

Review

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## REVIEWS

CÚIRT AN MHEADHON OIDHCHE. BRYAN MERRYMAN *ed.* RISEARD Ó FOGHLUDHA .i. Fiachra Eilgeach, do chuir in eagar. Aiste ann ó PHÍARAS BEASLAÍ. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis and Co. 10s. 6d. net.

"Cúirt an Mheadhoin Oidhche" is by far the most successful sustained effort in verse in Modern Irish. Mr. Foley's recently published edition removes the reproach that nothing like a good edition of this important work had hitherto been published in Ireland.

To Mr. Foley's edition Mr. Pierce Beasley contributes a very interesting introductory essay. Mr. Beasley is an enthusiastic admirer of Merriman, a fact which contributes not a little to the readability of his essay. But he has sometimes allowed his enthusiasm to get the better of his critical judgment, and the result is that he lays himself open to the charge of exaggeration. For instance he makes, as it seems to me, extravagant claims for Merriman as regards his originality in employing everyday speech, his entire freedom from conventionalism, and the originality of his outlook on life. No doubt a good deal of credit is due to Merriman on each of these heads, but it is possible to award more credit than is due. In as far as Merriman employs "the spoken speech" it is to a considerable extent due to the metre in which he wrote; when he writes the lyric "Mac Alla" he is much like any other contemporary. Furthermore the manner in which scribes of his own day misunderstood the text, and the number of words of doubtful meaning which still remain, show plainly enough that it was something more than the every-day speech of Clare that Merriman employed. And in simplicity of language (if that be esteemed a virtue) Merriman is a good way behind Seán Ó Conaill and Donnchadh Ruadh.

When one speaks of Merriman's freedom from conventionalism, one must not overlook the fact that "the splendid opening"—"a passage of pure poetry" Mr. O'Grady once called it—is at bottom as conventional as anything in Irish literature. It is in fact an ordinary *aisling* with its 'as-I-rove-out-one-morning-early' type of beginning somewhat expanded, and with some borrowings from the English poet Savage; and the landscape the poet paints for us is for the most part a purely ideal one. Compare for instance the pretty opening of Séamus Ó Leathlobhair's elegy on Éamonn Ó Caomhánaigh (1764)<sup>1</sup> and the whole dream-basis on which it is built; or even Eoghan Ruadh's *Rinneadh aisling bheag aorach* (ed. Dinneen, ll. 3098 sq.), or the poem beginning *Sealad am aonar cois Féile do bhíosa* written about the same time as the Cúirt by Uilliam Ó Lionáin. In all of these, as in the Cúirt, we find a vision heralded by an artificial description of nature; and this convention, though it survived so late with us, is not even of Irish origin, for, owing primarily to the fashion set by the thirteenth-century dream-allegory, *Le Roman de la Rose*, it was a commonplace of English and Continental literature in the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> Kilkenny Arch. Journal, iv. 133; Cnuasacht Comhagall, 1906, 51.

Too much, I think, has been made of the singularity of Merriman's attitude towards life, as seen in the *Cúirt*. Merriman's "revolt," as such, had nothing unique about it; the uncommon thing was that he had not only the desire but the ability—the courage, perhaps, too—to record his ideas in verse in the striking way he did. But the ideas themselves were not peculiar to Merriman: they were—not to go outside his own day or country—shared by a number of contemporary Irishmen, both literate and illiterate. Not only so, but several of his contemporaries had already written verses on themes similar to that treated of in the *Cúirt*. For instance An Mangaire Sógach in his *Seanduine* and *Seana-bhean*, and Eoghan Ruadh in his *Árrachtach Sean* and his *Ar dhrúcht na maidne 's me taisdeal go ró-mhoch*.<sup>1</sup> It would be interesting were it possible to prove that Merriman came under the influence of Voltaire or Rousseau, though of course such a fact could add nothing to the value of his work. But speculations of this kind, unsupported by evidence, are far-fetched and vain. There is no need to conjecture foreign influence when elemental human nature working in home surroundings is sufficient to account for all. Take for instance the following stanza from a Connacht folk song: in its own way it is as revolutionary as anything in the *Cúirt*, but surely it would be unreasonable to argue that its peasant author was inspired by the theories of Continental philosophers:—

*Léan go raibh ar an bpósadh !  
Is maírg riamh a níos é,  
Le n-a fhusacht duine cheangailt  
Is a dhoilighe tá sé é sgaoileadh.  
Is truagh nach dtigeann Acht amach,  
Mar dhiolfa bó nó caora,  
An té nach dtaithneóchadh a bhean leis,  
I thiomáint chun an aonaigh.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this poem, of which nothing has been published, two young women complain bitterly that they are tied to two *sgráistí*:

*Mo mhallacht don mbuidhin do ghní (?rín) me cheangal  
go dlúth le straoil gan bhrígh 'na bhallaibh,  
liom le mí nár smaoín ar radaireacht,  
acht casachtach fhada do shíor dá chrádh.*

According to John O'Daly this was Eoghan Ruadh's "first attempt at verse" (12 E 24, p. 169). Earlier still we find a song written by a Clare poet, Seón Ó Huaithnín, in the name of one 'Peggy Turruidhe,' who had been persuaded into a similarly ill-assorted marriage. It begins:

*Mo mhallacht-sa dom mhúdar, do cheangail me le stumpa  
do sgraisde mharbh bhrúite, gan lúth gan áird.*

(Cf. Ren. 69, p. 136). Her husband, however, is not wholly worthless, for she thus refers to him:

*A chnagaire bhig dhóite, gan maith ar bith ar m'éólas,—  
acht gur maith an clóca ar mo chloinn an fear tighe.*

The sentiment here is precisely that which Merriman puts into the mouth of Aoibheall; and indeed Merriman's use of the same word, *clóca*, in this connection (l. 896 of the *Cúirt*), would suggest a conscious reminiscence of Ó Huaithnín's poem. Still another effusion of this type is the *Leabhar Eóin* composed by Uilliam Mac Gearailt (? date) for the wife of one Henrigh Ó Briain (Nat. Lib. xxv., 130).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Siamsa an Gheimhridh*, p. 40; 'St. Stephen's,' June 1903.

By most students of the Cúirt Mr. Beasley's view that "Brian was essentially a moralist" will be regarded as a *paradox*. The fact is that the Merriman revealed to us in the Cúirt did not trouble himself with questions of morality, and in as far as he is moral he is only so by accident. His rule of life consists in the gratification of the lower appetites; and customs and institutions that hinder this gratification are, as far as possible, to be swept away. An attentive reader cannot help feeling that the libertinism which the *seanduine* preaches with such gusto, more truly voices the spirit of the poem as a whole, than do the modified views afterwards put forward by Aoibheall. The old husband's theories, one suspects, are faulty just because they are not 'practical politics'; his ideal is discountenanced because it is inattainable; hence follow concessions to the established order of things,—a form of marriage is, for appearance' sake, to be made compulsory, except on clerics, whose celibacy is to be tolerated for the moment.<sup>1</sup>

From an artistic point of view the Cúirt would have gained considerably had there been a greater contrast between its three principal characters. As it is, there is, at bottom, little or no difference of outlook between them. Merriman seems to have been incapable of conceiving anything more than merely animal passion; and so the debate centres round a comparatively minor topic,—a question of the ways and means of giving rein to a postulated promiscuous animalism. The *seanduine*, indeed, differs from the others chiefly in being so logical and thoroughgoing; he frankly pleads for the abolition of a marriage ceremony which neither he nor the others recognise as of binding force. The two other disputants, with less honesty and less courage, but with a keener eye to the practical side of things, plead for the retention of a certain outward show of propriety. But, though the verdict is not in his favour, the honours of the argument, such as it is, undoubtedly rest with the *seanduine*. Granted the complete truth of the view of life which permeates the Cúirt, the *seanduine's* conclusion is the only rational one.

Mr. Beasley's introduction does ample justice to the many excellencies of Merriman's work. But at times his essay reads like the brief of an advocate rather than the summing-up of a judge. It is too much of a panegyric; and a reader not able to judge for himself is likely to bear away an exaggerated idea of the merits of the Cúirt. With all its good qualities, the Cúirt is lacking in true poetic feeling. It roams, but it never soars. It is brilliant, but its brilliancy is that of prose. It is splendidly rhythmical, but one searches it in vain for any certain sign of the divine afflatus. There is more inspiration in 'Ógánach an Chúil Cheangailte' or in 'Domhnall Óg'—to mention two short lyrics—than there is in Merriman's thousand lines. So much for Merriman's manner. His matter is less attractive. One does not need to be over-squeamish to admit that his grossness, his constant rooting in the earth, becomes repellent. His 'realistic' picture of a world in which sensuality is the one motive-force of human action, is apt to pall, and that even though one choose to label it "nature."

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps I may remark here that Mr. Beasley's idea (p. 18) that Merriman found it necessary to pose as "jester" in order to protect his work from attack, finds no countenance in the history of our modern literature, nor do I believe that it can be justified by any evidence drawn from the Cúirt itself.

Merriman, as we know, borrowed something from Richard Savage, the English poet. I think it likely that he has also been influenced by one of the writers of antiquity. As a schoolmaster it is reasonable to suppose that he was acquainted with Ovid, who was a favourite classical author in eighteenth-century Ireland; and, granting this, he could hardly have failed to recognise in the Roman poet a kindred spirit to his own. While there are of course inevitable dissimilarities between the two, there are also striking resemblances. In Ovid we find the same hedonistic outlook on life as in Merriman, the same apparent unconsciousness of a moral sense, the same heartless materialism. Both, too, possess a remarkable fluency of verse, and an aptitude for epigrammatic lines and couplets. And Merriman's line (280) in which he describes a young woman in a public assembly as:

*ag éileamh breathnuighthe, ag amharc 's a' togha fir,*

must surely be an echo of Ovid's well-known:

*spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsae.*

No discussion of Merriman's *Cúirt* would be complete without a reference to another remarkable poem produced about the same time, *An Siota agus a Mháthair*,<sup>1</sup> though, strange to say, Mr. Beasley does not once refer to it. In this poem of over 200 lines an old woman and her natural son carry on an argument in which questions of religion and morality are discussed in the most daring fashion. In ideas, as in metre, its kinship with the *Cúirt* is undeniable; and if it is not Merriman's composition,<sup>2</sup> it certainly is that of a disciple of his, and almost certainly the work of a fellow-Clareman.

In his sketch of Merriman's career Mr. Foley has with commendable industry unearthed some new information concerning the poet and his family in the Census records and elsewhere. But he is hardly correct in representing (p. 31) O'Donovan as saying that Brian left Feakle because he feared his daughters might be abducted: O'Donovan merely gives it as the tradition he had heard in the neighbourhood. Here are the actual words O'Donovan wrote in 1839:

"There are many old men still living who were intimately acquainted with Brian, but I could learn no particulars about his life worth recording but that he was a stout black-haired man who held a small farm near *Loch Gréine*, and kept a hedge school, of both which he made some money; but fearing that two handsome daughters he had might be abducted from him for the sake of their little fortunes, he removed to Limerick where he followed his old trade of teaching, and where he died about 30 years ago."<sup>3</sup>

As regards Merriman's daughters O'Curry, writing about 1840, says that Merriman, after leaving Feakle, conducted "with the assistance of his daughter, who is now living in London," a "very respectable and popular"

<sup>1</sup> No less than four editions of *An Siota (otherwise Sutach) agus a Mháthair* have appeared, none of them, however, satisfactory.

<sup>2</sup> The lateness and comparative fewness of the MSS. in which it is found tell somewhat against Merriman's authorship, nor does there appear to be any tradition connecting him with the work. One of the printed versions, too, gives in metrical form the year 1815 as the date (of composition, presumably), while one of the MSS. (Ren. 69) similarly gives 1825. But the whole question still awaits proper discussion.

<sup>3</sup> Ord. Letters Co. Clare, ii. p. 161.

mathematical school in Limerick.<sup>1</sup> This statement of O'Curry's is of some importance; for Merriman's daughter, Mary, cannot have been so young as Mr. Foley would make out, if she was old enough to assist her father in teaching before 1805. O'Donovan should have been quoted as the authority for the identification of the surname 'Merriman' with 'Mac Meanman' (p. 21).<sup>2</sup> Reference too should have been made to the local tradition which O'Grady<sup>3</sup> records as to Merriman's illegitimate birth, which, if true, would help to account for, among other things, the peculiar interest he took in the writings of Richard Savage.<sup>4</sup>

A remarkable fact in connection with Merriman's career is the absence of references to him by contemporaries. He is indeed described complacently by a contemporary scribe as *aon do phríomhbhreitheamhuin na súagh-éigse*; and, if we are to believe John O'Daly,<sup>5</sup> he was on intimate terms with Seán Do Hóra. But none of the Clare and Limerick poets of the period appear to make any reference to him in their writings, nor does he allude to them. Like Egan O'Rahilly, he does not seem to have had much communication with his fellow poets, and like O'Rahilly's too, his death appears to have passed unnoticed by the poetic fraternity.

Coming to a consideration of the text of the *Cúirt*, it may be said at once that Mr. Foley in the present edition gives us what is, on the whole, the best text yet printed. His text has 1026 lines, exactly the same as Stern's; and this agreement between the two is at all events a great convenience for purposes of reference. Stern, it may be recalled, besides utilising the printed editions of John O'Daly and P. O'Brien, made use of the following MSS:

Eg. 111 (C), written by Finghin Ó Scannail, 1818; Kerry?

Three MSS. in possession of Dr. Hyde, viz. one (D) written apparently at end of 18th cent., imperfect; another (E) by Tomás Ó Gormáin, 1829-30, Clare; the third (F) by Ml. Ó Loinse, 19th cent., Co. Cork.

Besides making copious use of Stern's text and variants, Mr. Foley has used the following MSS.:

23 L 31 (S), written by Seán Mac Searraidh, 1792; Clare?<sup>6</sup>

23 B 36 (T), by Tadhg Mac Cártha, 1820, Co. Cork?

<sup>1</sup> H. and S. Cat., p. 85. Cf. O'Donovan (Clare Letters, ii. 183): "He had two daughters who were for some time employed as governesses in Limerick, but now living in London."

<sup>2</sup> O'Donovan's words are: "Brian's real surname was Mac Meanman, a name which is mentioned in the Wars of Turlough as that of a branch of the *Clann Choileain*, the principal family of whom were the MacNamaras" (Clare Letters, ii. 183). O'Curry calls Merriman "a native of the County of Clare, though not of Munster origin" (H. and S. Cat., p. 85). Merriman himself would seem to allude to both forms of his surname when he writes in the *Cúirt* (l. 988): *meidhreacht meanmnach a ainm 's is aorach*.

<sup>3</sup> Brit. Mus. Cat., p. 495.

<sup>4</sup> It might even be argued that when the *seanduine* speaks of *duine aca an uair seo ar fuaid an tighe seo* (ll. 608 sq.; *seo* has the best MS. authority), a contemporary of Brian's would see in it a slightly veiled allusion to the poet himself. At all events it is a fact that the connection of the person described ll. 608-628 with the infant of 530 sq., is not clearly brought out, and it may well have been left purposely vague.

<sup>5</sup> Ir. Lang. Miscellany, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Described by O'Curry (H. and S. Cat. p. 367) as "a full but inaccurate copy."

- 24 L 1 (H), by Seán Ó Dála, 1862, Dublin.  
 24 P 19 (R), 1805 ? ; Clare or Galway ?  
 23 K 46 (K), by Seán Ó Dála, 1824, Co. Watfd.  
 Nat. Lib. v.<sup>1</sup> (N).  
 Eg. 162.

Mr. Foley quotes variants from all of these MSS. with the exception of K. He adds that he has 'searched' a number of other MS. versions, which he does not think it necessary to specify. But a vague statement of this kind is hardly satisfactory; and indeed in an edition which aimed at completeness there would have been some attempt made to enumerate the whole 30 or 40 MS. copies of the *Cúirt* in existence. It is obvious that the wider the survey taken of existing MSS., the less will be the danger of overlooking any MS. of importance.

To the above MSS. of the *Cúirt* I add the following, which happen to have come under my notice; all but three belong to the R.I.A. collection:

- 23 D 40 (M), written by Domhnall Mac Cormaic, 1796; Clare or W. Tipperary ?  
 23 C 30, part iii (G), by Séamas Ó Glasáin, 1812, Co. Limerick.  
 23 K 18 (W), by Uilliam Ó Haodha, 1823, Co. Cork.  
 23 C 36 (U), by Seán Paor, 1823, Co. Waterford.  
 23 L 5 (L), by Rísdeárd Paor, 1825; E. Munster ?  
 24 L 37 (I).  
 3 B 5, by Ml. Óg Ó Longáin, 1829, Co. Cork.  
 23 K 29, by Pdg. Mac Gearailt, 1824, Limerick.  
 23 Q 18, by Edhmonn Ó Hórróchoadh (*sic*), 1817, Co. Roscommon.  
 24 A 3, by Sms. Ó Súilleabháin, 1847.  
 23 H 30.  
 Nat. Lib. xxvi. (O), by Antonín Ó Comhraidhe ?  
 Mur. 18 (P), by Eoghan Tóibín, 1817, Cork.  
 Ren. 69 (Q), by Ml. Ó Raghallaigh, about 1850, Clare.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Foley's accounts of some of his MSS. are open to criticism. The description of Humphrey O'Sullivan's Diary into which he digresses on p. 78, is not very accurate and is plainly second-hand. His references (p. 79) to 23 K 46 show that he can have made only the most superficial examination of that MS. The fact is that the texts in K and S belong to two totally distinct types; and the only connection between the MSS. is that they both came into the possession of Humphrey O'Sullivan, of Callan, who collated these MSS. with each other and with some third copy, and made marginal corrections and additions in each of them. In the case of N, too, Mr. Foley has fallen into some errors. It is quite impossible that N was the "original" copy which was in the possession of Anthony Howard. A comparison with MS. xxvi (O) of the National Library shows that *Anton* stands for *Antonín Ó Comhraidhe*, i.e. Anthony O'Curry, a brother of Eugene, whom he survived. In this latter MS. is also given a copy of the *Cúirt*, written

<sup>1</sup> This (not iii.) is the correct numbering at present.

<sup>2</sup> Other MS. versions, which I have not seen, are Eg. 211, Brit. Mus., and a MS. in St. John's College, Waterford (G. J. no. 167, p. 606).

apparently by the same Anthony O'Curry (cf. "A O'C," p. 134), in a hand which is identical with that of N.<sup>1</sup>

A necessary preliminary to any serious attempt to discover the author's original text would have been the ascertaining of the distinctive features of each MS. with a view to tracing, as far as might be, the relationship and pedigree of each. But Mr. Foley has quite failed to appreciate the importance of a methodical survey of this kind, and the result is that his treatment of the question of the inter-relation of the MSS. is meagre and unsatisfactory. He tells us indeed that the four MSS., S T H N, give an almost identical text, and also that the version in R is a 'very peculiar' one; but beyond these two statements he hardly goes. But even a cursory examination of the available sources—and the little time at my disposal has not permitted me to give more than a hurried glance at them—should enable one to form a much more satisfactory idea than this as to the relations of the MS. versions to one another.

The outstanding feature which reveals itself is this, that most of the MSS. readily fall into one of three well differentiated groups. (1) The first group, which I designate as **S**, includes the MSS. S D C Q N O H. All these MSS. give, when one disregards mere scribal varieties of spelling, substantially the same text, the relation between the three last being particularly close. (2) The second group, which I designate as **M**, includes the MSS. M W K G F. This group is marked off from the former not only by pronounced textual differences *passim*, but also by the inclusion of two passages of some length which are not found in **S**, viz. one of 16 lines in substitution for ll. 539-540, or (in the case of W G F) inserted between ll. 538-539, and another of 22 lines inserted between ll. 692-3.

(3) The MSS. U L I P are developments of **M**, and give the longest text of all. This recension I designate as **P**. U and L have no less than 36 lines inserted after 540, the last 20 of which are unknown in **M**; and, besides the 22 lines after l. 692, they have a further addition of 16 lines after l. 710. I is similar, save that in place of this last interpolation it has 12 lines in substitution for l. 764. A glance at P, which (dated 1817) is, so far as one can judge, the oldest MS. of the four, shows it to be of the same type as the others.

Intermediate between **S** and **M** stand certain MSS., viz. R E T, which give a contaminated text. Certain misplacements, omissions and additions also distinguish these MSS. E and R omit ll. 891-6 (which in **M** are placed after l. 902), and likewise ll. 603-6; and both place ll. 829-846<sup>2</sup> immediately after l. 756. E<sup>3</sup> is further distinguished by a unique addition of 16 lines—an obvious interpolation—between ll. 454-5. T has 24 additional lines after l. 538<sup>4</sup>, and has thus a certain relationship with **P**.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The contents of N, I may add, are by no means confined to Clare compositions, as Mr. Foley suggests.

<sup>2</sup> Not ll. 869-886, as Mr. Foley wrongly gives in the case of R.

<sup>3</sup> Not F, as Mr. Foley has it.

<sup>4</sup> Not (as Mr. Foley says) 20 ll. after l. 540.

<sup>5</sup> Of the other MSS., mostly of minor importance, 3 B 5, 23 K 29, 23 Q 18, and 23 H 30 (as well as Eg. 162) may be classed as belonging to **S**, while the extremely corrupt 24 A 3 is akin to **M**. The printed editions of O'Daly and O'Brien belong for the most part to **M**, but have (especially the latter) some of the additional lines found in **P**.



We thus see that of the six MSS. which Mr. Foley has collated, four belong to the **S** group, and two (R T) are 'mixed.' In a large majority of cases the variations between the **S** texts are quite unimportant, being no more than scribal differences of spelling and the like. A number of the variants which Mr. Foley has with considerable trouble put together, come under this head, as when he gives six MS. spellings of *léigheamh*, or records such variants as *d'am*, *do am* and *d'amm*, *sgiobfuin* and *sgiubfain*, *aga* and *agadh*. The only effect of noting differences such as these is to distract attention from the really significant variants. In this connection one may note that, as a concession to the prejudices of some of the more ignorant of his readers, Mr. Foley has, as best he could, printed his variants in the hiberno-roman characters, though he admits (p. 185) that greater accuracy could have been attained had he used the ordinary form of the roman alphabet.

Mr. Foley gives it as his opinion (p. 80) that the 1026 ll. found in **S** were all that Merriman composed, and that as late as 1820 the only addition that had been made to these was that found in T after l. 540. Evidently he was unaware of the existence of such MSS. as M and P. The question whether the additional passages in **M** are or are not from the pen of Merriman has not yet been satisfactorily investigated. Appearances are perhaps against the assumption that they are Merriman's. One is rather prejudiced by the fact that in M—the oldest MS. of its group—both handwriting and spelling are very poor; and indeed, as compared with that of **S**, the text of **M** appears in general to have got a bad start upon its MS. career. But until the whole **M** text has been systematically studied, it is uncritical, seeing that the additions were in existence as early as 1796, to pass such summary judgment upon them as Mr. Beasley and Mr. Foley have done.

In this connection an interesting question arises as to the genuineness of the "autograph" copy of the *Cúirt* which was in existence in the last century. O'Donovan, writing in 1839, says: "The autograph original is in possession of his [i.e. Merriman's] relative Anthony Howard (*O'Hiomhair*), who lives near Milltown Malbay."<sup>1</sup> In 1852 John O'Daly made a transcript of a copy of the *Cúirt* written by Howard in 1848 from what Howard claimed to be Merriman's own copy.<sup>2</sup> And afterwards, it would appear, this original copy came into the hands of O'Daly, who in 1862 made a copy of it, the MS. 24 L 1 (H). O'Daly in this last MS. adds a note to the effect that he did not believe that the book he had before him was what Howard represented it to be, viz. Merriman's autograph copy, but was probably only a copy made by Howard himself from the original.<sup>3</sup> There are, however, difficulties in the way of accepting these statements of O'Daly's. In the first place there appears to be no trace of either of the Howard MSS. which O'Daly claims he had before him. And secondly there is a remarkable disagreement as to the total number of lines: O'Daly's transcript of 1852 gives 1070 lines, his later transcript only 1026. Either O'Daly or Howard does not appear to be quite reliable in this matter.<sup>4</sup> In any case it is to be regretted that the

<sup>1</sup> Clare Ord. Letters, ii. 161. O'Daly in 1862 described Howard as of Ennistymon.

<sup>2</sup> O'Grady, Brit. Mus. Cat. p. 493.

<sup>3</sup> See ed. Foley, p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Most of the contents of 24 L 1 are found in Nat. Lib. v. (N), and I should not be surprised if investigation were to show that the latter was the MS. from which O'Daly actually transcribed. O'Daly, I fear, was not very scrupulous in such matters.

MS. which O'Donovan tells us was in the possession of Howard in 1839, is not now available.

As regards the spelling adopted by Mr. Foley in his text I have room for only a few remarks. Stern's influence is seen in spellings like *iláith*, *gnáith*, *luaith*, passim, instead of *iláth* etc. without the *i*; likewise in *a* for *an*, ll. 609, 723. The pronouns *mé* and *tú* appear everywhere without the accent, though, as is generally known, *me* and *tu* are used only disjunctively, and *mé* and *tú* as noms. to ordinary verbs. Spellings like *súbhchus*, *inad*, *buille* ('madness'), *calghais*, *coife*, are also open to objection.

The important questions of Merriman's dialect and metre, on which Stern has done some admirable pioneer work, are scarcely glanced at at all in the present edition. To enter into them here would be quite impossible in the space at my disposal; I will content myself with noting a few instances where metrical considerations would suggest an alteration in the text. Words like *d'órduigh* 815, 1005, *magaidh* 326, should have been written *d'órda*, *maga*; while conversely *déanfa* 896 should be *déanfaidh* (-faig). *feadh* 1023 should be *aga*, which likewise has best MS. authority. *agus*, *is* and *'s* are used one for another about a dozen times, e.g. 769, 578, 643. On the other hand the insertion of *na* before *rae* in l. 287, though it makes the line metrically regular, is against all good MS. authority; and the use of *an bás* (which R reads) for *bás* in l. 890 would be open to the same objection.

In place of the respective readings adopted by Mr. Foley I would, with some of the best MSS., read *éin-phioc*, l. 676; *duigir* 693; *is bhuaidhfeas* 336; *tré gach tiortha* 635; *i mbliadhanta* 310; *dallair* 389. In l. 466 *é* (the reading of M, etc.) seems required instead of *i*. In l. 92 *fee* 's should be *fts*. For *gáibha* 416 I would read *gáibhach* with M, and take it as a dissyllabic form of *gailbheach*, 'stormy' (: *fad* aguin, Seán na R. p. 104, l. 2). In l. 643 *dá mhaoidhchain* should be *dá bhithin*, which of course is to be taken with the following line. In l. 851 *gan foidhne* makes no sense: I would read *ná foidhne* with some of the MSS., taking *foidhne* as a verb (= *foidhnigh*).<sup>1</sup> The note of interrogation at the end of l. 686 should be replaced by a comma. The comma after *leat*, l. 813, should be deleted, and the full stop at end of following line replaced by a comma. Ll. 733-4 form one sentence; omit the mark of interrogation after *béile*, and for '*n-a féile!*' read *na féile?* (The construction of l. 734 is plain enough,—*ca bhfuil do dhíth* is equivalent to some such phrase as *an lughaidhe do chuid*, hence the same construction is used as might follow a comparative in *-de*; cf. ll. 735-6). In l. 364 M and kindred MSS. read *mtostáidh* for *mtástáid* (and also *do* for the *a* immediately following); this, I think, is right, and would enable us to improve the line metrically by reading: *a thoice le mtostá 'o shíol gábha is déarca*.<sup>2</sup> In l. 853 the pronunciation of the misspelling *bráthach* as a dissyllable would be unparalleled: the MSS. here with singular unanimity read *bráth* (and *brách*) *acht*, though one must admit that the force of the *acht* is not easily seen.

<sup>1</sup> *foidhnighim* = 'I permit, tolerate, put up with.' Cf. Tadhg Gaedhloch's *ná foidhnigh* [spelt *foidhene* in an early edition] *me leaghadh i nglais 's mo theinn-luit dom chrádh*.

<sup>2</sup> *mtástáid* is interpreted by Foley as 'ill-condition,' by Stern as 'defamation'; neither quotes any other instance of the word. For *mtostá* see supra p. 72. In l. 830 I think we should likewise read *do* (pronounced *o*) instead of *a* before *bharr*.

Ll. 815-6 are certainly corrupt. For *Dúileamh* all good MSS. have *dúlladh* (= *dúladh*), which is obviously the correct reading. This word, meaning 'concupiscence,' occurs again l. 997: *an crádh's an dúladh mhúch gan bhrígh me*; cf. also *dúla(dh)* (apparently gen. sg. of *dúil*), with same meaning, ll. 738, 884. It is synonymous with *dálgas* (for *álghas*, *dúlgheas*), 884, which probably owes the initial *d-* to its influence. For the meaningless *coróin* of the next line some of the best MSS. have *corón*; I would read *cró*, 'pen, enclosure' (here used figuratively). The couplet would then run:

*ca bhfuil na comhachta d'órda an dúladh*  
*is calcadh na feóla i gcró na cumha so.*<sup>1</sup>

i.e. Tell me (*aithris* 813) what (divine) authority has commanded them to leave unsatisfied their carnal desires and to straiten their flesh thus in a prison of joylessness. The speaker is, of course, referring to the clergy, whose celibacy she has just designated *cumha na cléire* (l. 810).

Ll. 113-116 I would be inclined to read as follows:

*'Sé cinneadh le saoihe i gcrích na comhairle,*  
*i gcuinne na daoirse hinnseadh dóibh-sean,*  
*duine don bhuidhin seo líonta i gcomhachta*  
*ar thuitim a ndíse shuidheamh i bhFódla.*

i.e. The fairy host assembled in council resolved—with a view to remedying the sad condition into which, as their discussion (ll. 73-97) showed, the country had fallen—to appoint one of their number to hold a session of enquiry into the decay of the 'old stock.' With *líonta i gcomhachta* cf. the variant *líonta i bpianta* of l. 10; here it may be taken either with *duine* (i.e. with plenipotentiary powers) or with *buidhin* (i.e. the powerful fairy host). *díse*, as I understand it here, has nothing to do with 'dice-throw,' but is a form of *dílse*<sup>2</sup>; the idea is that of l. 81: *an uaisle b'fhearr chum fáin mar leaghdar*. With *suidheamh* cf. l. 911: *suidhfe an chuideachta ar thiubaist na tíre*.

In the vocabulary one notices some words omitted: among them *cillín* 301; *cobhail* 379, 488, 875; *dúladh* 997; *fiorthann* 28, 730; *fonnsach* 456; *láithreach* 735; *muaireach* 573; *páil* (leg. *fál*), 729. On some other words I add brief notes:

*cnaiste*, 714, is not 'cliathán leabthan' but the old man himself.

*connsach* (var. *ciúnsach*), 105, 455, may be identical with Dinneen's *cichinseach* (mná), 'a strong, handsome, bouncing woman.'

<sup>1</sup> These are the lines quoted by Mr. Beasley (p. 12) as embodying the "central idea" of the *Cúirt*. But this is open to two objections. In the first place, it is impossible, as the lines have hitherto been printed, to extract tolerable sense from them without doing violence to the Irish language. Secondly, it should be borne in mind that in this passage the *ainnir* is speaking not of humanity in general but only of the clergy. Like the skilful debater that she is, she suits her arguments to the occasion; and in dealing with this side-issue of clerical celibacy she specially moderates her language, and goes so far as to endeavour to quote Scripture in support of her case. But it is dangerous to ignore the exceptional and uncharacteristic nature of the arguments brought forward in this passage. Otherwise, were it permissible to tear sentences from their context, ll. 817-820 might be quoted as proof that Merriman was a kind of modern St. Paul.

<sup>2</sup> O'Clery derives *díse* from "*dí uaisle, i. uaisle mhór*"; but this, I think, is a mistake—the word being merely a metathesised form of *dílse* (cf. *míseán* for *milseán, mílseán*).

*creice*, 555, means rather 'a child that whines or cries,' as Peter O'Connell (*apud* Meyer Contribb.) defines the word.

*crothaim*, 627, = *cruthuighim*, 'I create'; it has nothing to do with *crothaim*, *crathaim*, 'I shake.'

*doighear*, 1004, is 'a shooting pain' rather than 'an arrow.'<sup>1</sup> In the citation from Ktg. Eoch.-Sgiath, p. 89z ('*na dhoighir mhorgaighthe*) it means 'a blast of smoke'; cf. in a *ghal bhreun dhorchadh*, *ibid.* p. 90, l. 26.

*draghan*, 156, 318, 360, 546, 624, is not accurately glossed by 'doiceall.' It would be better written *draidhin*, being, as I take it, a Clare contraction of *fad-aradha(in)*, 'continued ill-usage,' hence 'long-suffering, reluctant forbearance or submission, a repressed exasperation, a smothering of one's natural impulses.' The development of *draidhin* from *fadaradhain* involves only the dropping of *f* and of unaccented syllables; \**ad(a)raidhin* would be an intermediate form; cf. *ráiste* used in W. Kerry side by side with *fordáiste*, 'forage.' For another Clare instance of the word cf. *an síofra gabhaig gan draighion gan eagla*, in a 'warrant' by Domhnall Ó Heichir, 23 K 11, p. 54; here the word is pronounced *drúin* (or *drúion*), whereas in the Cúirt the pronunciation *drayn* (or *drayan*) is required. The Mid-Cork usage of the same word is seen in Canon O'Leary's *faidearaidhe (-adha)*, 'deliberation' (Séadna, Niamh). Keating uses *fad-aradhnacht Dé* = "Dei longanimitas," 'the forbearance of God (towards sinners),' TBBh. 150. (With Merriman's *draidhin uilc*, l. 156, one should perhaps compare Peter O'Connell's "aradhain uilc, abuse, insult, hard usage, severe treatment.")

*fachnaid*, 326, is for *fochnuid*, a form of *fochmhuid* (M. Ir. *fochuitbed*), 'jeering, mocking.'

*fachtnaidhe*, 89, should be *fachnaoid* (M spells it *foichnaoid*), which is merely another form of the last word. For the lengthened termination, influenced perhaps by *c(o)náid* and *fonóid* (= *-omhaid*), cf. the following lines from a poem of D. Ó Bruadair's (H. 5. 4, p. 145) :

*teacht síos air leathbhaois lé gliogaireacht ghloin,*  
*is neamhshuim a bhfachnaoid fir chruinnighthe cruadh.*

*falachaidhe*, 456, is an adjective as the following exx. sufficiently show: *Rúidhri an dúin nár smúin bheith falachaidhe fann*, Seán na R. p. 62; *tugadar na sluaighthe falchaidhe* ("grim") *fiannuidhe fiathamhla ftochmhara sin aghaidh ar a chéile*, Comyn's Eachtra Thoroilbh, ed. O'Brien, p. 24. Perhaps it is the same word as *fealcaidh*, which Lhùyd, followed by other dictionaries, explains as (1) 'austere, harsh, unpleasant'; (2) 'deceitful, knavish.'

*féilteach*, 635, is from *féil*, 'a recurrent festival,' and has nothing to do with *fiat*. The meaning is 'at regular intervals': cf. *an fhaoistin fhéilteach*, Seán na R. p. 18; *a dathad glan-ghunna dá lígean gach féile*, Donnchadh Ruadh (Eachtra). So in Co. Mayo *féilteamhail* has a similar meaning (v. Lúb na Caillighe, p. 46).

*foiseach*, 635, has nothing to do with *fos*, 'a rest' (Stern, whence Foley's "sámh, ciúin?"), but comes from *foís*, a word unknown to the dictionaries, of which I have met some instances in, apparently, the sense of 'excessive animal spirits due to over-indulgence in food or drink.' Cf. Desiderius,

<sup>1</sup> With more probability, however, Dr. Bergin has suggested to me that *doigheartha dtograis* = 'burning zeal,' lit., 'flames of zeal,'—taking *dtograis*, not *doigheartha*, as the significant word.

1616, p. 50; *as cosmhail an cholann ré heach thréan-uaibhreach theinnbhéalach, bhíos ó iomarcadh fóisi ag gabháil do fpreabuibh ar a mothúigheann na goire.* So *cóbach* . . . is *fóis* air ó *ól iomad fiona*, Aindrias Mac Cuirtín's invocation to Donn. *próis*<sup>1</sup> appears to be another form of this word: cf. *riad óg beg is próis oirthes is cách na mian*, Tadhg Ruadh Ó Conch., 23 C 25 p. 139; *cuinnighidh próis is póit ón anam do shíor*, Parl. na Mban, 23 C 5 p. 103. Cf. also the Scottish *próis*, = 'pride.' The Donegal *prósaidh*, 'a stout, fat person' (Dinn.), and the Waterford *fóist*, 'a big, worthless man or beast' (Sheehan), may be connected.

*gártha*, 416: for this form of *gartha*, cf. Rogers, Beatha Aodha Uí Néill, p. 128, l. 19.

*glónradh*, 551, does not mean 'shape, cut,' but is a form of *lonnrach*, which is the reading of M here. Cf. *glonnrach*, Siamsa an Gheimhridh, and O'Reilly s. vv. *glonnra* etc.

*lómra*ch, 141, I take to be a mistake for *lonnrach*, which has the best MS. authority. Instead of the more usual pronunciation *lúnra*ch (as in ll. 234, 490) the word is here to be read as *lónra*ch, a form common enough in Munster verse, as e.g. in Eoghan Ruadh's *lasamhail lónnrach leóghanta léidmheach*. The combination *-nnr-* being frequently reduced to a nasalised *r*, *lómhrach* and *lúmhrach* would be likely MS. spellings; and in this manner probably was evolved the scribal *lómra*ch here and on p. 333 of O'Rahilly's Poems.

*Mairsile* (var. *Mairsire*), 325, is 'Margery,' not 'Marcella.'

*marthana*, "existence, continuance," 450. The correct word here is *marbhna* or (phonetically) *marana*, primarily 'an elegy' (which largely consisted of a recapitulation of the good qualities of the deceased), and hence used, as here, in some such secondary sense as 'characteristics, leading features.' Cf. *aig innsint marbhna an tsinnsir chalama*, 23 K 11, p. 53.

*módh* (is *díreach*), 993, appears to show in its spelling the influence of "An Modh Díreach"; it should, of course, be *mó*. The Scotch *motha* is offers a close parallel: *motha is fada* (or *tuilleadh is fada*), 'too long.'

*séithleach*, 11, "a wretch, an outcast;" rather 'a weakling, a puny little fellow,' as P. O'C. explains the word.

*sluighmhaim*: the correct spelling is *slaoidhim*, = M. I. *láidim*, 'I exhort, urge on,' with prothetic *s*. In l. 961 *sluigheamh* should be *slaoidheadh* (*-amh* is semi-phonetic for the conventional *-adh* of the p. pass.; so *dearnamh* p. 134, l. 11). The v. n. in Clare is *slaoidheamh* (cf. Dinn. s.v.), for the older *láided*; Sms. MacCuirtín uses an intermediate form *laoidheamh*, 23 H 30, p. 134.

*sreangaire*, "i. duine ceanndána," 241; rather, as it seems to me, 'a tall raw-boned person.' Cf. *rangaire* or *rangartach*, 'a long thin fellow,' O'Don. Spt. The word has various dialectic and orthographical forms (most of which will be found in Dinneen), e.g. *rangaire*, *rang(th)artach*, *rangalach*, *ranglamán*, where for initial *ra-* we also find *rea-*, *sra-*, *srea-*.

*stágach*, "i. liobarnach", 238. Peter O'Connell explains the word as = *stábhach*, i.e. "bow-legged, knock-kneed, halting, hobbling, limping." (Dinneen, following the R.I.A. copy of P. O'C., writes this latter word

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Bergin suggests to me that this is a survival (with degraded meaning) of M.I. *próis*, LL. 44a5, derived by Stokes from O. Fr. *proesse*, 'prowess.'

*stabhach*, as if the *a* were short; but this must be an error of transcription, as the kindred word *stábhghail* not only has the *a* marked long in the same copy of P. O'C., but is, according to Quiggin, so pronounced in Donegal). Cf. *seana-chapall* . . . *stágach*, supra p. 57, l. 60.

*stanncach*, 220, is probably identical with the Mayo *stainceamhail*, "discourteous, uncivil" (Rogers, B. Aodha Uí Néill), and referable to the nouns *stainnc* and *stanncán*.

*taidhbhse*, "good appearance, excellence," 823. The Foley-Stern interpretation of this line involves two difficulties: (1) *taidhbhse*, being taken as gen., must be masculine, for which I have no parallel; (2) *is* is left without a subject, unless it be *binn-ghuth* two lines further on. Rather *taidhbhse* here = 'revelation, the revealed word of God,' and is thus synonymous with *an dlighe seo* of the preceding line. Compare the Irish words used for the Revelation of St. John: *taisbéanadh*, E.R. Mac an Bhaird (supra p. 62); *tai[dh]bhreadh*, O'Begley, p. 579; *disling*, Eoghan Ó Caoimh (supra p. 165).

*tarrbhreac*, *tarrlag*: in these words *tarr-* is not a mere intensive prefix ("very"), but the noun *tarr*.

*tonnda*, 198, 573, 737, should have been spelt either *túnda* (as the MSS. phonetically have it), or, according to etymology, *tamhanda*, *tamhanta*, being, as I take it, a derivative of *tamhan*, 'a trunk, a stump, (fig.) a dolt.' Lhuyd (1707) gives *tamhanta*, 'slow, sluggish.' O'Brien (1768) edited this into *támhánta*, mistakenly connecting it with *támh*; and O'Reilly and Dinneen have followed suit. The R.I.A. copy of P. O'C. brackets *tamhanda* and *tamhánta* as meaning 'slow, sluggish, dull.' In the Sermons published in 1711 *tamhanta* is twice (pp. 25, 26) used with the signification 'cloyed, with senses dulled by over-indulgence.'

I may add that there are in the vocabulary almost a dozen words to which Mr. Foley has, for whatever reason, assigned a much more innocent meaning than that required by the context; but these are matters which it is hardly possible to discuss in detail. One is reminded of the fact that the compiler of the "school edition" of the *Cúirt* published some years ago retained certain lines in his text, which it is to be supposed he would have rejected had he understood them.

A feature of the notes and vocabulary is the rather disconcerting way in which Irish and English are mixed up. The notes, too, are sometimes trivial or unnecessary; while on the other hand one misses from them certain matters which would be the better of annotation,—as for instance the superstitious practices alluded to ll. 287-306, which very few readers nowadays could properly appreciate without help.

A translation of the *Cúirt* into English verse was made by Denis Woulfe (Donocha Ulf), a schoolmaster of Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare, who flourished in the twenties of the last century. This is known to me in only two MSS., viz. nos. v. and xxvi. of the National Library. It has been twice printed in the columns of newspapers, viz. first in some Clare newspaper,<sup>1</sup> and again, with some admitted expurgation,<sup>2</sup> by D. Comyn (or John Fleming?) in the

<sup>1</sup> Exact date unknown, but a short prefatory note in which the belief is expressed that the translation had not been previously printed, suggests that it is of earlier date than the "Irishman." In any case it is evident that neither of these two printed texts is a mere reprint of the other.

<sup>2</sup> Woulfe himself omits or condenses certain passages; for instance, he has nothing corresponding to ll. 761-816 of the original.

"Irishman" in 1880. The whole of the "Irishman" text and a large portion of the other will be found pasted into MS. v. of the National Library. With all its defects Woulfe's translation was well worth printing in permanent form, and it would have added appreciably to the value of Mr. Foley's book had he thought fit to print it in its entirety instead of merely quoting from it a few lines here and there.

Accompanying the "Irishman" version of Woulfe's translation pasted into N are two rough pen-and-ink illustrations.<sup>1</sup> The first—the bust of an old man—is placed after the opening of Part II. of the Court, when the "gray old man of feeble frame" rises to address the judge; the second—that of a young woman wearing a more or less fashionable bonnet—is inserted just before Part III. in which the 'maiden' delivers her harangue. The characters in the Cúirt whom the illustrations are intended to represent, should, one would think, be obvious to any reader; but Mr. Foley takes the sketch of Merriman's *seandúine suarach*, and after having it touched up and somewhat rejuvenated, and adorned with a kind of fictitious signature, he places it in the frontispiece to his edition as a more or less genuine attempt to sketch the features of Merriman himself. When such an extraordinary mistake could be perpetrated, one is left wondering why the logical thing was not done and the sketch of the maiden litigant not reproduced as that of "Mrs. Merriman."

Merriman apparently had little of the lyrical gift. Though the Cúirt is one of the longest verse compositions in modern Irish, we know of only two songs from his pen, An Mac Alla and An Poitín. Mr. Foley has printed both, but in too bald a fashion; one would have liked to see variants and notes and vocabulary, as in the case of the Cúirt. Of An Mac Alla, of which a poor text was printed by O'Daly in the second series of the Munster Poets, copies are found in M (ll. 17-53 only) and Q, besides the two MSS. (N and H) to which Mr. Foley refers. Already about 1746 Seán Do Hóra had composed an *aísling* beginning *Am shuan araér am néalta bhíos*, which according to MSS.<sup>2</sup> was modelled on Seán Clárach's *Oidhche bhíos am luighe am shuan*; and it is evident that Merriman's lyric was inspired by one or other, if not by both, of these. About An Poitín, which is now printed for the first time, the less said, perhaps, the better; but one may remark that the *ceangal* given by Mr. Foley has no connection with the song itself, and is not attached to it in Ren. 69 or in Nat. Lib. xxv.

There are not a few other points in connection with the Cúirt upon which I should like to touch, but considerations of space forbid. If, as it stands, the present notice should seem unduly long, I must plead as my excuse the importance of the work and of the edition. Cúirt an Mheadhoin Oidhche looms so large in our attenuated modern literature as to justify any attempt to throw a little light on some of the obscurities that still surround it.

T. F. O'RAHILLY.

[Since writing the above I have, in the O'Curry collection in Maynooth, come across three other MSS. of the Cúirt, two of which are of earlier date

<sup>1</sup> These illustrations, however, did not appear in the "Irishman," as a reference to the numbers of that journal for Feb.-June, 1880, shows. Probably they belong to the Clare-printed version, which in the MS. is placed side by side with the other.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. 23 G 21, p. 470.

than any hitherto noted. The oldest of them is at present numbered 3 A 11 ; its copy of the Cúirt was written by ' John Meagher ' in 1789. The second is numbered 3 A 24, and was written in 1791 ; it may be no more than a copy of 3 A 11, which it resembles closely. Both these MSS. belong to the S type. A third MS., 3 A 6, dated 1815-18, is of interest as containing the first 692 lines of *Court a Vaoneehe* (sic) written in a peculiar semi-phonetic spelling].

CEITHEARNACH UÍ DHOMHNAILL, nó EACHTRA AN CHEITHEARNAIGH CHAOIL-RIABHAIGH do réir druinge. ÉNRÍ UA MUIRGHEASA do chuir i n-eagar as lámhsgríbhinn Óirghiallaigh. Connradh na Gaedhilge i mBaile Átha Cliath. 1912. Réal glan.

The tale of An Ceithearnach Caoilriabhach was first printed from MS. in O'Grady's ' Silva Gadelica.' Previous to that it had been made known to English readers by Gerald Griffin's ' The Storyteller at Fault ' in his ' Tales of the Jury Room,' as well as by the oral versions which J. F. Campbell printed and translated in his West Highland Tales. The present text is edited by Mr. Henry Morris from a MS. in his own possession written by Pádraig Ó Pronntaigh in 1733, which, he tells us, he has compared with a MS. written by the same scribe 30 years later and now in the possession of Dr. Hyde. He has also made considerable use of O'Grady's text.

Though only two MSS. were noted by D'Arbois de Jubainville as containing the tale (viz. 23 M 19 and 23 N 25, R.I.A.), there are well over a score of MS. copies in existence. Thus, the British Museum contains at least four copies, viz. Add. 18747 (A.D. 1800, whence O'Grady's text) ; Eg. 156 (1817) ; Eg. 164 (1726 ?) ; and Eg. 166 (written in Bridge St., Dublin, 1740, according to O'Curry). In the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, there are two copies, viz. MS. xxxvi. (dated 1690-1, the oldest copy known to me), and MS. lv. (1738) ; while there is a 19th century copy in Edinburgh University.<sup>1</sup> In the Royal Irish Academy I have met the following :

23 I 7, A.D. 1705 : written by Eoghan Ó Caoimh (this I refer to as I).

23 A 45, 1745 (G).

12 F 7, 1749 (F).

23 L 31, 1777-8 (L).

23 M 19, 1789 (M) : here the tale of Cléireach na Gcroiceann is curiously welded on to the end of our present tale.

24 P 19, 1805 ? (R).

23 M 47, pt. v., 1816 (W).

23 D 35, 1819 (T).

24 L 34, 1824 (P).

23 N 25, 1834 (N.) : written in Cork from a MS. written by Fiachra Mac Brádaigh, the Co. Cavan writer, A.D. 1722.

24 A 13, 1847 (A).

In Trinity College I have met two copies, viz. :

H. 5. 4, written by Eoghan Ó Caoimh, 1699 ; gaps at beginning, middle and end (K).

H. 4. 13, written 1710 ; later portion missing (C).

In Maynooth College there are probably several copies : I have noted one, viz. Mur. 53, dated 1786 (O). And there is also a copy, of which the first

<sup>1</sup> See Mackinnon's Catalogue of Gaelic MSS., pp. 146, 165, 292.