

CHRISTIAN INSCRIPTIONS,

&c. &c.

CLONMACNOIS.

THE monastery of Clonmacnois was for a long time the most celebrated religious community in Ireland, and distinguished as the chief school of art and learning in the country.

It is situated on the eastern bank of the River Shannon, in the King's County. The name *Cluain-mic-Nois* (*Cluain maccu-nois* in Old-Irish, Zeuss, G. C., pref. xxxii.) means the Meadow of the son of Nos.

This monastery was founded about the year 544, by St. Ciaran, as we read in the *Chronicon Scotorum* (p. 44, A.D. 544), "Ciaran the Great, son of the Carpenter, *quievit* in the 33rd year of his age; in the seventh month, also, after he began to build Clonmacnois;" and it is added in the *Annals of Clonmacnois* that "his body was buried in the Little Church of Clonvicknose."

In the ancient records of this place we find that Diarmaid Mac Cerbhaill, King of Ireland, aided Ciaran with his own hands to raise the humble edifice, and the still humbler cell which adjoined it; the monarch, at the time, being himself actually an outcast, on whose life a price was fixed, and who was seeking shelter from his persecutors in the wilderness to which the saint had come for solitude and repose. After the death of St. Ciaran, in gratitude for some benefit that King Diarmaid deemed he had received miraculously at his touch, he made the monastery a grant of three or four parcels of land in perpetuity; and to this donation his descendants, who chose the cemetery of Clonmacnois for their place of sepulture, added many other gifts of the same kind: thus the wealth of the community accumulated, and its power and influence increased. But it was not to these causes alone that Clonmacnois owed its fame, or the veneration in which it was held. It gradually became the chief school in Ireland; and we have many interesting evidences of its early celebrity as such. In the latter part of the eighth century we find that the fame of one of its lecturers, Colcu, had spread to the Continent. He was the author of the *Scuaip Chrabhaidh*, i. e. the Besom of Devotion, transcribed by Colgan from the Book of Clonmacnois, which latter, according to O'Donovan, is probably the manuscript now called *Leabhar na hUidhre*). The high estimation in which Colcu was held is proved by his being called the "Chief Scribe and Master of the Scoti in Ireland," and by a letter to him from Alcuin, then residing at the court of Charlemagne, which is preserved among Archbishop Ussher's *Epistolæ Hibernicæ*, (Epist. xviii., Works, vol. iv., p. 466), beginning "From the humble priest, Alcuin, to the blessed

master and pious father Colcu, greeting;" and concluding thus:—"I have sent for thy charity some oil, which at present is scarcely found in Britain; that you may dispense it through the stations of bishops where it is required, for the use of men or the honour of God. I have also sent fifty shekels for the brotherhood, of the alms of king Charles (I adjure you to pray for him); and of my own alms fifty shekels; and to the brothers in the south at Balduinaga, thirty shekels of the king's alms, and thirty of my own alms; and twenty shekels of the alms of the king to the family of Areides, and twenty of my own alms; and to each of the Anchorites three shekels of pure silver; that they all may pray for me and for our lord king Charles, that God may preserve him for the protection of his holy Church, and for the praise and glory of his name." The death of Colcu is thus given in the Annals, A.D. 789:—"Colgu Ua Duineachda, lector of Cluain-mic-Nois, he who composed the 'Scuaip Chrabhaidh,' died."^a This work of his is described by Colgan as "opus plenum ardentissima devotione et elevatione mentis in Deum" (Acta Sanctorum, p. 379, n. 9).

The next most famous scholar we meet with in the history of this monastery was Suibhine Mac Maelehumai, a drawing of whose tombstone will be found in the following collection. (See Pl. xxxi., Fig. 82.) He lived in the ninth century. His death is given by the Four Masters at 887, in Annales Cambriæ under 889, and by Florence of Worcester at 892, by whom he is styled "Doctor Scotorum peritissimus." It is to be regretted that none of his works have come down to us.

Among other names connected with Clonmacnois, it may be allowed to enumerate those of Colman, who, in the early part of the tenth century, erected the great church, and the cross still standing there; Donnchadh O'Braoin; and of Fachtna, the learned professor and priest of Clonmacnois, who became abbot of Iona and "the most distinguished abbot of the Gaeidhil;" and who died at Rome in the year 1024, whither he had gone on a pilgrimage. But the most remarkable of all the scholars of Clonmacnois was Tighernach Ua Braoin, the Annalist of Ireland, and the authority most commonly appealed to by modern writers on Irish history. That his learning was varied and extensive is proved by the examination of his Annals in detail. He quotes Eusebius, Orosius, Sex. Julius Africanus, Josephus, St. Jerome, Bede, and many other learned writers. He also appears to have been familiar with some of the modes of correcting the Calendar. He mentions the Lunar Cycle, and uses the Dominical Letter with the Kalends of several years. He was abbot of both Clonmacnois and Roscommon, and died in the year 1088, as we learn from the following entry in the Annals of the Four Masters: A. D. 1088, "Tighearnach Ua Braoin, chief successor of Ciaran and Coman, died in *imdha Chiarain*^b [Ciaran's bed]. He was a paragon of learning and history."

The most distinguished ecclesiastic connected with this ancient church in the eleventh century was named Conn na mBocht, that is, Conn of the Poor. The Four Masters contain a notice of this Conn at 1031, which is the earliest passage in which the Céli-dé of Clonmac-

^a There are two entries of his death in the Four Masters: A. D. 789 (*rectè* 794), "Colgu Ua Duineachda, lector of Cluain-mic-Nois, he who composed the Scuaip Crabhaidh [died]; and A. D. 791 (*rectè* 796),

Colca the wise died."

^b This was a couch covered by the skin of the saint's cow. O'Donovan was wrong in supposing it to be a religious establishment.

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nois are mentioned, but from which we may infer that a body so called had been for some time in existence there:—"Conn na mBocht, head of the Céli-Dé, and anchorite of Clonmacnois, the first who invited a company of the poor of Cluain at Iseal-Chiarain, and who presented twenty cows of his own to it." In his essay on the Culdees, Dr. Reeves remarks that the account given in the Annals of this man and his son help to prove the connexion existing between the Céli-Dé and an hospital. A tract of low ground near Clonmacnois, called Iseal-Chiarain, was the site of this institution, and Conn na mBocht was succeeded by his son Maelchiaran in the presidency of it when, in the year 1079, Murchadh O'Melaghlin made a forcible descent upon it, and maltreated the Céli-Dé, and the superintendent of the poor; Maelchiaran was killed on this occasion (See Pl. LXIII., Fig. 151.)

The monastery of Clonmacnois seems to have been singularly rich in objects of art. The altar of the great church there was adorned with jewels, which were carried away when it was plundered in the year 1129. The annalists enumerate, among the things stolen, a model of Solomon's Temple; the cup of Donnchadh, son of Flann; the three jewels presented by King Turlough O'Connor—also a silver goblet, a silver cup with a gold cross over it, and a drinking horn of gold; the drinking horn of Ua Riada, King of Aradh; a silver chalice with a burnishing of gold upon it, with an engraving by the daughter of Ruaidri O'Conor; and the silver cup of Ceallach, successor of Patrick. The Crozier of Ciaran also is mentioned in the year 930. The shrine of St. Manchan, at Lemanaghan, within a few miles of Clonmacnois, is another work of this school, which we are told was executed in the year 1166, by "Ruaidhri Ua Conchobhair, and an embroidery of gold was carried over it by him in as good a style as a relic was ever covered in Ireland."^a This shrine is still in existence,^b and forms a fine example of late Celtic Christian art.

Many other treasures of this class, beautiful specimens of the goldsmith's and jeweller's art, have from time to time been found in Clonmacnois, and are preserved in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, and in the Petrie collection now deposited there, all showing the same high skill and true feeling for art that characterise the sculpture and architecture of this district from the latter part of the ninth to the twelfth century. But many have, we fear, been lost. Dr. Petrie, writing in the year 1821, says: "Some thirty years ago, the tomb of St. Ciaran was searched, in expectation of finding treasure, when a rosary of brass wire was discovered; a hollow ball of the same material, which opened; a chalice and wine vessel for the altar, and the crozier of St. Ciaran, were also found. These curious relics fell into ignorant hands, and were not, probably, deemed worthy of preservation; but there is reason to believe that the last-mentioned—the crozier of St. Ciaran—still exists. It was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries about the year 1760."^c

The antiquities still remaining at Clonmacnois may properly be divided into three classes—buildings, stone crosses, and sepulchral slabs. Of the first, there are the remains of

^a See O'Donovan's Notes to Annals of the Four Masters, vol. ii., p. 843-4.

^b It is still in fair preservation, and is now kept on a side altar, beneath a glass case, in the modern

Roman Catholic Chapel of Boher, not far from Lemanaghan, under the careful guardianship of the Rev. John Dardis, P. P.

^c Gough's Camden, vol. ii., p. 362.

eight ecclesiastical structures, with two round towers, and an ancient castle ; of the second, there are two large crosses standing, one of which was erected in memory of King Flann, by the Abbot Colman, in the early part of the tenth century ; and of the third class, there were upwards of one hundred and forty when Dr. Petrie visited Clonmacnois in early life. Many of these stones are not forthcoming now, while others have been found in digging graves, and during recent excavations at the Nunnery, since Dr. Petrie was there : drawings of these stones will be added to the collection.

“The value set on this spot as a cemetery is of very early antiquity, and, like that attached to Iona, arose out of a belief in the power which the patron saint’s intercession would have with the Deity on the last day. Thus, in the *Life of St. Corprius Crom*, bishop of Clonmacnois, in the ninth century, the saint asks the unladen spirit of the king Maelsechlainn, which he encounters on coming from his evening devotions in church, whether prayers had been offered for him, and whether he had any spiritual friends among the clergy in his lifetime, to which the spirit replies : ‘My burial at Clonmacnois has availed me more than anything they have done for me, for it will arise on the Day of Judgment, aided by the intercession of St. Ciaran.’ The prevalence of this belief is more fully set forth as the cause of the celebrity of Cluain as a place of sepulture, in a translation from an ancient MS. of the thirteenth century, commemorating the erection of its edifices, and enumerating the lands given to this see, for the purchase of places of interment. Thus, in the *Life of Ciaran*, it is set down that the best blood of Ireland have chosen their bodies to be buried in Cluain, which choice, for that Ciaran had such power—being a holy bishop, through the will of God—that whatever souls, harboured in the bodies, are buried under that dust, may never be adjudged to damnation. Wherefore, those of the said blood have divided the churchyard amongst themselves by the consent of Ciaran and his clerks. (This manuscript is in the British Museum. No. 51 of the Clarendon Collections, 4,796, and appears to have belonged to Sir James Ware).^a The desire for interment within the precincts of this sacred spot was not confined to the princes of the Hy Neill or Clan Colman race. Those of the Connaught, South Munster, and others, soon followed their examples, and bought their grants at the cost of large donations of land.” (Petrie MS.)

To the Hy Niall or Clanna Néill, to whom, according to the ancient manuscripts, the best part of the cemetery belonged, Dr. Petrie allots several of the inscriptions in the following collection, and he adds other families, such as the O’Kellys, kings of Hy-Many ; the Mac Dermots, of Moyluirg ; the Mac Carthys, kings of South Munster ; the Dálcais family, or kings of North Munster ; besides the many ecclesiastics and learned men of Clonmacnois whose names now live only in the meagre annals of the country and on the simple tombstones, the drawings of which will form the bulk of this collection.

In the Rev. Dr. Todd’s list of Irish manuscripts preserved in the Bodleian Library (Rawlinson, B. 486. fol. 29), the following poem, on the tribes and persons interred at Clonmacnois, written by Enoch O’Gillan, who lived on the borders of the River Suck, in the county of Galway, is mentioned.

^a This interesting MS. has been edited, with copious notes, by Dr. O’Donovan, in the “*Journal of the*

Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archæological Society,” vol. i., second series, p. 448.

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The Editor has to offer her best thanks to Mr. W. D. Macray for his kindness in procuring a tracing of the original MS. for her, and to Mr. Wm. M. Hennessy for the translation and notes with which he has enriched it:—

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| <p>Caéir Chíarain Cluain mic Nóir,
baile dhuéctóilur deargródur,
Da éil riúgráigi ar buan blaí,
Sluaig fan riébaile rruéglan.</p> | <p>“ Ciaran’s city is Cluain-mic-Nois,
A place dew-bright, red-rosed :
Of a race of chiefs whose fame is lasting
[Are] hosts under the peaceful clear streamed place.</p> |
| <p>Acaib ruairle cloinib Cuinb
Fan reilig leacuib leargbunib,
Snaibim no craeb ur gaé éolainb
Aíur aim éaeib éearc oíaim.</p> | <p>“ Nobles of the children of Conn
Are under the flaggy, brown-sloped cemetery ;
A knot,^a or a craebh,^b over each body,
And a fair, just, Ogham name.</p> |
| <p>Clainb Chairbri fá tuatib toir,
Na reabé tromlaibé a Teampuib,
Imda dorpmeirg ar gort gaib
Aí loct eorpmeirg Chíarain.</p> | <p>The sons of Cairbre^c over the eastern territories,
The seven great princes from Tara;—
Many a sheltering standard on a field of battle
[Is] with the people of Ciaran’s plain of crosses.</p> |
| <p>Fir Thearai [ir] tuatá breag,
Fá uir Cluana docuiréad ;
Briú eir feile tall fo cumh,
Sil Creide ir clann Conaill.</p> | <p>The men of Teffia,^d the tribes of Bregh,
Were buried under Cluain’s clay ; [sod ;
The valiant and hospitable are yonder under thy
The race of Creide,^e and the Clan-Conaill.^f</p> |
| <p>Ic imbo clainn Cuin na cath
Dú tur deirg ir fob ga palaé,
Imda ruil úame ir ball ban
Fá úir uatbe élanb Gólmán.</p> | <p>Numerous are the sons of Conn of the Battles,
With red clay and turf covering them ;
Many a blue eye and white limb
Under the earth of Clann-Colman’s tomb.</p> |
| <p>Imda fá bun fá diañair
Fear da cloinb Neill Naegiallaig,
Fíur fá buaib leabaib mar úrug,
Fá Cluain lecaib na golluó.</p> | <p>Numerous in the secret stronghold
Are men of the race of Niall of the Nine Hostages ;
Men whose fame deserved a bed like the Brugh,^g
Sleeping under the flags of Cluain.</p> |
- ^a *Knot*.—Probably this refers to the ornamental designs on the crosses and slabs.
- ^b *Craebh*.—The *ogham craebh*, or virgular ogham. See O’Donovan’s *Ir. Gram.*, Introd., p. xlvii.
- ^c *Cairbre*.—Apparently Cairbre Lifechair, son of Cormac Mac Airt.
- ^d *Teffia*.—The ancient name of a district, comprising portions of the present counties of Longford and Westmeath.
- ^e *Race of Creide*.—The O’Conors of Connacht were sometimes called Sil-Creide, or race of Creide.
- ^f *Clann-Conaill*.—Not the Cinel-Conaill, or septs descended from Conall Gulban, son of Niall ; but the descendants of his brother, Conall Cremthann, of whom were the Clann-Colman, or O’Melachlainns.
- ^g *Brugh*.—The principal cemetery of the pagan Irish kings was at Brugh, which seems to have been situated on the northern bank of the Boyne. A series of tumuli and sepulchral *carns* extends from the neighbourhood of Slane towards Drogheda, beginning with the tumulus of New Grange. (See *Lays of the Western Gael*, p. 240, n. 21, by Dr. S. Ferguson.)

Clann Choncóbur énuic in rǵáil
 Ir clann Cheallaiǵ na ǵomóáil
 Na fir anncóni a muǵ
 Cona bpuib a bpeab maiǵ.

The Clann-Connor of Cnoc-in-scáil,^a
 And the Clann-Kelly along with them ;
 The men of valour^b in the plain
 Who brought spoils from the plain of Bregh.

I Maelruanaǵ o buill buǵ,
 Air aiǵaib raeta in éomraic,
 Ǵlan aithaic on airb a buil
 Abarc I Ǵhaiǵ in teaglaǵ.

The O'Mulrouys from the soft Boyle,
 In front of Rath-in-chomraic ;
 Bright is the view from the place where is
 The pillow of O'Taidhg-in-teglaigh.^c

I Lanagan ir I Lainb,
 Ocur I Mael buic brenainb
 Craeb a raerriac ac raímal,
 I Finaect ir I Allamain.

The O'Flanagans,^d and O'Floinns,^e
 And the soft O'Mulrennins ;
 What but likenesses of a noble branch
 Are the O'Finnachtys, and O'Fallons ?

I Fiaépac éir ar tuar,
 Ir amaille na mor buar
 Tpuag aǵe ní cluanar ǵan clob
 Ir rluaiǵbeaǵ e ǵan impoð.

The Hy-Fiachrach, below and above,
 Are there together in great esteem,
 No misery is heard by him^f without being subdued ;
 Powerful is he in reversing them [it].

I Laiéparcraig na lanb nǵorm,
 Cemal Aedha na nor-éornb,
 Ir cian o doéuair in bream be,
 Ar fearr a Cluain a ǵumne.

The O'Flahertys of the blue blades,
 The Cenel-Aedha^g of the golden cups ;
 It is long since the race departed ;
 Better is their memory in Cluain.

I Diármada aǵ buil ba Cluain,
 Ir fir Ǵaileanǵa ǵlano rluaiǵ,
 Abur mar ba éuair ǵac fear,
 Da clar a Cluain ǵa caeine.

The descendants of Diarmaid^h going to Cluain,
 And the men of Gailengaⁱ—a bright host
 As each man departed hence,
 In Cluain was heard lamenting for him.

Da éuair mac Coiri ba cluain
 O éuaim mna ǵo ra mor buairb,
 Da ǵluair craeb aenac ablac,
 Ir Mael meada mall Fábpac.

Mac Coise^j went to Cluain,
 From Tumna,^k in great triumph ;
 The branch of the apple-tree plain went there,
 And Maelmedha the mild, of Fore.

^a *Cnoc-in-scáil*.—"The hill of the spectre," or of the "champion"—a name for the hill of Rath-Croghan, Co. Roscommon.

^b *Of valour*.—The text of this line, and the next, is corrupt, and the translation is only conjectural.

^c *O'Taidhg-in-teglaigh*.—The descendants of Taidhg-in-teglaigh, or Teige of the household. The name is now written *Tighe*.

^d *O'Flanagans*.—Of Clann-Cahill, Co. Roscommon.

^e *O'Floinns*.—O'Flynn, of the same county.

^f *Him*.—i. e. St. Ciaran.

^g *Cenel-Aedha*.—The tribe name of the O'Shaughnessys, of the Co. Galway.

^h *Diarmaid*.—Ancestor of the Mac Dermots.

ⁱ *Gailenga*.—The territory of the O'Garas ; now the barony of Gallen, Co. Mayo.

^j *Mac Coise*.—Erard Mac Coise, a distinguished poet, whose death is entered in the Chron. Scotorum, and Tighernach's Annals, at the year 988. See O'Reilly's Irish Writers, pp. lxix and lxxii.

^k *Tumna*.—Tuaim-mna, in the barony of Boyle, Co. Roscommon.

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Ruc mac Lonain ceim cpaḃaḃ Ḃu Cluain pleabaig paḃ paḃaḃ; Noḃo nuair inḃ ollamḃ ḃaḡ ḃuaig maḃ ḃolluḃ aḡ Ciaran.	Mac Lonain ^a went on a pious journey To the festive Cluain-Ramhfada; ^b The good Ollave obtained not A triumph like sleeping ^c with Ciaran.
Sa pelic ḃeanḃḃoraig ḃain Ḃa haḡlaiceḃ corḃ Ciarain, Ḃu in pelig o corḃ I Chair A hearḃaḃ ḃa ḃḃoḃe paḃḃḃir.	In the cross-pointed fair cemetery Ciaran's body was buried; The cemetery, from the body of the descendant of Cas, Is worth its size of the Garden of Paradise.
Aḃḃ ḃḃuil ḃoḃḃḃr clainḃ uḃ Ḃḃrian, Ḃa ḃuir caḃo ra reḃḃḃaḃ; In Ḃḃrian fuil maḃ ḃu ḃuḃoḃ, Ḃiamaiḡ a ruḡ in reḃḃḃḃ.	It drank of the purple blood of the Clan O'Brian, Who fought battles in the old clay; The O'Brian blood, like to a rose— Its essence gems the old sod.
Crḃḃ i claiḃaḃ ḃloḡ mḃinḃ, Ḃ . . . ceai . . . ḃeḡ na ḃḃḃll, ḃaile ḃeaḃḡlan ir buan blaḃ; Cuan paḃ leḡmaḡ ir leca.	The Cross ^d where melodious bells are heard, A clear-bright place of lasting fame— Under the surface and flags is a host.
Ḃol eaḃpaḃ aḃḃur ḡo á Me lip la na coḃḃala, Ḃaḃḃ ḡilḃ ir ḃoḃḃ na ḃaḃ Ḃir niri Conḃ na ceḃ caḃ. Caḃir Ciarain.	Paul the Apostle, source of comfort— May I be with him the day of the Assembly; Not more merry Conn of the Hundred Battles. Ciaran's City.
Eḃoḡ O Ḃḃillain ḃa ḡaḃ Ar ḃur in laeḃḃ ḡu leaḃar Aca in cpaḃḃ naḃ ḃeil a cpa pe rreḃḃ na Suca. Caḃir Ciar.	Enoch O'Gillain uttered This lay broadly at first, The scion who concealed not his love, Is by the stream of the Suck. ^e Ciaran's City.

^a *Mac Lonain*.—This may have been Flann Mac Lonain, the celebrated writer and chronologer, who was slain near Waterford in the year 891.

^b *Cluain-Ramhfada*.—Clonrode, near Ennis Co. Clare, one of the residences of the ancient chiefs of Thomond. The writer seems to have understood this name as signifying the Cluan of the long road. Two roads or causeways at Clonmacnois are mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters, A. D. 1070, viz., “The causeway from the Cross of Bishop Etchen to the Irdom of St. Ciaran, at Clonmacnois, was made by Maolciarain Mac Cuinn na-mbocht; and also the causeway from the Cross of St. Comgall to the Carn of the Three Crosses, and thence westward to the mouth of the street.” The Pilgrim's Road—one of the ancient approaches to Clonmacnois—is still traceable for many miles. Another road,

called the Long Road, led from Clonburren, opposite Clonmacnois, to Athlone. See Ord. Survey Letters, King's County.

^c *Like sleeping*.—The form of this expression leaves it doubtful whether Flann Mac Lonain was buried in Clonmacnois; but, as he was slain near Waterford, it seems improbable that his remains were conveyed all the way to Cluain. The letters *loan* occur on a broken tombstone at Clonmacnois. See Plate v., Fig. 14.

^d *The Cross*.—The Cross of the Scriptures, which stands close to the great belfry, O'Rourke's Tower, at Clonmacnois. The text of the next line is very obscure.

^e *Suck*.—The River Suck, Co. Galway. The name of O'Gillain is not found in the general lists of Irish poets.

In the works of the school of Clonmacnois will be included the inscribed stones found at Lemanaghan, Hare Island and Inisbofin (two islands in Lough Ree), Clonburren, Athlone, Gallen Priory, and Calry, near Moate. Situated as these places were, in the neighbourhood of the great Monastery from which some were but mere offshoots, it is not surprising that the same character prevails in all the remains of this class of art which have been found in them. It is noteworthy that, while the standing crosses throughout Ireland are much alike, there is a marked dissimilarity in the sepulchral slabs found in the different ancient burial grounds throughout the country.

LEMANAGHAN.

In the year 645, Diarmaid, King of Ireland, according to the Four Masters, passed through Clonmacnois on his way to Carn Conaill, in the County Galway, where a battle was fought between him and Guaire, King of Connaught, in which the former was victorious. The congregation of St. Ciaran made supplication to God that he might return safe through the merits of their intercession. On his return from victory, he granted the lands of Tuaim Eirc—that is Ere's mound—to Clonmacnois as “altar sod” to God and St. Ciaran, and he gave three maledictions to any king whose people should take even a drink of water there. In 664 we read of the death of Saint Manchan here; from him the place was afterwards named *Liath Manchain*, i. e., according to O'Donovan, St. Manchan's grey land—*liath* (Welsh *llwyd*) meaning grey. This St. Manchan is thus described in the Martyrology of Donegal, p. 27: “Manchán, of Liath, son of Indagh. Mella was the name of his mother, and his two sisters were Grealla and Greillseach. There is a church called Liath Mancháin, or Leth Mancháin, in Dealbhna-Mhec-Cochláin. His relics are at the same place in a shrine, which is beautifully covered with boards on the inside, and with bronze outside them, and very beautifully carved. It was Manchán of Liath that composed the charming poem, i. e. :—

‘Would that, O Son of the Living God!
O Eternal ancient King!’ &c.

A very old vellum book states that Manchán of Liath, in habits and life, was like unto “Hieronymus, who was very learned.” His day was January 24. Lemanahan is situated in the barony of Garrycastle, King's County.

* Archdall, writing in 1786, says of Lemanaghan Church, “Its ruins may yet, though distantly, be seen, being surrounded by a bog at present impassable” (Monast. Hib., p. 402). This bog has since been reclaimed. The cell of St. Manchan, half hidden in trees, and thickly covered with ivy, is still standing. The east window is gone, but the west end remains perfect, with its quaint doorway square-headed and

with inclined sides. From this building to the church runs a causeway, at the side of which is a holy well built in a circular form. There remain the ruins of a thirteenth or fourteenth century church, with portions of earlier masonry, and a much injured late twelfth century western doorway: in the graveyard lie the inscribed stones, drawings of which are given among the following Plates.

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ISLANDS IN LOUGH REE.

In the lives of the early monks, we often find that towards the close of their lives they left the monastery which had been the scene of their labours, and to which their fame as teachers had attracted students in numbers, to seek some lonely island or mountain solitude, there to pass their latter days in undisturbed communion with God, and resting from all worldly care. Thus, we find that in the end of the ninth century, Caencomrac, of Inis-Endoimh, Bishop and Abbot of Lughmadh (Louth), the tutor of Aenagan and of Dunadach, from whom the family of Conn na-mbocht were descended,^a “left Cluain in consequence of the veneration in which he was held there, for the neighbours worshipped him as a prophet, so that he went to seek for solitude in Loch Ree afterwards.” He died on the island of Inis Endoimh, now Inis-enagh, in Lough Ree, near Lanesboro’, in the year 898.

The character of the scenery of Lough Ree—its broad expanse of water studded with islands—is indeed such as might well offer many a quiet place of shelter for those humble and earnest men who thus sought to escape temptations which had reached them even in their schools and monasteries.

Two inscriptions, and one slab on which two crosses are carved, are all that have hitherto been found on these islands. One on Inis Aingin, or Hare Island—*Oraid do Tuathal hua Huarain*—is given by O’Donovan in his notes to the *Annals of the Four Masters*, (vol. i., p. 553); but this inscription was differently read by Dr. Petrie, who, in his drawing of the slab, gives the words as follows:—*Oṛ ar Tuath Charaṅ*. It has since disappeared. The other is on Inisbofin, an island a few miles to the north—*Oroit do Cormacan*. That the founder of Clonmacnois was also the founder of a church on Hare Island is stated by Colgan, and Lanigan, and Ware, who says: “Dermid, son of Cervail, Monarch of Ireland, granted to St. Kieran Clonmacnois and Inis Aingin, or the Island of All Saints” (Ware, *Monasticon Hib.*) He here confuses the Island of All Saints with Hare Island (Inis Aingin). Afterwards speaking of which, he says:—“Saint Kieran founded an abbey of regular canons in a certain island in Lough Ree, called Inis-Aingin.”^b O’Donovan questions the truth of this statement, which, however, seems to be borne out by the account given in the *Martyrology of Donegal* (at Jan. 7, p. 9) of Donnan, priest of this island, where it is stated that Donnan came to visit Ciaran in Inis Aingin, and that in the year 544 Ciaran left to him the island, and also his Gospel and its bearer, i. e. Maelodhrain.

CLONBURREN.

Clonburren, formerly Cluain Boirenn, is an ancient church on the west side of the Shannon, in the county of Roscommon, not far below Clonmacnois. It was founded in the sixth century by the Virgin Saint Cairech Dergain, who died on the 9th of February, 577. She was a sister of Saint Enna, of Aran.

^a *Annals of the Four Masters*, A. D. 898.

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^b *Antiquities of Ireland*, by Sir James Ware, p. 90.

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The following passage occurs in O'Donovan's Letters (Ordnance Survey, vol. f. 1.) from the County Roscommon:—

“Yesterday I visited the old Nunnery of Cloon Burren, from which I had a good view of Clonmacnoise. The following notice of it in the Registry of Clonmacnoise, as translated by Dudley Furbise for Sir James Ware, excited my curiosity to examine the localities in that neighbourhood.

“Grany (*rectè* Many) Mor O'Kelly killed a child; the Church forgave him, and he bestowed 12 daies in Relyg-na Keallry in Liosbailemor, in Kylmarusgach, to the cemeterie of O'Kelly in *Cluain*. And Loughlin O'Kelly, from w^{ch} are the offspring of the O'Kellys called Sloight Loughlyn, seeing these livings to have been concealed from *Cluaine*, went with this life of St. Kieran to the Bishop there in *Cluaine*, and delivered it unto the Bishop, for which the Bishop gave unto Loughlyn and to his heirs for ever six quarters of land under this rent, six cows and six fatt hogges at every feast of St. Martin, and to repair the *Togher* or causey of Cluyn Buyrynn from the *Cross* of Carbre Crom westwards to the *Cruaidh* of Failte.”

“This *togher* or causeway still exists, and runs across the bog from Cloon Burren to the *Cruaidh*, or hard ground of *Failte*, and the cross of Carbre Crom, now mutilated, stands nearly in the middle of it. There was a holy well at the foot of this cross, but it removed to the other side of the *togher*, in consequence of an insult offered it by an imprudent woman, who washed her clothes in it, and it has latterly been dried up by drains sunk at both sides of the causeway to keep it dry.”

Dr. Petrie does not mention this Cross of Carbre Crom at Clonburren; but in his work on Irish Ecclesiastical Architecture, p. 323, he alludes to a slab at Clonmacnois bearing the inscription—*O' do corbriu chrumm*, which he is inclined to believe was the work of the sculptor that executed the tombstone of Suibine Mac Mailehumai, whose death occurred about the same time as that of Carbre, that is the 6th of March, 899. Unfortunately, Dr. Petrie did not then publish any drawing of this stone, and none such has been found among his collections. The stone itself has since disappeared. This name was borne also by a chieftain of the race of Hy Many* in Connaught, who was contemporary with St. Ciaran, of Clonmacnois. The name is written Cairbre Crom, or Cam, which are nearly synonymous terms—*cam* meaning crooked, and *crom* bent or stooped.

In connexion with the subject of the above inscription we have the following passage in the Annals of the Four Masters, with a note by O'Donovan:—“A. D. 899, Cairbre Crom, Bishop of Cluain-mic-Nois, died. It was to him the spirit of Maelsechlainn shewed itself.” For a long account of the conversation, which is said to have taken place between this Bishop and the spirit of King Maelsechlainn, or Malachy, see Colgan's Acta Sanctorum, p. 508, and the Martyrology of Donegal, p. 67.

* A curious legend connected with Coirpre Crom, chief of Hymany, and a “flag-stone” on the *togher* of Clonburren, is given by O'Donovan amongst his

notes to the Registry of Clonmacnois, referred to at p. 4, *supra*. This legend will be referred to more fully in a subsequent page.