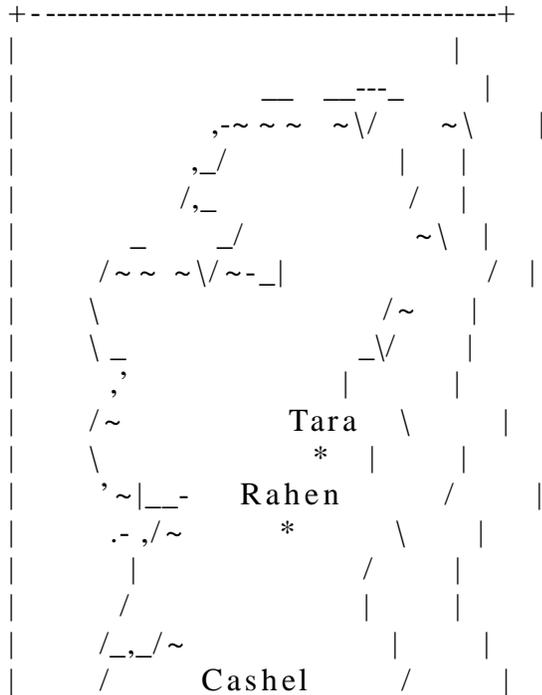
The Rule of St. Carthach is one of the few ancient Irish so-called monastic Rules surviving. It is in reality less a "rule," as the latter is now understood, than a series of Christian and religious counsels drawn up by a spiritual master for his disciples. It must not be understood from this that each religious house did not have its formal regulations. The latter however seem to have depended largely upon the abbot's spirit, will or discretion. The existing "Rules" abound in allusions to forgotten practices and customs and, to add to their obscurity, their language is very difficult—sometimes, like the language of the Brehon Laws, unintelligible. The rule ascribed to Mochuda is certainly a document of great antiquity and may well have emanated from the seventh century and from the author whose name it bears. The tradition of Lismore and indeed of the Irish Church is constant in attributing it to him. Copies of the Rule are found in numerous MSS. but many of them are worthless owing to the incompetence of the scribes to whom the difficult Irish of the text was unintelligible. The text in the *Leabhar Breac* has been made the basis of his edition of the Rule by Mac Eagraise, a writer in the 'Irish Ecclesiastical Record' (1910). Mac Eagraise's edition, though it is not all that could be desired, is far the most satisfactory which has yet appeared. Previous editions of the Rule or part of it comprise one by Dr. Reeves in his tract on the Culdees, one by Kuno Meyer in the 'Gaelic Journal' (Vol. V.) and another in 'Archiv fuer C.L.' (3 Bund. 1905), and another again in 'Eriu' (Vol. 2, p. 172), besides a free translation of the whole rule by O'Curry in the 'I. R. Record' for 1864. The text of the 'Record' edition of 1910 is from *Leabhar Breac* collated with other MSS. The order in the various copies is not the same and some copies contain material which is wanting in others. The "Rule" commences with the Ten Commandments, then it enumerates the obligations respectively of bishops, abbots, priests, monks, and culdees [anchorites]. Finally there is a section on the order of meals and on the refectory and another on the obligations of a king. The following excerpt on the duties of an abbot ('I. E. Record' translation) will illustrate the style and spirit of the Rule:

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“Of the Abbot of a Church. 1.—If you be the head man of a Church noble is the power, better for you that you be just who take the heirship of the king. 2.—If you are the head man of a Church noble is the obligation, preservation of the rights of the Church from the small to the great. 3.—What Holy Church commands preach then with diligence; what you order to each one do it yourself. 4.—As you love your own soul love the souls of all. Yours the magnification of every good [and] banishment of every evil. 5.—Be not a candle under a bushel [Luke 11:33]. Your learning without a cloud over it. Yours the healing of every host both strong and weak. 6.—Yours to judge each one according to grade and according to deed; he will advise you at judgment before the king.... 10.— Yours to rebuke the foolish, to punish the hosts, turning disorder into order [restraint] of the stubborn, obstinate, wretched.”

Reservation of the Coarbship of Mochuda at Lismore in favour of Kerry men is an extremely curious if not unique provision. How long it continued in force we do not know. Probably it endured to the twelfth century and possibly the rule was not of strict interpretation. Christian O’Connarchy, who was bishop of Lismore in the twelfth century, is regarded as a native of Decies, though the contrary is slightly suggested by his final retirement to Kerry. The alleged prophecy concerning Kerry men and the coarbship points to some rule, regulation or law of Mochuda.

MAP OF IRELAND.





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LIFE OF ST. DECLAN.

“Betha DECCLAIN.”



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1. The most blessed Bishop Declan of the most noble race of the kings of Ireland, *i.e.*, the holy bishop who is called Declan was of the most noble royal family of Ireland—a family which held the sceptre and exacted tribute from all Ireland at Tara for ages. Declan was by birth of noble blood as will appear from his origin and genealogy, for it was from Eochaidh Feidhleach, the powerful Ardrigh of Ireland for twelve years, that he sprang. Eochaidh aforesaid, had three sons, *scil.:*—Breas, Nar, and Lothola, who are called the three Finneavna; there reigned one hundred and seven kings of their race and kindred before and after them, *i.e.* of the race of Eremon, king of Ireland,—before the introduction of Christianity and since. These three youths lay one day with their own sister Clothra, daughter of the same father, and she conceived of them. The son she brought forth as a consequence of that intercourse was marked by three red wavy lines which indicated his descent from the three youths aforesaid. He was named Lugaidh Sriabhdearg from the three lines [sriabaib] in question, and he was beautiful to behold and of greater bodily strength in infancy than is usual with children of his age. He commenced his reign as king of Ireland the year in which Caius Caesar [Caligula] died and he reigned for twenty-six years. His son was named Criomthan Nianair who reigned but sixteen years. Criomthan's son was named Fearadach Finnfechnach whose son was Fiacha Finnolaidh whose son again was Tuathal Teachtmhar. This Tuathal had a son Felimidh Reachtmhar who had in turn three sons—Conn Ceadcathach, Eochaidh Finn, and Fiacha Suighde. Conn was king of Ireland for twenty years and the productiveness of crops and soil and of dairies in the time of Conn are worthy of commemoration and of fame to the end of time. Conn was killed in Magh Cobha by the Ulstermen, *scil.:*—by Tiopruid Tireach and it is principally his seed which has held the kingship of Ireland ever since. Eochaidh Finn was second son to Felimidh Reachtmhar and he migrated to the latter's province of Leinster, and it is in that province his race and progeny have remained since then. They are called Leinstermen, and there are many chieftains and powerful persons of them in Leinster. Fiacha Suighde moreover, although he died before he succeeded to the chief sovereignty, possessed land around Tara. He left three sons—Ross, Oengus, and Eoghan who were renowned for martial deeds—valiant and heroic in battle and in conflict. Of the three, Oengus excelled in all gallant deeds so that he came to be styled Oengus of the poisonous javelin. Cormac Mac Art Mac Conn it was who reigned in Ireland at this time. Cormac had a son named Ceallach who took by force the daughter of Eoghan Mac Fiacha Suighde to dwell with him, *i.e.* Credhe the daughter of Eoghan. When Oengus Gaebuaibhtheach ("of the poisonous javelin") heard this, *viz.*, that the daughter of his brother had been abducted



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by Ceallach he was roused to fury and he followed Ceallach to Tara taking with him his foster child, scil.:—Corc Duibhne, the son of Cairbre, son of Conaire, son of Mogha Lamha whom Cormac held as a hostage from the Munstermen, and whom he had given for safe custody to Oengus. When Oengus reached Tara he beheld Ceallach sitting behind Cormac. He thrust his spear at Ceallach and pierced him through from front to back. However as he was withdrawing the spear the handle struck Cormac's eye and knocked it out and then, striking the steward, killed him. He himself (Oengus) with his foster child escaped safely. After a time Cormac, grieving for the loss of his son, his eye and his steward at the hands of Oengus of the poisonous javelin and of his kinsmen, ordered their expulsion from their tribal territory, *i.e.* from the Decies of Tara, and not alone from these, but from whole northern half of Ireland. However, seven battles were fought in which tremendous loss was inflicted on Cormac and his followers before Oengus and his people, *i.e.* the three sons of Fiacha Suighde, namely, Ross and Oengus and Eoghan, as we have already said, were eventually defeated, and obliged to fly the country and to suffer exile. Consequent on their banishment as above by the king of Ireland they sought hospitality from the king of Munster, Oilill Olum, because Sadhbh, daughter of Conn Ceadcathach was his wife. They got land from him, scil.: the Decies of Munster, and it is to that race, *i.e.* the race of Eoghan Mac Fiacha Suighde that the kings and country of the Decies belong ever since.

2. Of this same race of Eoghan was the holy bishop Declan of whom I shall speak later scil.: Declan son of Eirc, son of Trein, son of Lughaidh, son of Miaich, son of Brian, son of Eoghan, son of Art Corp, son of Moscorb, son of Mesgeadra, son of Measfore, son of Cuana Cainbhreathaigh, son of Conaire Cathbuadhaigh, son of Cairbre, son of Eoghan, son of Fiacha Suighde, son of Felimidh Reachtmhar, son of Tuathal Teachtmhar. The father of Declan was therefore Erc Mac Trein. He and his wife Deithin went on a visit to the house of his kinsman Dobhran about the time that Declan's birth was due. The child she bore was Declan, whom she brought forth without sickness, pain or difficulty but in being lifted up afterwards he struck his head against a great stone. Let it be mentioned that Declan showed proofs of sanctification and power of miracle-working in his mother's womb, as the prophet writes:—"De vulva sanctificavi te et prophetam in gentibus dedi te" [Jeremias 1:5] (Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and made thee a prophet unto the nations). Thus it is that Declan was sanctified in his mother's womb and was given by God as a prophet to the pagans for the conversion of multitudes of them from heathenism and the misery of unbelief to the worship of Christ and to the Catholic faith, as we shall see later on. The very soft apex of his head struck against a hard



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stone, as we have said, and where the head came in contact with the stone it made therein a hollow and cavity of its own form and shape, without injury of any kind to him. Great wonder thereupon seized all who witnessed this, for Ireland was at this time without the true faith and it was rarely that any one (therein) had shown heavenly Christian signs. "Declan's Rock" is the name of the stone with which the Saint's head came into contact. The water or rain which falls into the before-mentioned cavity (the place of Declan's head) dispels sickness and infirmity, by the grace of God, as proof of Declan's sanctity.

3. On the night of Declan's birth a wondrous sign was revealed to all, that is to the people who were in the neighbourhood of the birthplace; this was a ball of fire which was seen blazing on summit of the house in which the child lay, until it reached up to heaven and down again, and it was surrounded by a multitude of angels. It assumed the shape of a ladder such as the Patriarch, Jacob saw [Genesis 28:12]. The persons who saw and heard these things wondered at them. They did not know (for the true faith had not yet been preached to them or in this region) that it was God who (thus) manifested His wondrous power (works) in the infant, His chosen child. Upon the foregoing manifestation a certain true Christian, scil.:—Colman, at that time a priest and afterwards a holy bishop, came, rejoicing greatly and filled with the spirit of prophecy, to the place where Declan was; he preached the faith of Christ to the parents and made known to them that the child was full of the grace of God. He moreover revealed to them the height of glory and honour to which the infant should attain before God and men, and it was revealed to him that he (Declan) should spend his life in sanctity and devotion. Through the grace of God, these, *i.e.* Erc and Deithin, believed in God and Colman, and they delivered the child for baptism to Colman who baptised him thereupon, giving him the name of Declan. When, in the presence of all, he had administered Baptism, Colman spoke this prophecy concerning the infant "Truly, beloved child and lord you will be in heaven and on earth most high and holy, and your good deeds, fame, and sanctity will fill all (the four quarters of) Ireland and you will convert your own nation and the Decies from paganism to Christianity. On that account I bind myself to you by the tie of brotherhood and I commend myself to your sanctity."

4. Colman thereupon returned to his own abode; he commanded that Declan should be brought up with due care, that he should be well trained, and be set to study at the age of seven years if there could be found in his neighbourhood a competent Christian scholar to undertake his tuition. Even at the period of his baptism grace and surpassing charity manifested themselves in the countenance of Declan so that it was understood of all that great should be the goodness



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and the spiritual charm of his mature age. When Dobhran had heard and seen these things concerning his kinsman Erc he requested the latter and Deithin to give him the child to foster, and with this request Erc complied. The name of the locality was “Dobhran’s Place” at that time, but since then it has been “Declan’s Place.” Dobhran presented the homestead to Declan and removed his own dwelling thence to another place. In after years, when Declan had become a bishop, he erected there a celebrated cell in honour of God, and this is the situation of the cell in question:—In the southern part of the Decies, on the east side of Magh Sgiath and not far from the city of Mochuda *i.e.* Lismore. For the space of seven years Declan was fostered with great care by Dobhran (his father’s brother) and was much loved by him. God wrought many striking miracles through Declan’s instrumentality during those years. By aid of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him he (Declan)—discreet Christian man that he was—avoided every fault and every unlawful desire during that time.

5. On the completion of seven years Declan was taken from his parents and friends and fosterers to be sent to study as Colman had ordained. It was to Dioma they sent him, a certain devout man perfect in the faith, who had come at that time by God’s design into Ireland having spent a long period abroad in acquiring learning. He (Dioma) built in that place a small cell wherein he might instruct Declan and dwell himself. There was given him also, to instruct, together with Declan, another child, scil., Cairbre Mac Colmain, who became afterwards a holy learned bishop. Both these were for a considerable period pursuing their studies together.

6. There were seven men dwelling in Magh Sgiath, who frequently saw the fiery globe which it has been already told they first beheld at the time of Declan’s birth. It happened by the Grace of God that they were the first persons to reveal and describe that lightning. These seven came to the place where Declan abode and took him for their director and master. They made known publicly in the presence of all that, later on, he should be a bishop and they spoke prophetically:—“The day, O beloved child and servant of God, will come when we shall commit ourselves and our lands to thee.” And it fell out thus (as they foretold), for, upon believing, they were baptised and became wise, devout (and) attentive and erected seven churches in honour of God around Magh Sgiath.

7. Declan remained a long time with Dioma, the holy man we have named, and acquired science and sanctity and diversity of learning and doctrine, and he was prudent, mild, and capable so that many who knew his nobility of blood came when they had heard of the fullness of his sanctity and grace. Moreover they submitted themselves to him and accepted his religious rule. Declan judged it proper that he should visit Rome to study discipline and ecclesiastical system, to secure for himself esteem and approbation thence, and obtain authority to preach to the (Irish) people and to bring back with him the rules of Rome as these obtained in Rome itself. He set out

with his followers and he tarried not till he arrived in Rome where they remained some time.



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8. At the same period there was a holy bishop, *i.e.* Ailbe, who had been in Rome for a number of years before this and was in the household of Pope Hilary by whom he had been made a bishop. When Declan with his disciples arrived in Rome Ailbe received him with great affection and gladness and he bore testimony before the Roman people to his (Declan's) sanctity of life and nobility of blood. He (Declan) therefore received marks of honour and sincere affection from the people and clergy of Rome when they came to understand how worthy he was, for he was comely, of good appearance, humble in act, sweet in speech, prudent in counsel, frank in conversation, virtuous in mien, generous in gifts, holy in life and resplendent in miracles.

9. When Declan had spent a considerable time in Rome he was ordained a bishop by the Pope, who gave him church-books and rules and orders and sent him to Ireland that he might preach there. Having bidden farewell to the Pope and received the latter's blessing Declan commenced his journey to Ireland. Many Romans followed him to Ireland to perform their pilgrimage and to spend their lives there under the yoke and rule of Bishop Declan, and amongst those who accompanied him was Runan, son of the king of Rome; he was dear to Declan.

10. On the road through Italy Bishop Declan and Patrick met. Patrick was not a bishop at that time, though he was (made a bishop) subsequently by Pope Celestinus, who sent him to preach to the Irish. Patrick was truly chief bishop of the Irish island. They bade farewell to one another and they made a league and bond of mutual fraternity and kissed in token of peace. They departed thereupon each on his own journey, *scil.:*— Declan to Ireland and Patrick to Rome.

11. Declan was beginning mass one day in a church which lay in his road, when there was sent him from heaven a little black bell, (which came) in through the window of the church and remained on the altar before Declan. Declan greatly rejoiced thereat and gave thanks and glory to Christ on account of it, and it filled him with much courage to combat the error and false teaching of heathendom. He gave the bell for safe keeping and carriage, to Runan aforesaid, *i.e.* son of the king of Rome, and this is its name in Ireland—"The Duibhin Declain," and it is from its colour it derives its name, for its colour is black [dub]. There were manifested, by grace of God and Declan's merits, many miracles through its agency and it is still preserved in Declan's church.

12. When Declan and his holy companions arrived at the Sea of Icht [English Channel] he failed, owing to lack of money, to find a ship, for he did not have the amount demanded, and every ship was refused him on that account. He therefore struck his bell and prayed to God for help in this extremity. In a short time after this they saw coming towards them on the crest of the waves an empty, sailless



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ship and no man therein. Thereupon Declan said:—"Let us enter the ship in the name of Christ, and He who has sent it to us will direct it skilfully to what harbour soever He wishes we should go." At the word of Declan they entered in, and the ship floated tranquilly and safely until it reached harbour in England. Upon its abandonment by Declan and his disciples the ship turned back and went again to the place from which it had come and the people who saw the miracles and heard of them magnified the name of the Lord and Declan, and the words of the prophet David were verified:—"Mirabilis Deus in Sanctis Suis" [Psalm 67(68):36] (God is wonderful in His Saints).

13. After this Declan came to Ireland. Declan was wise like a serpent and gentle like a dove and industrious like the bee, for as the bee gathers honey and avoids the poisonous herbs so did Declan, for he gathered the sweet sap of grace and Holy Scripture till he was filled therewith. There were in Ireland before Patrick came thither four holy bishops with their followers who evangelized and sowed the word of God there; these are the four:—Ailbe, Bishop Ibar, Declan, and Ciaran. They drew multitudes from error to the faith of Christ, although it was Patrick who sowed the faith throughout Ireland and it is he who turned chiefs and kings of Ireland to the way of baptism, faith and sacrifice and everlasting judgment.

14. These three, scil.:—Declan, Ailbe and Bishop Ibar made a bond of friendship and a league amongst themselves and their spiritual posterity in heaven and on earth for ever and they loved one another. SS. Ailbe and Declan, especially, loved one another as if they were brothers so that, on account of their mutual affection they did not like to be separated from one another—except when their followers threatened to separate them by force if they did not go apart for a very short time. After this Declan returned to his own country—to the Decies of Munster—where he preached, and baptized, in the name of Christ, many whom he turned to the Catholic faith from the power of the devil. He built numerous churches in which he placed many of his own followers to serve and worship God and to draw people to God from the wiles of Satan.

15. Once on a time Declan came on a visit to the place of his birth, where he remained forty days there and established a religious house in which devout men have dwelt ever since. Then came the seven men we have already mentioned as having made their abode around Magh Sgiath and as having prophesied concerning Declan. They now dedicated themselves and their establishment to him as they had promised and these are their names:—Mocellac and Riadan, Colman, Lactain, Finnlaoc, Kevin, &c. [Mobi]. These therefore were under the rule and spiritual sway of bishop Declan thenceforward, and they spent their lives devoutly there and wrought many wonders afterwards.



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16. After some time Declan set out to visit Aongus MacNatfrich, king of Cashel, to preach to him and to convert him to the faith of Christ. Declan however had two uterine brothers, sons of Aongus, scil.: Colman and Eoghan. The grace of the Holy Ghost inspiring him Colman went to Ailbe of Emly and received baptism and the religious habit at the latter's hands, and he remained for a space sedulously studying science until he became a saintly and perfect man. Eochaid however remained as he was (at home)—expecting the kingdom of Munster on his father's death, and he besought his father to show due honour to his brother Declan. The king did so and put no obstacle in the way of Declan's preaching but was pleased with Declan's religion and doctrine, although he neither believed nor accepted baptism himself. It is said that refusal (of baptism) was based on this ground: Declan was of the Decies and of Conn's Half, while Aongus himself was of the Eoghanacht of Cashel of Munster—always hostile to the Desii. It was not therefore through ill will to the faith that he believed not, as is proved from this that, when the king heard of the coming to him of Patrick, the archbishop of Ireland, a man who was of British race against which the Irish cherished no hate, not only did he believe but he went from his own city of Cashel to meet him, professed Christianity and was immediately baptised.

17. After this Declan, having sown the word of God and preached to the king (although the latter did not assent to his doctrines), proceeded to his own country and they (the Desii) believed and received baptism except the king alone and the people of his household who were every day promising to believe and be baptised. It however came about through the Devil's agency that they hesitated continually and procrastinated.

18. Other authorities declare that Declan went many times to Rome, but we have no written testimony from the ancient biographers that he went there more than three times. On one of these occasions Declan paid a visit to the holy bishop of the Britons whose name was David at the church which is called Killmuine [Menevia] where the bishop dwelt beside the shore of the sea which divides Ireland from Britain. The bishop received Declan with honour and he remained there forty days, in affection and joy, and they sang Mass each day and they entered into a bond of charity which continued between themselves and their successors for ever afterwards. On the expiration of the forty days Declan took leave of David giving him a kiss in token of peace and set out himself and his followers to the shore of the sea to take ship for Ireland.



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19. Now the bell which we have alluded to as sent from heaven to Declan, was, at that time, in the custody of Runan to carry as we have said, for Declan did not wish, on any account, to part with it. On this particular day as they were proceeding towards the ship Runan entrusted it to another member of the company. On reaching the shore however the latter laid the bell on a rock by the shore and forgot it till they were half way across the sea. Then they remembered it and on remembrance they were much distressed. Declan was very sorrowful that the gift sent him by the Lord from heaven should have been forgotten in a place where he never expected to find it again. Thereupon raising his eyes heavenward he prayed to God within his heart and he said to his followers:—“Lay aside your sorrow for it is possible with God who sent that bell in the beginning to send it now again by some marvellous ship.” Very fully and wonderfully and beautifully the creature without reason or understanding obeyed its creator, for the very heavy unwieldy rock floated buoyantly and without deviation, so that in a short time they beheld it in their rear with the bell upon it. And when his people saw this wondrous thing it filled them with love for God and reverence for their master. Declan thereupon addressed them prophetically:—“Permit the bell to precede you and follow it exactly and whatsoever haven it will enter into it is there my city and my bishopric will be whence I shall go to paradise and there my resurrection will be.” Meantime the bell preceded the ship, and it eased down its great speed remaining slightly in advance of the ship, so that it could be seen from and not overtaken by the latter. The bell directed its course to Ireland until it reached a harbour on the south coast, scil.:—in the Decies of Munster, at an island called, at that time, High Sheep Island [Aird na gCcaorac] and the ship made the same port, as Declan declared. The holy man went ashore and gave thanks and praise to God that he had reached the place of his resurrection. Now, in that island depastured the sheep belonging to the wife of the chieftain of Decies and it is thence that it derives its Irish name—Ard-na-Ccaorac, scil.:—there was in it a high hill and it was a promontory beautiful to behold. One of the party, ascending the summit of the hill, said to Declan:—“How can this little height support your people?” Declan replied:—“Do not call it little hill, beloved son, but ‘great height’ [ard mor],” and that name has adhered to the city ever since, scil.:—Ardmore-Declan. After this Declan went to the king of the Desii and asked of him the aforesaid island. Whereupon the king gave it to him.



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20. Declan next returned to Ait-mBreasail where, in a haven at the north side, were the shipping and boats of the island, plying thither and backwards. The people of the island hid all their boats not willing that Declan should settle there; they dreaded greatly that if Declan came to dwell there they themselves should be expelled. Whereupon his disciples addressed Declan:—"Father," said they, "Many things are required (scil.: from the mainland) and we must often go by boat to this island and there will be (crossing) more frequently when you have gone to heaven and we pray thee to abandon the place or else to obtain from God that the sea recede from the land so that it can be entered dry shod, for Christ has said:—"Whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name He will give it to you" [John 15:16]; the place cannot be easily inhabited unless the sea recede from it and on that account you cannot establish your city in it." Declan answered them and said:—"How can I abandon the place ordained by God and in which He has promised that my burial and resurrection shall be? As to the alleged inconvenience of dwelling therein, do you wish me to pray to God (for things) contrary to His will—to deprive the sea of its natural domain? Nevertheless in compliance with your request I shall pray to God and whatever thing be God's will, let it be done." Declan's community thereupon rose up and said:—"Father, take your crosier as Moses took the rod [Exodus 14:16] and strike the sea therewith and God will thus show His will to you." His disciples prayed therefore to him because they were tried and holy men. They put Declan's crosier in his hand and he struck the water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost and made the sign of the cross over the water and immediately, by command and permission of God, the sea commenced to move out from its accustomed place—so swiftly too that the monsters of the sea were swimming and running and that it was with difficulty they escaped with the sea. However, many fishes were left behind on the dry strand owing to the suddenness of the ebb. Declan, his crosier in his hand, pursued the receding tide and his disciples followed after him. Moreover the sea and the departing monsters made much din and commotion and when Declan arrived at the place where is now the margin of the sea a stripling whose name was Mainchin, frightened at the thunder of the waves and the cry of the unknown monsters with gaping mouths following the (receding) water, exclaimed:—"Father, you have driven out the sea far enough; for I am afraid of those horrid monsters." When Declan heard this and (saw) the sea standing still at the word of the youth it displeased him and turning round he struck him a slight blow on the nose. Three drops of blood flowed from the wound on to the ground in three separate places at the feet of Declan. Thereupon Declan blessed the nose and the blood ceased immediately (to flow). Then Declan declared:—"It



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was not I who drove out the sea but God in His own great power who expelled it and He would have done still more had you not spoken the words you have said.” Three little wells of clear sweet water burst forth in the place where fell the three drops of blood at the feet of Declan, and these wells are there still and the colour of blood is seen in them occasionally as a memorial of this miracle. The shore, rescued from the sea, is a mile in width and is of great length around (the island) and it is good and fertile land for tillage and pasture—lying beneath the monastery of Declan. As to the crosier which was in Declan’s hand while he wrought this miracle, this is its name—the Feartach Declain, from the miracles and marvels [fertaib] wrought through it. I shall in another, subsequent, place relate some of these miracles (narrated).

21. After the expulsion of the sea by this famous Saint, scil.: Declan, whose name and renown spread throughout Erin because of his great and diverse miracles, he commenced to build a great monastery by the south side of the stream which flows through the island into the sea. This monastery is illustrious and beautiful and its name is Ardmor Declain, as we have said. After this came many persons to Declan, drawn from the uttermost parts of Ireland, by the fame of his holy living; they devoted themselves, soul and body to God and Declan, binding themselves beneath his yoke and his rule. Moreover he built himself in every place throughout the territory of the Decies, churches and monasteries and not alone in his own territory (did he build) but in other regions of Ireland under tribute to him. Great too were the multitudes (thousands) of men and women who were under his spiritual sway and rule, in the places we have referred to, throughout Ireland, where happily they passed their lives. He ordained some of his disciples bishops and appointed them in these places to sow the seed of faith and religion therein. Gentleness and charity manifested themselves in Declan to such an extent that his disciples preferred to live under his immediate control and under his direction as subjects than to be in authority in another monastery.

22. After this the holy renowned bishop, head of justice and faith in the Gaelic island came into Ireland, *i.e.* Patrick sent by Celestinus, the Pope. Aongus Mac Nathfrich went to meet him soon as he heard the account of his coming. He conducted him (Patrick) with reverence and great honour to his own royal city—to Cashel. Then Patrick baptised him and blessed himself and his people and his city. Patrick heard that the prince of the Decies had not been baptised and did not believe, that there was a disagreement between the prince and Declan and that the former refused to receive instruction from the latter. Patrick thereupon set out to preach to the prince aforesaid. Next, as to the four bishops we have named who had been in Rome: Except Declan alone they were not



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in perfect agreement with Patrick. It is true that subsequently to this they did enter into a league of peace and harmonious actions with Patrick and paid him fealty. Ciaran, however, paid him all respect and reverence and was of one mind with him present or absent. Ailbe then, when he saw the kings and rulers of Ireland paying homage to Patrick and going out to meet him, came himself to Cashel, to wait on him and he also paid homage to him (Patrick) and submitted to his jurisdiction, in presence of the king and all others. Bear in mind it was Ailbe whom the other holy bishops had elected their superior. He therefore came first to Patrick, lest the others, on his account, should offer opposition to Patrick, and also that by his example the others might be more easily drawn to his jurisdiction and rule. Bishop Ibar however would on no account consent to be subject to Patrick, for it was displeasing to him that a foreigner should be patron of Ireland. It happened that Patrick in his origin was of the Britons and he was nurtured in Ireland having been sold to bondage in his boyhood. There arose misunderstanding and dissension between Patrick and Bishop Ibar at first, although (eventually), by intervention of the angel of peace, they formed a mutual fellowship and brotherly compact and they remained in agreement for ever after. But Declan did not wish to disagree at all with Patrick for they had formed a mutual bond of friendship on the Italian highway and it is thus the angel commanded him to go to Patrick and obey him:—

23. The angel of God came to Declan and said to him “Go quickly to Patrick and prevent him cursing your kindred and country, for to-night, in the plain which is called Inneoin, he is fasting against the king, and if he curses your people they shall be accursed for ever.” Thereupon Declan set out in haste by direction of the angel to Inneoin, *i.e.* the place which is in the centre of the plain of Femhin in the northern part of the Decies. He crossed Slieve Gua [Knockmaeldown] and over the Suir and arrived on the following morning at the place where Patrick was. When Patrick and his disciples heard that Declan was there they welcomed him warmly for they had been told he would not come. Moreover Patrick and his people received him with great honour. But Declan made obeisance to Patrick and besought him earnestly that he should not execrate his people and that he should not curse them nor the land in which they dwelt, and he promised to allow Patrick do as he pleased. And Patrick replied:—“On account of your prayer not only shall I not curse them but I shall give them a blessing.” Declan went thereupon to the place where was the king of Decies who was a neighbour of his. But he contemned Patrick and he would not believe him even at the request of Declan. Moreover Declan promised rewards to him if he would go to Patrick to receive baptism at his hands and assent to the faith. But he would



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not assent on any account. When Declan saw this, scil.:—that the king of the Decies, who was named Ledban, was obstinate in his infidelity and in his devilry—through fear lest Patrick should curse his race and country—he (Declan) turned to the assembly and addressed them:—“Separate yourselves from this accursed man lest you become yourselves accursed on his account, for I have myself baptised and blessed you, but come you,” said he, “with us, to Patrick, whom God has sent to bless you, for he has been chosen Archbishop and chief Patron of all Erin; moreover, I have a right to my own patrimony and to be king over you as that man (Ledban) has been.” At this speech they all arose and followed Declan who brought them into the presence of Patrick and said to the latter:—“See how the whole people of the Deisi have come with me as their Lord to thee and they have left the accursed prince whose subjects they have been, and behold they are ready to reverence you and to obey you for it is from me they have received baptism.” At this Patrick rose up with his followers and he blessed the people of the Deisi and not them alone, but their woods and water and land. Whereupon the chiefs and nobles of the Deisi said:—“Who will be King or Lord over us now?” And Declan replied:—“I am your lord and whomsoever I shall appoint offer you as lord, Patrick and all of us will bless, and he shall be king over you all.” And he whom Declan appointed was Feargal MacCormac a certain young man of the nation of the Deisi who was a kinsman of Declan himself. He (Declan) set him in the midst of the assembly in the king’s place and he was pleasing to all. Whereupon Patrick and Declan blessed him and each of them apart proclaimed him chieftain. Patrick moreover promised the young man that he should be brave and strong in battle, that the land should be fruitful during his reign. Thus have the kings of the Deisi always been.

24. After these things Declan and Feargal Mac Cormac (king of the Deisi) and his people gave a large area of land to Patrick in the neighbourhood of Magh Feimhin and this belongs to his successors ever since and great lordship there. And the place which was given over to him is not far from the Suir. There is a great very clear fountain there which is called “Patrick’s Well” and this was dear to Patrick. After this, with blessing, they took leave of one another and Patrick returned to Cashel to Aongus Mac Natfrich and Declan went with him.

25. A miracle was wrought at that time on Declan through the intercession and prayers of Patrick for as Declan was walking carelessly along he trod upon a piece of sharp iron which cut his foot so that blood flowed freely and Declan began to limp. Ailbe of Emly was present at this miracle and Sechnall a bishop of Patrick’s and a holy and wise man, and he is said to be the first bishop buried in Ireland. The wound which Declan had received grieved them very much. Patrick was informed of the accident



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and was grieved thereat. He said:—"Heal, O Master (i.e. God), the foot of your own servant who bears much toil and hardship on your account." Patrick laid his hand on the wounded foot and made over it the sign of the cross when immediately the flow of blood ceased, the lips of the wound united, a cicatrix formed upon it and a cure was effected. Then Declan rose up with his foot healed and joined in praising God. The soldiers and fighting men who were present cried out loudly, blessing God and the saints.

26. As Patrick and the saints were in Cashel, *i.e.* Ailbe and Declan with their disciples, in the territory of Aongus Mac Nathrich, they made much progress against paganism and errors in faith and they converted them (the pagans) to Christianity. It was ordained by Patrick and Aongus Mac Natrich in presence of the assembly, that the Archbishopric of Munster should belong to Ailbe, and to Declan, in like manner, was ordained (committed) his own race, *i.e.* the Deisi, whom he had converted to be his parish and his episcopate. As the Irish should serve Patrick, so should the Deisi serve Declan as their patron, and Patrick made the "rann":—

"Humble Ailbe the Patrick of Munster, greater than any saying, Declan, Patrick of the Deisi—the Decies to Declan for ever."

This is equivalent to saying that Ailbe was a second Patrick and that Declan was a second Patrick of the Decies. After that, when the king had bidden them farewell and they had all taken leave of one another, the saints returned to their respective territories to sow therein the seed of faith.

27. Declan and Ferghal Mac Cormac, king of the Deisi, with his army and followers, met one another at Indeoin and they made still more strong on the people the bond of Christian obligation. The king we have already mentioned, *scil.:*—Ledban, the recusant to the Christian name, was rejected of all and he came to nothing, leaving no knowledge (memory) of his history, as is written of the enemies of the faith:—"Their memory perisheth like a sound" [Psalm 9:7]. Moreover Declan and Fergal and the chief men of the Deisi decreed this as the place where the king of the Deisi should be inaugurated for ever thenceforward, because it was there Patrick and Declan blessed the king, Fergal; moreover tradition states that it was there the kings were crowned and ruled over the Deisi in pagan times.

28. At that time there broke out a dreadful plague in Munster and it was more deadly in Cashel than elsewhere. Thus it affected those whom it attacked: it first changed their colour to yellow and then killed them. Now Aongus had, in a stone fort called "Rath na nIrlann," on the western side of Cashel, seven noble hostages. It happened that in one and the same night they all died of the plague. The king was much affected thereat and

he gave orders to have the fact concealed lest it should bring disgrace or even war upon him, for the hostages



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were scions of the strongest and most powerful families in Munster. On the morrow however Declan came to Cashel and talked with Aonghus. The king welcomed him heartily and addressing him said to him in presence of persons of his court, "I pray you, Declan, servant of God, that in the name of Christ you would raise to life for me the seven hostages whom I held in bondage from the chieftains of Munster. They have died from the plague of which you hear, and I fear their fathers will raise war and rebellion against me, for they are men of strength and power, and indeed we are ashamed of their death, for they will say that it is we ourselves who killed them." Declan answered the king, saying to him:—"Such a matter as this—to raise one to life from death—belongs to Omnipotence alone—but I shall do whatever is in my power. I go where the bodies lie and pray to God for them and let Him do in their regard what seems best to Him." Next, Declan, with a multitude and his disciples together with the king's councillors, went to the place where the corpses of the young men lay. The king followed after them until he came in sight of the bodies. Declan, full of divine faith, entered the house wherein they lay and he sprinkled holy water over them and prayed for them in the presence of all, saying:—"O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the living God, for thine own name's sake wake the dead that they may be strengthened in the Catholic faith through our instrumentality." Thereupon, at Declan's prayer, the group (of corpses) revived and they moved their eyelids and Declan said to them "In the name of Christ, our Saviour, stand up and bless and glorify God." And at his words they rose up immediately and spoke to all. Declan then announced to the king that they were alive and well. When people saw this remarkable miracle they all gave glory and praise to God. The fame of Declan thereupon spread throughout Erin and the king rejoiced for restoration of his hostages.

29. After this the people of Cashel besought Bishop Declan to bless their city and banish the plague from them and to intercede with God for those stricken with sickness who could not escape from its toils. Declan seeing the people's faith prayed to God and signed with the sign of Redemption the four points of the compass. As he concluded, there was verified the saying of Christ to His disciples when leaving them and going to heaven:—"Super aegros imponet manus et bene habebunt" [Mark 16:18] (I shall place my hands on the sick and they shall be healed). Soon as Declan had made the sign of the cross each one who was ill became well and not alone were these restored to health but (all the sick) of the whole region round about in whatsoever place there were persons ailing. Moreover the plague was banished from every place and all rejoiced greatly thereat as well as on account of the resurrection of the dead men we have narrated. The king thereupon ordered tribute and honour to Declan and his successors from himself and from every king who should hold Cashel ever after. Upon this the glorious bishop Declan blessed Aongus together with his city and people and returned back to his own place.



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30. One night Declan was a guest at the house of a wealthy man who dwelt in the southern part of Magh Femhin; this is the kind of person his host was, scil.:—a pagan who rejected the true faith, and his name was Dercan. He resolved to amuse himself at the Christians' expense; accordingly he ordered his servants to kill a dog secretly, to cut off its head and feet and to bury them in the earth and then to cook the flesh properly and to set it before Declan and his company as their meal. Moreover he directed that the dog should be so fat that his flesh might pass as mutton. When, in due course, it was cooked, the flesh, together with bread and other food, was laid before Declan and his following. At that moment Declan had fallen asleep but he was aroused by his disciples that he might bless their meal. He observed to them:—"Indeed I see, connected with this meat, the ministry of the devil." Whereupon he questioned the waiters as to the meat—what kind it was and whence procured. They replied: "Our master ordered us to kill a fat ram for you and we have done as he commanded." Declan said, "Our Master is Jesus Christ and may He show us what it is that connects the ministry of Satan with this meat and preserve thy servants from eating forbidden food." As he spoke thus Declan saw in the meat the claw of a dog, for, without intending it, they had boiled one quarter of the dog with its paw adhering; they thought they had buried it (the incriminating limb) with the other paws. Declan exclaimed, "This is not a sheep's but a dog's foot." When the attendants heard this they went at once to their master and related the matter to him. Then Dercan came to Declan, accepted his faith and received Baptism at his hands, giving himself and his posterity to Declan for ever. Moreover he gave his homestead to Declan and his people were baptised. After this Dercan requested that Declan should bless something in his homestead which might remain as a memorial of him (Dercan) for ever. Then Declan blessed a bell which he perceived there and its name is Clog-Dhercain ("Dercan's Bell"); moreover, he declared: "I endow it with this virtue (power) that if the king of Decies march around it when going to battle, against his enemies, or to punish violation of his rights, he shall return safely and with victory." This promise has been frequently fulfilled, but proud (men) undertaking battle or conflict unjustly even if they march around it do not obtain victory but success remains with the enemy. The name of that homestead was Teach-Dhercain ("Dercain's House") and its name now is Coningean, from the claw [con] of the hound or dog aforesaid. To this place came the saintly concourse, scil.:—Coman and Ultan, MacErc and Mocoba and Maclaisren, who dedicated themselves to (the service of) God and placed themselves under the spiritual rule and sway of Declan.

31. Thereupon Declan established a monastery in that place, scil.—in Coningin—and he placed there this holy community with a further band of disciples. Ultan however he took away with him to the place whither he went.



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32. On another (subsequent) occasion Declan visited Bregia, *i.e.* the original territory which belonged to his race previous to the expulsion of his ancestors. There he was treated with particular honour by the king of Tara and by the chieftains of Meath by whom he was beloved, since it was from themselves (their tribe and territory) that his forbears had gone out, for that region was the patrimony of his race and within it lies Tara. Declan instituted therein a monastery of Canons, on land which he received from the king, and it is from him the place is named. Moreover he left therein a relic or illuminated book and a famous gospel which he was accustomed to carry always with him. The gospel is still preserved with much honour in the place and miracles are wrought through it. After this again he turned towards Munster.

33. Declan was once travelling through Ossory when he wished to remain for the night in a certain village. But the villagers not only did not receive him but actually drove him forth by force of arms. The saint however prayed to God that it might happen to them what the Sacred Scripture says, "Vengeance is mine I will repay" [Deuteronomy 32:35]. The dwellers in the village, who numbered sixty, died that same night with the exception of two men and ten women to whom the conduct of the others towards the saint had been displeasing. On the morrow these men and women came humbly to the place where Declan was and they told him—what he himself foreknew—how miserably the others had died. They themselves did penance and they bestowed on Declan a suitable site whereon he built a monastery and he got another piece of land and had the dead buried where he built the monastery. The name of that monastery is Cill-Colm-Dearg. This Colm-Dearg was a kind, holy man and a disciple of Declan. He was of East Leinster, *i.e.* of the Dal Meiscorb, and it is from him that the monastery is named. When he (Declan) had completed that place he came to his own territory again, *i.e.* to the Decies.

34. On a certain day Declan came to a place called Ait-Breasail and the dwellers therein would not allow him to enter their village; moreover they hid all their boats so that he could not go into his own island, for they hated him very much. In consideration however of the sanctity of his servant, who prayed in patience, God the All-Powerful turned the sea into dry land as you have already heard. Declan passed the night in an empty stable out in the plain and the people of the village did not give him even a fire. Whereupon, appropriately the anger of God fell on them, who had not compassion enough to supply the disciple of God with a fire. There came fire from heaven on them to consume them all [together with their] homestead and village, so that the place has been ever since a wilderness accursed, as the prophet writes: "civitates eorum destruxisti" [Psalm 9:7] (the dwellings of the unmerciful are laid waste).



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35. On yet another occasion Declan was in his own region—travelling over Slieve Gua in the Decies, when his horse from some cause got lame so that he could proceed no further. Declan however, seeing a herd of deer roaming the mountain close to him, said to one of his people: “Go, and bring me for my chariot one of these deer to replace my horse and take with you this halter for him.” Without any misgiving the disciple went on till he reached the deer which waited quietly for him. He chose the animal which was largest and therefore strongest, and, bringing him back, yoked him to the chariot. The deer thereupon obediently and without effort carried Bishop Declan till he came to Magh Femhin, where, when he reached a house of entertainment, the saint unloosed the stag and bade him to go free as was his nature. Accordingly, at the command of the saintly man and in the presence of all, the stag returned on the same road back (to the mountain). Dormanach is the name of the man aforesaid who brought the stag to Declan and him Declan blessed and gave him a piece of land on the north of Decies close by the Eoghanacht and his posterity live till now in that place.

36. On another occasion, Declan, accompanied, as usual, by a large following, was travelling, when one member of the party fell on the road and broke his shin bone in twain. Declan saw the accident and, pitying the injured man, he directed an individual of the company to bandage the broken limb so that the sufferer might not die through excess of pain and loss of blood. All replied that they could not endure to dress the wound owing to their horror thereof. But there was one of the company, Daluadh by name, who faced the wound boldly and confidently and said: “In the name of Christ and of Declan our patron I shall be surgeon to this foot”; and he said that jestingly. Nevertheless he bandaged the foot carefully and blessed it aright in the name of God and Declan, and in a little while the wound healed and they all gave praise to God. Then Declan said to Daluadh: “You promised to be surgeon to that foot in Christ’s name and in mine and God has vouchsafed to heal it at these words: on this account you will be a true physician for ever and your children and your seed after you for ever shall also possess the healing art, and whomsoever they shall practise healing upon in God’s name and mine, provided there be no hatred [in their hearts] nor too great covetousness of a physician’s fee to him, God and myself shall send relief.” This promise of Declan has been fulfilled in the case of that family.

37. On another occasion, as Declan was travelling in the northern part of Magh Femhin beside the Suir, he met there a man who was carrying a little infant to get it baptised. Declan said to the people [his “muinntear,” or following]: “Wait here till I baptise yonder child,” for it was revealed by the Holy Ghost to him that he [the babe] should serve God. The attendant



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replied to him that they had neither a vessel nor salt for the baptism. Declan said: "We have a wide vessel, the Suir, and God will send us salt, for this child is destined to become holy and wonderful [in his works]." Thereupon Declan took up a fistful of earth and, making prayer in his heart to God, he signed the clay with the sign of the cross of redemption. It (the handful of earth) became white, dry salt, and all, on seeing it, gave thanks and honour to God and Declan. The infant was baptised there and the name of Ciaran given him. Declan said: "Bring up my spiritual son carefully and send him, at a fitting age, for education to a holy man who is well instructed in the faith for he will become a shining bright pillar in the Church." And it was this child, Ciaran Mac Eochaidh, who founded in after years a famous monastery (from which he migrated to heaven) and another place (monastery) besides. He worked many miracles and holy signs and this is the name of his monastery Tiprut [Tubrid] and this is where it is:—in the western part of the Decies in Ui Faithe between Slieve Grot [Galtee] and Sieve Cua and it is within the bishopric of Declan.

38. On another day there came a woman to Declan's monastery not far from the city where she dwelt. She committed a theft that day in Declan's monastery as she had often done previously, and this is the thing she stole—a "habellum" [possibly an item of tribute]; she departed homewards taking it with her and there met her a group of people on the highway, and the earth, in their presence, swallowed her up, and she cast out the tabellum from her bosom and it was quickly turned into a stone which the wayfarers took and brought with them to Declan. Declan himself had in supernatural vision seen all that happened to the woman in punishment of her theft, and the name of Declan was magnified owing to those marvels so that fear took possession of all-those present and those absent. The stone in question remains still in Declan's graveyard in his own town of Ardmore-Declan, where it stands on an elevated place in memory of this miracle.

39. A rich man named Fintan was childless, for his wife was barren for many years. He himself, with his wife, visited Declan and promised large alms and performance of good works provided he (Declan) would pray that they might have children: they held it as certain that if Declan but prayed for them God would grant them children. Declan therefore, praying to God and blessing the pair, said: "Proceed to your home and through God's bounty you shall have offspring." The couple returned home, with great joy for the blessing and for the promise of the offspring. The following night, Fintan lay with his wife and she conceived and brought forth twin sons, scil.: Fiacha and Aodh, who, together with their children and descendants were under tribute and service to God and Declan.



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40. When it was made known to a certain holy man, scil.:—Ailbe of Emly Iubar, chief bishop of Munster, that his last days had come, he said to his disciples: “Beloved brethren, I wish, before I die, to visit my very dear fellow worker, scil.:—Declan.” After this Ailbe set out on the journey and an angel of God came to Declan notifying him that Ailbe was on his way to visit him. On the angel’s notification Declan ordered his disciples to prepare the house for Ailbe’s coming. He himself went to meet Ailbe as far as the place which is called Druim Luctraidh [Luchluachra]. Thence they came home together and Ailbe, treated with great honour by Declan and his people, stayed fourteen pleasant days. After that the aged saint returned home again to his own city, scil.:—to Emly Iubar. Declan came and many of his people, escorting Ailbe, to Druim Luchtradh, and Ailbe bade him return to his own city. The two knew they should not see one another in this world ever again. In taking leave of one another, therefore, they shed plentiful tears of sorrow and they instituted an everlasting compact and league between their successors in that place. Ailbe moreover blessed the city of Declan, his clergy and people and Declan did the same for Ailbe and they kissed one another in token of love and peace and each returned to his own city.

41. On a certain day the Castle of Cinaedh, King of the Deisi, took fire and it burned violently. It happened however that Declan was proceeding towards the castle on some business and he was grieved to see it burning; he flung towards it the staff to which we have referred in connection with the drying up of the sea, and it (the staff) flew hovering in the air with heavenly wings till it reached the midst of the flame and the fire was immediately extinguished of its own accord through the grace of God and virtue of the staff and of Declan to whom it belonged. The place from which Declan cast the staff was a long mile distant from the castle and when the king, *i.e.* Cinaedh, and all the others witnessed this miracle they were filled with amazement and gave thanks to God and to Declan when they came to know that it was he who wrought it. Now the place where the castle stands is not far from the Suir, *i.e.* on the south side of it and the place from which Declan cast the staff is beside a ford which is in the Suir or a stream which flows beside the monastery called Mag Laca [Molough] which the holy virgins, daughters of the king of Decies, have built in honour of God. There is a pile of stones and a cross in the place to commemorate this miracle.



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42. On another occasion there approached a foreign fleet towards Declan's city and this was their design—to destroy and to plunder it of persons and of cattle, because they (the foreigners) were people hostile to the faith. Many members of the community ran with great haste to tell Declan of the fleet which threatened the town and to request him to beg the assistance of God against the invaders. Declan knew the man amongst his own disciples who was holiest and most abounding in grace, scil., Ultan, already mentioned, and him he ordered to pray to God against the fleet. Ultan had pity on the Christian people and he went instantly, at the command of Declan, in front of the fleet and he held his left hand against it, and, on the spot, the sea swallowed them like sacks full of lead, and the drowned sailors were changed into large rocks which stand not far from the mouth of the haven where they are visible (standing) high out of the sea from that time till now. All Christians who witnessed this rejoiced and were glad and they gave great praise and glory to God and to Declan their own patron who caused the working of this miracle and of many other miracles besides. Next there arose a contention between Ultan and Declan concerning this miracle, for Ultan attributed it to Declan and Declan credited it to Ultan; and it has become a proverb since in Ireland when people hear of danger or jeopardy:—"The left hand of Ultan against you (the danger)." Ultan became, after the death of Declan, a miracle-working abbot of many other holy monks.

43. The holy and glorious archbishop, *i.e.* Patrick, sent one of his own followers to Declan with power and authority (delegation) from the archbishop. And proceeding through the southern part of Decies he was drowned in a river [the Lickey] there, two miles from the city of Declan. When Declan heard this he was grieved and he said: "Indeed it grieves me that a servant of God and of Patrick who sent him to visit me, having travelled all over Ireland, should be drowned in a river of my own territory. Get my chariot for me that I may go in haste to see his corpse, so that Patrick may come to hear of the worry and the grief I have undergone because of his disciple's death." The body had been recovered before the arrival of Declan by others who were close at hand and it had been placed on a bier to be carried to Ciaran for interment. Declan however met them on the way, when he ordered the body to be laid down on the ground. They supposed he was about to recite the Office for the Dead. He (Declan) advanced to the place where the bier was and lifted the sheet covering the face. It (the face) looked dark and deformed as is usual in the case of the drowned. He prayed to God and shed tears, but no one heard aught of what he said. After this he commanded:—"In the name of the Trinity, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost whose religious yoke I bear myself, arise to us for God has given your



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life to me.” He (the dead man) rose up immediately at the command and he greeted Declan and all the others. Whereupon Declan and his disciples received him with honour. At first he was not completely cured but (was) like one convalescent until (complete) health returned to him by degrees again. He however accompanied Declan and remained some time with him and there was much rejoicing in Declan’s city on account of the miracle and his (Declan’s) name and fame extended over the country generally. This disciple of Patrick was named Ballin; he returned with great joy and he told him (Patrick) that Declan had raised him from the dead. To many others likewise he related what had happened to him. Patrick, in presence of many persons, hearing of the miracle gave glory and thanks to God and the name of Declan was magnified.

44. With this extraordinary miracle wrought by Declan we wish to conclude our discourse. The number of miracles he wrought, but which are not written here, you are to judge and gather from what we have written. And we wish moreover that you would understand that he healed the infirm, that he gave sight to the eyes of the blind, cleansed lepers, and gave “their walk” to cripples; that he obtained hearing for the deaf, and that he healed many and various diseases in many different places throughout Ireland—(things) which are not written here because of their length and because they are so numerous to record, for fear it should tire readers to hear so much said of one particular person. On that account we shall pass them by.

45. When Declan realised that his last days were at hand and that the time remaining to him was very short he summoned to him his own spiritual son, scil., MacLiag (residing) in the monastery which is on the eastern side of the Decies close to the Leinstermen in order that, at the hour of death, he might receive the Body and Blood of Christ and the Sacraments of the Church from his hands. Thereupon he foretold to his disciples the day of his death and he commanded them to bring him to his own city, for it was not there he dwelt at the time but in a small venerable cell which he had ordered to be built for him between the hill called Ardmore Declain and the ocean—in a narrow place at the brink of the sea by which there flows down from the hill above a small shining stream about which are trees and bushes all around, and it is called Disert Declain. Thence to the city it is a short mile and the reason why Declan used go there was to avoid turmoil and noise so that he might be able to read and pray and fast there. Indeed it was not easy for him to stay even there because of the multitude of disciples and paupers and pilgrims and beggars who followed him thither. Declan was however generous and very sympathetic and on that account it is recorded by tradition that a great following (of poor, &c.), generally accompanied him and that moreover the little cell was very dear to him for the reason we have given, and many devout people have made it their practice to dwell therein.

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46. When Declan fell ill and became weak in body, but still strong in hope and faith and love of God, he returned to his own city—his people and disciples and clergy surrounding him. He discoursed to them on the commands of God and he enjoined on them to live holily after his death, to be submissive to authority and to follow as closely as possible the way he had marked out and to preserve his city in a state of piety and under religious rule. And when they had all heard the discourse it grieved them greatly to perceive, from what he had said, he realised that in a short time he would go away to heaven from them. But they were consoled by his gentle words and then there came to him the holy man, to wit, MacLiag, at his own request, already referred to. He [Declan] received the Body and Blood of Christ and the Sacraments of the Church from his [MacLiag's] hand—surrounded by holy men and his disciples, and he blessed his people and his dependents and his poor, and he kissed them in token of love and peace. Thus, having banished images and the sacrifices to idols, having converted multitudes to the true faith, having established monasteries and ecclesiastical orders in various places, having spent his whole life profitably and holily, this glorious bishop went with the angels to heaven on the ninth day of the Kalends of August [July 24] and his body was blessed and honoured with Masses and chanting by holy men and by the people of the Decies and by his own monks and disciples collected from every quarter at the time of his death. He was buried with honour in his own city—in Declan's High-Place—in the tomb which by direction of an angel he had himself indicated—which moreover has wrought wonders and holy signs from that time to now. He departed to the Unity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost in Saecula Saeculorum; Amen. *Finis.*

The poor brother, Michael O'Clery originally copied this life of Declan in Cashel, from the book of Eochy O'Heffernan. The date, A.D., at which that ancient book of Eochy was written is 1582. And the same life has now been re-written in the Convent of the Friars at Druiske, the date, A.D., 27th February, 1629.

NOTE

The Irish text of the “rann” from paragraph 26 reads:

Ailbe umal; Patraicc Muman, mo gacrath,
Declan, Patraicc na nDeisi: na Deisi ag Declan gan brat.

And the Latin rendering:

Albeus est humilis dixit Caephurnia proles;
Patriciusque esto hinc Ailbee Momonia.
Declanus pariter patronus Desius esto;
Inter Desenses Patriciusque suos.



LIFE OF ST. MOCHUDA.

“Beata MOCUDA.”

The renowned bishop, Carthach, commonly called Mochuda, was of the territory of Ciarraighe Luachra [North Kerry] and of the race of Fergus Mac Roigh.



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The illustrious bishop, who is generally known as Mochuda, was of the Ciarraighe Luachra; to be exact—he was of the line of Fergus Mac Roigh, who held the kingship of Ulster, till the time that he gave the kingship to a woman for a year and did not get it back when the year was over. His descendants are now to be found throughout various provinces of Ireland. He fell himself, through the treachery of Oilioll, king of Connaght, and the latter's jealousy of his wife, Meadhbh, daughter of Eochaid Feidhleach. Finghen Mac Gnaoi of Ciarraighe Luachra was father of Mochuda, and his mother was Mead, daughter of Finghin, of Corca Duibhne, in the vicinity of the stream called Laune in the western part of Ireland. The forthcoming birth of Mochuda was revealed to St. Comhghall by an angel, announcing—"There will be conceived a child in the western part of Erin, and Carthach will be his baptismal name and he will be beloved of God and men—in heaven and on earth. He will come to you seeking direction as to a proposed pilgrimage to Rome—but you must not permit the journey for the Lord has assigned him to you; but let him remain with you a whole year." All this came to pass, as foretold. In similar manner the future Mochuda was foretold to St. Brendan by an angel who declared: "There will come to you a wonder-working brother who will be the patron of you and your kindred for ever; the region of Ciarraighe will be divided between you and him, and Carthach will be his name; to multitudes his advent will be cause for joy and he will gain multitudes for heaven. His first city will be Raithen [Rahen or Rahan] in the region of Fircheall, territory of Meath and central plain of Ireland; this will become a place revered of men, and revered and famous will be his second city and church, scil.:—Lismore, which shall possess lordship and great pre-eminence."

One day when there was a large meeting of people at a certain place in Kerry, the men and women who were present saw descending a fiery globe, which rested on the head of Mochuda's mother, at that time pregnant of the future saint. The ball of fire did no one any injury but disappeared before it did injury to anyone. All those who beheld this marvel wondered thereat and speculated what it could portend. This is what it did mean:—that the graces of the Holy Spirit had visited this woman and her holy child unborn.

Mochuda's father was a rich and powerful chieftain owning two strong lioses—one, on the south side of Slieve Mish, and the other, in which Mochuda first saw the light, beside the River Maing [Maine]. Both places were blessed for sake of the Saint, who was conceived in one of them and born in the other; it is even said that no evil disposed or vicious person can live in either. Carthage in due course was sent to be baptised, and, on the way, the servant who bore the infant, meeting a saintly man named Aodhgan, asked him to perform the ceremony. There was



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however no water in the place, but a beautiful well, which burst forth for the occasion and still remains, yielded a supply. With the water of this well the infant was baptised and Carthach, as the angel had foretold, was the name given him. Nevertheless 'Mochuda' is the name by which he was commonly known, because he was so called, through affection and regard, by his master (St. Carthach Senior). Many scarcely know that he has any other name than Mochuda and it is lawful to write either Mochuda or Carthach. Speaking prophetically Aodhgan said of him:—"This child whom I have baptised will become famous and he will be beloved by God and men." That prophecy has been fulfilled, for Mochuda was graceful of figure and handsome of features as David, he was master of his passions as Daniel, and mild and gentle like Moses. His parents however despised him because he valued not earthly vanities and in his regard were verified the words of David:—"Pater meus et mater mea derliquerunt me, Dominus autem assumpsit me" [Psalm 26(27):10] (For my father and my mother have left me and the Lord hath taken me up). Like David too—who kept the sheep of his father—Mochuda, with other youths, herded his father's swine in his boyhood.

On a certain day as Mochuda, with his companion swineherds and their charges, was in the vicinity of the River Maing, he heard that the king of Ciarraighe Luachra was at his residence called Achadh-di; he waited on the king by whom he was kindly and politely received. The king, whose name was Maoltuile and who wished to see Mochuda frequently, invited the youth to come every day to the royal lios and to bring with him his companions, who would be made welcome for his sake. One evening as Mochuda sate in the king's presence Maoltuile gazed so long and so intently at the youth that the queen (Dand, daughter of Maolduin Mac Aodha Beannan, king of Munster) reproved her husband asking why he stared every evening at the boy. "O wife," answered the king, "if you but saw what I see, you would never gaze at anything else, for I behold a wondrous golden chain about his neck and a column of fire reaching from his head to the heavens, and since I first beheld these marvels my affection for the boy has largely increased." "Then," said the queen, "let him sit there beside you." Thenceforth the youth sate as suggested. Sometimes Mochuda herded the swine in the woods and at other times he remained with the king in his court.

One day as Mochuda was keeping his herd as usual beside the river already alluded to, he heard the bishop and his clerics pass by, chanting psalms as they went along. The Spirit of God touched the boy's heart and leaving his pigs Mochuda followed the procession as far as the monastery called Tuaim [Druim Fertain] [into which the clerics entered]. And as the bishop and his household sate down to eat, Mochuda, unknown to them, concealed himself—sitting in the shadow of the doorway. Meanwhile the king,



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Maoltuile, was troubled about the boy, noticing his absence [from the homestead at Achaddi] that evening and not knowing the cause thereof. He immediately sent messengers to seek the youth throughout the country, and one of these found him sitting, as indicated, in the shadow of the doorway of the bishop's house. The messenger took Mochuda with him back to the king. The latter questioned him:—"My child, why have you stayed away in this manner?" Mochuda replied, "Sire, this is why I have stayed away—through attraction of the holy chant of the bishop and clergy; I have never heard anything so beautiful as this; the clerics sang as they went along the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house, and thenceforth they sang till they went to sleep. The bishop however remained by himself far into the night praying by himself when the others had retired. And I wish, O king, that I might learn [their psalms and ritual]." Hearing this the king at once sent a message to the bishop requesting the latter to come to him.

About this time Mochuda's father gave a feast in the king's honour and as the company were at supper the king calling Mochuda before him offered him a shield, sword, javelin, and princely robe, saying: "Take these and be henceforth a knight to me as your father has been." But Mochuda declined the offer. "What is it," asked the king, "that you will accept, so that [whatever it be] I may give it to you?" Mochuda answered:—"I do not long for anything of earth—only that I be allowed to learn the psalms of the clerics which I heard them sing." In this answer the king discerned the working of divine grace, whereupon he promised the youth the favour he asked for. Shortly afterwards the bishop, Carthach, whom we have mentioned as sent for by the king, arrived, and to him the latter entrusted Mochuda to be instructed in reading and writing. With great joy the bishop undertook his charge for he saw that his pupil was marked by grace, and under the bishop's guidance and tutelage Mochuda remained till his promotion to the priesthood.

Mochuda was very handsome of features with the result that at different times during his youth maidens to the number of thirty were so enamoured of him that they could not conceal their feeling. But Mochuda prayed for them, and obtained for them by his prayers that their carnal love should be turned into a spiritual. They afterwards became consecrated religious and within what to-day is his parish he built them cells and monasteries which the holy virgins placed under his protection and jurisdiction.

Finntan Mac Cartan, bringing with him an infant for baptism came to Bishop Carthach. The latter said to him:—"Let the young priest there who was ordained to-day baptise the child." Whereupon Finntan handed the infant to the young priest. Mochuda enquired the name he was to impose, and the father answered—Fodhran. Having administered baptism Mochuda taking the infant's



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hand prophesied concerning the babe—"This hand will be strong in battle and will win hostages and submission of the Clan Torna whose country lies in mid-Kerry from Sliabh Luachra [Slieve Lougher] to the sea. From his seed, moreover, will spring kings to the end of time, unless indeed they refuse me due allegiance, and if, at any time, they incur displeasure of my successors their kingship and dominion will come to an end." This prophecy has been fulfilled.

Sometime afterwards Mochuda with his master, Carthach, visited King Maoltuile, whom they found at a place called Feorainn, near Tralee, from which the lords and kings of Kerry take their name. Said Bishop Carthach:—"Here, Sire, is the youth you gave me to train; he is a good scholar and he has studied the holy writings with much success. I have ordained him a priest and (his) grace is manifest in many ways." "What recompense do you desire for your labour?" asked the king. "Only," replied Carthach, "that you would place yourself and your posterity under the spiritual jurisdiction of this young priest, the servant of God." The king, however, hesitated—because of Mochuda's youth. Soon as Carthach perceived this he himself inclined to Mochuda and bending his knee before him exclaimed:—"I hereby give myself, my parish and monastery to God and to Mochuda for ever." Touched by the bishop's example the king prostrated himself before Mochuda and pledged to God and to him, his soul and body and posterity to the end of time. Then Mochuda placed his foot upon the king's neck and measured the royal body with his foot. Against this proceeding of Mochuda's a member of the king's party protested in abusive and insulting terms—"It is a haughty act of yours, laying your foot upon the king's neck, for be it known to you the body on which you trample is worthy of respect." On hearing this Mochuda ceased to measure the king and declared:—"The neck upon which I have set my heel shall never be decapitated and the body which I have measured with my foot shall not be slain and but for your interference there would not be wanting anything to him or his seed for ever." Addressing (specially) the interrupter, he prophesied:—"You and your posterity will be for ever contemptible among the tribes." Blessing the king he promised him prosperity here and heaven hereafter and assured him:—"If any one of your posterity contemn my successors refusing me my lawful dues he will never reign over the kingdom of Kerry." This prophecy has been fulfilled.

Next, Mochuda, at the suggestion of his master, the bishop, and the King Maoltuile, built a famous cell called Kiltulach [Kiltallagh] at a place between Sliabh Mis and the River Maing in the southern part of Kerry. Here his many miracles won him the esteem of all. In that region he found two bishops already settled before him, scil.:—Dibhilin and Domailgig. These became envious of the honour paid him and the fame he acquired, and they treated him evilly.



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Whereupon he went to Maoltuile and told him the state of affairs. Soon as the king heard the tale he came with Mochuda from the place where he then was on the bank of the Luimnech and stayed not till they reached the summit of Sliabh Mis, when he addressed Mochuda: "Leave this confined region for the present to the envy and jealousy of the bishops and hereafter it will become yours and your coarbs' to the end of time." The advice commended itself to Mochuda and he thanked the king for it. Thereupon he abandoned his cell to the aforesaid bishops and determined to set out alone as a pilgrim to the northern part of Ireland.

In the meantime an angel visited Comghall and repeated to him what had been foretold him already—that there should come to him a young priest desirous for Christ's sake of pilgrimage beyond the seas—that Comghall should dissuade him and, instead, retain the stranger with him for a year at Bangor. "And how am I to recognise him?" asked Comghall. The angel answered:—"Whom you shall see going from the church to the guest-house" (for it was Mochuda's custom to visit the church first). [See note 1.] Comghall announced to his household that there was coming to them a distinguished stranger, well-beloved of God, of whose advent an angel had twice foretold him. Some time later Mochuda arrived at Comghall's establishment, and he went first to the monastery and Comghall recognised him and bade him welcome. In that place Mochuda remained a whole year, as the angel had said, and at the end of the year he returned to his own country where he built many cells and churches and worked many wonders, winning many souls to religion and to good works. Many persons moreover placed themselves, their children, and their kindred under his jurisdiction, and the great parishes of their own territory were assigned to him, and finally the episcopate of Kerry became his.

Subsequent to this Mochuda, having committed the care of his cell and parish to certain pious and suitable persons, set out himself, accompanied by a few disciples, through the south of Munster to visit the Monastery of Ciaran Mac Fionntan at Rosgiallan [Rostellan]. From Ciaran Mochuda enquired, where—in south Munster (as the angel had mentioned to Comghall)—the chief and most distinguished of these churches should be. Ciaran, who possessed the spirit of prophecy, replied—"You shall go first to Meath where you will find a famous church in the territory of Ibh Neill and there you will remain for forty years. You shall be driven thence into exile and you will return to Munster wherein will be your greatest and most renowned church." Mochuda offered to place himself under the patronage and jurisdiction of Ciaran: "Not so, shall it be," said Ciaran, "but rather do I put myself and my church under you, for ever, reserving only that my son, Fuadhran, be my successor in this place." This Mochuda assented to and Fuadhran governed the monastic city for twenty years as Ciaran's successor in the abbacy.



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Next, Mochuda entered the territory of the Munster Decies where dwelt the Clanna Ruadhain who placed themselves and all their churches under him, and one Colman Mac Cobhthaigh a wealthy magnate of the region donated extensive lands to Mochuda who placed them under devout persons—to hold for him. Proceeding thence Mochuda took his way across Sliabh Gua looking back from the summit of which he saw by the bank of the Nemh [Blackwater] angels ascending towards heaven and descending thence. And they took up with them to heaven a silver chair with a golden image thereon. This was the place in which long afterwards he founded his famous church and whence he departed himself to glory.

Hence Mochuda travelled to Molua Mac Coinche's monastery of Clonfert [Kyle], on the confines of Leinster and Munster. He found Molua in the harvest field in the midst of a 'meitheal' [team] of reapers. Before setting out on this present journey of his Mochuda had, with one exception, dismissed all his disciples to their various homes for he, but with a single companion, did not wish to enter the strange land ostentatiously. The single follower whom Mochuda had retained wishing to remain at Clonfert, said to St. Molua: "Holy father, I should wish to remain here with you." Molua answered:—"I shall permit you, brother, if your pious master consents." Mochuda, having dismissed so many, would not make any difficulty about an individual, and so he gave the monk his freedom. Mochuda thereupon set out alone, which, Molua's monks observing, they remark:—"It were time for that aged man to remain in some monastery, for it is unbecoming such a (senior) monk to wander about alone." They did not know that he, of whom they spoke, was Mochuda, for it was not the custom of the latter to make himself known to many. "Say not so," said Molua (to the censorious brethren), "for the day will come when our community and city will seem but insignificant beside his—though now he goes alone; you do not know that he is Mochuda whom many obey and whom many more will obey in times to come."

As Mochuda went on his lonely way he met two monks who asked him whither he was bound. "To Colman Elo," he answered. Then said one of them to him:—"Take us with you as monks and subjects," for they judged him from his countenance to be a holy man. Mochuda accepted the monks and they journeyed on together till they came to Colman's monastery [Lynally]. Mochuda said to Colman: "Father I would remain here with you." "Not so," replied Colman, "but go you to a place called Rahen in this vicinity; that is the place ordained by God for your dwelling and you shall have there a large community in the service of God and from that place you will get your first name—Mochuda of Rahen." Having said farewell to Colman and obtained his blessing Mochuda, with his two monks, set out for the place indicated and there in the beginning he built a small cell and Colman and he often afterwards exchanged visits.



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Colman had in the beginning—some time previous to Mochuda's advent—contemplated establishing himself at Rahen and he had left there two or three [bundles] of rods remarking to his disciples that another should come after him for whom and not for himself God had destined this place. It was with this material that Mochuda commenced to build his cell as Colman had foretold in the first instance. He erected later a great monastery in which he lived forty years and had eight hundred and eighty seven religious under his guidance and rule.

Subsequent to Mochuda's foundation of Rahen his miracles and the marvels he wrought spread his fame far and wide through Ireland and through Britain, and multitudes came to him from various parts of those countries to give themselves to the service of God under his guidance. In the beginning he refused worldly gifts from others although his church was honoured and patronised by neighbouring kings and chieftains who offered him lands and cattle and money and many other things. Mochuda kept his monks employed in hard labour and in ploughing the ground for he wanted them to be always humble. Others, however, of the Saints of Erin did not force their monks to servile labour in this fashion.

Mochuda was consecrated bishop by many saints and from time to time he visited his parish in Kerry, but as a rule he remained at Rahen with his monks, for it is monks he had with him not clerics.

On a certain day in the (early) springtime there came to tempt him a druid who said to him:—"In the name of your God cause this apple-tree branch to produce foliage." Mochuda knew that it was in contempt for divine power the druid proposed this, and the branch put forth leaves on the instant. The druid demanded "In the name of your God, put blossom on it." Mochuda made the sign of the cross [over the twig] and it blossomed presently. The druid persisted:—"What profits blossom without fruit?" [said the druid]. Mochuda, for the third time, blessed the branch and it produced a quantity of fruit. The druid said:—"Follower of Christ, cause the fruit to ripen." Mochuda blessed the tree and the fruit, fully ripe, fell to the earth. The druid picked up an apple off the ground and examining it he saw it was quite sour, whereupon he objected:—"Such miracles as these are worthless since it leaves the fruit uneatable." Mochuda blessed the apples and they all became sweet as honey, and in punishment of his opposition the magician was deprived for a year of his eyesight. At the end of a year he came to Mochuda and did penance, whereupon he received his sight back again and he returned home rejoicing.

On another occasion there came to Mochuda a secular who brought with him his deaf and dumb son whom he besought the saint to heal. Mochuda prayed to God for him and said, "My son, hear and speak." The boy answered immediately and said, "Man of God, I give myself and my inheritance to you for ever," and thenceforth he possessed the use of all his senses and members.

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Another day a young man who had contracted leprosy came to Mochuda showing him his misery and his wretched condition. The saint prayed for him and he was restored to health.

At another time there came to Mochuda a man whose face was deformed. He besought the saint's aid and his face was healed upon the spot.

On yet another occasion in the springtime a poor man who dwelt some distance from the monastery of Rahen, came to Mochuda, and asked the loan of two oxen and a ploughman to do a day's ploughing for him. But Mochuda, as we have already said, had no cattle, for it was the monks themselves who dug and tilled the soil. Mochuda summoned one of his labourers named Aodhan whom he ordered to go into the nearest wood to bring back thence a pair of deer with him and go along with them to the poor man to do the spring work for him. Aodhan did dutifully all that Mochuda bade him—he found the two deer, went with the poor man and ploughed for him till the work was completed when the deer returned to their habitat and Aodhan to Mochuda.

On another day there came to Mochuda a man troubled by the devil. Mochuda cured him at once, driving the demons from him and the man went his way thanking God and Mochuda.

Once, when the brethren were at work in the fields and in the kitchen, Mochuda went to the mill to grind meal for the monk's use, and nine robbers, who hated him, followed with the intention of murdering him. The chief of the band sent each member of the gang to the mill in turn. Not one of them however could enter the mill because of a violent flame of fire which encircled the building round about, through the goodness of God protecting Mochuda from the robbers. The latter, through the mill door, watched Mochuda who slept portion of the time and was awake another portion. And while he slept the mill stopped of itself, and while he was awake it went of its own accord. The gang thereupon returned to the chief and told him all they had seen, which, when he heard, he became enraged. Then he hastened himself to the mill to kill Mochuda. But he experienced the same things as all the others and he was unable to hurt Mochuda. He returned to his followers and said to them—"Let us stay here till he comes out of the mill, for we need not fear that he will call help nor need we fear his arm." Shortly afterwards Mochuda came out carrying his load. The robbers rushed on him, but they were unable to do him any injury for as each man of them tried to draw his weapon his hands became powerless, so he was unable to use them. Mochuda requested them to allow him pass with his burden and he promised them on his credit and his word that he should return to them when he had deposited the sack in safety. They took his word and he went, deposited his bag of meal in the kitchen, and returned meekly to martyrdom. The brethren imagined he had gone to a quiet place for prayer as was his custom. When he returned to the robbers they drew their weapons several times to kill him but they were unable to do so. Seeing this wonder they were moved to repentance and they gave themselves to God and to Mochuda for ever and, till the time of their

death, they remained under his guidance and rule and many subsequent edifying and famous acts of theirs are recorded.



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An angel came to Mochuda at Rahen on another occasion announcing to him the command of God that he should go that same day to Mac Fhiodaig, king of his own region of Kerry Luachra, and administer to him Holy Communion and Confession as he was on the point of death. Mochuda asked the angel how he could reach Kerry that day from Rahen. The angel thereupon (for reply) took him up through the air in a fiery chariot until they arrived at the king's residence. Mochuda administered Holy Communion and Confession and the king having bestowed generous alms upon him departed hence to glory. Mochuda returned that same day to Rahen where he found the community singing vespers.

On another occasion Mochuda visited Colman Elo at the latter's monastery of Lynally and requested Colman to come with him to consecrate for him his cemetery at Rahen, for Colman, assisted by angels, was in the habit of consecrating cemeteries and God gave him the privilege that no one should go to hell who was interred in a grave consecrated by him. Colman said to him:—"Return home and on the fifth day from now I shall follow." Mochuda returned home, where he remained till the fifth day, when, seeing that Colman had not arrived he came again to the latter. "Father," said he, "why have you not kept your promise?" To which Colman replied, "I came and an angel with me that day and consecrated your cemetery. Return now and you will find it marked (consecrated) on the south side of your own cell. Lay it out as it is there indicated and think not that its area is too small, because a larger will be consecrated for you later, by the angels, in the southern part of Erin, namely—in Lismore." Mochuda returned and found the cemetery duly marked as Colman had indicated.

About the same time clerics came across Slieve Luachra in the territory of Kerry to the church of Ita, honoured [abbess] of Conall Gabhra. They had with them a child upon seeing whom Ita wept bitterly. The clerics demanded why she cried at seeing them. "Blessed," she answered, "is the hour in which that youth in your company was born, for no one shall ever go to hell from the cemetery in which he will be buried, but, alas, for me, that I cannot be buried therein." The clerics asked what cemetery it was in which he should be buried. "In Mochuda's cemetery," said she, "which though it be as yet unconsecrated will be honoured and famous in times to come." This all came to pass, for the youth afterwards became a monk under Mochuda and he is buried in the monastic cemetery of Lismore as Ita had foretold.

A child on another occasion fell off the bridge of Rahen into the river and was drowned. The body was a day and a night in the water before it was recovered. Then it was brought to Mochuda who, moved with compassion for the father in his loss of an only son, restored the boy to life. Moreover he himself fostered the child for a considerable time afterwards and when the youth had grown up, he sent him back to his own country of Delbhna. Mochuda's foster son begat sons and daughters and he gave himself and them, as well as his inheritance, to God and Mochuda, and his descendants are to this day servile tenants of the monastery.



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Once as Mochuda, with large offerings, was returning from Kerry to Rahen he passed through the confines of Delbhna [Lemanaghan?] by the lake called Muincine [Lough Gur?] where he and his party were overtaken by night. They found here before them by the roadside revolving wheels, which an artisan, who was erecting a mill on the stream from the lake, had set up for a joke. As the wheels revolved they made a terrific noise which was heard by the whole neighbourhood. Many of the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages aroused by the noise rushed out, with appeals for help and loud cries, to investigate the matter. Mochuda's people were frightened by the din and their pack and riding horses stampeded and lost their loads and it was not without difficulty that they were caught again. Mochuda knew what caused the noise and he told the workmen who had played this mischievous trick that they should be scattered throughout the different provinces of Ireland, that they should be always worthless and unprofitable, that the mill they were engaged on should never be finished and that their progeny after them should be valueless race of mischief-makers. The latter are called the Hi-Enna [Ui Enna Aine Aulium] to-day.

One day Mochuda came to a place called Cluain-Breanainn where apples abounded. His followers asked some apples for him but the orchard owner refused them. Said Mochuda:—"From this day forward no fruit shall grow in you orchard for ever," and that prophecy has been fulfilled.

Mochuda had in his monastery twelve exceedingly perfect disciples, scil.:—Caoinche Mac Mellain [Mochua Mac Mellain or Cronan], who was the first monk to enter Rahen; Mucoinog [Mochoemog]; the three sons of Nascainn—Goban, Srafan, and Laisren; Muluia [Molua]; Lugair; Mochomog Eile; Aodhan [Aedhan]; Fachtna Coinceann [Fiachna or Fiochrae]; Fionnlog and Mochomog who became a bishop later. The virtue of these monks surpassed belief and Mochuda wished to mitigate their austerities before their death. He therefore built separate cells for them that they might have some comfort in their old age as a reward for their virtue in youth; moreover he predicted blessings for them. He made [a prophecy] for one of them, mentioned above, scil.:—Mochua Mac Mellain, for whom he had built a comfortable cell at a place called Cluain-Da-Chrann. He said to him: "Your place of resurrection will not be here but in another place which God has given you." That prediction has been verified. To a second disciple, scil.:—Fiachna, Mochuda said:—"Your resurrection will not be in this place though I have made you a cell here; you will have three further abiding places, nevertheless it will be with your own companion, Aodhan, that your remains will rest and your resurrection will be in the territory of Ui Torna, and it is from you that the place will get its name." For this Aodhan alluded to Mochuda likewise built another cell in the land of Ui Torna close by Slieve Luachra, and speaking prophetically he said to him: "The remains of your fellow-disciple, Fiachna, will be carried to you hither and from him will this place be named." That statement has been verified, for the church is now called Cill-Fiachna and it was first called Cill-Aeghain. Concerning other persons, Mochuda prophesied various other things, all of them have come to pass.



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A child born of secret adultery was abandoned close by the monastery of Rahen and Mochuda fostered the child until he became a bishop, though no one knew his name or his progenitors. Mochuda said:—"This child's name is Dioma and his father is Cormac of the race of Eochaidh Eachach." All thereupon magnified the foreknowledge of Mochuda, which he had from no other than the Holy Spirit. Having consecrated him bishop, Mochuda instructed him: "Go in haste to your own native region of Hy-Eachach in the southern confines of Munster for there will your resurrection be. War and domestic strife shall arise among your race and kinsfolk unless you arrive there soon to prevent it." Dioma set out, accompanied by another bishop, Cuana by name, who was also a disciple of Mochuda's. They travelled into Ibh Eachach and Dioma preached the word of God to his brethren and tribesmen. He made peace between them and they built a monastery for him and he placed himself, his kindred, and parish under his chosen master, Mochuda, and he ended his life (there) in peace.

On another occasion Mochuda travelled from Rahen to the provinces of Munster and entered Ciarraighe Corca. It happened that Cairbre Mac Criomhthain, who was king of Munster, was at that time in Magh-Cuirce, the place to which Mochuda came. At the same time there fell a fire ball which destroyed one of the king's residences, killing his wife, many of his people and his son, Aodh Mac Cairbre, who were buried in the falling ruin. There were killed there moreover two good carriage horses of the king's. Cairbre besought Mochuda that he would restore the queen and his son to life, and when the saint saw the king's faith he prayed for him to God and then addressing the dead he said,—“Arise.” They arose thereupon and he gave them safe to the king and they all gave glory and thanks to God and Mochuda. The king moreover made large offerings of land and servile tenants to Mochuda. But one of the tenants, through pride and jealousy, refused to obey Mochuda, notwithstanding the king's command. Mochuda said: “Your posterity will die out and their inheritance, for sake of which you (mis)behave towards me, shall become mine for ever; whosoever takes from me that which another has given me shall be deprived of heaven and earth.” That man and his posterity soon came to nought.

On another occasion Mochuda sent a golden belt to Fergus Mac Criomhthan who suffered from uncleanness of skin arising from kidney disease and upon application of the girdle, by the blessing of Mochuda he recovered.

Another time again a king of Munster, Cathal Mac Aodha, in the region of Cuirche, was a sufferer from a combination of complaints—he was deaf, lame, and blind, and when Mochuda came to see him the king and his friends prayed the saint to cure him. Mochuda therefore prayed for him and made the sign of the cross on his eyes and ears and immediately he was healed of all his maladies—he heard and



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saw perfectly, and Cathal gave extensive lands to God and Mochuda for ever, scil:—Oilean Cathail and Ros-Beg and Ros-Mor and Inis-Pic [Spike Island]. Mochuda placed a religious community in Ros-Beg to build there a church in honour of God. Mochuda himself commenced to build a church on Inis-Pic and he remained there a whole year. [On his departure] Mochuda left there—in the monastery of Inis-Pic—to watch over it, in his stead, and to keep it in perfect order—the three disciples whom we have already named (scil:—the three sons of Nascon, *i.e.* Goban a bishop, Srafan a priest, and holy Laisren) together with the saintly bishop, Dardomaighen [Domangenum], (who had conferred orders on them in presence of Mochuda) and forty monks. Thereupon Mochuda returned to Rahen. That island we have mentioned, scil.:—Inis-Pic, is a most holy place in which an exceedingly devout community constantly dwell.

Mochuda next directed his steps eastward through Munster and he crossed the river then called Nemh, and now named the Abhainn More. As he crossed he saw a large apple floating in the middle of the ford. This he took up and carried away with him in his hand. Hence (that ford is named) Ath-Ubhla in Fermoy [Ballyhooley]. His attendant asked Mochuda for the apple, but the latter refused to give it saying—“God will work a miracle by that apple and through me to-day: we shall meet Cuana Mac Cailcin’s daughter whose right hand is powerless so that she cannot move it from her side. But she shall be cured by the power of God through this apple.” This was accomplished. Mochuda espied the child playing a game with the other girls in the *faithche* [lawn] of the Lios. He approached and said to her:—“Take this apple.” She, as usual, put forth her left hand for the fruit. “You shall not get it in that hand, but take it in the other.” The girl full of faith tried to put out the right hand, and on the instant the hand became full of strength and blood and motion so that she took the apple in it. All rejoiced thereat and were amazed at the wonder wrought. That night Cuana said to his daughter: “Choose yourself which you prefer of the royal youths of Munster and whomsoever your choice be I shall obtain in marriage for you.” “The only spouse I shall have,” said she, “is the man who cured my hand.” “Do you hear what she says O Mochuda?” said the king. “Entrust the child to me,” answered Mochuda, “I shall present her as a bride to God who has healed her hand.” Whereupon Cuana gave his daughter Flandnait, together with her dowry and lands on the bank of Nemh, to God and to Mochuda for ever. Cuana was almost incredibly generous. Mochuda took the maiden with him to Rahen where she passed her years happily with the religious women there till Mochuda was expelled by the kings of Tara as you may hear. He took Flandnait with him (from Rahen) in his party to her own native region that she might build herself a cell there. She did build a famous cell at Cluain Dallain in Mochuda’s own parish.



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Previous to his expulsion (from Rahen) Mochuda visited the place where (later) he built Lismore and he heard the voice of persons reading at Rahen, wherefore he said to his followers: "I know that this is the place where God will permit us to build our monastery." This prophecy was subsequently verified.

On a certain occasion Columcille came to Rahen where Mochuda was and asked him:—"Is this place in which you now are dear to you?" "It is, indeed," answered Mochuda. Columcille said: "Let not what I say to you trouble you—this will not be the place of your resurrection, for the king of Erin and his family will grow jealous of you owing to machinations of some of the Irish clergy, and they shall eventually drive you hence." Mochuda questioned Columcille who had a true prophetic gift—"In what other place then will my resurrection be?" Columcille told him—"The place where from the summit of Slieve Gua you saw the host of angels building a chair of silver with a statue of gold therein on the bank of the Nemh—there will your resurrection be, and the chair of silver is your church in the midst of them [, and you are truly the golden statue in its midst]." Mochuda believing what he heard thanked and glorified God.

As Mochuda on another day was at Rahen there came to him a priest and monk of his own community from the northern part of Munster; he made a reverence as was the custom of the monks, in Mochuda's presence and said to him, "Father, I have complied with all your commands and the precepts of God from the day I left Rahen till now—except this—that, without your permission, I have taken my brother from the secular life." "Verily I say to you," answered Mochuda, "if you were to go to the top of a high hill and to shout as loudly as you could and were to bring to me all who heard the cry I should not refuse the habit of religion to one of them." Hearing these words all realised the character and extent of Mochuda's charity and returned thanks to God for it.

On a certain day about vesper time, because of the holiness of the hour, Mochuda said to his monks—"We shall not eat to-day till each one of you has made his confession," for he knew that some one of them had ill will in his heart against another. All the brethren thereupon confessed to him. One of them in the course of his confession stated: "I love not your miller and the cause of my lack of charity towards him is this, that when I come to the mill he will not lift the loads off the horses and he will neither help me to fill the meal sacks nor to load them on the horse when filled. And not this alone but he does everything that is disagreeable to me; moreover I cannot tell, but God knows, why he so acts. Often I have thought of striking him or even beating him to death." Mochuda replied, "Brother dear, the prophet says—'Declina a malo et fac bonum' [Psalm 36(37):27] (Avoid evil and do good). Following this precept let



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you act kindly towards the miller and that charity of yours will move him to charity towards you and ye shall yet be steadfast friends.” Things went on thus for three days—the monk doing all he could to placate the miller. Nevertheless the miller did not cease his persecution, nor the brother his hate of the miller. On the third day Mochuda directed the brother to confess to him again. The brother said: —“This is my confession, Father, I do not yet love the miller.” Mochuda observed:—“He will change to-night, and to-morrow he will not break fast till you meet him and you shall sit on the same seat, at the same table, and you shall remain fast friends for the rest of your lives.” All this came to pass; for that monk was, through the instruction of Mochuda, filled with the grace of the Divine Spirit. And he glorified and praised Mochuda, for he recognised him as a man favoured by the Holy Ghost.

On another occasion two British monks of Mochuda’s monastery had a conversation in secret. Mochuda, they said, is very old though there is no immediate appearance of approaching death—and there is no doubt that his equal in virtue or good works will never be found—therefore if he were out of the way one of us might succeed him. Let us then kill him as there is no likelihood of his natural death within a reasonable time. They resolved therefore to drown him in the river towards close of the following night and to conceal all traces so that the crime could never be discovered. They found him subsequently in a lonely place where he was accustomed to pray. They bound him tightly and carried him between them on their shoulders to the water. On their way to the river they met one of the monks who used to walk around the cemetery every night. He said to them: “What is that you carry?” They replied that it was portion of the monastic washing which they were taking to the river. He however, under the insistent suggestion of the Holy Spirit, believed them not. He said: “Put down your load till we examine it.” They were constrained to obey and the burden proved to be—Mochuda. The monk who detected [the proposed murder] was the overseer of the homestead. He said mournfully, “My God, it is a dreadful work you are about.” Mochuda said gently:—“Son, it were well for me had that been done to me for I should now be numbered among the holy martyrs. And it were bad for them (the two wicked monks) for it is with Judas the betrayer of his Lord they should be tortured for ever, who had desired my death for their own advancement. Neither these wretched men themselves nor anyone of their nation shall be my coarb for ever, but my successors shall be of his race through whom God has rescued me. Moreover my city shall never be without men of the British race who will be butts and laughing-stocks and serve no useful purpose.” The person who saved Mochuda was of the Ciarraighe race and it is of that same people that the coarbs and successors of Mochuda have commonly been ever since. [See note 2.]



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Mochuda refused for a long while, as we have already said, to accept cattle or horses from anyone; it was the monks themselves who dug and cultivated the land and they did all the haulage of the monastery on their own backs. St. Fionan however who was a kinsman of Mochuda and had just returned from Rome, came at this time on a visit to the monastery. He reproached Mochuda saying: "Mochuda, why do you impose the burden of brute beasts upon rational beings? Is it not for use of the latter that all other animals have been created? Of a truth I shall not taste food in this house till you have remedied this grievance." Thenceforth Mochuda—in honour of Fionan—permitted his monks to accept horses and oxen from the people and he freed them from the hardship alluded to. Sometime later the holy abbot, Lachtaoin [St. Lachten], compassionating Mochuda and his monks because of their lack of cattle paid a visit to Rahen bringing with him a gift of thirty cows and a bull, also a couple of cattlemen and two dairymaids. Coming near Rahen he left the cattle in a secluded place, for he did not wish them to be seen. Thereupon he went himself to the monastery and simulating illness requested a drink of milk. The house steward went to Mochuda to tell him that Lachtaoin was ill and required milk. Mochuda ordered the steward to fill a pitcher with water and bring it to him—and this order was executed. Mochuda blessed the water which immediately was changed into sweet new milk apparently of that day's milking. He sent the milk to Lachtaoin but the latter identified it as milk miraculously produced; he in turn blessed it with the result that it was changed back again into water. He complained:—"It is not water but milk I have asked for." The messenger related this fact publicly. Lachtaoin declared:—"Mochuda is a good monk but his successors will not be able to change water to milk," and to the messenger he said—"Go to Mochuda and tell him that I shall not break bread in this house until he accept the alms which I have brought to the community." On Mochuda agreeing to accept them he handed over the cattle and dairymen to the monks of Rahen and the stewards took charge of them. Mochuda said thereupon, that he should not have accepted the cattle but as a compliment to Lachtaoin. Lachtaoin replied:—"From this day forward there will be plenty cattle and worldly substance in your dwelling-place and there will be a multitude of holy people in the other place whence you are to depart to heaven (for you will be exiled from your present home)." After they had mutually blessed and taken leave and pledged friendship Lachtaoin departed.

Once, at harvest time, the farm steward came to Mochuda complaining that, though the crop was dead ripe, a sufficient number of harvesters could not be found. Mochuda answered: "Go in peace, dear brother, and God will send you satisfactory reapers." This promise was fulfilled, for a band of angels came to the ripest and largest fields, reaped and bound a great deal quickly, and gathered the crop into one place. The monks marvelled, though they knew it was God's work and they praised and thanked Him and Mochuda.



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The spirit of obedience amongst Mochuda's monks was such that if any senior member of the community ordered another to lie in the fire he would be obeyed. As an instance of this,—some of the brethren were on one occasion baking bread in an oven when one the monks said to another younger than himself, "The bread is burning: take it out instantly." There was an iron shovel for drawing out the bread but the brother could not find it on the instant. He heeded not the flames which shot out of the oven's mouth but caught the hot bread and shifted it with his hands and suffered no hurt whatever. On another day the monks were engaged in labour beside the river which runs through the monastery. One of the senior monks called upon a young monk named Colman to do a certain piece of work. Immediately, as he had not named any particular Colman, twelve monks of the name rushed into the water. The readiness and exactness of the obedience practised was displayed in this incident.

Great moreover was their meekness and patience in sickness or ill-health as appears from the case of the monk out of the wounds of whose body maggots fell as he walked; yet he never complained or told anyone or left his work for two moments although it was plain from his appearance that his health was declining, and he was growing thinner from day to day. The brothers pitied him very much. At length Mochuda questioned him—putting him under obedience to tell the truth—as to the cause of his decline. The monk thereupon showed him his sides which were torn by a twig tied fast around them. Mochuda asked him who had done that barbarous and intolerable thing to him. The monk answered:—"One day while we were drawing logs of timber from the wood my girdle broke from the strain, so that my clothes hung loose. A monk behind me saw this and cutting a twig tied it so tightly around my sides that it has caused my flesh to mortify." Mochuda asked—"And why did you not loosen the twig?" The monk replied—"Because my body is not my own and he who tied it (the withe) has never loosed it." It was a whole year since the withe had been fastened around him. Mochuda said to him:—"Brother, you have suffered great pain; as a reward thereof take now your choice—your restoration to bodily health or spiritual health by immediate departure hence to eternal life." He answered, deciding to go to heaven:—"Why should I desire to remain in this life?" Having received the Sacrament and the Holy Communion he departed hence to glory.

There came to Mochuda on another occasion with her husband, a woman named Brigh whose hand lay withered and useless by her side: she besought the saint to cure her hand. Moreover she was pregnant at the time. Mochuda held out an apple in his hand to her as he had done before to Flandnait, the daughter of Cuana, saying—"Alleluia, put forth your nerveless hand to take this apple." She did as she was told and took the apple from his hand and was cured; moreover as she tasted the fruit parturition came on—without pain or inconvenience, after which [the pair] returned to their home rejoicing.



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In fulfilment of the prophecy of Columcille and other holy men that Mochuda should be expelled from Rahen the king of Tara, Blathmac, the son of Aodh Slaine, and his brother Diarmuid came, together with some clergy of the Cluain Earaird [Clonard] community, to carry out the eviction [in A.D. 635]. They said to him, "Leave this monastery and region and seek a place for yourself elsewhere." Mochuda replied—"In this place I have desired to end my days. Here I have been many years serving God and have almost reached the end of my life. Therefore I shall not depart unless I am dragged hence by the hands against my will, for it is not becoming an old man to abandon easily the place in which he has spent great part of his life." Then the nobles returned to Blathmac and they made various complaints of Mochuda, accusing him falsely of many things; finally they asked the king to undertake the expulsion personally, for they were themselves unequal to the task. The king thereupon came to the place accompanied by a large retinue. Alluding prophetically to the king's coming, previous to that event, Mochuda said, addressing the monks:—"Beloved brothers, get ready and gather your belongings, for violence and eviction are close at hand: the chieftains of this land are about to expel and banish you from your own home." Then the king, with his brothers and many of the chief men, arrived on the scene. They encamped near Rahen and the king sent his brother Diarmuid with some others to expel Mochuda and to put him out by force—which Diarmuid pledged his word he should do. It was in the choir at prayer that Diarmuid found Mochuda. Mochuda, though he knew his mission, asked Diarmuid why he was come and what he sought. Diarmuid replied that he came by order of King Blathmac to take him by the hand and put him out of that establishment and to banish him from Meath. "Do as you please," said Mochuda, "for we are prepared to undergo all things for Christ's sake." "By my word," answered Diarmuid, "I shall never be guilty of such a crime; let him who chooses do it." Mochuda said:—"You shall possess the kingdom of God and you shall reign in your brother's stead and your face which you have turned from me shall never be turned from your enemies. Moreover the reproaches which the king will presently cast upon you for not doing the work he has set you, will be your praise and your pride. At the same time as a penalty for your evil designs toward me and your greater readiness to drive me out, your son shall not succeed you in the sovereignty." Diarmuid returned to the king and told him that he could do no injury to Mochuda. The king retorted [sarcastically and] in anger, "What a valiant man you are, Diarmuid." Diarmuid replied:—"That is just what Mochuda promised—that I should be a warrior of God." He was known as Diarmuid Ruanaidh thenceforth, for the whole assembly cried out with one voice—truly he is Valiant (Ruanaidh).



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Next, the nobles present cast lots to decide which one of them should go with the king to lay hands on Mochuda and expel him from the monastery. The lot fell upon the Herenach [hereditary steward] of Cluain Earaird. He and the king accompanied by armed men went to the monastery where they found Mochuda and all the brethren in the church. Cronan, a certain rich man in the company, shouted out, "Make haste with the business on which you are come." Mochuda answered him—"You shall die immediately, but on account of the alms which you gave me for the love of Christ and on account of your uniform piety heretofore your progeny shall prosper for ever." That prophecy has been fulfilled. Another man, Dulach by name, winked mockingly with one of his eyes; moreover he laughed and behaved irreverently towards Mochuda. Mochuda said to him:—"Thus shall you be—with one eye closed and a grin on your countenance—to the end of your life; and of your descendants many will be similarly afflicted." Yet another member of the company, one Cailche, scurrilously abused and cursed Mochuda. To him Mochuda said—"Dysentery will attack you immediately and murrain that will cause your death." The misfortune foretold befell him and indeed woeful misfortune and ill luck pursued many of them for their part in the wrong doing. When the king saw these things he became furious and, advancing—himself and the abbot of Cluain Earaird—they took each a hand of Mochuda and in a disrespectful, uncivil manner, they led him forth out of the monastery while their followers did the same with Mochuda's community. Throughout the city and in the country around there was among both sexes weeping, mourning, and wailing over their humiliating expulsion from their own home and monastery. Even amongst the soldiers of the king were many who were moved to pity and compassion for Mochuda and his people.

One of Mochuda's monks had gout in his foot and for him Mochuda besought the king and his following that he, as he was unable to travel, might be allowed to remain in the monastery; the request was, however, refused. Mochuda called the monk to him and, in the name of Christ, he commanded the pain to leave the foot and to betake itself to the foot of Colman [Colman mac hua Telduib, abbot, or perhaps erenach only, of Cluain Earaird], the chieftain who was most unrelenting towards him. That soreness remained in Colman's foot as long as he lived. The monk however rose up and walked and was able to proceed on his way with his master.

There was an aged monk who wished to be buried at Rahen; Mochuda granted the request, and he received Holy Communion and sacred rites at the saint's hands. Then he departed to heaven in the presence of all and his body was buried at Rahen as he had himself chosen that it should be.



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Leaving Rahen Mochuda paid a visit to the monastic cemetery weeping as he looked upon it; he blessed those interred there and prayed for them. By the permission of God it happened that the grave of a long deceased monk opened so that all saw it, and, putting his head out of the grave, the tenant of the tomb cried out in a loud voice: "O holy man and servant of God, bless us that through thy blessing we may rise and go with you whither you go." Mochuda replied:—"So novel a thing I shall not do, for it behoves not to raise so large a number of people before the general resurrection." The monk asked—"Why then father, do you leave us, though we have promised union with you in one place for ever?" Mochuda answered:—"Brother, have you ever heard the proverb—'necessitas movet decretum et consilium' (necessity is its own law)? Remain ye therefore in your resting places and on the day of general resurrection I shall come with all my brethren and we shall all assemble before the great cross called 'Cross of the Angels' at the church door and go together for judgement." When Mochuda had finished, the monk lay back in his grave and the coffin closed.

Mochuda, with his following, next visited the cross already mentioned and here, turning to the king, he thus addressed him:—"Behold the heavens above you and the earth below." The king looked at them: then Mochuda continued:—"Heaven may you not possess and even from your earthly principality may you soon be driven and your brother whom you have reproached, because he would not lay hands on me, shall possess it instead of you, and in your lifetime. You shall be despised by all—so much so that in your brother's house they shall forget to supply you with food. Moreover yourself and your children shall come to an evil end and in a little while there shall not be one of your seed remaining." Then Mochuda cursed him and he rang his small bell against him and against his race, whence the bell has since been known as "The Bell of Blathmac's Extinguishing," or "The Bell of Blathmac's Drowning," because it drowned or extinguished Blathmac with his posterity. Blathmac had a large family of sons and daughters but, owing to Mochuda's curse, their race became extinct. Next to the prince of Cluain Earaird who also had seized him by the hand, he said: "You shall be a servant and a bondman ere you die and you shall lose your territory and your race will be a servile one." To another of those who led him by the hand he said:—"What moved you to drag me by the hand from my own monastery?" The other replied:—"It pleased me not that a Munster man should have such honour in Meath." "I wish," said Mochuda, "that the hand you laid on me may be accursed and that the face you turned against me to expel me from my home may be repulsive and scrofulous for the remainder of your life." This curse was effective for the man's eye was thereupon destroyed in his head. Mochuda noticed that some of Columcille's successors and people from Durrow, which was one of Columcille's foundations, had taken part in his eviction. He thus addressed them:—"Contention and quarrelling shall be yours for ever to work evil and schism amongst you—for you have had a prominent part in exciting opposition to me." And so it fell out.



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The king and his people thereupon compelled Mochuda to proceed on his way. Mochuda did proceed with his disciples, eight hundred and sixty seven in number (and as many more they left buried in Rahen). Moreover, many more living disciples of his who had lived in various parts of Ireland were already dead. All the community abounded in grace: many of its members became bishops and abbots in after years and they erected many churches to the glory of God.

Understand, moreover, that great was the charity of the holy bishop, as the following fact will prove:—in a cell without the city of Rahen he maintained in comfort and respectability a multitude of lepers. He frequently visited them and ministered to them himself—entrusting that office to no one else. It was known to all the lepers of Ireland how Mochuda made their fellow-sufferers his special care and family, and the result was that an immense number of lepers from all parts flocked to him and he took charge and care of them. These on his departure from Rahen he took with him to Lismore where he prepared suitable quarters for them and there they have been ever since in comfort and in honour according to Mochuda's command.

As Mochuda and his people journeyed along with their vehicles they found the way blocked by a large tree which lay across it. Owing to the density of underwood at either side they were unable to proceed. Some one announced:—"There is a tree across the road before us, so that we cannot advance." Mochuda said: "In the name of Christ I command thee, tree, to rise up and stand again in thy former place." At the command of Mochuda the tree stood erect as it was originally and it still retains its former appearance, and there is a pile of stones there at its base to commemorate the miracle.

It was necessary to proceed; the first night after Mochuda's departure from Rahen the place that he came to was a cell called Drum Cuilinn [Drumcullen], on the confines of Munster, Leinster, and Clanna Neill, but actually within Clanna Neill, scil.:—in the territory of Fearceall in which also is Rahen. In Drum Cuilinn dwelt the holy abbot, Barrfhinn, renowned for miracles. On the morrow Mochuda arrived at Saighir Chiarain [Seirkieran] and the following night at the establishment where Cronan is now, scil.:—Roscrea. That night Mochuda remained without entertainment although it was offered to them by Cronan who had prepared supper for him. Mochuda refused however to go to it saying that he would not go out of his way to visit a man who avoids guests and builds his cell in a wild bog far from men and that such a man's proper guests are creatures of the wilderness instead of human beings. When Cronan heard this saying of Mochuda he came to the latter, by whose advice he abandoned his hermitage in the bog and he, with Mochuda, marked out the site of a new monastery and church at Roscrea. There he founded a great establishment and there he is himself buried. Mochuda took leave of Cronan and, travelling through Eile [Ely O'Carroll], came to the royal city named Cashel. On the following day the king, scil.:—Failbhe [Failbhe Flann], came to Mochuda offering him a place whereon to found a church. Mochuda replied:—"It is not permitted us by God to stay our journey anywhere till we come to the place promised to us by the holy men."



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About the same time there came messengers from the king of Leinster to the king of Munster praying the latter, by virtue of league and alliance, to come to his assistance as Leath-Chuinn and the north were advancing in great force to ravage Leinster. This is how Failbhe was situated at the time: he had lost one of his eyes and he was ashamed to go half-blind into a strange territory. As soon as Mochuda realised the extent of the king's diffidence he blessed the eye making on it the sign of the cross and it was immediately healed in the presence of all. The king and Mochuda took leave of one another and went each his own way. The king and his hosting went to the aid of Leinster in the latter's necessity.

Mochuda journeyed on through Muscraige Oirthir the chief of which territory received him with great honour. Aodhan was the chief's name and he bestowed his homestead called Isiol [Athassel] on Mochuda, who blessed him and his seed. Next he came into the Decies. He travelled through Magh Femin where he broke his journey at Ard Breanuinn [Ardfinnan] on the bank of the Suir. There came to him here Maolochtair, king of the Decies, and the other nobles [or one noble, Suibhne] of his nation who were at variance with him concerning land. Mochuda by the grace of God made peace amongst them, and dismissed them in amity. Maolochtair gave that land to Mochuda who marked out a cell there where is now the city of Ardfinnan, attached to which is a large parish subject to Mochuda and bearing his name. The wife of Maolochtair, scil:—Cuciniceas, daughter of Failbhe Flann, king of Munster, had a vision, viz.:—a flock of very beautiful birds flying above her head and one bird was more beautiful and larger than the rest. The other birds followed this one and it nestled in the king's bosom. Soon as she awoke she related the vision to the king; the king observed: "Woman you have dreamed a good dream and soon it will be realised; the flock of birds you have seen is Mochuda with his monks coming from Rahen and the most distinguished bird is Mochuda himself. And the settling in my bosom means that the place of his resurrection will be in my territory. Many blessings will come to us and our territory through him." That vision of the faithful woman was realised as the faithful king had explained it.

Subsequently Mochuda came to Maolochtair requesting from him a place where he might erect a monastery. Maolochtair replied: "So large a community cannot dwell in such a narrow place." Mochuda said: "God, who sent us to you, will show you a place suited to us." The king answered:—"I have a place, convenient for fish and wood, beside Slieve Gua on the bank of the Nemh but I fear it will not be large enough." Mochuda said:—"It will not be narrow; there is a river and fish and that it shall be the place of our resurrection." Thereupon, in the presence of many witnesses, the king handed over the land, scil.:—Lismore,



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to God and Mochuda and it is in that place Mochuda afterwards founded his famous city. Mochuda blessed the king and his wife as well as the nobles and all the people and taking leave of them and receiving their homage he journeyed across Slieve Gua till he came to the church called Ceall Clochair [Kilcloher]. The saint of that church, scil.:—Mochua Mianain, prepared a supper for Mochuda to the best of his ability, but he had only a single barrel of ale for them all. Although Mochuda with his people remained there three days and three nights and although the holy abbot (Mochua) continued to draw the ale into small vessels to serve the company, according to their needs, the quantity in the barrel grew no less but increased after the manner of the oil blessed by Elias [3 Kings 17:16]. Then one of the monks said to Mochuda, “If you remain in this place till the feast ends your stay will be a long one for it (the entertainment) grows no smaller for all the consumption.” “That is true, brother,” said Mochuda, “and it is fitting for us to depart now.” They started therefore on their way and Mochua Mianain gave himself and his place to God and Mochuda for ever. On Mochuda’s departure the ale barrel drained out to the lees.

Mochuda proceeded till he reached the river Nemh at a ford called Ath-Mheadhon [Affane] which no one could cross except a swimmer or a very strong person at low water in a dry season of summer heat, for the tide flows against the stream far as Lismore, five miles further up. On this particular occasion it happened to be high tide. The two first of Mochuda’s people to reach the ford were the monks Molua and Colman, while Mochuda himself came last. They turned round to him and said that it was not possible to cross the river till the ebb. Mochuda answered: —“Advance through the water before the others in the name of your Lord Jesus Christ for He is the way the truth and the life” [John 14:6]. As soon as they heard this command of Mochuda’s Molua said to Colman, “Which of the two will you hold back—the stream above or the sea below?” Colman answered:—“Let each restrain that which is nearest to him”—for Molua was on the upper, or stream, side and Colman on the lower, or sea, side. Molua said to Colman—“Forbid you the sea side to flow naturally and I shall forbid the stream side.” Then with great faith they proceeded to cross the river; they signed the river with the sign of Christ’s cross and the waters stood on either hand and apart, so that the dry earth appeared between. The side banks of water rose high because there was no passage up or down, so that the ridges were very elevated on both the sea and stream sides. The waters remained thus till such time as all Mochuda’s people had crossed. Mochuda himself was the last to pass over and the path across was so level that it offered no obstacle to foot-passengers or chariots but was like a level plain so that they crossed dryshod, as the Jordan fell back for Josue the son of Nun [Josue 3:17]. Soon as Mochuda had crossed over he blessed the waters and commanded them to resume their natural course. On the reuniting again of the waters they made a noise like thunder, and the name of the place is The Place of Benedictions, from the blessings of Mochuda and his people.



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Next the glorious bishop, Mochuda, proceeded to the place promised to him by God and the prophets, which place is the plain called Magh-Sciath. Mochuda, with the holy men, blessed the place and dedicated there the site of a church in circular form. There came to them a holy woman named Caimell who had a cell there and she asked, "What do you propose doing here, ye servants of God?" "We propose," answered Mochuda, "building here a little 'Lios' [enclosure] around our possession." Caimell observed, "Not a little Lios will it be but a great [mor] one (Lis-mor)." "True indeed, virgin," responded Mochuda, "Lismore will be its name for ever." The virgin offered herself and her cell to God and Mochuda for ever, where the convent of women is now established in the city of Lismore.

As Colman Elo, alluded to already, promised, Mochuda found his burial place marked out (consecrated?) by angels; there he and a multitude of his disciples are buried and it was made known to him by divine wisdom the number of holy persons that to the end of the world would be buried therein. Lismore is a renowned city, for there is one portion of it which no woman may enter and there are within it many chapels and monasteries, and in which there are always multitudes of devout people not from Ireland alone but from the land of the Saxons and from Britain and from other lands as well. This is its situation—on the south bank of the Avonmore in the Decies territory.

On a certain day there came a druid to Mochuda to argue and contend with him. He said:—"If you be a servant of God cause natural fruit to grow on this withered branch." Mochuda knew that it was to throw contempt on the power of God that the druid had come. He blessed the branch and it produced first living skin, then, as the druid had asked—leaves, blossom and fruit in succession. The druid marvelled exceedingly and went his way.

A poor man came to Mochuda on another occasion with an ill timed request for milk, and beer along with it. Mochuda was at the time close by the well which is known as "Mochuda's Well" at the present time; this he blessed changing it first into milk then into beer and finally to wine. Then he told the poor man to take away whatever quantity of each of these liquids he required. The well remained thus till at Mochuda's prayer it returned to its original condition again. An angel came from heaven to Mochuda at the time and told him that the well should remain a source of health and virtues and of marvels, and it still, like every well originally blessed by Mochuda, possesses power of healing from every malady.



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Mochuda, now grown old and of failing powers and strength, was wearied and worried by the incessant clamour of building operations—the dressing of stones and timber—carried on by the multitude of monks and artisans. He therefore by consent and counsel of the brethren retired to a remote, lonely place situated in a glen called “Mochuda’s Inch” below the great monastery. He took with him there a few monks and built a resplendent monastery; he remained in that place a year and six months more leading a hermitical life. The brethren and seniors of the community visited him (from time to time) and he gave them sound, sweetly-reasoned advice. He received a vow from each to follow his Rule, for he was the support of the aged, the health-giver to the weak, the consoler of the afflicted, the hope-giver to the hopeless, the faith-giver to the doubting, the moderator and uniter of the young.

As soon as Mochuda saw the hardship to the visiting brothers and elders of the descent from Lismore and the ascent thereto again—knowing at the same time that his end was approaching—he ordered himself to be carried up to the monastery so that the monks might be saved the fatigue of the descent to him. Then it pleased God to call to Himself His devoted servant from the troubles of life and to render to him the reward of his good works. He opened the gates of heaven then and sent to him a host of angels, in glory and majesty unspeakable. When Mochuda saw the heavens open above him and the angel band approaching, he ordered that he be set down in the middle of the glen and he related to the seniors the things that he had seen and he asked to receive the Body of Christ and he gave his last instruction to the monks—to observe the Law of God and keep His commands. The place was by the cross called “Crux Migrationis,” or the cross from which Mochuda departed to Glory. Having received the Body and Blood of Christ, having taught them divine doctrines, in the midst of holy choirs and of many brethren and monks to whom in turn he gave his blessing and the kiss of peace according to the rule, the glorious and holy bishop departed to heaven accompanied by hosts of angels on the day before the Ides of May [May 14], in his union with the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

Finit 7ber [September] 4th, 1741.

NOTE 1

One of our scribe’s predecessors omitted a word or two from the text here, with disastrous results to the sense. The Latin Life comes to our aid however and enables us to make good the omission; the latter, by the way, puzzles our scribe who is like a man fighting an invisible enemy—correcting a text of which he does not know the defect. Insertion of the words “walking backwards” immediately after “church,” in the angel’s answer, will enable us to see the original writer’s meaning. The text should probably read:



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The angel answered:—"Whom you shall see going from the church walking backwards to the guest-house" (for it was Mochuda's custom to walk backwards from the door of the church). Comghall announced to his household that there was coming to them a distinguished stranger, well-beloved of God, of whose advent an angel had twice foretold him. Some time later Mochuda arrived at Comghall's establishment, and he went to the monastery first and he did just as the angel foretold of him and Comghall recognised him and bade him welcome.

NOTE 2

The obits of Mochuda's successors, down to Christian O'Conarchy, are chronicled as follows:—

- A.D. 650. Cuanan, maternal uncle and immediate successor of Mochuda (Lanigan).
- A.D. 698. Iarnla, surnamed Hierologus (Four Masters). In his time King Alfrid was a student in Lismore.
- A.D. 702. Colman, son of Finnbhar (Acta Sanctorum). During his reign the abbey of Lismore reached the zenith of its fame.
- A.D. 716. Cronan Ua Eoan (F. Masters).
- A.D. 719. Colman O'Liathain (Annals of Inisfallen).
- A.D. 741. Finghal (F. Masters).
- A.D. 746. Mac hUige (Ibid).
- A.D. 747. Ihrichmech (A. of Inisf.)
- A.D. 748. Maccoigeth (F. M.)
- A.D. 752. Sinchu (F. M.)
- A.D. 755. Condath (Ibid).
- A.D. 756. Fincon (Annals of Ulster).
- A.D. 761. Aedhan (F. M.)
- A.D. 763. Ronan (Ware).
- A.D. 769. Soairleach Ua Concuarain (F. M.)
- A.D. 771. Eoghan (Ibid).
- A.D. 776. Orach (Ibid).
- A.D. 799. Carabran (Ibid).
- A.D. 801. Aedhan Ua Raichlich (A. of Inisf.)
- A.D. 823. Flann (F. M.)
- A.D. 849. Tibrade Ua Baethlanaigh (F. M.) At this period the town was plundered and burned by the Danes who had sailed up thither on the Blackwater.
- A.D. 849. Daniel (A. of Inisf.)
- A.D. 854. Suibne Ua Roichlech (F. M. and A. of Ulster). What is probably his gravestone is one of five Irish-inscribed slabs built into the west gable of the Cathedral.



- A.D. 861. Daniel Ua Liaithidhe (F. M.)
A.D. 878. Martin Ua Roichligh (Ibid). Another of the inscribed stones above referred to asks "A prayer for Martan."
A.D. 880. Flann Mac Forbasaich (A. I.)
A.D. 899. Maelbrihte Mac Maeldomnaich (Ibid).
A.D. 918. Cormac Mac Cuilennan (A. I.) He is to be distinguished from his more famous namesake of Cashel.
A.D. 936. Ciaran (F. M.)
A.D. 951. Diarmuid (Ibid).
A.D. 957. Maenach Mac Cormaic (Ibid).
A.D. 958. Cathmog (Ibid). He was also bishop of Cork.
A.D. 963. Cinaedh (F. M.)
A.D. 1025. Omaelsluaig (Cotton's "Fasti").
A.D. 1034. Moriertach O'Selbach, bishop of Lismore (Cotton).
A.D. 1064. Mac Airthir, bishop (Cotton).
A.D. 1090. Maelduin O'Rebhacain (Ibid).
A.D. 1112. Gilla Mochuda O'Rebhacain (A. of I.)
A.D. 1113. Nial Macgettigan. His episcopal

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staff, possibly

enclosing the venerable oaken staff of the founder of the abbey, is still preserved at Lismore Castle. [Also known as the 'Lismore Crozier,' in 2004 it is housed in 'The Treasury' exhibit at the National Museum of Ireland, Kildare St., Dublin 2.]

A.D. 1134. Malchus. Most probably he is identical with the first bishop of Waterford. During his term both St. Malachy and King Cormac MacCarthy dwelt as fugitives, guests or pilgrims, at Lismore.

A.D. 1142. Ua Rebhacain.

A.D. 1186. St. Christian. He had however resigned the bishopric.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

The source for this text includes the Irish text and English translation on facing pages and notes. The notes are quite lengthy and should take longer to transcribe than the English text. Except for a few notes transplanted in brackets to the body of the text I have not transcribed them. Due to inexperience with the Irish language and its script I have decided not to attempt to transcribe the Irish text. Hopefully someone with the appropriate talent and interest will undertake that task some day. I have corrected the errata as indicated in the source and a few obvious printer errors. Please note that this text contains variant spellings of names and words sometimes inconsistently applied.