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THE EUROPEAN SKY-GOD.

VI. THE CELTS (*continued*).

BY ARTHUR BERNARD COOK.

HITHERTO we have confined our attention almost exclusively to Ireland and the Isle of Man. It may next be shown that partial parallels to the foregoing Irish and Manx beliefs can be traced elsewhere among the Insular Celts.

Corresponding to the Gaelic *Bile* is the British *Beli*,¹ whose son Avallach² was called after the apple or the apple-tree.³ This Avallach appears to have given his name to Avallon or the Isle of Avallon,⁴ which was the British counterpart of the Gaelic Emhain of the Apple-trees. Avallon was early identified with Glastonbury, whose hill (Glastonbury Tor) surrounded by swamps came to be looked upon as an Elysium or Otherworld.⁵ If Avallach, son of the dark sky-god and king of the Other-world, was thus connected with apples, it can hardly be

¹ *Folk-lore* xvii. 55, 59, 68, 70.

² Rhys *Arthurian Legend* p. 336 cites from cod. Harl. 3859 fol. 193b a pedigree ending 'son of Eugene, son of Aballac, son of Amalech, who was the son of Beli the Great, and his mother was Anna, who is said to have been cousin to the Virgin Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and justly observes that *Aballac* and *Amalech* are only two forms of the same name, adding that *ib.* fol. 194a *Aballac* is made son of Beli and Anna without any allusion to *Amalech*.

³ Welsh *afal*, 'apple,' or *afall*, 'apple-tree,' which would be in Old Welsh spelling *abal* and *aball* respectively. Old Irish *aball*, 'apple.' See further A. Holder *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* s.v. *ab-áll-os.

⁴ Rhys *Arthurian Legend*, p. 337.

⁵ *Id. ib.* p. 328 ff.

doubted that he had one apple-tree of peculiar sanctity resembling that of the Irish tales. Nor is this a matter of mere conjecture. William of Malmesbury in his account of the founding of Glastonbury¹ relates how a certain Glasteing passed through the midlands following his sow till he found it suckling its young under an apple-tree close to Glastonbury church. Hence, he says, the apples of that tree are called *Ealdcyrcenes epple*, that is 'apples of the Old Church,' while the sow, which had eight legs, was known as *ealdcyre* [sic] *suge*, 'The sow of the Old Church.' Glasteing settled there and his descendants peopled the place.

Whether the British king had a branch of the Elysian apple-tree comparable with the branches borne by Bran, Cormac, and Conchobar, we cannot say. But in the Welsh tale of *Branwen the daughter of Llyr*, Bendigeid Vran, son of Llyr and king of Britain, sought to compensate Matholwch, king of Ireland, for an insult done to him by offering him 'a staff of silver, as large and as tall as himself, and a plate of gold of the breadth of his face.'² Lady Charlotte Guest *ad loc.*³ compares the Laws of Hywel Dda, where the fine for insult to a king is fixed at a 'hundred cows on account of every cantrev in the kingdom, and a silver rod with three knobs at the top, that shall reach from the ground to the king's face, when he sits in his chair, and as thick as his ring-finger; and a golden bason, which shall hold fully as much as the king drinks, of the thickness of a husbandman's nail, who shall have followed husbandry for seven years, and

¹ William of Malmesbury *De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae*, cited by Rhys *Arthurian Legend* p. 332 n. 1 from Gale *Historia Britanniae* etc. Oxford 1691 p. 295, states that he took this narrative 'de antiquis Britonum libris.'

² *The Mabinogion* trans. Lady Charlotte Guest, publ. J. M. Dent, London, p. 36.

³ *Ib.* p. 303.

a golden cover, as broad as the king's face, equally thick as the bason.' In another MS. cited by Lady Charlotte Guest the payment is said to be of gold throughout: 'a golden rod as long as himself, of the thickness of his little finger, and a golden tablet, as broad as his face, and as thick as a husbandman's nail.' This silver rod with three knobs, or golden rod as the case may be, reminds us forcibly of Conchobar's silver wand with three golden apples on it¹ and of Cormac's silver branch with nine (or three) golden apples.² We shall not be far wrong, if we suppose that the silver rod and the golden bason are analogous to the silver branch and the golden cup of the Irish king.³

At Glastonbury, as elsewhere,⁴ the apple-tree may have been a substitute for an oak. For Professor Rhys points out that Malmesbury's *Glasteing*, i.e. *Glastenig* or *Glastenic*, 'is clearly derived from the *glasten*, which in Breton meant "oak": cf. Cornish *glastanen*, "an oak."⁵ On this showing, *Glasteing*, the eponymous founder of Glastonbury, who built his town round the apple-tree, was himself called 'He of the Oaks.' Professor Rhys further makes it probable that another name of Glastonbury, used from motives of piety, was *Lojt cojt*, the 'Grey Trees.'⁶ If

¹ *Folk-lore* xvii. 160.

² *Id.* xvii. 152.

³ *Id.* xvii. 159 ff., 169 ff.

⁴ *Folk-lore* xvii. 57, 61, 153, 159, 170.

⁵ Rhys *Arthurian Legend* p. 333 n. 2. The Celtic *glasto-*, the root of *glasten* and *glastanen*, was a colour-word denoting 'green,' 'blue,' 'grey' (Holder *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* s.v. *glasto-*). Hence also *glastum*, 'wood.' Since *vitrum*, the Latin for 'wood,' also meant 'glass,' and since *Glastenic* would readily suggest 'glass,' the belief arose that Glastonbury was somehow connected with glass. Malmesbury states that another ancient name for the place was *Ynesuuitrin*, 'Insula Vitrea.' See O. Schrader *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde* Strassburg 1901 s.v. 'Wald,' and Rhys *Arthurian Legend* pp. 330, 333.

⁶ *Id.* *ib.* quoting from Cod. Harl. 3859 fol. 194b the gloss *unus* st. 'glastenic. qui uener' [q; uocat] *lojt/cojt*, which he emends into 'unde sunt glastenic qui uenerabiliterque uocantur lojt cojt.'

so, the oaks after which the place was called must have been objects of veneration.¹

Glasteing, 'He of the Oaks,' following a monstrous sow till it lay down beneath a sacred tree, recalls not only the sow with thirty teats found at last by Aeneas beneath the oaks of the Alban Mount,² but also the Welsh tale of *Math, the Son of Mathonwy*.³ Math and Gwydion together made a wife for Llew Llaw Gyffes ('the Lion of the Sure Hand'), who was the son of Arianrod ('Silver-wheel') and prince of Dinodig. They called her Blodeuwedd ('Flower-face'), for she was a lovely creature formed of the blossoms of the oak, of the broom, and of the meadow-sweet. But she was fickle and, through love of

¹ Glastonbury has been distinguished for a sacred tree of one sort or another from its earliest foundation to the present time.

The Glastonbury walnut never put forth its leaves before St. Bartholomew's day, Aug. 24, but on that festival was covered with them (Camden *Britannia* ed. Gough i. 59). According to others, it never budded before the feast of St. Barnabas, June 11 (R. Folkard *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* London 1884 p. 63, from Collinson's *History of Somerset*). Or again, it put forth young leaves at Christmas (J. Aubrey *The Natural History of Wiltshire* ed. J. Britton, London 1847, p. 57). The credulous, including Queen Anne, King James, etc., gave large sums of money for small cuttings from it (Folkard *loc. cit.*).

The Glastonbury cornel or hawthorn budded on Christmas day (Camden *loc. cit.*). It was even more sought after (R. Warner *An History of the Abbey of Glaston* Bath 1826 p. c. ff., Hilderic Friend *Flowers and Flower Lore* London 1883 i. 193 f., Folkard *op. cit.* pp. 62 f., Mrs. J. H. Philpot *The Sacred Tree* London 1897 p. 166 ff.).

With these trees should be compared the Cadenham oak in the New Forest, which budded always on Christmas day and was regarded by the country folk with peculiar veneration (Folkard *op. cit.* pp. 63, 470, J. Nisbet and the Hon. G. W. Lascelles in the *Victoria History of Hampshire* ii. 465). The same is said of the King's oak in the New Forest (Aubrey *op. cit.* p. 57); of an old pollard oak within the trenches of Malwood castle, from which a basket of young leaves used to be sent every Christmas to King Charles I; and of two other pollard oaks growing not far from the King's oak (*id. ib.* p. 53 f.). Cp. also Philpot *Sacred Trees* p. 167 on two apple-trees blossoming at Christmas.

² *Folk-lore* xvi. 281 n. 2.

³ Lady Charlotte Guest *Mabinogion* ed. 1904 p. 58 ff.

Gronw Pebyr ('the Strong'), got from Llew Llaw Gyffes his life-secret. He could be killed only by a spear that had been a year in the making; and nothing must have been done to it except during the sacrifice on Sundays. He could not be killed within a house or without, on horseback or on foot, but only when he stood with one foot on the edge of a thatched cauldron beside a river and with the other foot on the back of a buck. Blodeuwedd revealed the secret to Gronw, who slew him thus. Llew Llaw Gyffes in the form of an eagle flew up and disappeared. His uncle Gwydion made search for him by following a sow, which set off with great speed and made for the brook now called Nant y Llew. Here she halted under an oak-tree and began to eat putrid flesh that dropped from the boughs. Looking up, Gwydion saw perched there an eagle, from whom fragments of flesh kept dropping. He charmed the eagle with song to descend to his knee, and, striking him with his magic wand, restored him once more to the form of Llew Llaw Gyffes. Gwydion next pursued after Blodeuwedd and changed her into an owl; while Llew killed Gronw, even as Gronw had killed him, and so recovered his principedom.

In this important myth we notice, to begin with, that the hero's name, as Professor Rhŷs¹ has shown, was originally not *Llew*, but *Lleu*, the Welsh equivalent of *Lug*, the Irish sun-god.¹ Again, Llew or Lleu reigns as a king over the cantrev of Dinodig, having his palace at Mur-y-Castell.² Further, after death he comes to life again, and for the second time takes possession of his kingdom under the same name.³ These indications point to the conclusion that the British, like the Gaelic,⁴ king personated the sun-god, who was believed to be re-incarnate in the royal line.

¹ Rhŷs *Hibbert Lectures* p. 237 n. 1, pp. 398-409, *Arthurian Legend* p. 97, *Celtic Folklore* ii. 542 f.

² Lady Charlotte Guest *Mabinogion* ed. 1904 p. 72.

³ *Ib.* p. 80.

⁴ *Folk-lore* xvii. 159.

Once more, Llew passes at death into the form of an eagle haunting an oak. With this transformation of the king into a bird we are already familiar from Greek, Italian, and Irish sources.¹ Sundry other examples of it occur in Welsh, Breton, and Cornish legends, *i.e.* in all the subdivisions of the British Celts. In Cornwall it is believed that King Arthur is still living in the form of a raven, having been changed into that bird by magic, but that some day he will become a king once more.² Here too, as in the case of Llew, metamorphosis into a bird precedes re-incarnation as a man. Later Welsh literature gives us a dialogue between Arthur and his nephew Eliwlod, son of Madog, in which Eliwlod—again like Llew—appears as an eagle seated among the branches of an oak.³ Similarly a Breton ballad,⁴ at least as old as the end of the fourteenth century, tells how Bran, grandson of a yet greater Bran, in the form of a crow (for *Bran* means 'crow' in the Breton language, as it does also in Welsh⁵) haunts an oak on the battlefield of Kerloän, where a famous fight was fought in the tenth century between the Norsemen and the Bretons under Ewen the Great. Part of this ballad is translated by Mr. Tom Taylor:

' On the battlefield of Kerloän
There grows a tree looks o'er the lan';
There grows an oak in the place of stour,
Where the Saxons fled from Ewen-Vor.
Upon this oak, when the moon shines bright,
The birds they gather from the night.

¹ *Ib.* xv. 385 ff., xvi. 312, xvii. 165.

² *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, viii. 618, cited by Mr. Gomme in *The Archaeological Review* 1889 iii. 226. See also R. Bosworth Smith *Bird Life and Bird Lore* London 1905 p. 147 f.

³ *Rhys Arthurian Legend* p. 56 n. 2, *Celtic Folklore* ii. 610.

⁴ T. Taylor *Ballads and Songs of Brittany* London 1865 p. 51 ff., M. Maclean *The Literature of the Celts* London 1902 p. 248.

⁵ *Folk-lore* xvii. 166.

Sea-mews, pied-black and white are there,
 On every forehead a bloodspeck clear.
 With them a corbie, ash-grey for eld,
 And a young crow aye at her side beheld.
 Wayworn seem the twain, with wings that dreep,
 As birds that flight o'er sea must keep.
 So sweetly sing these birds, and clear,
 The great sea stills its waves to hear,
 And aye their songs one burden hold,
 All save the young crow's and the corbie's old.
 And this is ever the crow's sore cry,
 "Sing, little birds, sing merrily."
 "Sing, birds o' the land, in merry strain,
 You died not far from your own Bretayne."

Another anonymous Breton ballad¹ translated by Mr. Taylor dates from the sixth century. It tells the tale of *The Lord Nann and the Fairy*. Lord Nann gripped his oaken spear and sallied out into the wild-woods to get venison for his bride. While pursuing a snow-white hind he intruded upon the grotto of a Corrigaun, who challenged him to wed her on pain of pining away for seven years or dying within three days. True to his young wife he refused temptation, and the Corrigaun laid a spell upon him. He at once fell sick and died. His wife came suddenly upon his grave:

' She threw herself on her knees amain,
 And from her knees ne'er rose again.
 That night they laid her, dead and cold,
 Beside her lord, beneath the mould;
 When, lo!—a marvel to behold!—
 Next morn from the grave two oak-trees fair,
 Shot lusty boughs high up in air;
 And in their boughs—oh, wondrous sight!—
 Two happy doves, all snowy white—
 That sang, as ever the morn did rise,
 And then flew up—into the skies!'

¹ T. Taylor *Ballads and Songs of Brittany* p. 7 ff., *Maclean Literature of the Celts* p. 240 ff.

The regalia of Greek and Italian kings marked them out as vice-gerents of the sky-god or sun-god. On the one hand, they had a golden crown of oak-leaves;¹ on the other, an eagle-tipped sceptre, which represented an original tree or branch.² The British imperial crown is now closed in by two arches of golden oak-leaves and acorns, richly studded with diamonds and pearls,³ while the so-called 'rod of equity' is a sceptre surmounted by a dove.⁴ It is, moreover, possible that the royal 'orb,' like the apple of the Irish prince,⁵ stands for the sun itself. The Scottish crown likewise has golden arches enriched with enamelled oak-leaves: these leaves were in all probability added about the year 1536 by James V.,⁶ the Stuart badge being the oak.⁷ The Scottish sword of state, presented to James IV. in 1507 by Pope Julius II., has the arms of the latter enamelled on its scabbard, *vis.* 'on a cartouch azure, an oak tree eradicated and fructuated or': the handle and guard of this sword are decorated with silver-gilt oak-leaves and acorns, while the scabbard is adorned throughout with a similar design.⁸ Lastly, the head of the Scottish sceptre is formed by a globe of rock crystal,⁹ which again may have symbolised the sun.

We have seen reason to suppose that the life of the Irish king was bound up with the *bile* or sacred tree that grew in or near his fort.¹⁰ For instance, in *The Lay of*

¹ *Folk-lore* xvi. 302, 307, 312.

² *Ib.* xv. 370 ff., xvi. 302, 307, 312.

³ R. Chambers *The Book of Days* London 1864 i. 614 f. with woodcut.

⁴ *The Encyclopædia Britannica* ed. 9 xx. 340 s.v. 'Regalia.'

⁵ *Folk-lore* xvii. 147, 154, 159, 169.

⁶ A. J. S. Brook 'Technical Description of the Regalia of Scotland' in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* New Series xii. 83.

⁷ *Infra* p. 15 f.

⁸ A. J. S. Brook *loc. cit.* p. 105 ff.

⁹ *Id. ib.* p. 98 f.

¹⁰ *Folk-lore* xvii. 169 ff.

the Wife of Meargach,¹ Ailne is thus forewarned of the death of her husband and two sons :

‘ I knew, by the eagle’s visit
Each evening over the Dun,
That ere long I would hear
Evil tidings from my Three !

I knew, when the huge tree (*bile*) withered,
Both branch and leaves before the Dun,
That victorious you would never return
From the wiles of Fionn Mac Cumhail !’

Similarly, in the tale of *Arthur and Gorlagon*,² the Welsh king has in his garden a young tree (*virga*), which sprang up when he was born, has grown with his growth, and exactly matches him in height. He keeps it most jealously guarded, because a blow from the slender end of it will turn him into a werwolf. In Scotland too the life of the king or local magnate was bound up with that of a tree, especially an oak-tree. This sympathetic relationship comes out in a folk-tale from Argyll.³ There was once a big man called the Strong Man of the Wood. One day he cut a large oak, which fell on him and gave him his death-hurt. But, before he died, he bade his wife plant an acorn of the tree in the midden-stead by his door. When the acorn appeared above ground, a son should be born of her.⁴ She was to nourish him with the sap of her

¹ *Transactions of the Ossianic Society for 1856* Dublin 1859 iv. 173.

² A. C. L. Brown in *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* Boston 1903 viii. 153, 171.

³ J. Macdougall *Folk and Hero Tales from Argyllshire* London 1891 p. 187 ff. Somewhat similar is the Irish tale of the giant cow-herd, who pulls up an oak-tree by the roots, does the bidding of Finn in a series of desperate adventures suggested by Finn’s men, who are afraid of him, and at last proves to be no cow-herd but the son of the king of Alba (J. Curtin *Myths and Folk-lore of Ireland* London 1890 p. 292 ff.). For other parallels see Grimm’s *Household Tales* trans. M. Hunt London 1901 ii. 16 ff., 383 ff.

⁴ Cp. the oak of Mughna, which was ‘hidden’ till the birth of King Conn (*Folk-lore* xvii. 60, 68).

breast and side until he could uproot the tree thus planted. In due time the woman had a son, and sure enough the seedling of the acorn was just breaking from the ground. She nourished her son seven years, and then took him out to try the tree; but he could not move it. She gave him another seven years of the breast, and then told him to try the tree again; but, though he shook it terribly, he still could not lift it. Again she gave him suck for seven years; and this time he uprooted it, and left it as a heap of firewood before her door. Hereupon his mother sent him out into the world with a bannock and her blessing. Others, scared at his strength, were anxious to be rid of him, and set him one impossible task after another with that end in view. But he easily performed them all, and in the end carried off his mother to live with him in a fine place from which all the previous inhabitants had fled in dismay.

Perhaps the most remarkable case of vital sympathy between man and tree is that of the Hays, formerly earls of Errol on the Firth of Tay.¹ The family legend is thus given by the Rev. Adam Philip in his *Songs and Sayings of Gowrie*.² During the Danish invasion of Scotland in 980 A.D. the Scots were all but worsted at Luncarty, when a countryman and his two sons rallied them and armed with mere plough-coulters defeated the Danes. After the battle the old peasant, named Hay, was taken to King Kenneth, who gave him at a parliament held at Scone as much land on the Tay in the district of Gowrie

¹Dr. Frazer drew attention to this case in his *Golden Bough* ed. 1, ii, 362, ed. 2 iii. 448 f.; but unfortunately the newspaper-cutting, on which he relied, did not give the full facts.

²A. Philip *Songs and Sayings of Gowrie* Edinburgh and London 1901 p. 67 ff. The author duly notes that Milton proposed to found a drama on this legend, and that Shakspeare (after Holinshed *History of Scotland* p. 155) has utilised it in *Cymbelins* 5. 3. 1 ff. Camden *Britannia* ed. Gough iii. 394 arms Hay with a yoke, not a plough-coulter.

as a hawk let off at Kinnoull should fly over before it settled. The hawk alighted at the Hawk's Stane in St. Madoes' Parish, all the intervening land becoming the property of the Hays. John Hay Allan, a member of the family, in his 'Lines Written upon coming in sight of the Coast of Scotland'¹ exclaims:

'And sooth there was a time, howe'er 'tis now,
O'er thy wide realm they held the regal sway.
The blood which yet beneath this breast doth flow,
Was from thy Stuarts drawn in olden day:²
But with their race all! all! is fallen away—
Yet mourn I how my name withstood their foes?
Cursed had it been to fail them in the fray,
Aye in their weal it shared as in their woes,
And aye the misle spray shall blend it with the rose.'³

Commenting on the last line, the poet himself writes as follows:⁴ 'Among the Low Country families the badges are now almost generally forgotten; but it appears by an ancient MS. and the tradition of a few old people in Perthshire, that the badge of the Hays was the mistletoe. There was formerly in the neighbourhood of Errol, and not far from the Falcon stone, a vast oak of an unknown age, and upon which grew a profusion of the plant: many charms and legends were considered to be connected with the tree, and the duration of the family of Hay was said to be united with its existence. It was believed that a sprig of the mistletoe cut by a Hay

¹J. H. Allan *The Bridal of Caolchairn; and other Poems* London 1822 p. 97.

²This refers to the supposed connexion between J. H. Allan and Prince Charlie, on which see the Rev. A. Philip *op. cit.* p. 142 ff. and Mr. F. Hindes Groome's article on 'John Sobieski Stolberg Stuart' in the *National Dictionary of Biography*.

³J. H. Allan *Bridal of Caolchairn* p. 232 in 'The Gathering of the Hays' writes:

'Dark as the mountain's heather wave,
The rose and the misle are coming brave.'

⁴*Id. ib.* p. 337 f.

on Allhallowmas Eve, with a new dirk, and after surrounding the tree three times sun-ways, and pronouncing a certain spell, was a sure charm against all glamour or witchery, and an infallible guard in the day of battle. A spray gathered in the same manner was placed in the cradle of infants, and thought to defend them from being changed for elf-bairns by the fairies. Finally, it was affirmed, that when the root of the oak had perished, "the grass should grow in the hearth of Errol, and a raven should sit in the falcon's nest." The two most unlucky deeds which could be done by one of the name of Hay was, to kill a white falcon, and to cut down a limb from the oak of Errol. When the old tree was destroyed I could never learn. The estate has been some time sold out of the family of Hay,¹ and of course it is said that the fatal oak was cut down a short time before. A white rose is the badge of the Clan Stuibhard.'

Thomas the Rhymer is credited with the following :²

'While the mistletoe bats on Errol's aik,
And the aik stands fast,
The Hays shall flourish, and their good grey hawk
Shall nocht flinch before the blast.

But when the root of the aik decays,
And the mistletoe dwines on its withered breast,
The grass shall grow on Errol's hearth-stane,
And the corbie roup in the falcon's nest.'

So then the fortune of the Hays was bound up with an immemorial oak. And the white falcon that haunted the spot was very possibly regarded as an ancestral spirit

¹ *Id. ib.* p. 334 f. explains that the name De la Haye is a translation of the old Gaelic name Mac Garadh. Garadh, i.e. 'Dike' or 'Barrier,' was the appellation bestowed on the ancestor of the Hays for his conduct at the battle of Luncarty. Hence his descendants were known as the *Clann na Garadh*, and their chief for the time being as *Mac Mhic Garadh Mòr ann Sgithan Dearg* or 'the son of the son of Garadh of the red shields.'

² Rev. J. B. Pratt *Buchan* ed. 4 Aberdeen 1901 p. 57 n. *Id. ib.* p. 50 ff. gives many interesting details concerning the Hays, the *Saxum Falconis*, the Luncarty Stone, etc.

in bird-form.¹ The Falcon's stone near the old oak recalls the Pillar of the Living Tree near the oak of Mugna.² Both Greeks and Italians, as we have already seen, connected oak-mistletoe with the sun:³ it is *à priori* probable that the Insular Celts did the same. In Ireland, however, the mistletoe is not a native plant and was only introduced in the eighteenth century.⁴ Hence in the ritual of Allhallowmas Eve the Irish sun-charm was performed with apples, not mistletoe.⁵ Now it was precisely on Allhallowmas Eve that mistletoe was cut from the oak at Errol by a Hay, who surrounded the tree three times sun-ways. We can hardly deny that the cutting of such a plant on such an occasion in such a way had a definitely solar significance. I conjecture that the Hay with the sprig of mistletoe in his hand was the Scotch equivalent of Bran or Coymac or Conchobar with his silver apple-branch. In other words, that he represented the sun-god and as such bore the sun-god's fruit. The mistletoe sprig was 'an infallible guard in the day of battle.' Why? Simply because it filled its bearer with the sun-god's strength. Placed in a cradle, it proved a powerful prophylactic. What agencies of darkness dared touch the *protégé* of the sun?

¹ *Id. ib.* p. 231 in 'The Gathering of the Hays':

'The standard of Errol unfolds its white breast,
And the falcon of Loncartie stirs in her nest.'

² *Folk-lore* xvii. 61, with n. 4. Beside an ancient oak near Kingston Lisle in White Horse Vale stands a remarkable stone known as the Blowing Stone. It is a brown Sarsen block, three feet high, honeycombed by sinuous cavities. By blowing bugle-wise down one of these a deep-toned note is produced, which is audible at Faringdon Clump six miles away. The original site of the stone was on the crest of the downs, above White Horse Hill; and it is said that King Alfred used it for the purpose of summoning his troops. (*The Daily Graphic* April 2 1906 p. 13 and *The Wide World Magazine* May 1906 xvii. 206 f., both with illustration.)

³ *Folk-lore* xv. 424 ff., xvi. 284 f.

⁴ P. W. Joyce *A Social History of Ancient Ireland* London 1903 i. 236.

⁵ *Folk-lore* xvii. 58.

This is not the place to dwell on the obvious parallelism between the cutting of the mistletoe by the druids and its cutting by the Hays. Of that I shall have occasion to speak later. For the moment it must suffice to have found the solar chief, whose fortunes were bound up with the ancestral oak-tree, defying his foes through the virtue of the mistletoe that he holds in his hand. Even in death he would not be buried without it, if we may judge from a find made at Gristhorpe near Scarborough in 1834 A.D. A tumulus was opened, and in it was discovered the trunk of an oak-tree containing a very perfect skeleton of a supposed Brigantian chief with his spear-heads, etc. Mr. Williamson, one of the excavators, writes of it: 'A quantity of a vegetable substance, which was first believed to be dried rushes, was also found in the coffin; some of it has since been macerated, and though the greater portion of it is so much decomposed that nothing but the fibre remains, in one or two instances we have been so far successful as to clearly distinguish a long lanceolate leaf, resembling that of the mistletoe, which plant it has probably been: a few dried berries were amongst the vegetable mass; they were very tender and most of them soon crumbled to dust;—they are about the size of those of the mistletoe.'¹

The Hays, as we have seen, claimed kinship with the Stuarts, of whom the Rev. Hilderic Friend² says: 'The

¹J. Allies *Antiquities and Folk-lore of Worcestershire* ed. 2 London 1852 p. 164. The oak-log with its contents was then preserved in the Scarborough Museum. There may have been similar oak-kings at Glastonbury. For, according to Giraldus Cambrensis *Speculum Ecclesiae* 2.9 f. cited by Camden *Britannia* ed. Gough i. 59, Henry II. made search for King Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury and discovered 'a coffin made out of the trunk of an oak hollowed, in which were lodged the bones of this famous champion.' It should also be observed that mistletoe is particularly frequent in all the orchards about Glastonbury (R. J. King *Sketches and Studies* London 1874 p. 48).

²Friend *Flowers and Flower Lore* p. 12, after King, *Sketches and Studies*, p. 53.

Oak formed the badge of the Stuarts. As, however, it was not evergreen, the Highlanders regarded this as ominous of the fate of the royal house.' Among the many Scottish armorial bearings in which an oak-tree figures Sir James Balfour Paul Lyon gives those of Reginald Macdonald Steuart (1813) as 'Arg. an oak tree vert surmounted of a double-headed eagle displayed or.'¹ Again, in the grounds of Dalhousie Castle, some two miles from Dalkeith, is the famous Edgewell Oak, so called because it stands on the edge of a fine spring. Local tradition has it that a branch falls from the tree whenever a member of the [Ramsay] family dies.² The original oak fell early in the eighteenth century; but a new one sprang from the old root, and the tree was still flourishing in 1889.³

In England too special sanctity attaches to the mistletoe-bearing oak. At Croydon there used to be a great forest of oak-trees called Norwood, in which at a point where four parishes met stood an ancient tree known as the Vicar's Oak. One of the oaks in this forest bore mistletoe, 'which some persons were so hardy as to cut for the gain of selling it to the apothecaries'⁴

¹ Sir James Balfour Paul Lyon *Ordinary of Scottish Arms* Edinburgh 1903 p. 371 No. 5466. See *ib. s. vv.* 'Oak,' 'Oak-slips,' 'Tree.'

² If a branch was blown down off certain old ash-trees at Manor Farm, Hill Deverill, in South-west Wilts, this was held to portend the death of one of the family living there (*Folk-lore* xii. 72). Cp. J. Aubrey *Remains of Gentilisme* ed. J. Britten London 1881 p. 180.

³ J. M. Mackinlay *Folk-lore of Scottish Locks and Springs* Glasgow 1893 p. 238.

⁴ *Friend Flowers and Flower Lore* ii. 378 f. 'Bacon says the Mistletoe upon oaks is counted very medicinal,' etc., J. Brand *Popular Antiquities of Great Britain* ed. Ellis London 1849 i. 525 'The mistletoe of the oak, which is very rare, is vulgarly said to be a cure for wind-ruptures in children,' Folkard *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* p. 442 'The powder of an oak-mistletoe was deemed an infallible cure for epilepsy,' etc., V. S. Lean *Collectanea* Bristol 1903 iii. 505 'The mistletoe of the oak, a capital thing for a sick cow.—Lees.' See further J. Aubrey *Remains of Gentilisme* p. 89.

of London, leaving a branch of it to sprout out. But they proved unfortunate after it, for one of them fell lame and others lost an eye. At length, in the year 1678, a certain man, notwithstanding he was warned against it, upon the account of what the other had suffered, adventured to cut the tree down, and he soon after brake his leg.¹ But further the oak, if not the mistletoe,² stood in a relation of mysterious sympathy to royal or noble personages. In Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire, it is said that the old oaks lost their tops when Lady Jane Grey, who resided at Bradgate Hall in that neighbourhood, was beheaded.³ Eastwell in Kent is the seat of the Finches, Earls of Winchelsea; and Aubrey tells how grave misfortunes overtook the family, when Lord Winchelsea felled a curious grove of oaks near his house and gave the first blow with his own hand.⁴

But it is in Cornwall, if anywhere in England, that we should look to find clear traces of Celtic superstition. Painter's Oak in the hundred of East, Cornwall, and an oak in the parish of Probus, near Truro, are both said to have had leaves speckled with white; and in the case of the Probus oak it was added that, if the leaves appeared all of one colour, it betokened the death of the owner.⁵ Since oak-mistletoe is not found in the

¹ *Lean Collectanea* ii. i. 207, quoting Cox *Magna Britannia* v. 374. Cp. Aubrey, cited by Folkard *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* p. 442 and by King *Sketches and Studies* p. 53.

² A tomb in Bristol Cathedral belonging to the great family of Berkeleys has its spandrels filled with sprays of mistletoe—apparently the sole example of mistletoe in British ecclesiastical sculpture (King *Sketches and Studies* p. 49). Is there a family tradition to explain it?

³ *County Folk-lore*, i. 3 Leicestershire and Rutland, p. 28.

⁴ Aubrey, cited by Mackinlay *Folklore of Scottish Lochs and Springs* p. 237 f.

⁵ Carew *History of Cornwall*, cited by Mr. Gomme in *The Archaeological Review* 1889 iii. 231. See also Heath *Description of Cornwall* 1750, cited by Miss M. A. Courtney *Cornish Feasts and Folk-lore* Penzance 1890 p. 104 f. :

⁶ In Lanhadron Park there grows an oak that bears leaves speckled with

county,¹ it may be that these oaks with white-spotted leaves were the Cornish substitute for mistletoe-bearing oaks; and it is of interest to note that they were thus related to their owners. Still more significant is that relation, when the speckled oak is said to be in sympathy with a king. 'At Boconnoc, near Lostwithiel,' says Miss M. A. Courtney,² 'not long ago stood the stump of an old oak, in which, in 1644, when Charles I. made this seat his head-quarters, the royal standard was fixed. It bore variegated leaves. According to tradition, they changed colour when an attempt was made to assassinate the king while he was receiving the sacrament under its branches. The ball passed through the tree, and a hole in its trunk was formerly pointed out in confirmation of the story.'

We have now passed in review the scattered indications, which go to prove that among the Insular Celts, Gaelic and British alike, the king was originally believed to discharge the rôle of the sky-god or sun-god and that in this capacity he was thought to stand in a peculiar relation to the sky-god's tree (apple or oak), a portion of which (apple-branch or oak-mistletoe) he was entitled to bear.

In Christian times the divine king was succeeded by the saint.³ As the former mounted guard over his sacred tree, so the latter dwelt beneath its hallowed boughs. The records of Celtic saints, if searched for the purpose, would probably yield many details of pagan import. For example, Bres, king of the Tuatha Dé Danann and successor of Nuada,⁴ was married to the ancient Irish

white, as another, called Painter's Oak, grows in the hundred of East. Some are of opinion that divers ancient families of England are preadmonished by oaks bearing strange leaves.' Cp. J. Evelyn *Silva* York 1776 p. 75 ff.

¹ R. Polwhele *The History of Cornwall* Falmouth 1803 i.

² M. A. Courtney *Cornish Feasts and Folk-lore* p. 104.

³ See e.g. *Folk-lore* xvii. 42 ff.

⁴ *Folk-lore* xvii. 45 f.

goddess Brigit, daughter of the Dagda.¹ St. Brigit or St. Bridget, her canonical name-sake, is said² to have loved and blessed a certain very high oak-tree, the trunk of which was still standing at the close of the tenth century and was regarded as so sacred that no one dared to cut it with a weapon. Under this oak St. Brigit built her cell, calling it Kildare, *i.e.* *Cill-dara*, 'the Church of the Oak.' A perpetual fire of extraordinary sanctity was maintained there in her honour down to the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII.³ St. Brigit's festival falls on February 1, the eve of Candlemas; and the Candlemas bonfires and illuminations, like the fire-ritual of Beltaine and Samain,⁴ are almost certainly sun-charms.⁵ Note also that in Ireland small crosses, resembling the Maltese, are made of wheaten or oaten straw on February 2 and stuck somewhere in the roof, especially in the angles and over the doors—witness the old couplet:

St. Bridget's cross, hung over door,
Which did the house from fire secure.⁶

Such crosses are often shaped like the *swastika*,⁷ and may fairly be interpreted as solar in character. St.

¹ D'Arbois *L'épopée celtique* p. 433 f., Squire *Mythology of the British Islands* p. 78.

² According to Joyce *Irish Names of Places* ed. 2 p. 109 f., Animosus, the writer of the fourth *Life of St. Brigid* published by Colgan states: 'That cell is called in Scotie, *Cill-dara*, which in Latin sounds *Cella-querens*. For a very high oak stood there, which Brigid loved much, and blessed it; of which the trunk still remains; and no one dares cut it with a weapon.'

Mr. D. Fitzgerald in the *Revue celtique* iv. 193 cites the distich—

That Oak of Saint Bride, which nor Devil nor Dane,

Nor Saxon nor Dutchman could rend from her fane.—

and observes that 'a lizard appears at foot of the oak, the crest of the Vi Duinn, who claim Saint Brigit as their kinswoman.'

³ P. W. Joyce *A Social History of Ancient Ireland* London 1903 i. 335, J. G. Frazer *Lectures on the Early History of the Kingship* London 1905 p. 222 ff.

⁴ *Folk-lore* xvii. 30, 58, 64 f. ⁵ Frazer *Golden Bough* ed. 2 iii. 248, 300 ff.

⁶ *Lean Collectanea* ii. 1. 417 f.

⁷ My informant is Prof. A. C. Haddon, who possesses a series of these crosses.

Brigit's life bears out the suggestion. Not only was she expressly compared with the sun,¹ but, as Mr. Squire² puts it, 'she was born at sunrise; a house in which she dwelt blazed into a flame which reached to heaven; a pillar of fire rose from her head when she took the veil.' In short, I submit that the pagan deity, whose name and fame St. Brigit has usurped, was a great sun-goddess. Bres, king of the Tuatha Dé Danann, mated with her, just as Bran or Connla or Cuchulain or Oisín mated with the goddess who possessed the sun-tree; for every king of Tara must needs wed the sun-goddess.³ Truly, St. Brigit was well called St. Bride. If I am right in my surmise, the Irish Brigit was strictly comparable to the Italian Diana, and her oak to the famous tree at Nemi. Moreover, Brigit, like Diana,⁴ was *triformis*: at least, she had two sisters also named Brigit, the three being regarded as patrons of bards, physicians, and smiths respectively.⁵ This triune character reappears in Brigit's children. She was the mother of three gods, who patronized art and literature, *viz.* Brian, Iucharba or Iuchar, and Iuchair or Uar. But these three sons had a child in common called *Ecné*, that is 'Science' or 'Poetry.'⁶ Finally, as Diana, originally the partner of a 'Bright' sky-god,⁷ became a goddess of fertility, who made the cattle to increase and the crops to grow,⁸ so too did Brigit. In the Hebrides her marriage was celebrated on Candlemas eve, she herself being represented by a sheaf of oats in woman's clothing, which was put to bed in a large basket with a wooden club⁹—perhaps the last trace of Brigit's oak.

¹ Douglas Hyde *A Literary History of Ireland* London 1899 p. 191.

² Squire *Mythology of the British Islands* p. 228.

³ *Folk-lore* xvii. 163.

⁴ *Id.* xvi. 279.

⁵ Rhys *Hibbert Lectures* p. 74 f.

⁶ D'Arbois *Cycle mythologique* p. 145.

⁷ *Folk-lore* xvi. 270 f., 289 n. 5.

⁸ Frazer *Golden Bough* ed. 2. i. 230.

⁹ *Id. ib.* i. 223.

Significant, too, are the relations between St. Columcille and the oak. He built a church in the oak-grove of Derry, 'and,' says Dr. Hyde,¹ 'so careful was he of his beloved oaks that, contrary to all custom, he would not build his church with its chancel towards the east, for in that case some of the oaks would have had to be felled to make room for it. He laid strict injunctions upon all his successors to spare the lovely grove, and enjoined that if any of the trees should be blown down some of them should go for fuel to their own guest-house, and the rest be given to the people.' Years afterwards he penned a poem, in which he says:

'The reason I love Derry is for its quietness, for its purity, crowded full of heaven's angels in every leaf of the oaks of Derry. My Derry, my little oak grove, my dwelling and my little cell, O Eternal God in heaven above, woe be to him who violates it.'²

Besides Derry, two other famous monasteries were founded in Ireland by St. Columcille. One was Durrow, which like Derry drew its name from the beautiful oak-groves of the neighbourhood (*Dair-magh*, 'Oak-plain'). The other was Kells; and here too the saint resided under a great oak-tree, which stood for centuries and ultimately fell in a tremendous storm. According to the Irish *Life of St. Columcille*, 'a certain man took somewhat of its bark to tan his shoes with. Now, when he did on the shoes, he was smitten with leprosy from his sole to his crown.' The same authority states that on one occasion St. Columcille made a hymn to arrest a fire that was consuming the oak-wood, 'and it is sung against every fire and against every thunder from that time to this.'³ Again, the name *Columcille*, 'Dove of the Church,' was not inappropriate to a saint thus intimately connected with oak-groves: it recalls the doves on the oaks of Dodona and Libya⁴ and Brittany.⁵ On one occasion,

¹ Hyde *Literary History of Ireland* p. 169.

² *Id. ib.* p. 170 n. 1.

³ *Id. ib.* p. 170 f.

⁴ *Folk-lore* xv. 295.

⁵ *Supra* p. 7.

when St. Columcille was celebrating the Mass, a ball of fire like a comet was seen burning brightly on his head¹; and we read more than once that there shone round him a golden light, bright as the sun, descending from the sky,² or a gleam as of lightning,³ or a brilliance that others could not bear to look upon.⁴ May we not conclude that the populace regarded St. Columcille as a spiritual successor of the old oak-kings, who personated the sun-god, and ascribed to him miracles appropriate to them? This would suit his descent from Niall of the Nine Hostages, king of Ireland,⁵ and might account for the extraordinary veneration in which his foundation at Iona was held. Here he inaugurated Aedan, Dalriadic king of Scotland about 570⁶ A.D.; and hither for more than a thousand years came kings and chiefs, even from far-off Norway, to be buried, in order that their bones might mingle with the dust of the Holy Isle.⁷ Iona, where dwelt the saint of the oak-trees, was to the Christian what Emhain of the Apple-trees had been to the pagan.⁸

St. Kentigern, an older contemporary of St. Colum-

¹ Adamnan *Life of St. Columbkille*, trans. from Dr. W. Reeves' text, Dublin 1875 p. 131.

² *Id. ib.* p. 132. ³ *Id. ib.* p. 133. ⁴ *Id. ib.* p. 134, cp. *ib.* p. 6 f.

⁵ *Id. ib.* p. 4. ⁶ *Id. ib.* p. 117 f.

⁷ The Duke of Argyll *Iona* new ed. Edinburgh 1889 p. 87.

⁸ The apple-tree too was connected with St. Columbkille. A certain very fruitful apple-tree near the monastery of Durrow, when blessed by him, changed its fruit permanently from a bitter to a sweet kind (Adamnan *Life of St. Columbkille* p. 63).

St. Serf, when on his way to Fife, threw his staff across the sea from Inchkeith to Culross: it there took root and became the famous apple-tree called Morglas (Folkard *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* pp. 130, 219). This incident reminds us on the one hand of the apple-branch borne by the Irish divine king, on the other hand of St. Ninian's staff which, when planted, grew into a considerable tree with a healing spring at its base (A. P. Forbes, Bishop of Brechin, *Lives of S. Ninian and S. Kentigern* Edinburgh 1874 p. 19 ff.). See further J. M. Mackinlay *Folklore of Scottish Lochs and Springs* p. 235.

cille, planted a small religious establishment on the site of Glasgow. Upon a tree beside his clearing in the forest he is said to have hung a bell for the purpose of summoning his savage neighbours to worship.¹ As a boy at Culross he had restored to life a pet redbreast belonging to his teacher St. Servanus.² And, when Queen Languoreth of Cambria lost the signet-ring entrusted to her by King Rederech, St. Kentigern found it for her in the belly of a salmon caught in the river Clud.³ All these details of his legend are commemorated in the arms of the City of Glasgow, *vis.*: 'Arg. on a mount in base vert an oak tree ppr., the stem at the base thereof surmounted by a salmon on its back, also ppr., with a signet ring in its mouth or; on the top of the tree a redbreast and in the sinister fess point an ancient handbell, both also ppr.'⁴ It may be suspected that St. Kentigern's oak, like the oaks of St. Brigit and St. Columcille, had a sanctity of its own quite apart from its use as a Christian belfry. Mr. J. M. Mackinlay points out that as late as 1500 A.D. the *Arbores sancti Kentigerni* were landmarks in the district, while in their immediate vicinity, close to Little St. Mungo's Church, is a well dedicated to him, another Kentigern's well being actually included within Glasgow Cathedral.⁵ Mr. Mackinlay further suggests that the oak, the salmon, and the redbreast of the Glasgow arms may have been no mere emblems of certain acts of St. Kentigern, but rather the repositories of his external soul.⁶ That Christianity was here grafted on to a heathen stock seems to me highly probable. The oak and the salmon, as we have

¹ Chambers *Book of Days* i. 103.

² Forbes *Lives of S. Ninián and S. Kentigern* p. 42 f.

³ *Id. ib.* p. 99 ff.

⁴ Sir James Balfour Paul Lyon *Ordinary of Scottish Arms* p. 370 no. 5449.

⁵ Mackinlay *Folklore of Scottish Lochs and Springs* p. 50.

⁶ *Id. ib.* p. 239 f.

seen,¹ and the redbreast, as we shall see,² are at least consistent with the view that St. Kentigern inherited the position of a priestly king. It is to be noted that he was, on his mother's side, the grandson of Leudonus, king of Leudonia in North Britain.³ But Leudonus is one with Loth,⁴ whom we found to be a king personating the sky-god Lludd.⁵ When St. Columcille visited St. Kentigern, he beheld 'a fiery pillar in fashion as of a golden crown, set with sparkling gems, descending from heaven upon his head, and a light of heavenly brightness encircling him like a certain veil, and covering him, and again returning to the skies.'⁶ Such a manifestation suited the solar king. Even in his early days at Culross, when in need of a light, he had plucked a hazel-bough, which burst into spontaneous fire, 'as if the boy had exhaled flame for breath.'⁷ St. Kentigern's claim to be a priestly king was evidently recognised by King Rederech; for it is recorded of the latter that 'stripping himself of his royal robes, on bended knees and hands joined, with the consent and advice of his lords, he gave his homage to S. Kentigern, and handed over to him the dominion and principedom over all his kingdom, and willed that he should be king, and himself the ruler of his country under him as his father, as he knew that formerly the great Emperor Constantine had done to S. Silvester. Hence the custom grew up for a long course of years, so long as the Cambrian kingdom lasted in its own proper rank, that the prince was always subject to the bishop.'⁸

¹ *Folk-lore* xvii. 52 ff., *supra* p. 3 ff.; *Folk-lore* xvii. 39 f., 61 f., 162.

² See my next article.

³ Forbes *Lives of S. Ninian and S. Kentigern* p. 125 ff. According to the Welsh *Bonedd y Saint*, cited by the Rev. J. Gammack in his article on 'Kentigern' in Smith-Wace *Dict. Christ. Biogr.* iii. 604, Cyndeyrn's maternal grandfather was Llewddyn Lueddag of Dinas Eiddyn (Edinburgh).

⁴ Forbes *Id.* p. lxxxvi.

⁵ *Folk-lore* xvii. 47 ff.

⁶ Forbes *Lives of S. Ninian and S. Kentigern* p. 106 f.

⁷ *Id. ib.* p. 44 f.

⁸ *Id. ib.* p. 94.

At Strath in Skye there is a tradition that St. Maree used to preach, and that he hung a bell in a tree, where it remained for centuries, dumb all the week, but ringing of its own accord all Sunday.¹ At Contin, too, there is a burial ground called Praes Maree or 'Maree's Bush.'² The inference that St. Maree had a sacred tree or bush rises to a certainty, when we take into account the evidence concerning Inchmaree, an island in Loch Maree. Pennant, who visited the place in 1772, describes it as 'covered thickly with a beautiful grove of oak, ash, willow, wicken, birch, fir, hazel, and enormous hollies. In the midst is a circular dike of stones, with a regular narrow entrance: the inner part has been used for ages as a burial place, and is still in use. I suspect the dike to have been originally *Druidical*, and that the antient superstition of *Paganism* had been taken up by the saint, as the readiest method of making a conquest over the minds of the inhabitants. A stump of a tree is shewn as an altar, probably the memorial of one of stone; but the curiosity of the place is the well of the saint; of power unspeakable in cases of lunacy. . . . I must add, that the visitants draw from the state of the well an omen of the disposition of St. *Maree*: if his well is full they suppose he will be propitious; if not they proceed in their operations with fears and doubts: but let the event be what it will, he is held in high esteem: the common oath of the country is, by his name: if a traveller passes by any of his resting-places, they never neglect to leave an offering; but the saint is so moderate as not to put him to any expence: a stone, a stick, a bit of rag contents him.'³ St. Maree's tree and well are still to be seen. Miss Gertrude M. Godden⁴

¹ Miss G. M. Godden in *Folk-lore* iv. 506.

² *Ibid.* *ib.*

³ T. Pennant *A Tour in Scotland and Voyages to the Hebrides* Chester 1774 p. 330.

⁴ Miss G. M. Godden 'The Sanctuary of Mourie' in *Folk-lore* iv. 498-508, with an illustration of the tree.

speaks of the former as a bare branchless oak with coins, nails, screws etc. stuck into cracks in its stem, and of the latter as a small dark hole at its foot. Twenty years since it used to be said that 'if anyone removes an offering that has been attached to the tree, some misfortune, probably the taking fire of the house of the desecrator, is sure to follow.'¹ Now St. Maree was the well known Ulster saint Maelrubha (642-722 A.D.), whose name ran through the following series of forms: *Maelrubha, Malrubius, Malrube, Mulray, Mourie, Moury, Maree*.² He was 'the most popular saint of the north of Scotland,'³ and is said to have been descended, like St. Columcille, from Niall of the Nine Hostages, King of Ireland.⁴ In fact, he was a most likely person to step into the shoes of an old priestly-king. When Pennant suggested that St. Maree took over an ancient druidical cult, he was well on the right track. I should conjecture that, living beneath his sacred oak on the island in Loch Maree the Christian saint received all the honours due to the Celtic man-god. In support of this conjecture I would cite Sir Arthur Mitchell, a most careful enquirer, who mentions some very remarkable facts with regard to the local prestige of our saint. Writing in 1860 he says⁵: 'The people of the place speak often of the god Mourie instead of St. Mourie.' And an old man in the locality told him that the island's name 'was originally Eilean-Mo-Righ (the Island of my King), or Eilean-a-Mhor-Righ (the Island of the Great King), and that this king was

¹ J. A. Dixon *Gairloch* Edinburgh 1886, cited by Miss Godden *ib.* p. 499.

² Dean Reeves 'Saint Maelrubha: his history and churches' in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* Edinburgh 1861 iii. 258-296.

³ Rev. J. Gammack 'Maelrubha' in Smith-Wace *Dictionary of Christian Biography* iii. 782.

⁴ Dean Reeves *loc. cit.*

⁵ Sir A. Mitchell 'The Various Superstitions in the N.W. Highlands and Islands of Scotland, especially in relation to Lunacy' in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* Edinburgh 1862 iv. 254 n. 3.

long ago worshipped as a god in the district.' We have here what looks like a genuine trace of a divine king connected with an oak-tree and a wonder-working well. His cult seems to have survived down to the seventeenth century; for as late as 1656¹ the Dingwall presbytery was doing its best to prevent the people at Applecross² from sacrificing bulls on August 25, a day dedicated to St. Mourie.³ At Gairloch too, bulls were sacrificed on his day and milk poured upon the hills. Contemporary records mention 'these poore ones who are called Mourie his derilans,' and again so-and-so 'quho receaves the sacrifices and offerings upon accompt of Mourie his poore ones.'⁴ Mr. J. A. Dixon derives the word *derilans* from the Gaelic *deireoil*, 'afflicted.' If so, he may be right in his conclusion that 'the lunatics would seem to have served as priests to the grove.'

It seems a far cry from the brilliant figures of Irish story, Bran and Cormac, Mael-Duin and Connla, with their silver branches and their golden apples, to 'these poore ones' of stunted intellect subsisting on the charity of the country-side. But the history of religion has its Nebuchadnezzars. Was not the vice-roy of the sky-god at Nemi a run-away slave?

Now the *rex Nemorensis*, sword in hand, defended his sacred tree against all comers, thereby proving his

¹ Miss G. M. Godden in *Folk-lore* iv. 506.

² According to Irish tradition, St. Maelrubha founded Apurcrossan (Applecross in Ross-shire), where he died on April 21, 722 A.D. According to Scotch tradition, he was slain at Urquhart by a body of Norwegians and buried at Apurcrossan in 1024 A.D. See Rev. J. Gammack 'Maelrubha' in *Smith-Wace Dict. Christ. Biogr.* iii. 782.

³ Dean Reeves *loc. cit.* supposes that the name *Malrubius* led to confusion with St. *Ruffus* of Capua, whose feast is August 27. Hence in a seventeenth century document Inchmaree is called 'the island of St. Ruffus,' and fairs named after St. Maelrubha are held in Ross, Moray, Banff etc. in the last week of August or the first week of September. See Miss G. M. Godden in *Folk-lore* iv. 503 ff.

⁴ *Ead. ib.* p. 506.

⁵ Cited by Miss Godden *ib.*

physical fitness for the office of divine king¹ Can the same be said of his Gaelic and British peers? In 'The Feast of Bricriu'² there are three competitors for the championship of Ulster, *vis.* Laegaire, Conall, and Cuchulain. After various preliminary tests, in which Laegaire and Conall claim to rival Cuchulain, they all three repair to the dun of Curoi, son of Daire and king of South Munster. Curoi is away from home; but they are hospitably entertained by his wife Blathnath, who bids them guard the dun, each in turn for a night, till Curoi comes back. Laegaire and Conall fail to do so. But Cuchulain successfully slays thrice nine assailants and a monster from the neighbouring lake. At the last there comes against him a gigantic warrior armed with great branches of oak. The warrior hurls his branches at Cuchulain; Cuchulain hurls his javelin at the warrior: both miss. The warrior then attempts to grapple with Cuchulain, who leaps his famous salmon-leap and circles his opponent's head with his sword; then, performing his wheel-trick, turns about in the air and forces the foe to cry for mercy. Finally Cuchulain extorts three concessions, that he should obtain the sovereignty of Erin's heroes, that he should receive the champion's portion, and that his wife should take precedence of all the women in Ulster.

¹ *Ib.* xvi. 322, cp. xv. 376 ff. So well did he defend it that it, or more probably a seedling of it, has perhaps lived down to modern times. At least, the learned though anonymous author of a *Description of Latium* London 1805 p. 85 f. prefaces his account of the *rex Nemorensis* by remarking that in the wood at Nemi 'there is a tree which tradition reports to be near two thousand years old, but some of the inhabitants content themselves with saying, that it was planted by Augustus; its spreading branches hang over the lake, and produce a noble effect.' The period between Servius, who described the tree of the *rex Nemorensis*, and our author may be reckoned at 1420 years.

² G. Henderson *Fled Bricrend* (*Irish Texts Society* vol. ii) p. 101 ff., D'Arbois *L'épopée celtique* p. 135 ff., Lady Gregory *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* p. 74 ff.

These concessions are ratified by Curoi, who shortly after returns home with the heads of Cuchulain's victims. In the sequel the vanquished warrior reappears one evening among the heroes of Ulster assembled in the Red Branch at Emain. He comes as a big uncouth staff-bearer, carrying a great spreading club-tree and a heavy axe, and offers to let any hero hew off his head, on condition that next night he may hew off the hero's head. Three of the company, including Laegaire and Conall, accept the challenge, but, when the beheaded giant each time walks off with his head in his hands, fail through terror to keep their part of the compact. At length Cuchulain beheads him, and alone awaits his return. The stranger deals him a counter-blow, but with the blunt side of the axe,¹ and bids him rise as acknowledged champion. He himself proves to be Curoi son of Daire, who had come on purpose to confirm his promises to Cuchulain.

So the warrior armed with oak-branches was none other than Curoi. Indeed, it is probable that Curoi son of *Daire* means Curoi son of 'Oak' (Irish *dair*).² Curoi with a branch of oak in his hand attacking Cuchulain, who defends himself with a sword, resembles the would-be king at Nemi with a branch in his hand attacking the sword-bearing successor of Virbius. And, be it observed, this attack formed the crowning test of fitness for the kingship of Ireland's warriors. It established Cuchulain's right to the golden cup decorated with a bird in precious stones, the significance of which we have already considered.³ Further, Cuchulain, like Virbius, was a solar

¹ Dr. Frazer has suggested to me that this business of pretended decapitation, of which we shall see another example *infra*, may well be the mythical counterpart of an actual custom.

² D'Arbois *L'épopée celtique* p. 506, *La civilisation des Celtes* p. 28, connects Daire with the *Dario-s* of Dario-ritum, on which see Dottin *Manuel de l'antiquité celtique* p. 331, Holder *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* i. 1241.

³ *Folk-lore* xvii. 168.

hero.¹ And Curoi is regarded by Mr. Standish O'Grady,² by Prof. Rhys,³ and by Prof. A. C. L. Brown,⁴ as a sort of Manannan. Hence we might look to find Cuchulain mating with Curoi's wife Blathnath, as with Manannan's wife Fand.⁵ But this is just what we do find; for a well-known Irish romance⁶ tells how one November-eve Cuchulain, in response to a pre-arranged signal from Blathnath, entered Curoi's dun, slew Curoi and carried off to Ulster Blathnath daughter of Midir along with Midir's three cows and cauldron. Another story⁷ has it that Curoi had originally got Blathnath, the cows and the cauldron, by guile from their rightful owner Cuchulain, whom he subsequently vanquished in a duel by main force. In fact, Curoi and Cuchulain contended with alternate success for the hand of Blathnath—a trait which recalls their alternate decapitation, and suggests comparison with the strife between Gwyn and Gwythyr for possession of Creiddylad daughter of Lludd.⁸ Again, if we may thus venture to detect in Cuchulain some characteristics of the divine king, certain *gessa* or tabus laid upon him⁹ fall into place, e.g. he might not swerve a foot from his path before a fight with one man, he might not refuse a duel, he might not go to Emain without a combat, and—like the king of Tara¹⁰—he might not let the sun be up before him in Emain. These rules were made for one who must always accept

¹ Rhys *Hibbert Lectures* p. 431 ff., Miss E. Hull *The Cuchullin Saga in Irish Literature* London 1898 p. lvi ff.

² S. O'Grady, *History of Ireland, critical and philosophical* Dublin 1881 i. 220 n.

³ Rhys *Hibbert Lectures* p. 474 n. 1.

⁴ Prof. A. C. L. Brown 'Iwain' in *Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* Boston 1903 viii. 51.

⁵ *Folk-lore* xvii. 149 f.

⁶ Rhys *Hibbert Lectures* p. 473 f.

⁷ *Id. ib.* p. 475 ff.

⁸ *Folk-lore* xvii. 48.

⁹ Whitley Stokes in the *Revue celtique* xiv. 399 ff.

¹⁰ *Folk-lore* xvii. 161 f.

a challenge to single fight, one who had powers and responsibilities somehow connected with the sun—posing perhaps as champion and consort of a sun-goddess.¹ But, it will be said, if Cuchulain was a second Virbius, where was his sacred tree? We naturally turn to Emain. In this palace of the Ulster kings the three principal forts were called the Royal Branch (*Craebh Ruadh*), the Red Branch (*Craebh Derg*), and the Speckled House (*Teite Brec*).² But the word *Craebh* is constantly used in place-names of a sacred tree. Dr. Joyce³ writes: '*Craebh* [crave] signifies either a branch or a large wide-spreading tree. This name, like *bile*, was given to large trees, under whose shadow games or religious rites were celebrated, or chiefs inaugurated; and we may conclude that one of these trees formerly grew wherever we find the word perpetuated in a name.' Hence it appears that a sacred tree or trees formed the nucleus of the palace at Emain; and it becomes highly probable that the Red Branch knights of Ulster succeeded to the position once occupied by champions of the sacred tree.⁴

¹ *Ib.* xvii. 163.

² Miss E. Hull *The Cuchullin Saga* p. 36 n. 1.

³ P. W. Joyce *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places* ed. 2 p. 483.

⁴ After reaching this conclusion I found that I had been to some extent anticipated by Miss E. Hull, who in *Folk-lore* xii. 438 suggests that the three halls of Emain were called the Royal Branch, the Red Branch, and the Speckled House, while the knights of the king were styled Champions of the Royal Branch, because of the 'Apple-tree of Emain.' The golden apples of Conchobar's sceptre (*Folk-lore* xvii. 160) and the 'apple-tree from Emain' on Manannan's isle (*ib.* p. 143 f.) certainly support this conjecture. On the other hand, Conchobar's palace was built of red yew (D'Arbois *L'épopée celtique* p. 12, Lady Gregory *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* p. 43, though Douglas Hyde *A Literary History of Ireland* p. 295 says red oak); and, if the folk-etymology of Emain from *Eb-muin* (O'Curry *Manuscript Materials* pp. 71 f., 528) contains a germ of truth, we might refer the first element in the name to *Eb*, 'a yew-tree' (Joyce *Irish Names of Places* ed. 2 p. 568), as well as to *Eb*, 'a brooch.' When Cuchulain met Fand beneath a yew-tree (*Folk-lore* xvii. 150),

The British equivalent of Cuchulain is Gawain.¹ And an interesting parallel to the whole episode of Cuchulain and Curoi is furnished by the old English poem *Syr Gawayn and the Grene Knyght* published by Sir Frederic Madden in 1839² from a MS. apparently written in the reign of Richard II. The poem is thus summarised by Miss J. L. Weston³:

'On a New Year's Day, while Arthur is keeping his Christmas feast at Camelot, a gigantic knight, clad in green, mounted on a green horse,⁴ and carrying in one hand a holly bough, and in the other a "Danish" axe, enters the hall and challenges one of Arthur's knights to stand him "one stroke for another." If any accept the challenge he may strike the first blow, but he must take oath to seek the Green Knight at a twelve-months' end and receive the return stroke. Seeing the gigantic size and fierce appearance of the stranger the knights hesitate, much to Arthur's indignation. Finally Gawain accepts the challenge, and, taking the axe, smites the Green Knight's head from the body. To the dismay of all present the trunk rises up, takes up the head, and, repeating the challenge to Gawain to meet him on the next New Year's morning at the Green Chapel, rides from the hall.

Faithful to his compact, Gawain, as the year draws to an end, sets forth amid the lamentations of the court to abide his doom, which all look upon as inevitable. He

was it a case of the union of the champion with the goddess of a sacred tree? Ibor the guardian of Lug, Cuchulain's father, and Ibor the brother of Emer, Cuchulain's wife, bore a name that denoted 'a yew' (D'Arbois *L'épopée celtique* p. 511, *Les Celtes* p. 52).

¹ Miss J. L. Weston *The Legend of Sir Gawain* London 1897 pp. 17, 28, 30, 63 f., 92 ff., 100 f., 110.

² Sir F. Madden *Syr Gawayne* London 1839 p. 1 ff.

³ Miss J. L. Weston *Sir Gawain* p. 86 ff.

⁴ For the green horse cp. the story of Ciabán (S. H. O'Grady *Silva Gadelica* ii. 198 ff.).

journeys north, and on Christmas Eve comes to a castle, where the lord receives him kindly, tells him he is within easy reach of his goal, and bids him remain over the feast as his guest. Gawain accepts. The three last days of the year the host rides forth on a hunting expedition, leaving Gawain to the care of his wife, and making a bargain that on his return they shall mutually exchange whatever they have won during the day. Gawain is sorely tempted by the wiles of his hostess, who, during her lord's absence, would fain take advantage of Gawain's well-known courtesy and fame as a lover. But he turns a deaf ear to her blandishments, and only a kiss passes between them, which he, in fulfilment of his compact, passes on to the husband on his return. The next day the result is similar: Gawain receives and gives two kisses. The third day, besides three kisses, the lady gives him a green lace, which, if bound round the body, has the property of preserving from harm. In view of the morrow's ordeal, from which Gawain does not expect to escape with his life, he cannot make up his mind to part with this talisman, but gives his host the kisses and says nothing about the lace. The morrow morning at day-break he rides forth, and comes to the Green Chapel, apparently a natural hollow, or cave, in a wild and desolate part of the country. The Green Knight appears, armed with his axe, and bids Gawain kneel to receive the blow. As the axe descends, Gawain instinctively flinches, and is rebuked for his cowardice by the knight, who tells him he cannot be Gawain. The second time he remains steady, but the axe does not touch him. The third time the knight strikes him, inflicting a slight cut on the neck.

Gawain promptly springs to his feet, drawing his sword, and announces that he has now stood "one stroke for another," and that the compact is at an end; whereon the Green Knight reveals himself as his erewhile host. He

was cognisant of his wife's dealings with Gawain; the three strokes equalled the three trials of his guest's fidelity, and, had not Gawain proved partially faithless to his compact by concealing the gift of the lace, he would have escaped unharmed. The name of the Green Knight is Bernlak de Hautdesert, and he had undertaken this test of Gawain's valour at the instance, and by help of the skill, of Morgan le Fay, who desired to vex Guinevere by shaming the Knights of the Round Table.

Gawain returns to court, tells the whole story, concealing nothing, and all the knights vow henceforward to wear a green lace in his honour.'

Miss Weston institutes a careful comparison of this poem with other extant versions of the same tale.¹ Some of these contain variant details deserving notice: *e.g.* in the German *Diu Krône* Gawain's host lives in a turning castle, the battlements of which, with one exception, are surmounted by human heads; and similarly in the French romance *La Mule sans Frein* the giant who challenges Gawain has a castle surrounded by poles supporting human heads. Now in classical mythology, as I have elsewhere² shown, the practice of hanging heads over the doorway is characteristic of the oak-king,³ and appears to be a modification of a still more primitive practice—that of hanging the heads on the sacred oak.⁴ On this showing the Green Knight, who is plainly identical with Gawain's host, would be aptly compared with Virbius. Indeed, when dealing with Virbius himself, we noted the fact that his name was 'referable

¹ Miss J. L. Weston *Sir Gawain* p. 88 ff.

² *Classical Review* xvii. 269 ff.

³ Sithon (Nonn. *Dion.* 48. 224 f.): Oinomaos (Apollod. *epit.* 2. 5, Philostr. *Jun. imagg.* 9. 3 and the works of art cited in *Classical Review* xvii. 271 f.): Euenos (schol. *Il.* 9. 557). Cp. *Folk-lore* xv. 377 f., 382.

⁴ Phorbas (Philostr. *Sen. imagg.* 2. 19): Thoas (Bötticher *Baumkultus* p. 540 fig. 31). Cp. *Folk-lore* xv. 376 f., xvi. 323 n. 1.

to the root of *viridis*:¹ it might be literally rendered the Green Man.

Nor need we be surprised if the Green Knight bears a branch of holly, not (like Curoi, his Irish analogue) a branch of oak. For we have seen already that the peculiar mining population in the oak-forest of Dean swear by a stick of holly.² And in one story connected with Gawain we seem to catch the actual transition from oak to holly. A fragmentary poem on the *Marriage of Sir Gawaine*,³ printed by Sir Frederic Madden from the text of the Percy MS. as given in Dr. Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* ed. 1794 iii. 350, tells how one Christmas King Arthur came to Tearne-wadling in Cumberland, where a bold baron with a great club upon his back challenged him to fight, or pay a ransom, returning for the purpose on New Year's Day. When he rode out to keep his appointment, he met a hideous hag sitting

'Betwixt an oke and a greene hollen,'

who made love to him. He extricated himself by promising that Gawain should wed her, and passed on to keep his tryst with the baron, who claimed to be a king and brother of the beldame. Gawain, to fulfil King Arthur's promise, sought out the woman where she sat

'Vnderneath a greene holly tree':

but on the marriage night he found her as beautiful as she had before been ugly. She offered him the choice, whether he would have her beautiful by night or by day. He left it courteously to her—an act, which broke a spell laid on her by a step-mother, and enabled her to regain her good looks permanently.

To Mr. A. Nutt⁴ belongs the credit of setting this

¹ *ib.* xvi. 291 n.

² *ib.* xvii. 54.

³ Sir F. Madden *Syr Gawayne* p. 288 ff.

⁴ *The Academy* April 30, 1892, p. 425 f.

story beside an important Irish parallel, existing in two versions. The older and simpler version occurs in the *Cóir Anmann*, and is translated by Dr. Whitley Stokes.¹ It may be summarised as follows. It had been foretold that one of the sons of Dáire Doimthech would obtain the kingship of Ireland, and that his name would be Lugaid. Hence his five sons were all called Lugaid. Now the Assembly of Teltown was held by Dáire, and his sons raced their horses there. When Dáire enquired of the druid, which son would obtain the kingship after himself, the answer was: 'A fawn with golden sheen will come into the assembly, and the son who shall take the fawn will take the kingship after thee.' In due course the golden fawn appeared and was pursued by Dáire's sons, till a magical mist separated them from the men of Erin. It was Lugaid Laigde, otherwise known as Macniad, who actually caught the fawn. The brothers were now overtaken by a snow-storm; but one of them found a great house with fire and food in abundance. It was kept by a horrible hag, who bade him share her couch. When he refused to do so, she declared: 'Thou hast severed from thee sovranty and kingship.' After this the other brothers arrived in turn and were severally greeted by the hag. Last of all came Lugaid Laigde, who had caught and devoured the fawn. 'Then,' says the chronicler, 'Lugaid of the Fawn goes with her into the house for sake of food and ale. Howbeit the hag went into the couch of white bronze and Macniad followed her; and it seemed to him that the radiance of her face was the sun rising in the month of May, and her fragrance was likened by him to an odorous herb-garden. And after that he mingled in love with her, and she said to him: "Good is thy journey, for *I* am the Sovranty, and *thou* shalt obtain the sovranty of Erin."' On the morrow the brothers found themselves alone on a plain,

¹ *ib.* April 23, 1892, p. 399.

and returned to the Assembly of Teltown to relate their adventure.

The name *Lugaid* is derived from Lug,¹ the Irish sun-god. This story, therefore, reinforces the lesson that we learnt from the *Bailé an Scáil*, viz. that the king of Tara was regarded as Lug incarnate and husband of the goddess who possessed the sun-tree.² But our story does more than that. For the resemblance of its *dénouement* to that of the *Marriage of Sir Gawaine* raises a strong presumption that Sir Gawain too will prove to be a sun-king married to the goddess of a sun-tree.

Gawain was the son of Lot, king of Norway,³ behind whom lurks the ancient British sky-god Lud.⁴ Miss Weston inferred from this relationship that Gawain 'was originally a sun-deity.'⁵ She also pointed out that 'one of the most striking characteristics of Gawain, and one which may undoubtedly be referred to the original conception of his character, is that of the waxing and waning of his strength as the day advances and declines. . . . Scholars have seen in this growth and waning of Gawain's power, directly connected as it is with the waxing and waning of the sun, a proof that this Celtic hero was at one time a solar divinity.'⁶ On these and other grounds⁷ Miss Weston concludes that Gawain had solar powers. She also makes out a good case for believing that he, like Bran, Connla, Oisín, etc., went on a quest to the Otherworld described as the *Château Merveil*; that he found it to be a

¹ D'Arbois *Les Celtes* p. 43, *L'épopée celtique* p. 512.

² *Folk-lore* xvii. 157 ff.

³ See the genealogy in Miss J. L. Weston's translation of Wolfram von Eschenbach *Parzival* London 1894 i. 295.

⁴ *Folk-lore* xvii. 47 ff.

⁵ Miss J. L. Weston *Sir Gawain* p. 52.

⁶ *Ead. ib.* p. 12 f.

⁷ *Ead. ib.* p. 13 ff. Gawain's horse *Gringalot* or *Keincaled*, and Gawain's sword *Escalibor* or *Caledwulch*. The former recalls the horses of various solar heroes: the latter, when drawn, 'throws so great a light . . . that it is as if two torches had been kindled.'

magnificent palace on an island inhabited by women, who dwelt apart from men;¹ and that he wedded the mistress of it, a lady of surpassing beauty known by various names (*L'Orgueilleuse de Logres*, *Orgeluse*, *Blancemal*, *Lorie*, *Florie*, *Flort*, *Amurfin*, etc.), but originally nameless, and to be regarded as 'either the *Daughter of the King of the Other-world*, or as herself the *Queen of that Other-world*.'² Finally Miss Weston remarks that 'a feature recurring in the Irish tales, the bearing of a branch of a wondrous tree by the queen, seems reflected in the command laid upon the knight to pluck the bough of the tree guarded by Gramoflanz.'³

The incident in question occurs in the *Parsival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach.⁴ Orgeluse bids Gawain, if he would win her as his bride, to break a bough from off a certain tree and bring her a garland of its fresh leaves. The tree is guarded by Gramoflanz, king of Rosche Sabbins.⁵ Gawain, traversing a wood of *Tamris* (tamarisk) and *Prisein* (?)⁶ and crossing the Perilous Ford, reaches the tree, breaks a bough, and makes of it a garland for his helmet. Hereupon up rides a knight :

'Twas King Gramoflanz—'To the garland that doth there in thine helmet
wave

I yield not my claim !' thus quoth he, 'Sir Knight, were ye *two* I trow,
Who here for high honour seeking had reft from my tree a bough,
I had greeted ye not, but had fought ye, but since thou alone shalt be,
Thou canst ride hence, for strife unequal I deem it a shame to me !'

And Gawain, too, was loth to fight him, for no armour the king did wear,
And nought but a yearling falcon he did on his white hand bear.
(And the sister of Gawain gave it, Itonjé the maid was hight.)

¹ *Ead. ib.* chapter v, p. 32 ff.

² *Ead. ib.* chapter vi, p. 44 ff.

³ *Ead. ib.* p. 37.

⁴ Wolfram *Parsival* ed. K. Bartsch Leipzig 1871 xii. 530 ff., trans. Miss J. L. Weston xii. 269 ff.

⁵ *ib.* xiv. 233, cp. xii. 322, xiv. 858. This is Wolfram's equivalent of Chrétien 10186 *Roche de Sanguin* (Bartsch vol. ii p. 298).

⁶ *ib.* xii. 282. Bartsch *ad loc.* vol. ii p. 288 cp. Prov. *brasil*.

His headgear in Sinzester¹ fashioned was of peacock's plumage bright,
And green as grass was the mantle of velvet that wrapped him round,
And with ermine lined, and on each side it swept even unto the ground.²

When Gramoflanz learns that the trespasser is Gawain, whose father king Lot had slain his father king Irôt, he alters his mind, and at once challenges Gawain to fight him sixteen days hence at Ioflanz in the presence of a great company. Gawain meantime returns with his bough to the *Château Merveil* and there weds Orgeluse. Next morning Parzival too breaks a bough from the same tree and wreaths it round his helmet. Gawain and he meet accidentally and, mistaking each other for king Gramoflanz,³ fight a furious duel, in which Gawain is worsted. Parzival on discovering his error cries aloud :

Alas ! that with gallant Gawain I have foughten so fierce a fight,
'Tis *myself* whom I here have vanquished, and my joy shall have taken
flight.⁴

Gawain's combat with Gramoflanz is necessarily postponed for a day ; and Parzival begs leave to encounter the king in Gawain's stead :

'Right gladly will I defy him, King Gramoflanz, in his pride ;
I brake from his tree this morning a bough ere I thence did ride,
And for that he of need must fight me—For conflict I sought his land,
And for nothing else came I hither but to fight with his strong right
hand.'⁵

Gawain of course will not let Parzival go ; but Parzival steals out at break of day, meets and beats King Gramoflanz. Gramoflanz, however, still insists on fighting Gawain, and is only reconciled to the loss of his bough by wedding Itonjé, Gawain's sister, of whom he has long been enamoured.

¹ Probably *Winchester*, according to Bartsch vol. ii p. 292. In vi. 603 Kondrie, daughter of Lot, wears 'a hat of the English peacock' (Miss Weston vol. ii. p. 210).

² *Ib.* xii. 332 ff.

³ *Ib.* xiv. 9 f., 363 f.

⁴ *Ib.* xiv. 157 f.

⁵ *Ib.* xiv. 359 ff.

Wolfram wrote his *Parzival* early in the thirteenth century and quotes as his source Kyot the Provençal.¹ Kyot and Chrétien de Troyes appear to have had a common source in a book given to the latter by Philip, Count of Flanders, and cited by him in the prologue to his *Conte del Graal*: a fragment of this common source is perhaps still extant.² It is, therefore, practically certain that such a name as Gramoflanz goes back to a Romance (? Breton) original; and that, in seeking to determine its earliest form, we must set side by side the variants of Wolfram and Chrétien:—

{ Wolfram: *Gramoflanz*, *Gramovlanz*.³
 { Chrétien: *Guiromelans*, *li guiromelans*, *li Guiremelanz*,
 { *li griomelans*. Cp. Heinrich von dem Türlin (*Dieu*
 { *Krône*): *Gtremelanz*.⁴

In view of these variants I would suggest that the name was originally **Guiramelans*, representing a Latin *visci-ramellanus*, which in Old French would become successively *vis-ramel-ans*, *guis-ramel-ans*, *gui-ramel-ans*.⁵ On this showing Wolfram has preserved the original *a* as against Chrétien's *o* or *e*, though Chrétien's forms are otherwise more primitive than Wolfram's: yet even in the scarcely recognisable *Gramoflanz* the ending (cp. *pflanse*) shows that the name suggested to Wolfram some connexion with

¹ *Ib.* xvi. 663 ff.

² Miss J. L. Weston *The Legend of Sir Perceval* London 1906 i. 1, 73, 93, 319, 325.

³ K. Bartsch in Index to his ed. of Wolfram's *Parzival*.

⁴ *Id.* *Germanische Studien* Wien 1875 ii. 121.

⁵ Old French used both *vis* and *guis* for 'mistletoe' (Mod. Fr. *gui*). *Guis*, as I learn from my friend Dr. P. Giles, was probably a borrowed word (? from Breton), which superseded the Old French *vis*. The Latin **ramellus* appears in Old French *ramel*, 'a branch,' Provençal *ramels*, 'a bush,' Modern French *rameau*, 'a branch.' See A. Brachet *An Etymological Dictionary of the French Language* ed. 3 Oxford 1882 s. vv. 'gui,' 'rameau,' G. Körting *Lateinisch-romanisches Wörterbuch* ed. 2 Paderborn 1901 nos. 7745, 10227.

the vegetable world. If I am right in my conjecture,¹ Gramoflanz or rather Guiromelans was a king who defended a tree against all comers and himself bore a name meaning 'He of the Mistletoe-branch' or 'the Mistletoe-branch-man.'² As already mentioned, he wore a mantle of velvet 'green as grass'—a trait which recalls Gawain's other antagonist the Green Knight and suits the guardian of a sacred tree.³ On another occasion

Gramoflanz, he ware

For garment a robe of wonder, in Gampfassasch wroughten fair.

'Twas a rick silk, all gold embroidered, and woven with golden thread,
And a shimmer of light from his vesture afar round the monarch spread.⁴

¹ Bartsch *Germanische Studien* ii. 121 would derive the name from *guirlande* (Lat. *gyrus*) and *meller, mesler*, 'to fight,' i.e. 'He who fights for the garland.' But the Old French *garlande*, Provençal *garlanda*, are against him; nor has *guirlande* anything to do with *gyrus*. See Körting *op. cit.* nos. 4429, 10389.

² Hence the appellative forms *li guiomelans*, etc.

³ Mr. D. Fitzgerald in the *Revue celtique* iv. 185 f. reports the following folk-tale concerning Loch Guirr: 'This lake, all Munster knows, is enchanted; but the spell passes off it once in every seven years. The lake then, to whoever has the luck to behold it, appears dry; and the Tree may be partly seen at the bottom of it, covered with a Green Cloth. A certain bold fellow was at the spot one day at the very instant when the spell broke, and he rode his horse towards the tree and snatched away the *Brat 'Uaine* [Green Cloth] that covered it. As he turned his horse, and fled for his life, the woman who sat on the watch, knitting under the cloth, at the foot of the tree, cried out,

Awake, awake, thou silent tide!

From the Dead Women's Land a horseman rides,

From my head the green cloth snatching.

At the words the waters rose; and so fiercely did they pursue him that as he gained the edge of the lake one half of his steed was swept away, and with it the Brat 'Uaine, which he was drawing after him. Had that been taken, the enchantment was ended for ever.' Mr. Fitzgerald *ib.* p. 192 cp. Campbell *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* ii. 42 ff.

The Rev. J. Macdougall *Folk and Hero Tales* London 1891 (*Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition: Argyllshire* iii.) p. 231 tells of 'the Knight of the Green Vesture . . . who fell fighting in the play of swords against the Fierce Earl of the Wood-of-Masts (*Coille-nan-Crann*).'

⁴ Wolfram *Parzival* trans. Miss J. L. Weston xiv. 733 ff.

The gold, like the green, was appropriate to the bearer of the mistletoe.¹ It will further be noticed that whoever wore the branch in question (Gramoflanz, Gawain, or Parzival) was exposed thereby to the attack of another champion eager to wrest from him the coveted prize. Lastly, the branch was worn round the helmet as a garland or crown: it formed in fact the *regale* of the *rex nemorensis*. Not only was Gamoflanz a king; but Gawain too is said to have reigned as a king in *Walweitha*,² that is Galloway,³ and—as Miss Weston points out⁴—it is in *Galvoie* or Galloway that Chrétien locates the *Château Merveil*.

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(*To be continued.*)

¹ Verg. *Aen.* 6. 204 ff. Is there an allusion to the man-god with his golden bough in Anth. Pal. 4. 1. 47 f. Meleager *ναί μὴν καὶ χρύσειον δαί θελοιο Πλάτωνος* | *κλῶνα, τὸν ἐξ ἀρετῆς πάντοθι λαμπόμενον*?

² William of Malmesbury *Gesta regum Anglorum* 3. 287 (ed. W. Stubbs London 1889 ii. 342).

³ F. Lot in *Romania* xxv. 2 n. 3. ⁴ Miss J. L. Weston *Sir Percival* i. 191.