UM Libraries Depository

103234904013

THE CELTIC LEGENDS AND THEIR USE
IN THE 30
MODERN CELTIC PLAYS AND POETRY

by

Mildred Maxwell Bell, A.B., B.S. in Ed.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in the

GRADUATE SCHOOL

of the

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

1914.

This thesis, herewith
submitted in partial
fulfillment of the
requirements for the
M. A. degree, is
hereby approved.-

Robert L. Ramsay

378.7 M71
XB413

2397 27

TABLE OF CONTENTS,

	<u>Pages.</u>
Chapter I. Introduction.	1-11.
Chapter II. The Three Main Cycles of Legend.	11-57.
Chapter III. The Modern Use of the Legends.	57-115.
Chapter IV. The Celtic Spirit and its Value in Modern Literature.	115-128.
Bibliography.	128-137.

THE CELTIC LEGENDS AND THEIR USE IN THE
MODERN CELTIC PLAYS AND POETRY

Chapter I.

Introduction

I

We have heard much of late of the Irish Literary Revival. It has been hailed as the most significant literary movement of the time; and it has been condemned as the last feeble flickerings of the decadent school. Irishmen have written of it in extravagant terms, while the great majority of foreigners have either ridiculed or remained impassive. Few intelligent attempts have been made to study it in itself and in its relation to the main literary tendencies of the age. Such a study is beyond the scope of this thesis, and yet before we can understand the significance of the Irish legends and their use by the modern Irish writers, we must know in general the characteristics of the movement and how they correspond to the other leading literary characteristics of the age.

All literature is simply an attempt to explain and interpret life. Any great discovery in any realm of thought immediately affects literature. The greatest in-

Intellectual discovery of the last century was the theory of evolution. This doctrine not only caused a complete reorganization of the sciences, but it affected in varying degrees practically every field of human thought. In literature it found its expression in naturalism. When the writers saw the splendid concrete results that came from the scientists observations they felt that the same things might be attained by literature if they faithfully and impartially recorded all that they saw. Balzac, Zola, and Flaubert worked in this way, endeavoring always to eliminate themselves, to do away with the personal equation. This utterly objective literature soon ceased to satisfy the needs of the people. Science was forced to step down from its pedestal, and many writers who had been most ardent in their naturalism turned to mysticism and symbolism. So did Ibsen in his later work and Hauptmann in *his drama* "Der ^{ie} versunkene Glocke". The pendulum now seems to be swinging most decidedly toward the representation of the ideal and spiritual. When men no longer gain satisfaction from painting things as they are, they turn inevitably to the portrayal of things as they ought to be. Maeterlinck in Belgium, Rostand in France, and D'Aununzio in Italy represent different phases of this reaction; and it is this same general spirit that animates the work of the writers in Ireland. So, speaking loosely, we may say that the Irish Literary Revival is one manifestation of the revolt against extreme realism or naturalism. This arbitrary class-

ification will be validated when we come to examine the work of the individual writers.

In addition to this idealistic reaction there is another characteristic which can be traced pretty generally in modern literatures--the tendency to center literary work in small districts and localities. Mr. Leon Kellner in his book, "Die Englische Literatur im Zeitalter der Königen Viktoria",¹ has admirably discussed this movement under the name of "Heimatkunst" literature. According to him industrial conditions and the great increase in transportation facilities have tended to take people from their country and small town homes to the cities. Here the work and surroundings have often proved uncongenial, and the home place assumes a glamour it would not otherwise have had. Arising from these conditions this type of literature² might well be called "Heimwehkunst".

Another influence affecting the growth of this regionalistic literature is the reaction against imperialism. Within the last century most of the countries of Europe went through a centralizing process, and local distinctions of race and language were obliterated as far as possible. Now a reaction has begun, and the local units within the great empires are endeavoring to keep alive their dying nationality. The last two or three decades have been a period of great vitality in many smaller units of larger countries and empires. In most countries it is not so much a political movement as an attempt to

1. p. 561 and ff.

2. I am indebted to Dr. Ramsay for this term.

resuscitate and reestablish local languages, literatures, and customs. Perhaps the two most striking instances of local renaissance are the awakening of the Czechs in the great Austrian Empire and the attempt of Ireland to become deanglicized. The aim of this attempt, as of all such attempts, was admirably expressed by George Moore when he said, "We can only escape from a new dark age in which literature and art will crumble in the monotony of empire by the preservation of languages and all local characteristics. Destroy the language of a nation and you destroy the soul. Home Rule rightly interpreted merely means Ireland's desire to save her own soul".¹

II.

Having thus attempted roughly to classify the Irish Literary Revival as a part of two great reactions against materialism and imperialism, let us next consider the place of the movement in Ireland's literary development. If we might trace the literary history of a nation by the attempts to record that history, we would have to assume that Ireland's literary history had been most meager, for only one thorough and satisfactory account has been written. I refer to Dr. Douglas Hyde's "Literary History of Ireland" published in 1903.² Without prejudice or exaggeration Dr. Hyde traces the uneven and

1. Nineteenth Century, Vol. 49, p. 285.

2. T. Fisher Unwin, London.

rather tempestuous development of the literature of Ireland. After the seventh and eighth centuries--a period in which Ireland was recognized as the focus of European intellectual activity--there came the successive invasions of the Danes and the Normans, continual war and depredation. All development of Irish life and literature was completely arrested. From this time until the nineteenth century Ireland's literary history was uneven and sporadic. The bardic school which existed until the beginning of the seventeenth century kept alive tribal feeling and made impossible any literary expression of the nation as a unit. The eighteenth century saw the rise of much controversial prose and poetry, but most of it was so bitter and impassioned that we can scarcely call it literature.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was little change. Thomas Moore was singing his pretty songs in London drawing-rooms, but with all their grace and lightness they were not vital expressions of the Irish spirit. Toward the middle of the century there arose a group of young writers under the leadership of Thomas Davis, who were filled with high hopes for Ireland's future. Though much of their work was crude and imitative in technique of the popular English writers, their influence was widespread, and they did more than had been done in many weary centuries to fasten the attention of the

people on the worth and dignity of things Irish. Contemporary with and following them came another group of poets, possibly less intense in their feeling, but better artists. Chief among them were James Clarence Mangan, Sir Samuel Ferguson, and William Allingham. Mangan was not well known to the people during his life time, but his poems of Ireland, particularly his "Dark Rosaleen", won him a firm place in their hearts. Sir Samuel Ferguson was attracted by the great wealth of legend and folk lore practically untouched, and tried in his ballads and poems to retell these tales to the people. His influence on the use of legends as subject matter on the writers of the present revival can hardly be overestimated. William Allingham wrote exquisite lyrics and the majority of them are based on Irish folk lore.

The latter part of the nineteenth century was another stormy period of political agitation. All the arts were made subservient to the great struggle for national freedom. Nothing of artistic merit was produced under the long leadership of Parnell. In 1890, just about the time of Parnell's fall, Mr. Yeats, the man who has perhaps done more for the revival than any one else, prophesied that there was a new spirit abroad in the land and that a literary awakening would follow the first lull in politics. His prophesy has been more than fulfilled. The last twenty-four years have witnessed a greater ac-

tivity and productiveness in every field than any time since the early civilization of the seventh and eighth centuries. It seems as though Ireland was just now falling heir to the revivifying spirit of the Renaissance. For practically the first time in the history of the country, attention is being directed toward the Irish race rather than the Irish nation. Every effort is being made to preserve and renew Irish customs, the Irish language, and the Irish literature.

III.

With some idea then of the progress of literature in Ireland and the relation of the present movement to the previous development, let us turn to a more detailed consideration. It is impossible to say whether or not the Irish Literary Revival is a definite movement, the result of well-defined propaganda. If literature were an organism, as the scientific critics would have us believe, we might trace very definite causes and functions. In so far, however, as the revival is a movement, we may say that its underlying function or purpose is to make of Ireland a self-sufficing nation. This of course includes all the phases of the awakening--social, economic, and literary. We are directly concerned only with the latter. The narrower purpose of the Irish Literary Revival seems to be the opening and retelling

of the ancient Irish legends and the interpreting to the world of the Irish spirit. In order, however, to include all that has been written in Ireland from a literary point of view within the last two decades we must make three main divisions: nationalistic literature, literature resulting from the opening and recovery of the legends, and mystic, symbolistic, and realistic literature. In the first division falls all that has been written from the propagandist point of view. Here we may place the work of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, Dr. George Sigerson, Rev. Stopford Brooke, Douglas Hyde, some of the essays of Lady Gregory and William Butler Yeats--all in fact that has been written to acquaint the people with the worth of Irish literature and language. In the second division comes the work of the collectors and retellers of the legends and folk lore--Standish James O'Grady, Dr. Whitley Stokes, Dr. P.W. Joyce, William Larminie, Douglas Hyde, and Lady Gregory. From this list are excluded the eminent German, French, English, American, and Irish scholars who have approached the legends from a scientific and philological point of view. The third division is by far the largest. It includes all those who have written from an Irish point of view to an Irish public and who have endeavored to catch and interpret some phase of Irish life and spirit. No complete list could be given. There is great variety of subject matter, some drawing

their inspiration from the legends and others from modern Irish life. The treatment of the subject matter is in the main mystic or symbolic, and yet there are a number doing very effective work in realistic portrayal of actual Irish life. These are the three main divisions in which the work of the literary revival falls. It is the purpose of this thesis, however, to investigate the second of these divisions, since we deem it the most important and significant of the three.

The recovery and opening of the Irish legends is undoubtedly the most important phase of the Irish literary movement. The other two phases are closely related and in a way dependent on this. The writers in the nationalistic phase of the movement base half their arguments for the establishment of a national literature on the worth and beauty of the legends. They feel sure that Irish nationalism and literature will be built up and strengthened by the fostering of these splendid stories of Ireland's golden age. We can judge for ourselves concerning the truth of this contention after we have examined the cycles of legend in detail. The opening up of the legends has not only greatly affected the nationalistic writing, but it has proved the most fruitful source of inspiration to the writers of the third class--those who are seeking to interpret Ireland to herself and to the world. The legends contain the very essence of the Irish

genius. These stories of "old, unhappy, far-off things" are the foundation upon which the modern workmen have built much of their work. As we shall see later the spirit of the legends agrees perfectly with the spirit of the age which is prompting the revolt against materialism in literature. So this revival of interest in Ireland's heroic age is proving of inestimable value not only to those writers who are trying to strengthen Ireland's nationality, but also to those others who are seeking in a less direct way to make for Ireland a reputable place among the literatures of the world. Deeming, then, the opening of the legends the most important phase of the Irish Literary Revival, we shall make it our purpose first, to examine the three main cycles of legend with a view toward determining their essential characteristics and spirit; second, to examine the use of the legends in the plays and poetry of five of the leading writers of the movement, noting their agreement with or departure from the spirit of the legends; and third, to deduce from the legends and from the plays and poetry under consideration as definite a statement as possible of the Celtic spirit and its value in modern literature.

Chapter II.

THE THREE MAIN CYCLES OF LEGEND

I.

William Butler Yeats in his essay on "The Celtic Element in Literature"¹ affirms that "literature dwindles to a mere chronicle of circumstance, or passionless phantasies, and passionless meditations unless it is constantly flooded with the passions and beliefs of ancient times, and that of all the fountains of passions and beliefs of ancient times in Europe, the Slavonic, the Finnish, the Scandinavian, and the Celtic, the Celtic alone has been for centuries close to the main river of European literature. It has again and again brought 'the vivifying spirit of excess into the arts of Europe'". Mr. Yeats also believes that the opening of the legends has come at a most opportune time "when the imagination is as ready, as it was at the coming of the tales of Arthur and of the Grail, for a new intoxication. The reaction against the rationalism of the eighteenth century has mingled with the reaction against the materialism of the nineteenth century, and the symbolical movement, which has come to perfection in Germany in Wagner, in England in the Pre-Raphaelites, and in France in Villiers de L'Isle Adam, and Mallarmé, and Maeterlinck, and has stirred the imagination of Ibsen and D'An-

1. Yeats: Ideas of Good and Evil, p. 290.

nunzio, is certainly the only movement that is saying new things. The arts by brooding upon their own intensity have become religious, and are seeking, as I think Verhaeren has said, to create a sacred book. They must, as religious thought has ever done, utter themselves through legends," and the Irish legends "have so much of a new beauty, that they may well give the opening century its most memorable symbols." ¹

Of these four great fountains of legend which have been opened up in comparatively recent times the Celtic is the only one which has been close to the main stream of European literature. While Celtic legend may not yet have produced its Wagner or Ibsen to make the legends live again in the minds of the people, it is nevertheless true that Celtic legend and folk lore have furnished to literature a greater number of poetical themes than any other body of ancient legends. We must not forget that from the sixth to the eighth century Ireland was practically the University of Europe. Pupils came from every foreign country and as soon as they had become trained they went away to establish new centers of learning. ~~Some went to Iceland and put their stamp unmistakably upon the Icelandic sagas.~~ Some went to Charlemagne's court to become the chief teachers of his children and courtiers, and in the disorder which followed Charlemagne's death it was an Irishman--John Scotus

1. Yeats: op. cit. p.294.

Erigenus, who stood preeminent among scholars. From the isle of Iona, where St. Columba was exiled, missionaries went forth carrying Christianity and education to Britain and to many places on the continent. Some scholars even maintain that a close connection can be traced between Irish literature and the Norse and Scandinavian sagas. In view of these instances it does not seem so strange that Irish themes and Irish thought permeated the literature of mediaeval Europe.

To avoid any ambiguity, let us pause for a moment to define more closely the term 'Celt'. Up to this time we have used it as synonymous with Irish. Ireland, however, is only a part of Celtdom. The latter term may properly be applied to the people of Ireland, Highland Scotland, the Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany. The peoples of the first three districts are further classified as Gaelic Celts, while the latter three are British Celts. If we examine briefly four of the instances of Celtic influence, we may gain a better idea of how wide-spread its effect has been.

Two very popular types of ancient Irish tales were the Imrans, or voyage stories, and the Fisa, or visions. Both types are found among the legends before Christianity entered Ireland; both, however, were well adapted to religious treatment and in the course of their development soon became tinged with Christian influence. Both were concerned either with a voyage to or a vision of

the otherworld, be it pagan or Christian. Very often the otherworld is an island and the descriptions of it are remarkable for poetry and their vivid sense of beauty. The fact that these stories underwent no serious changes at the hands of Christianity is a proof of the tolerance with which the old literature and the new faith regarded each other. The earliest of the voyage stories, such as the Voyage of Bran or the Sick-Bed of Cuchulain, are purely pagan and describe the otherworld as a wonderfully beautiful place in which one enjoyed a never-ending round of sensuous delights. Then come a group written from a Christian point of view but with an essentially pagan framework. The Voyage of Maeldun is the best example of this type. Finally, there are the purely Christian voyage stories, included often in the acts of the saints, of which the Voyage of St. Brendan is the most important example. This became one of the most popular stories of the Middle Ages and was translated into Latin and some of the vernacular tongues. Mr. C. S. Boswell in his book on "An Irish Precursor of Dante" believes that this story of Brendan may have influenced in some slight degree the course of the world's history, "for its account of a land beyond the Atlantic fired the imaginations of many navigators."¹ During Brendan's voyage the devil gives the saint a view of the border of hell--"a hot rough prison full of stench, full of flame, full of filth,

1. Boswell: op. cit. p. 207.

full of the camps of poisonous demons, full of wailing and screaming and hurt and sad cries and a gloomy mournful life in hearts of pain."¹ This is one of the earliest attempts in literature at the picturing of an Inferno. With the story of Brendan the Imrans, or voyage tales, culminate, and the otherworld traditions are carried on by the Fisa, or vision stories. The Fis Adamnan represents the highest point of the Irish vision tales. This was followed on the continent by the Vision of Tundale in 1149. In 1153 we have the first version of the many stories of St. Patrick's Purgatory. It was written down by a monk in an English monastery, although the story had existed long before this time in Ireland. Some version of St. Patrick's Purgatory or the Vision of Tundale is almost certain to have been known to Dante. Indeed, Ernest Renan in his essay on "The Poetry of the Celtic Races" says, "it cannot be doubted for a moment that to the number of poetical themes which Europe owes to the genius of the Celts is to be added the framework of the Divine Comedy."²

In tracing these instances of Celtic influence we must distinguish from which of the two main branches they proceed. The voyage and vision stories which we have just traced and which had such popularity and influence on the continent are to be attributed directly to Ireland. The next great instance of Celtic influence had its origin probably in Wales or Cornwall. I refer to the great Ar-

1. Lady Gregory: Poets and Dreamers, p. 67.

2. Renan: op. cit. p. 57.

thurian cycle. We are here on such debatable ground that few definite statements can be made. We do know, however, that these stories must have first taken shape among the people of Wales and Cornwall, that later they were taken ~~the Breton settlers or~~ by the Norman invaders back to France where for the next century or two they became ornamented with the borrowed trappings of chivalry and Christianity. The Celtic heroes were transformed into Norman knights in armor. The ethics of the tales became Christian. The stories did more, however, than merely furnish the framework. The Celtic delicacy, love of beauty, and respect for women did much toward the formation of the spirit of chivalry. It is needless to comment upon the widespread influence of the Arthurian stories. It is safe to say that they offered mediaeval literature half its themes. They introduced into the hitherto hard and rough literature of the Middle Ages a spirit of love, romance, and devotion that changed it utterly. As Renan says, "Through the Arthur legends and the stories of the Mabinogion Celtic imagination has exercised its influence on the Continent and realized this miracle--that the creations of a half-conquered race have become the universal feast of imagination for mankind."¹

The mention of the Mabinogion brings us to the discussion of this third manifestation of the Celtic spirit in literature. The term itself is rather an artificial one and means the stories of the Welsh 'mabinogs', the literary apprentices, those who had not yet risen to

1. Renan: op. cit. 64.

the dignity of authorship. The tales are part and parcel of the tales which furnished the Normans and later the English the framework of the Arthurian cycle. These are the tales as they were evolved by the Welsh. The great majority of them are preserved in "The Red Book of Hergest", a manuscript of the fourteenth century, which is now in the library of Jesus College, Oxford. In 1838-1842 Lady Charlotte Guest went over this manuscript and selected the best of the tales for translation and retelling. Most of the stories are romantic in tone. Some center exclusively around Wales and Cornwall and relate more or less directly to Arthur; others have their scenes in various parts of Great Britain and do not concern Arthur. It is a pity that these stories, as the Irish sagas, were shut away from the people for so long. They are of great value to us now not only because they preserve the mediaeval ideas and customs of the Welsh, but also because they embody so many Irish traditions and characters.

From the middle ages to the eighteenth century there are many instances of the indirect influence of the Celtic legends. Chaucer and Spenser derived much of their fairy mythology from these sources, and Spenser's descriptions are fairly permeated with a Celtic love of beauty and color. From old Celtic stories Shakespeare derived the plots that he wove into "King Lear" and "Midsummer Night's Dream". Mr. Yeats points out that Shakespeare found his Mab, his Puck, and many more of his fairy

people in Celtic legends.¹ In fact Mr. John Morley goes so far as to say that "but for early, frequent, and various contact with the race that in its half-barbarous days invented Ossian's dialogues with St. Patrick, and that quickened afterwards the Northmen's blood in France, Germanic England would not have produced a Shakespeare."²

About the middle of the eighteenth century when the minds of men were growing very weary of the classical traditions that had been imposed upon them for so long, a book appeared³ which had a most widespread effect in inaugurating the romantic movement. This was an epic poem in irregular prose called "Fingal" which claimed to have been originally written in the ancient Gaelic of the Scotch Highlands by Ossian, son of Fingal. These Ossianic poems, as they are called, were nothing more than a clever literary fabrication, the work of a young Scotchman, James Macpherson. He no doubt found his material in some genuine manuscripts of ancient Gaelic poetry in the Highlands. But he put so much of his own into them, and tampered so freely with the legends that as translations they are worthless. Their publication roused a veritable storm of argument and their authenticity was challenged from the very beginning. Despite their worthlessness as translations they did much to bring back into English and Continental poetry the appreciation for nature and the love of "old, unhappy, far-off things" that had been absent from it for so long. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica,

1. Yeats: op. cit. p.291.

2. Morley: English Writers, Vol. I, p. 190.

3. 1761.

"it did more than any single work to bring about the romantic movement in European, and especially in German literatures."¹ Matthew Arnold credits the Celts with a "vein of piercing regret and passion," and then adds, "a famous book, Macpherson's 'Ossian', carried this vein like a flood of lava through Europe," and "has the proud distinction of having brought this soul of the Celtic genius into contact with the genius of the nations of modern Europe, and enriched all our poetry by it."²

This praise may be too lavish, but it is certain that the excitement which the book caused immediately engendered an interest in the sources from which Macpherson had gotten his material. Ossianic societies were formed and from that day to this there has been a steadily increasing interest in things Celtic.

II.

This interest in Celtic legend falls into two main divisions: the critical and philological interest, which has busied itself with the translation and critical interpretation of the old Celtic literature, and the artistic or literary interest which has endeavored to present the legends to the people in a popular form. In the first division we can simply name a few of the most important workers. From Ireland Dr. Whitley Stokes, Eugene O'Curry, Dr. George Henderson, Dr. Petrie, and Dr. Todd;

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. XVII, p. 267.

2. Arnold: On the Study of Celtic Literature, p. 116.

from Wales Professor Rhys; from England Alfred Nutt; from America Joseph Dunn; from Germany Zimmer, Windisch, Kuno Meyer and many others; and from France the greatest Celtic scholar is Arbois de Jubainville. Since 1885 particularly there has been great activity among these scientific investigators, and the results of their work have tended more and more to impress the people with the worth and possibilities of the Gaelic language.

In passing from the translators and critical writers to the retellers, we must not fail to give due credit to the former. Without their careful work the retellings could never have been done. The translations give us as nothing else can the atmosphere and spirit of the legends, and set certain definite limits wherein the imaginations of the modern artists may work. As we have seen before Sir Samuel Ferguson was one of the very first to use the subject matter of the legends in his poems and ballads. The first attempt, however, to collect and retell the most famous of the prose romances was made by Dr. P.W. Joyce. His "Early Celtic Romances" did much to make the tales familiar to the people, and to set a precedent for all translators who should follow, since he endeavored to tell the tales as he felt the old Shenachies would have told them if they had used English instead of Gaelic.

Not long after the appearance of Dr. Joyce's book, Standish O'Grady published his "Mythical History of Ireland". His purpose was quite similar to that of Dr.

Joyce, but his manner was different. Consciously or unconsciously he told the tales in a classic and Homeric style. They lose much of their delightful Irish flavour. The book, however, had a great influence on the younger writers of Mr. O'Grady's time. Mr. Yeats has pronounced him "the father of us all."

Since Mr. O'Grady many have turned into literary English a large number of the old Irish tales. Among the more successful of the later workers are Dr. Todhunter, Mr. Larminie, Nora Hopper Chesson, Dr. Sigerson, Douglas Hyde, Eleanor Hull, T.W. Rolleston, and Lady Gregory. All of them are Irish and hence have been able with varying success to retain the true Irish spirit in their retellings. None, however, have been quite so successful as has Lady Gregory. In her two books, "Gods and Fighting Men" and "Cuchulain of Muirthemne", she has gathered together the best versions of all the legends, and by omitting a little here and rearranging and piecing together there, she has transfused the whole various mass of material into one homogeneous body. The language Lady Gregory uses is the modern Anglo-Irish speech of the peasants of West Galway. One only has to read a page or two before one realizes what a perfect medium it is for the subject matter it translates. Lady Gregory has received not a little criticism because of the manner in which she has sought out and pieced together the best versions of the stories from a

great number of manuscripts. Some complain that by her omissions she has taken all the piquancy out of the stories. She has, however, left out only the unnecessary or grotesque elements. Those who criticise her method fail to recognize, I think, that she approached the stories purely from an artistic and literary point of view, and not at all from the philological and scientific. She herself in the dedication of "Cuchulain of Muirthemne" best explains her method. "When I went looking for the stories in the old writings, I found that the Irish in them is too hard for any person to read that has not made a long study of it. Some scholars have worked well at them, Irishmen, Germans, and Frenchmen, but they have printed them in the old cramped Irish, with translations into German, or French, or English, and these are not easy for you to get, or to understand, and the stories themselves are confused, every one giving a different account from the others in some small thing, the way there is not much pleasure in reading them. It is what I have tried to do, to take the best of the stories, or whatever parts of each will fit best to one another, and in that way to give a fair account." ¹ Mr. Yeats in his preface to the same book says, "I think this book is the best that has come out of Ireland in my time. Perhaps I should say that it is the best book that has ever come out of Ireland; for the stories which it tells are a chief part of Ireland's gift to the imagination of the world--and it tells them perfectly for the first time." ²

1. Gregory: op. cit. p.V

2. " : " " Preface, p.VII.

Such praise may be expected from Mr. Yeats, but he is by no means alone in his unqualified approval. Paul Elmer More, a sane and unprejudiced critic, in his essay on "The Epic of Ireland" says, "Mr. Yeats' praise of Lady Gregory's book may be exaggerated; yet to one who comes to it from the outside as a lover of beautiful words wherever he may find them, and who brings with him only sufficient sympathy with things Irish to understand their spirit, he trusts without suffering a perversion of judgment this praise will sound, not too enthusiastic, but too narrow."¹ Lady Gregory has indeed proved herself the Malory of Irish legend. Apart from purely scientific purposes, one need ask no better text for the study of the legends. Since, too, we are primarily interested in the use to which the modern writers put the legends, and since the modern writers seek their inspiration in the retellings rather than in the literal translations, Lady Gregory's two books are the best basis for the study of the legends that could be found.

III.

After having discussed various instances of the effect of the Celtic legends on literature, the rise of the interest in the legends, and different translations and retellings, let us turn to an examination of the legends themselves. The manuscripts in which the old Irish

1. More: Shelburne Essays, First Series, p. 147.

tales are preserved date from the eleventh century to comparatively recent times. We have no way of determining when the Celts first began to put their stories into writing. During the troubled centuries of the Danish and Anglo-Norman invasions many manuscripts were destroyed or lost. It was at this time that the scribes, fearing, perhaps, the total destruction of their written literature, began to collect in large vellum books the most important tales, poems, biographies, and genealogies. No attention was paid to chronological order. Each book was a miscellaneous collection of material often varying widely in time and value. There was of course much repetition, and of some of the stories we have many different versions. Each book classified its stories into certain main divisions, of which the most important were Invasions, Battles, Voyages, Expeditions, Cattle-Raids, Courtships, Pursuits, and Adventures.

The most ancient of these great collections is the Book of the Dun Cow. It was compiled about 1100 A.D. in the monastery of Clonmacnois. It owes its name to a curious tradition that the parchment on which it was written was made out of the skin of the favorite cow of the saint who founded the monastery. Among the other more important collections are the Book of Leinster, the Great Book of Lecan, the Yellow Book of Lecan, and the Book of Fermoy. Besides these well-known books there are scores of other manuscripts. The greatest collections

are to be found in the libraries of the Royal Irish Academy and of Trinity College, Dublin. In the British Museum, too, there are one hundred and ninety-eight large manuscripts, and many of these have as yet not been translated. Ancient Irish literature is indeed a mine from which only the surface treasures have been taken.

The main body of the legends divides itself into three pretty well-defined cycles--the mythological cycle concerning the Tuatha De Danann, the Fenian cycle concerning Finn and the High Kings of Ireland, and the Heroic, or Red Branch cycle in which Cuchulain is the dominating figure. The first cycle is the smallest of the three and is made up of the primeval legends that were common to both branches of the Celtic race. As far as rather misty historical knowledge enables us to judge, it seems that the two main bodies of the Celts came over from the Continent and settled in the British Isles. The first to come were the Gaels, the people who now inhabit Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland, and the Isle of Man. After them came the Brythons or Britons. They originally spread over a large part of England, but were gradually driven to the west by the Saxons, and remained a distinct race only in Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany. It seems quite possible that at first these two branches spoke the same language and had the same traditions. This is borne out by the fact that the stories in the first cycle of the Tuatha De Danann (the Children of the Goddess Dana) are well-

known in Wales under the name of the Children or the Tribe of Dôn. They appear in the Mabinogion, as we have seen before, with names changed very slightly from the personages in the Irish stories. The two later cycles of Finn and Cuchulain are practically unknown in Wales.

The stories of the first or mythological cycle tell of the struggles, victories, and defeats of the ancient gods and goddesses. The later scribes who wished to make these tales rational and probable in the eyes of other peoples worked out an elaborate and fanciful history of early Ireland and fitted the Tuatha De Danann into it. According to their scheme a man named Partholan led a colony to Ireland immediately after the flood. Next came Nemed and his people; and after them the Firbolgs, who were conquered by the Tuatha De Danann. After the latter had held sway for a time they were harried and attacked by the Fomorians, frightful sea giants. Intermittent warfare went on for a number of years. Finally, both sides met in the terrible battle of Moytura. The Fomorians were led by Balor, a terrible one-eyed monster. The eye was opened only in battle and it needed four men to lift the lid. Before its poisonous glance hundreds of men would fall. In the battle Lugh, one of the leaders of the Tuatha De Danann, flung a stone at Balor's eye just as it was opened and it struck with so much force that it went through his head carrying the eye with it. The Fomorians were utterly defeated. After this great battle the Tuatha De Dananns

were in power for a number of centuries until they in turn were conquered by the last and greatest colony of all, the people of Miled, or the Milesians, the ancestors of the Gaelic families of Ireland.

While this attempt of the later scribes and analysts at rationalization is interesting we cannot accept it. The tales of the Tuatha De Danann are simply parts of an ancient mythology, and the great warfare between them and the Fomorians probably represents the contest between the forces of light and knowledge on one hand and the powers of darkness and ignorance on the other. The Tuatha De Danann had come to Ireland in a mist and had knowledge and skill that made them appear as wizards and magicians to their predecessors. In the end brute force had to give way before intelligence.

The head of this primeval family of gods (if we may term them gods) was called Ana or Dana, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Dr. Kuno Meyer and Mr. Alfred Nutt in their book on the "Celtic Doctrine of Rebirth" have surmised that Dana and her fellow gods and goddesses were gods of growth and fertility, "manifestations of the spirit of life animating in ever fresh transformations the whole of nature."¹ Most closely associated with Dana we find the names of the Dagda, god of science, Ogma, of eloquence, and Diancecht, of medicine. These seem to be the oldest gods. They figure indirectly rather than directly in the stories of the first cycle. The principal parts

1. Meyer and Nutt: op. cit. p. 82.

are played by a younger group--Lugh, god of light and knowledge, Angus, god of love and beauty, Manannan, who superseded his father Lir as god of the sea, and Midhir, the "Very Proud One". The latter is chiefly known as the husband of Etain, who became a mortal and married Eochaid, the King of Ireland. Midhir continues to love Etain and from time to time appears to her and begs her to return to him, but she will not without Eochaid's consent. In a beautiful and dramatic tale it is told how Midhir wins his wife back as the stake in a game of chess with Eochaid, and bears her off through the air to his home.

The two other longest stories in this cycle belong to the group known as "The Three Sorrows of Story Telling". The first of these is the Fate of the Children of Lir. Lir was the ancient sea god, but in this story his connection with the sea is lost and he seems to be merely king of one division of the Tuatha. His four children are turned into swans by their cruel stepmother, Aoife, who is jealous of Lir's affection for them. Their sufferings for the next nine hundred years are told with great sympathy. Three hundred years are spent on Lake Derryveragh, three hundred on the narrow stormy strip of water between Ireland and Scotland, and the last three hundred on the ocean off the coast of Galway. When the spell is over, they are transformed into human beings and are cared for by a Christian priest. But they are old and withered and die as soon as they are baptized. The general Christian air of

this story marks it as late, and it is not found in any manuscript earlier than the beginning of the eighteenth century. The human characteristics given to Lir and the incident of the cruel stepmother also indicate that the story is one of rather late composition.

The second of the stories--The Fate of the Children of Tuireann--is much older in tone. The three sons of Tuireann--Brian, Iuchar, and Iucharba--slay the father of Lugh, and Lugh in return demands an extremely heavy eric-fine, or compensation. Like Jason searching for the Golden Fleece, they go all over the world to fulfill Lugh's many requests. At last they procure everything, but their sufferings have been so great that when they return they die.

After the defeat of the Tuatha by the Milesians, the former seemed to have retired into the green mounds and hills. The hills were called 'sidhe', and the Tuatha gradually came to be known as the people of the Sidhe. Their homes were wonderfully beautiful, and they themselves retained their youth and beauty forever. Their world was invisible to mortal eyes, and could never be reached by mortals except through the guidance of one of the Sidhe. They could be visible or invisible at will, and could change their shape or size. When Midhir is trying to lure Etain back, he says, "It is pleasant to be looking at the people there, beautiful people without any blemish; their hair is of the color of the flag-flower, their body is as white as

the snow, the color of the fox-glove is on every cheek. The young never grow old there, the fields and the flowers are as pleasant to be looking at as the blackbird's eggs; warm, sweet streams of mead and of wine flow through that country; there is no care and no sorrow on any person; we see others, but we ourselves are not seen."¹ The Sidhe (we can scarcely call them gods in the other two cycles, for mortals do not reverence or worship them) appeared and disappeared under different guises. Little by little they dwindled in power and dignity until they became the fairy folk of modern Irish folk lore.

The comparatively few stories that have come down to us from this mythological cycle, and the references to so many characters that do not appear in the stories, point to the probability that many of the manuscripts relating to the Tuatha have been lost. The whole cycle as we have it is like some huge shadowy canvas where vast figures of indeterminate outline come and go. The supernatural and improbable is so mixed with the probable that no character stands out with clear and distinct characteristics. Manannan, the ocean god, is typical. His character is as unstable and flowing as the sea he is supposed to represent. As history, of course, the cycle must be utterly rejected, and as a body of ancient mythology it seems lacking in strength and definiteness.

When we leave the mythological and come to the

1. Gregory: Gods and Fighting Men, p.96.

Fenian cycle, we enter a region of much clearer light. There has been, however, much dispute concerning the chronological position of these stories. Many critics maintain that the Fenian cycle is based on very definite history, that Finn and his men, the Fianna, were a hired body of soldiers employed by the High King, Cormac mac Art, during the third century to defend his kingdom against invaders. They affirm, also, that the chivalrous elements, the Christian atmosphere, the delight in hunting all tend to prove that the stories are of late development. Dr. Douglas Hyde, Mr. Rolleston, and Stopford Brooke maintain this view. On the other hand, however, Lady Gregory, Mr. Yeats, Standish O'Grady, and Alfred Nutt feel that the Fenian stories represent a civilization far older than that pictured in the Cuchulain tales. As evidence of this, they point out, first, that the stories of Finn are as well or better known in Scotland as they are in Ireland. This would seem to indicate that the Fenian cycle is the heritage of the undivided Gaelic Celts, and arose when their language was the same and their connection close. The chivalrous and Christian elements may be explained when we realize that the Fenian stories were in the possession of the people long before the rise of the Cuchulain cycle; and that the latter were essentially court poems, and really never passed into the familiar possession of the people. The Fenian stories, therefore, were exposed to every change of peoples and civilization,

and quite naturally became tinged with both chivalrous and Christian tones.

Of the civilization of the Cuchulain cycle, which is placed historically in the first century, we have many corroborations in the Latin writers of that time. Poseidonius, Diodorus, Livy, and Caesar all describe Irish life and their descriptions agree admirably with the social conditions pictured in the stories themselves. Of the Fenian civilization, which is supposed to come two centuries later we have no agreeing historical accounts. The records of third century life do not correspond with the life in the stories.

Then, too, although the gods appear to Cuchulain and he is related to them, still they appear to him as god to mortal. Finn, however, is their equal. He goes continually to their houses and meets them as friend to friend. Finn's world is a romantic fairy world, and the men and women prolong their lives or change their shapes with as much ease as the gods. Everything is free from the dominion of fact.

In answer to the statement that hunting is an evidence of late development Mr. Yeats in his preface to Lady Gregory's book maintains that Finn's love of the open and his wild, free, irresponsible life point rather to a much earlier period than the elaborate, well-ordered life of Cuchulain. "His story (Cuchulain's) must have come

out of a time when the wild wood was giving way to pasture and tillage, and men had no longer a reason to consider every cry of the birds or change of the night. Finn was always in the woods, and his battles were but hours amid years of hunting."¹ This whole question of date is complex and interesting, but it can never be settled definitely, and even if it could be that would not affect our judgment and appreciation of the legends as literature. We are primarily interested in the life they picture, and not in their shadowy historical elements.

In the mythological cycle there was no central figure; the misty personages appeared and disappeared in no logical order and sequence, but in this next cycle the majority of the tales center around the great hero Finn. Again and again he and his loyal men remind us of Arthur and his knights. As we read these stories of bravery, courtesy, and faithfulness we cannot help feeling that they were the fountainhead from which the Arthurian romances sprang. We find Finn gathering his men about him and giving them counsel which sounds exactly like the advice Arthur gave his knights.² There was almost perfect companionship among the Fianna, both when they were defending Ireland for the High King, and when they were hunting in smaller groups. There was no littleness or meanness.

The court of the High King was at Teamhair, but

1. Gregory: op. cit. Preface, p. XI.

2. " " " p. 184.

Finn and his men made their headquarters at Almuin in Leinster. Here they returned to rest from their wars and long hunting expeditions. The warriors who stand out most clearly in the stories are Oisín, Finn's son, Osgar, Oisín's son, Goll, the tallest and strongest of the Fianna, Caoilte, the swiftest runner, Lugaidh's son, a kinsman of Finn, and Diarmuid with his fatal love-spot.

The stories are long, rambling, and disconnected. They are veritable fairy tales in their lists of enchantments and transformations. The two longest and most unified stories in the cycle are really nothing more than a series of detached episodes. The first of these--the story of Diarmuid and Grania--is the most famous love story of the cycle. It tells how Finn in his later years desired a wife and set his choice upon Grania, the beautiful daughter of the High King. Grania, however, loved Diarmuid as soon as she saw his fatal love-spot. She persuades Diarmuid against his will to take her away with him. For seven years they wander over Ireland fleeing from the wrath of Finn. Many times they would have been caught had it not been for the intervention and protection of Angus, the god of love. Finally through Angus peace is brought about and Diarmuid and Grania settle at Rath Grania. After some years of quiet life Grania grows weary and invites Finn and the Fianna to a great feast. During the feast Diarmuid and the Fianna go out to hunt the great boar of Beinn Gulbain.

After a mighty conflict the boar mortally wounds Diarmuid. A drink of water from Finn's hands would have saved his life, but each time before Finn reaches Diarmuid he thinks of Grania, and the water runs out of his hands. Diarmuid dies and Grania keeps him pitifully. She sends her sons away that they may learn skillful feats of arms and revenge themselves on Finn. In the meantime, however, Finn goes to her secretly and it is not long before she consents to be his wife. When the soldiers saw him coming with her, "they gave a great shout of laughter and mockery."¹ So Grania in Irish legend is a symbol for beauty and fickleness.

In later years the Fianna became very arrogant. The High King grew more and more displeased until at last he made war upon them, and in the great battle of Gabhra he broke their power forever. There is a tradition that Finn died by the hand of a fisherman; but there is another stronger tradition, which reminds us of the Frederick Barbarossa story, that Finn and his men are biding their time in a lonely cave and will rouse to action when someone blows three blasts upon the great horn at the entrance.

The second of the long and distinct stories in the Fenian cycle is the tale of Oisín and his experiences. So many stories have grown up about Finn's son that they almost form a cycle in themselves. Before the complete overthrow of the Fianna a beautiful woman called Niamh

1. Gregory: op. cit. p. 399.

comes to Oisín and bids him follow her to her home in the country of the young. This land corresponds exactly with Tir-na-n-Og, the Land of the Ever-Living Ones, that fabulous country that plays such an important part in all Irish legend--the land that inspired so many of the voyages that we have discussed before. It is usually thought of as an island and is placed in the mysterious western ocean, that has always been so alluring and fascinating to the Irish. Niamh's description to Oisín of this wondrous country is vivid and beautiful.¹ For three hundred years Oisín lives with Niamh in this delightful place, and then he is overcome with a great longing for Ireland and the Fianna, and despite Niamh's complaints, mounts his fairy steed and returns. When he dismounts in Ireland all his years come upon him and he is found on the shore a helpless withered old man. St. Patrick cares for him and tries to make a Christian of him. Oisín, however, can see neither joy or beauty in the life Patrick would have him lead. Many dialogues are recorded between the two. This interest and willingness of Patrick's to hear of the life of the Fianna is typical of the toleration with which paganism and Christianity met and mingled in Ireland. The dialogues are interesting also because they are the nearest approach to drama that we have in legendary literature. With all his arguments, however, Patrick is not able to convert Oisín, and the latter dies mourning for Finn.

1. Gregory: op. cit. p. 432-433.

In summing up the characteristics of this second or Fenian cycle the thing that stands out most clearly is the love of nature that permeates every story. Finn and his men spent the greater part of their lives out of doors and they loved every wood and stream and valley. So intimate and close is their association with nature that they very often endowed her with human characteristics. Certain trees, bushes, and streams are either good or evil. The trees were not inhabited by separate living beings as in the Greek stories; they had certain living powers of their own that had been given them by the gods.

This humanising process was extended also to animals. Finn's two hounds, Bran and Sceolan, are as dear to him as any of his friends. They mourn with him in his grief and understand him perfectly. They know, for instance, that a certain white faun that they pursue is really an enchanted maiden, and they defend her from the other dogs.¹ Finn's song to May shows how closely Finn knew and observed the animals and birds.

Connected with their love of nature and animals is their love of music, for nature and the birds are the musicians of the world. In Finn's song to May "the harp of the woods is playing music", "the high lonely waterfall is singing a welcome to the warm pool", "the talking of the rushes has begun", "the lark is singing clear tidings." Once when Finn was asked what music pleased him best, he

1. Gregory: op. cit. p. 163.

answered, "The time the seven battalions of the Fianna are gathered in the one place and raise their spear-shafts over their heads, and the sharp whining of the clear, cold wind goes through them, that is very sweet to me."¹ But at other times when the warrior was not uppermost, he would answer, "the voice of the sea-gull and the heron, the sound of the waves", "the voice of the cuckoo in the beginning of summer, and the sound of laughter in Doire."²

Another aspect of their love of nature is their fondness for color. Again and again through the stories reference is made to "the bog as dark as the feathers of the raven," "the green fields", "the haze on the lakes", "the grey mane of the sea", and "the golden flag-flower." Their clothes and weapons blaze with color. Caoilte met a young man "having a crimson cloak about him, and on his breast a silver brooch, and a white shield, ornamented with linked beasts of red gold. And he had heavy green weapons, and he was holding two hounds in a silver chain."³ The women are always dressed in rich brilliant colors. Niamh, Oisín's sweetheart, is described as wearing a cloak of silk, "having stars of red gold on it." "Her eyes were blue and as clear as the dew on the grass; and her cheeks redder than the rose, and her skin whiter than the swan upon the wave."⁴ The human body was beautiful to them, and they searched nature for lovely color comparisons. This clear and vivid color sense is absent from the old German and Scandinavian

1. Gregory: op. cit. p. 286.

2. " " " "

3. " " " p. 271.

4. " " " p. 431.

stories.

Another main characteristic which we cannot fail to note is the prevailing courtesy and kindness, so different from the brutality which is prevalent in the Teutonic and Norse sagas. There are many combats and wars, but no brutal stories of torture. These men seem not so eager for bloodshed as the warriors of other early nations. When a great chief falls he is keened by both armies. There is little treachery or baseness. Finn's men are always loyal. When Diarmuid is forced against his will to go away with Finn's promised queen, he bitterly mourns his breach of faith. There is very little self-seeking; and no gossip and tale-bearing. These men live and die splendidly. Mr. Yeats sums them up well when he says, "We think of them as great-bodied men with large movements, that seem as it were, flowing out of some deep below the stream of narrow personal impulse, men that have broad brows and quiet eyes full of confidence in a good luck that proves every day afresh that they are a portion of the strength of things. They are hardly so much individual men as portions of universal nature, like the clouds that shape and reshape themselves momentarily."¹

When we turn to the third and last cycle, that which centers about Cuchulain and takes its name from him, we enter a far more clear and definite period. Archaeologists have placed it in the "Late Celtic" age, which extends

1. Gregory: op. cit. Preface, p. XIII.

from about 400B.C. to 100 A.D. Their researches agree admirably with the accounts given by Caesar and the Roman historians, and with the life which is pictured in the stories themselves. Weapons, ornaments, and jewels spoken of in the stories and commented upon by the Romans, have been duly found by the archaeologists, so there seems to be little doubt that the events of this cycle took place just about the beginning of the Christian era. The date, however, matters little; it is the life we are interested in. For five hundred years or more the stories underwent much shaping and reshaping at the hands of the bards. This was the heroic and aristocratic cycle of Ireland and was kept in the possession of the great families for many centuries after the Fenian stories had become common property. In fact, even to-day, to one peasant who knows intimately of Cuchulain there are ten who are thoroughly acquainted with Finn and Ossian. Yet the Cuchulain cycle represents heroic Ireland at its highest and best. According to Zimmer, one of the most reliable Celtists, the text of the stories, as we have them, was completed early in the seventh century. The earliest version that has been preserved, however, is in the Book of the Dun Cow, which dates from about 1100. In the later versions, of which there are quite a number, there is a tendency to smooth away all harshness and roughness, and to emphasize the pathetic and imaginative scenes. Lady Gregory has succeeded admirably in so combin-

ing and rearranging that she has kept the simplicity and dignity of the early versions without their extravagance and grotesqueness.

The great majority of the stories center about a district in the eastern part of Ulster, or Uladh, as it is known in the stories. Emain Macha was its capital. The outlines of this ancient rath or palace still remain and are known as Navan Fort. It seems strange that Ulster, which to-day is the most prosaic and un-Irish district of all Ireland, should have been the birthplace of the most splendid of the old romances.

At the time when the events chronicled took place Conchubar was king at Emain Macha. The Christian scribes have endeavored to dignify this king by saying that his death was caused by grief at the news of Christ's crucifixion. The Conchubar of the stories, however, we feel sure would never have parted with life in this manner. Around him at Emain Macha he gathered a splendid company of young heroes, of whom Cuchulain, his nephew, was destined to be the greatest.

The introductory stories in the cycle tell of the boyhood and youth of the hero. He is given a mortal father and mother, but it is generally recognized that Lugh, one of the mightiest of the gods, is his father. From his birth he is superhuman. At six years he outdoes all the other boys of Ulster in sports and slays the terrible dog of

Culann, the smith, from which feat he gained his name Cuchulain, the Hound of Culann. At seven he took arms and slew great warriors in single combat. When he became maddened in battle his body grew larger and gave off light and heat, and then no one could stand against him. This great feat was valued highly and was known as the hero's fury. It reminds us of the Norse berserkers and their fearful rage in battle.

The story of Cuchulain's wooing of Emer is one of the merriest and daintiest of the tales, so different from the grim love stories of other sagas. Emer has much of the modern woman about her. According to the story, she has the six gifts: "the gift of beauty, the gift of voice, the gift of sweet speech, the gift of needlework, the gift of wisdom, the gift of chastity."¹ She is of superior intelligence because she and Cuchulain talk together in the riddle language of the bards, a rare thing for a woman to know. She is not to be won by Cuchulain's fame, but makes large demands of him. To fulfill some of these demands Cuchulain goes to Scathach, the woman warrior of Alba (Scotland), and from her learns all the feats of championship. After a year Emer consents to marry Cuchulain, and remains always devoted to him, helping and counselling him whenever she can. Emer is only one of the many splendid women in these stories. All are heroic and their characters are

1. Gregory: Cuchulain of Muirthemne, p. 22.

drawn with the greatest vividness and skill.

After these introductory stories we come to the central episode of the cycle--the Tain Bo Cuailnge, or Cattle Raid of Cooley. This is the longest and most unified story in all three cycles, and more than any other may be called the epic of Ireland. It may seem strange that the story of a cattle raid could assume sufficient importance to become the subject of an epic. When we realize, however, the primitive pastoral society from which these stories rose, and the fact that herds of cattle formed the property and wealth, the strangeness vanishes. According to Miss Hull in her "Text Book of Irish Literature", "every great war was preceded by a series of cattle raids, which were designed to collect kine and other live-stock to serve as provisions for the army, and many lengthy campaigns consisted either entirely or for the main part not of a series of battles, but of a series of excursions into the enemy's country, accompanied by the burning and depredation of villages and the carrying off of heads of cattle."¹ In reading this great story of the Tain, which holds in Irish literature a place as important as the Iliad in the literature of Greece, we are lifted far above local and tribal feuds. It is truly universal in the Aristotelian sense of the word, and we feel that the men who created it read into it a far greater significance than is possessed by the actual events

1. Hull: op. cit. Vol. I, p. 35.

which are recorded. There is a constant emphasis on the supernatural. The two bulls, the immediate cause of the war, are of superhuman birth. First they were shepherds of the gods of the otherworld, then ravens, then sea-monsters, then warriors, and finally bulls. In each transformation they carried on a great struggle. The war undertaken for the Brown Bull proves to be only a prelude to the gigantic contest between the two bulls themselves, wherein both of them are killed. As Mr. Yeats says in the preface, "when one thinks imagination can do no more, the story of the two bulls, emblematic of all contests, suddenly lifts romance into prophecy."¹

The story begins with a quaint "Bolster Conversation" between Queen Maeve of Connaught and her husband Ailell. Her palace at Cruachan was a political center competing closely in importance and power with Emain Macha. She, herself, was a fierce haughty woman, a veritable amazon, who led her own armies and tried to dominate all with whom she came in contact. Ailell was no exception. On this particular night she was reckoning up with Ailell as to which of them had the greater number of possessions. They were found to be exactly equal with one exception. Ailell had a splendid white-horned bull for which Maeve had no match. This annoyed her so that she immediately decided to send to Cuailnge for the famous Brown Bull, and to obtain him

1. Gregory: op. cit. Preface, p. XV.

by fair means or foul.

Finding that only the latter would avail, she gathered together a great army composed not only of Connaughtmen, but of allies from all the other provinces. At the beginning of winter they marched into Ulster. Unfortunately the men of Ulster were then in their debility or weakness, a curious condition, the result of a curse which had been laid upon them for the wrong they had done some goddess. It lasted from November to February. During that time the defence of the province rested upon Cuchulain and his mortal father Suatim, the only two who were exempt from the curse. Cuchulain agreed to let Maeve's army march on into Ulster if every day she would send a champion to meet him in single combat. If he killed his opponent Maeve's army had to pitch camp until the next day. Warrior after warrior was sent against him, but Cuchulain succeeded in killing them all. The imaginations of the ancient story tellers must have been marvellous, because not one of these fights are alike, and not once does the recital become monotonous. At the last Cuchulain's best friend Ferdiad was sent against him. Very unwillingly they met and fought. At the end of the first day's fight each came to the other and gave him three kisses. They shared their food and healing herbs. For four days they fought and at last Cuchulain killed Ferdiad. This native courtesy and chivalry is to be found in no other primitive literature.

While the single combats were going on, Maeve did not keep her oath, but made a sally into Ulster and succeeded in driving off the Brown Bull. When the Ulster men awoke from their stupor they repulsed Maeve's army, but they did not regain the Bull. He had scarcely reached Connaught before he broke loose, sought out the White-Horned Bull, and the story ends with their terrible struggle and death.

This war, in which Cuchulain proved himself the Irish Achilles, is the culminating point of his career. After this the two most important stories in which he figures are "The Only Jealousy of Emer" and "The Only Son of Aoife". The first tells of Fand, a fairy goddess, wife of Manannan, and her love for Cuchulain. She endeavors to lure him away to her invisible home. Twice he refuses and sends Laegh, his charioteer, in his place, but he finally is persuaded, and spends some time with Fand in her beautiful country. Emer becomes jealous and plans to kill Fand, but the story ends with a dialogue between the two in which each declares her willingness to give up Cuchulain. Fand finally returns with Manannan and leaves Cuchulain to his mortal wife. This story is sometimes called "The Sick-Bed of Cuchulain". The other story tells of another love episode and its tragic consequences. While in Scotland Cuchulain fell in love with Aoife, Scathach's daughter. When he left he gave her a ring to put on the child's hand. Years afterward Aoife

sent Connla to seek his father in Ireland and commanded him to tell his name to no one. Because he refuses to tell his name he must fight with Conchubar's warriors and is at last killed by Cuchulain. As he is dying Cuchulain recognizes him and mourns bitterly for what he has done. He became so distraught that Conchubar feared he would kill all the men of Ulster, so he had his druid put a spell on him, and for three days and nights Cuchulain fought the waves until he was exhausted. This episode is paralleled in the Persian Sorab and Rustum story.

It is not long after this until Cuchulain meets his death. After her defeat Maeve gathers another army in Connaught and proceeds to Ulster to revenge herself on Cuchulain. She brings with her three hideous witches, the daughters of Calatin. The whole court endeavors to keep Cuchulain from going out to battle, but all their devices fail. He would rather die than be dishonored. For a while he does great slaughter among the men of Maeve's army, but gradually they close in around him and he receives his death wound. When he knows that death is upon him he creeps to his chariot and binds himself to a pillar, so that he may die standing up.

When Emer hears of his death, she bids them dig a wide grave and when they have placed his body in it, she lies down beside him and keens. "Love of my life, my friend, my sweetheart, my one choice of the men of the earth, many is

the woman, wed or unwed, envied me till to-day: and now I will not stay living after you."¹ And this was the end of the great hero's life, the man who would rather his span of years be short than his name be not remembered among the men of the earth.

Included in this cycle, although having no vital connection with it are two love stories. The first of these stories is possibly the best known of all the old tales and is to be found in hundreds of manuscripts. It is the third of the three great sorrows of story-telling--the tragical tale of Deirdre and the sons of Usnach. Fedlimid, the harper at Conchubar's court, had a daughter, Deirdre, around whose birth there were many ominous portents. He had her reared in a solitary place with only her nurse Levarcham for company. As she grew up she was wondrously beautiful. A hunter saw her one day and immediately told Conchubar of her beauty. The latter sought her out and resolved to make her his wife. She plead for a delay of a year. In the meantime she meets and loves Naoise, one of the sons of Usnach. He and his two brothers, Ainnle and Ardan, take Deirdre with them to Scotland where they live happily for seven years. Then Conchubar practises treachery on them. He sends Fergus with promises of pardon and safe return. Deirdre feels immediately that treachery is intended, and begs them not to go. They dismiss her warnings as a foolish woman's fears, and go back. When they

1. Gregory: op. cit. p. 349.

come to Emain Macha they are sent into the House of the Red Branch. This was an evil portent since this was the palace where they kept their weapons and the heads of their slain enemies. It was not long before Conchubar and his men attacked them. The sons of Usnach defended themselves bravely, and Deirdre carried herself like a queen. Druid spells are used against them and at last they are killed. The end of the story varies in different versions. In the oldest manuscript the whole tone of the story is rude and primitive. Deirdre is forced to go with Conchubar after Naoise's death, and her life is made so miserable that she dashes out her brains against a stone. In the later versions the savage features are greatly softened. After Naoise's death Deirdre sings a pitiful lament and then springs into his grave and dies upon his body, or makes her way to the shore and kills herself before Conchubar reaches her. Deirdre is the greatest woman in all Irish legend and has been the inspiration of hundreds of poems and tragedies. She reminds us both of Helen and Cassandra and is as noble a figure as either.

The other love story is simple and most appealing. It is probably of late invention and is quite independent of the other personages in the Cuchulain cycle. It is the tale of Baile and Aillinn--two lovers who planned to meet at Dundéalgan beside the sea. A strange messenger appears to each with the news of the other's death. So great is

their love that their hearts break with grief. An apple grows out of her grave and a yew tree out of his. From that time on the place was known as Baile's strand.

This last or Cuchulain cycle represents the highest civilization of ancient Ireland, a civilization which grew and flourished untouched by external influences. Indeed, some critics maintain that the sagas of this cycle are more ancient than any in Western Europe and are least spoiled and obscured by the uniformity which came with Roman civilization. The world that we most frequently think of when we read these stories is the world of Homer. There is the same joyous pleasure in the living of life. There are no artificial restraints and we can come in contact with real humanity, strong and virile. Their pleasures are in the main sensuous, a sort of royal progress from battle to splendid feasts or hunting expeditions. There is more staying in houses in this cycle than in the two others, but the out-doors is still very close to them and their love of nature is just as strong. We find, too, the same love for brilliant colors. The whole background against which the figures in the stories move is much more like the Homeric world than the worlds pictured in the Norse or Teutonic sagas.

The heroes of these tales are in many respects like the heroes of all other heroic tales. They are strong, powerful men, whose chief title to fame lies in

their bodily prowess. Each hero must be able to perform a certain number of feats; he must know how to leap like a salmon, run like a stag, and hurl great weights. Physical courage is exalted above everything, and death is a very little thing compared to winning eternal fame in battle. When Cuchulain takes arms, Cathbad, the druid, tells him it is not an auspicious time and that if he takes them, his life will be short. Cuchulain replies, "It is little I would care if my life were to last one day and one night only, so long as my name and the story of what I have done would live after me."¹ Although there are many battles and much slaughter through the stories, no one seems to feel the grimness and horror of war. No terrible details are mentioned, and it seems to be nothing more than a splendid game to them.

In this cycle there are more women characters than there are in the others, and they are portrayed more vividly. Great care seems given to their development, and we learn to know them so well that we can almost prophesy what they will do in certain situations. They conform very closely to our modern ideals. They are intelligent and forceful, fit companions for their warrior husbands. They can be grave and dignified, but they have also a large fund of humor, and can be very buoyant and sprightly. They have a large share in choosing their husbands and in the main are very faithful to them. The moral standards are high.

1. Gregory: op. cit. p. 12.

The heroines of the Norse and Teutonic sagas are splendid and terrible women, as stern and relentless as their husbands, but they do not appeal to our sympathies as do Emer, and Deirdre, and even the haughty Maeve.

There is still much of the supernatural present. There is not the familiar mingling with the gods that we found in the Fenian stories. The gods often appear and intervene in human affairs just as they do in the Homeric tales, but as in the latter, they appear as gods to mortals, and there is no confounding of the two. The mortals themselves, however, are gifted often with supernatural powers. Whole armies are cast under spells, and when hard pressed individual warriors often resort to magic feats. The druids form the connecting link between the natural and supernatural worlds, but as we have seen, the knowledge of magic is not confined to them alone.

The most obvious and striking characteristic, however, is the one we noticed so prevalent in the Fenian cycle -- the natural courtesy and chivalry. This differentiates the Irish sagas from the early literature of every other country, not excluding Greece. The courtesy which prompts Cuchulain to share his food and healing herbs with his opponent Ferdiad cannot be paralleled in any other heroic tale. The later chivalry of the Arthurian stories was the product of a highly artificial age; the chivalry of Cuchulain and his comrades was the outcome of a fine native code

of honor.

IV.

At the risk of some repetition let us go back for a moment and summarize briefly the main characteristics of the three cycles of legend.

I. An intense love of and sympathy with nature. This trait is ever-present. There is an ancient poem attributed to Amergin, one of the sons of Miled, which expresses this nearness, almost an identification with nature:

"I am the wind on the sea;
 I am a powerful billow;
 I am the sound of the ocean;
 I am an infuriate ox;
 I am a hawk on the cliff;
 I am a flash of the sunshine;
 I am a wild boar pursuing;
 I am a river salmon;
 I am the lake of the lowlands;
 I am the strength of song." ¹

This is not pantheism, but simply that sense of nearness and closeness to nature which never left these men and women of ancient Ireland. Nature in return seems to feel a sympathy for man. Whenever danger threatened

1. Gregory: Gods and Fighting Men, p. 69.

Ireland or her kings the four great waves arose and flooded all the bays and rivers, thus giving a sign of the coming disaster. Included in the feeling for nature we must put their love for beautiful and brilliant colors, and their delight in music of all kinds.

II. Closely connected with their feeling for nature, is the ever-recurring sense of the supernatural or weird. They firmly believed in the existence of spiritual worlds about them. There were countries under the sea, or far out on beautiful islands in the western ocean, or in their own green hills. Wherever the location of this wonderful place it was always beautiful, a region of everlasting happiness and youth where there were brave men and lovely women, palaces, music, and the best of food and drink. Some chosen mortals were allowed to visit this land before death. It became the symbol of all beautiful and happy things. The belief in the nearness and actuality of these other-worlds made the people very credulous. Something wonderful might happen at any moment, and one must not become too much absorbed in material things, else he may become deaf and blind to the fairy folk of the spiritual worlds.

III. The belief in the supernatural never made these people of the legends any less human. As one critic puts it, "The great value of the Irish epics consists

in the undistorted splendor with which absolutely natural humanity is bodied forth."¹ They are real men and women, pagan it is true, but without sham and without veneer. They may be barbarous, but they have the instincts of gentlemen and ladies. They live their lives with abandon and joy, and have no acquaintance with hypocrisy or littleness. Fortunately for us the story tellers of the middle ages did not burden this "natural humanity" with the artificialities of a later time.

IV. Unspoiled human nature has strong emotions, and so we find in the legends a remarkable sensibility. A hundred instances might be given of their recognition of the beauty and worth of the vital human relationships. The tenderness and grief of the father at the discovery that he is the murderer of his son, the love and admiration of the son for his father, the faithfulness and devotion of wife to husband, the staunch affection and comradeship of friend to friend--all these are dwelt upon again and again. There is little brutality and coarseness, and much refinement and delicacy of feeling.

V. Another element not quite so important, but which in a way permeates all the legends is the love of the people for Ireland. In the mythological cycle we find it in the story of the sons of Tuireann. When they are

1. Charles L. Moore: Celtic Literature, Dial, Vol. 40, p. 185.

returning, weary and sick, from their long wanderings, Brian says to his brothers, "Raise up our heads till we see Ireland again, and life or death will be the same to us after that."¹ In the Fenian cycle we find it not so much in literal statements, but in a universal love of Ireland--her valleys, her mountains, her rivers, and her plains. There are hundreds of descriptions showing that the Fenians knew and loved every inch of their land. In the Cuchulain cycle we find it in the joy with which Naoise and his brothers return from their exile, even though in return there lurks the possibility of death. Perhaps this intense love of country is due to Ireland's isolation. Whatever its cause it has existed from the earliest times and is still strong and vital.

1. Gregory: Gods and Fighting Men, p. 12.

Chapter III.

THE MODERN USE OF THE LEGENDS

I.

This brief and imperfect survey of the main cycles of Irish legend may give us some idea of the wealth of fresh unworked material which is now being opened up to the modern Irish writers. These sagas did not develop as did the sagas of other nations. If Ireland's history had not been so broken by war, and invasion, and pillage, these tales would undoubtedly have assumed a far more definite and connected shape, and might possibly have been woven into a great epic. As it is they are simply epic fragments awaiting the touch of a Homer. Whenever the themes of these Irish stories have gone abroad to other lands, they have acted as a "powerful fecundating pollen"; at home they have never been able to develop into epic unity.

Through the work of Lady Gregory and other able translators and adapters this vast treasure house is being opened, and is proving to be the great source of inspiration to the modern writers of the Irish Literary Revival. The legends and folk-lore appeal not only because of their freshness and newness, but also because they fit in with that tendency which we have noticed in modern

literature to turn from a direct consideration of the real world to remote, far-off, beautiful things. Stronger, however, than both these appeals is the national appeal. The legends represent the golden age of Ireland, an age when she was independent, self-sufficing, and thoroughly Irish. To the people of modern Ireland, weary and sick of asking for their freedom, these legends come as a great consolation and inspiration, reminding them of their past greatness and inspiring them with hope for the future. As Miss Eleanor Cox, speaking of the legends and their heroes, has so beautifully phrased it,

"They are coming with the silver speech of Erin on
their lips--

The speech that once of all the mighty Celtic race
made kin.

They are coming with the laughter that has known no
age eclipse,

They are coming with the songs beloved of Finn.

Yea, with gifts regenerating to all men of women born,
Flame of courage that shall fade not, flame of truth
that shall not fail,

To the music of a thousand harps they're marching
through the morn.

Deathless gods and kings and heroes of the Gael."¹

The modern awakening of literary feeling, which

1. Cox: The Century, Vol. 87, p. 440.

has been termed the Irish Literary Revival, is manifesting itself in the main through two forms--the lyric and the drama. At first glance this seems a little strange in this age in which the novel, short story, and essay have been so predominate. When we recognize, however, that novels are always the product of a well-developed, mature literature this does not seem strange. Ireland's history has always militated against the development of her literature. There has been no steady growth. When we recognize also that poetry is always the form in which literature begins, or in which a newly awakened literary spirit manifests itself, the first mode of expression seems natural enough. Since the Dialogues of Patrick and Oisín are the nearest previous approach which Ireland has made to dramatic expression, this sudden rise of the drama seems strange. This is very probably due to external foreign influence.

For various and obvious reasons it would be impossible to study all the writers of the movement who have made use of the legends. For our purpose here it has been sufficient to select the five most representative writers, those who have exerted the greatest influence upon the other men and women of the school. An examination of their use of the legends both in poetry and drama will give us enough material from which to draw our final conclusions as to; (1) the nature of the Celtic spirit both new and

old, and (2) the value of this Celtic spirit for modern literature. The five writers chosen for consideration are William Butler Yeats, Lady Gregory, George Russell (A.E.), John Millington Synge, and William Sharp (Fiona Macleod).

II.

TABLE OF REFERENCE FOR MR. YEATS' USE OF LEGEND.

<u>Cycle</u>	<u>Poems</u>	<u>Lady Gregory's version</u>
2	"The Wanderings of Oisín" -- "Gods and Fighting Men"; pp. 67-149.	pp. 431-457.
2	"The Madness of King Goll" -- pp. 34-39.	" pp. 422-424.
3	"Fergus and the Druid" ---- pp. 157-160.	"Cuchulain of Muirthemne"; pp. 1-2.
3	"Baile and Ailinn" ----- pp. 325-338.	" pp. 305-306.
3	"The Old Age of Queen Maeve" -- pp. 309-321.	" No definite source in legend
3	"The Death of Cuchulain" -- "Cuchulain of Muirthemne"; pp. 161-169.	pp. 276-293, pp. 312-319.
1	"The Hosting of the Sidhe" -- "Gods and Fighting Men"; pp. 213-214.	pp. 1.
1	"The Host of the Air" -- pp. 219-222.	" pp. 1.
1	"The Song of Wandering Aengus" -- pp. 228-229.	" No definite source in legend.

- 2-"He Mourns for the Change"-- "Gods and Fighting Men",
pp.236-236. No definite source in legend.

Dramas

- "The King's Threshold" -- No definite source in legend.
--"The Shadowy Waters" -- " " " " "
3-"On Baile's Strand" --"Cuchulain of Muirthemne",pp.312-19
3-"Deirdre" -- " " " ".104-43.
3-"The Green Helmet" -- " " " ".48-62.

Mr. Yeats is the most typical and prominent figure in the movement. He prophesied its coming and has been untiring in his efforts to promote its development. His work is many-sided and runs the gamut from poetry, drama, and sketches to essays and criticism. His genius, however, is essentially lyric, and it is in poetry that he has done his best work. He feels most keenly the depressing and paralyzing effect which British imperialism has had upon Ireland. There is a note of sadness in all his work, and yet with it a kind of defiance which realizes that all the noise and material prosperity of the conquerors will one day come to naught. To him the world of the imagination is the only durable world, and wisdom is to be gained only through meditation and inspiration. This feeling of the littleness and transitoriness of earthly things is characteristic of all the Irish poets; it is, perhaps, a bequest from the great body of the Irish people who have for so many centuries found their

62.

actual world so bleak and drear, that they have created for themselves in imagination a beautiful joyous world in which they can roam at will. The legends envision such an imaginary world of light, and joy, and color, and make their appeal to both peasant and poet. It is not strange, therefore, that Mr. Yeats drew many of the themes of his poems from the legends.

"The Wanderings of Oisín" (1889) was one of his first poems based on this material, and is also one of his best. It is often taken as the starting point of the Revival, and is practically the first tangible expression of the group of modern writers who are endeavoring to give Ireland a national literature in English. It follows quite closely the story of Oisín's visit to the Land of the Ever-Young, the legend version of which we traced in our discussion of the Fenian cycle. It is written in three books, and is half dramatic in that it takes the form of a dialogue between Patrick and Oisín. Patrick is endeavoring to turn Oisín's thoughts to Christian things, but Oisín mourns unceasingly for his comrades and the old free life. The account in the legend is also in dialogue form, but it is much shorter than Mr. Yeats' poem and gives us rather meager account of the time Oisín spent his time in the beautiful land to which Niamh took him. It is very natural that the scribes of the middle ages should minimize this part of the story and place greater emphasis on

the attempts of Patrick to win Oisín to Christianity. Mr. Yeats has told the story from Oisín's point of view, and our sympathy is with him to the end. He tells us in detail the story of his three centuries--a century of feasting and pleasure, a century of fighting, and a century of forgetfulness. The poem is overflowing with lyric beauty, and sense and sound are often wonderfully harmonious.

"And we rode on the plains of the sea's edge, where all
is barren and gray,

Gray sands on the green of the grasses and over the
dripping trees,

Dripping and doubling landward, as though they would
hasten away,

Like an army of old men longing for rest from the
moan of the seas."¹

The whole poem is full of a wistful regret for the carefree happy life of the old time; it typifies the same revolt against the actual world of restraint and artifice that is so pronounced in the work of Mr. Yeats and his companions. According to Mr. Weygandt in his book on "Irish Plays and Playwrights", "In exuberance and richness of color it ("The Wanderings of Oisín") is Mr. Yeats' most typically Irish poem based on legend, and nowhere do his lines go with more lilt, or fall oftener into inevitability of phrase, or more fully diffuse a glamour of otherworldliness."²

1. Yeats: Poems, "The Wanderings of Oisín", p. 138.

2. Weygandt: op. cit., p. 40.

In three of the other shorter poems we see more plainly than in "The Wanderings of Oisín" the stamp of Mr. Yeats' individuality. The first of these—"The Madness of King Goll"—tells the story of a warlike king who, in the midst of his battles, began to receive messages from the spirit world. He leaves his throne and wanders thereafter in the woods. Each verse ends with the beautiful refrain, "They will not hush, the leaves a-flutter round me, the beech leaves old." The story is not to be found in Lady Gregory's version. There Goll is one of Finn's warriors; he does not go mad and wander in the woods, but dies on a rocky island off the coast and is sane to the very end. Mr. Krans in his book speaks of the legendary Goll as a monarch who went mad and hid himself in a valley in Cork.¹ This is the only evidence we have, however, of another legend version of Goll's end. It seems more probable that Mr. Yeats invented the story. He had no scruples about changing the legend material to serve his own purposes.

In the second of these poems, "Fergus and the Druid", Mr. Yeats has also changed the story to suit his purpose. In the legend, which is taken from the third cycle, Fergus is shown as king at Emain Macha before Conchubar. Fergus asked Ness, the mother of Conchubar, to marry him, but she would do so only on one condition that Fergus let Conchubar reign as king for one year. He consented, but in the meantime Ness worked so on the minds of the people that at the

1. Krans: William Butler Yeats and the Irish Literary Revival, p. 61.

cycle. The argument of Mr. Yeats' poem tells the tale in a sentence. "Baile and Aillinn were lovers, but Aengus, the Master of Love, wishing them to be happy in his own land, told to each a story of the other's death, so that their hearts were broken and they died." The only radical deviation from the legend is that Mr. Yeats identifies the interferer as Aengus. In the legend we are given no clue as to who the tale bearer was, and we rather suppose it was the work of some malicious enemy. By making it the work of Aengus, Mr. Yeats changes what was in the original a pitiful tragedy into something to be thankful for. From Mr. Yeats viewpoint the death of the lovers was a happy thing, for

"Their love was never drowned in care
Of this or that thing, nor grew cold
Because their bodies had grown old."¹

Here is the same discontent with the world as it is, and the same preoccupation with dreams of a better.

In two other poems based on legend Mr. Yeats attempts rather a reproduction of the spirit of the legend than an interpretation of his own. In "The Old Age of Queen Maeve" we get a splendid picture of the high spirit and dauntless courage of this famous queen. One night when she is walking restless through her halls, musing on the old times, Aengus, the god of love, speaks to her and bids her rouse her people and dig into a fairy mound, so

1. Yeats: Poems, "Baile and Aillinn", p. 326.

that he may carry off a fair woman of the Sidhe, whom he loves. She does so and when

"At middle night great cats with silver claws,
Bodies of shadow and blind eyes like pearls,
Came up out of the hole, and red-eared hounds
With long white bodies came out of the air,"¹

her people became terrified and try to run away, but she urges them back and makes them dig until Aengus and his love hover over her head and give her their thanks. The poem is clear in outline and conveys to us the unconquerable spirit of the warlike queen as well as any of the legends.

The poem on "The Death of Cuchulain" does not catch the heroic spirit quite so well. With little gain, it seems to me, the incidents of the legend are changed almost radically. In the legend Aoife, Cuchulain's love in Scotland, sends Connla, her son, under "geasa" not to tell his name, to fight with Cuchulain. The latter kills him and becomes so distraught over the thing he has done that Conchubar has druid spells put on him and he fights the waves for three days until he is physically exhausted. In the poem news is brought to Emer, Cuchulain's wife, that Cuchulain is in love with another beautiful woman, probably Fand of the legends. Emer seeks her son, Finmole, and sends him to Cuchulain, forbidding him to tell his name until he is compelled. Cuchulain kills him, as in the legend, and

1. Yeats: Poems, "The Old Age of Queen Maeve", p. 318.

is overcome at his deed. For three days he sits with his head bowed upon his knees; then Conchubar has the druid spells put on him and he

"Stood up and came to the long sands alone:

For four days warred he with the bitter tide;

And the waves flowed above him and he died."¹

This account of Cuchulain's death is much weaker than the account in the legends, where he dies fighting valiantly against the men of Ireland. Despite the changes, however, the narrative is clear and some of the images are beautiful. Mr. Yeats has handled this same subject in a play. The play is better than the poem, but neither one can approach Matthew Arnold's handling of the same theme in "Sorab and Rustum".

There are four other short poems based not on actual legends, but dealing more or less with personages and symbols of the legends. "The Hosting of the Sidhe", and "The Host of the Air" describe the rushing through the air of the fairy host. The sight of this phantom company is only granted to a few favored mortals, and once having seen, the mortal henceforth loses all interest in things mortal; he has "emptied his heart of its mortal dream". It is the same mood and the same call that appears ever and again in Mr. Yeats' poetry. "The Song of Wandering Aengus" is a good example of most of the love lyrics. They do not glorify the physical beauty and desire for the beloved,

1. Yeats: Poems, "The Death of Cuchulain", p. 169.

instead the beloved seems to represent some universal beauty, always to be striven for, but never to be attained in this world. Although Aengus has searched many years for the beautiful vision that appeared to him, he needs must keep on.

"Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow hills and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,"¹

In a number of the love poems Mr. Yeats uses symbols unintelligible to all save the close student of the legends, and thus lays himself open to the charge of wilful obscurity. In the poem "He Mourns for the Change that Has Come upon Him and his Beloved", that the "hound with one red ear" is pursuing "the white deer with no horns", and the hound wishes that the "Boar without bristles had come out from the West and had rooted the sun and moon and stars out of the sky" means absolutely nothing to us. Unless we are told that the hound is the symbol of the pursuer and the deer of the pursued, and the first represents "the desire of the man which is for the woman", and the second "the desire of the woman which is for the desire of the man", and that the black Boar that shall root up the sun, moon, and stars is a symbol of the end of the world, we will understand nothing of the poem. Some symbols are emotional and we understand them intuitively, as a beautiful woman or a rose as the symbol of beauty, or the wind and sea as symbols of change and transitoriness;

1. Yeats: Poems, "The Song of Wandering Aengus", p. 229.

but other symbols are intellectual and are understood only by the initiated. The poetry of intellectual symbols, however, is always short-lived.

We may say then that the great majority of Mr. Yeats' lyric poems are wonderfully musical, both in rhythm and in sound, that they are filled with dreams and the longing for a world unaffected by time and change, and that into the themes which he takes from the legends he puts much of his own spirit, so that they become "dream-burdened." Mr. Francis Bickley in an article on "The Development of Yeats" sums up his lyric poetry well when he says, "When not rendered unacceptable by remote learning and arbitrary symbols it has the qualities which make poetry unforgettable-- beauty of phrase and measure wedded to subjective realism, which is the true symbolism."¹ Before we make any complete summary of his use of the legends we must examine five of the poetical plays which are based wholly or in part on legendary material.

The first two are not taken from any actual stories but they are placed in legendary times and have semi-legendary characters. "The King's Threshold" was written in 1903 when Mr. Yeats had been accused of caring more for his poetry than for Ireland; so perhaps we may consider it an apologia. It deals with the ancient right of the poet to sit at the king's table and receive the respect and consideration of the entire court. Seanchan, the poet,

1. Bickley: op. cit. Living Age, Vol. 264, p. 804.

had always enjoyed these privileges until one day some soldiers and politicians prevailed on the king to send him away. Seanchan was so grieved at the deprivation of his right that he threw himself on the king's steps and refused to eat. It was believed that if a king allowed anyone to starve on his threshold from that day on ill luck would light upon him and his kingdom. The king sent messengers of every kind to Seanchan entreating him to eat, but all to no avail. Even Fedelm, his sweetheart, could not move him. When the king asks Seanchan's pupils what they would do under like conditions and finds that they would all prefer to die, he realizes the mistake he has made and tenderly places his crown on Seanchan's head. At last he knows that the poets and artists are the real rulers of the land. It seems very probable that Mr. Yeats wrote the play to vindicate his art before the people and to prove that a poet holds as honorable a position in the community as the "Bishops, Soldiers, and Makers of the Law."

The second of these two plays, "The Shadowy Waters," is characteristic of all the voyage and quest stories in the legends, and is also most characteristic of Mr. Yeats himself. It is the story of Forgael, a mythical king, who was not satisfied with ordinary happiness. Messengers from the Land of the Ever-Living Ones have told him that if he will sail away over the shadowy waters guided by the souls of dead men on their way to rest, he will at length find the

great and perfect happiness he desires. For years he sails over unknown seas, until one day his sailors capture a richly laden spice ship, kill all the men aboard, and bring away with them Dectora, the queen. When Forgael sees her, he loves her and persuades her to sail on with him to the Land of the Ever-Living Ones, so that then they may enjoy perfect happiness. In Forgael's statement of what he desires we cannot help but feel that we are listening directly to Mr. Yeats' own creed.

"All would be well

Could we but give us wholly to the dreams,
And get into their world that to the sense
Is shadow, and not linger wretchedly
Among substantial things; for it is dreams
That lift us to the flowing changing world
That the heart longs for. What is love itself,
Even though it be the lightest of light love,
But dreams that hurry from beyond the world,
To make low laughter more than meat and drink,
Though it but set us sighing?"¹

The poem can scarcely be allowed the name of play; it is utterly remote from human life, and filled with dreams. The men of the legends who went on quests were seeking a very actual world, a world of sensuous delights. Forgael, however, is in search of a misty immaterial world free from all the limitations and restraints of the body. Since it is so re-

1. Yeats: Plays, "The Shadowy Waters", p. 206.

moved from human life it has little dramatic power, but it is full of beautiful lyric lines.

The next three plays are based directly on legends. The first of these, "On Baile's Strand", deals with the story of Cuchulain's combat with Aoife's son. A part of this story was used in "The Death of Cuchulain", but there it was combined with the story of Emer's jealousy, and the emphasis was placed here rather than on the death of Cuchulain. The play is more real and more dramatic and follows the legend very closely. Two new characters are introduced--a Fool and a Blind Man. The latter knew that the young stranger was Cuchulain's son and could have prevented the fight, but it afforded too good an opportunity for the two of them to rob the ovens, so he said nothing. When Cuchulain returns from the fight, his sword wet with his son's blood, the play rises to real tragic heights. From his talk with the Fool and the Blind Man Cuchulain discovers whom he has killed. There is a long pause. Then the Blind Man, "Somebody is trembling, Fool. The bench is shaking. Why are you trembling? Is Cuchulain going to hurt us? It was not I who told you, Cuchulain."¹ This is the highest point of the play.

There is another play, or rather heroic farce, based upon Cuchulain and his deeds. It first appeared as "The Golden Helmet", but was rewritten two years later as the

1. Yeats: Plays, "On Baile's Strand", p. 318.

"Green Helmet". It is a combination of two legend stories, "The Bargain of the Strong Man" and "The Women's War of Words". The first of these reminds one of the English story, "Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight". A man in a green helmet appeared one day to Cuchulain, Conall, and Legaire. He offered to let them strike off his head if they would give him the same privilege. They do so, and he picks up his head and walks off, promising to come back for one of their heads later. Here the other story is introduced and we find the wives of the three men quarreling with each other as to the precedence of their husbands. The stable boys and servants take up the quarrel and trouble is imminent, when the man in the green helmet reappears, demanding a head. Cuchulain is the only one, who, seeing the fairness of his demand, is willing to offer his head. Instead of receiving a blow, however, the helmet is placed upon his head and he is declared the champion of the land. The farce was writtgen with no very high purpose. It combines two legend stories in an interesting way, but no new interpretation is given and none of the lines may be classified as great poetry.

The last of the legend plays is the best. It is the tragic love story of Deirdre, a theme which has inspired nearly every Irish poet. Mr. Yeats in his play presents only the end of the story. The scene is laid in a guesthouse in a wood. It is described at length and we get most won-

derfully the feeling of the old wood, the twilight atmosphere, and the hint of impending disaster. Three women musicians gathered around a small brazier talk together of Deirdre and the heavy price she has had to pay for her love. They feel that no good will come of her return. Fergus scoffs at their fears and bids them sing a joyful song when the lovers appear. Deirdre doubts Conchubar's sincerity and the half veiled remarks of the musicians confirm her fears. Shortly afterward when she and Naoise realize that the house is surrounded and they have been tricked, they decide to make no furious fight, but to meet death calmly. When Conchubar approaches, however, Naoise cannot resist rushing out at him. He is immediately caught in a net and brought in before Deirdre. She pleads for their lives, but he will grant them only on condition that Naoise go away and Deirdre come to him as his bride. For Naoise's sake Deirdre agrees, but Naoise will not listen to her. While she is still pleading, Naoise is led away into another room and killed. Then most wonderfully and craftily Deirdre pretends to admire Conchubar for his bold deed and promises to marry him that night. But first, she says, she must perform certain last rites for Naoise. Conchubar is reluctant, but when she offers to be searched, he is ashamed and lets her go. Fergus distracts him for a minute and when he rushes into the next room he finds Deirdre dead on Naoise's body. Mr. Yeats has told the story so simply, that though it has

preserved its heroic remote atmosphere, it is throbbing with real human tragedy. Deirdre, Naoise, and Conchubar are not symbols; they are men and women whose sorrow and agony stir us profoundly. These men and women of the legend were deeply human, and in this retelling Mr. Yeats has kept them so. Passage after passage might be quoted for its power and beauty, the songs of the musicians, the last talk of Deirdre and Naoise, Deirdre's pleadings, and even Conchubar's last speech. There is one line particularly that is wonderfully beautiful for its simplicity. The First Musician in telling Deirdre's story says that Conchubar went to see her daily after he discovered her in her lonely house until at last

"She put on womanhood and he lost peace."¹

The play follows the legend in almost every detail; the mode of death is changed slightly, but the impression produced is the same in both cases, and Mr. Yeats' play will always remain as one of the most beautiful versions of this splendid tragic tale. According to Mr. Weygandt, "None have told it so nobly as Mr. Yeats, save only Synge, and his re-statement of it, of the whole story from Deirdre's girlhood to her death, has about it a grandeur and a triumphing beauty that make further retellings not to be tolerated."²

Having now examined the ten poems and the five plays based on legend, we should be able to draw some conclusions concerning Mr. Yeats' use of this material. We

1. Yeats: Plays, "Deirdre", p. 413.

2. Weygandt: op. cit., p. 61.

noticed first in the legends an extreme love and appreciation of nature. All phases were loved, but particularly the larger, more universal ones--the sea in all its varying aspects, the sky and clouds, the rolling hills and valleys, and the clear rivers. In Mr. Yeats' poetry nature plays a large part, but it is the gentler, softer aspects that are emphasized; "the gentle waves of the summer seas", "the softness of the starlight", "the windless woods", "the ever-summered solitudes", "the moon like a white rose", "high frail cloudlets", "dim shores far away", and "the golden evening light". The country of the legends stood out clear and distinct in outline; the country of Mr. Yeats' poetry is dim and brooded over by a soft twilight haze. In descriptions of the human body, as in nature descriptions, there was in the legends a love of brilliant colors; in Mr. Yeats the colors are much softened. Looking at random we find "brows white as fragrant milk", "her pearl-pale hand", "a citron color gleamed in her hair", "eyes that glimmer like silk", "bodies, grown whiter than curds". Hair is always mentioned in his descriptions of people, and it is nearly always "dim" and "soft".

Secondly we noticed in the legends an ever-recurring sense of nearness to the spiritual worlds and a credulous acceptance of the weird and supernatural. These spiritual worlds, however, were very clearly and definitely conceived, and favored mortals could visit them. Mr. Yeats'

poetry also is saturated with a sense of the nearness and reality of things spiritual, but the spiritual world to him does not assume any tangible form. It is without body or limitations of any kind. We may conceive of it as an invisible ether surrounding and permeating everything in the universe and constituting the only true reality. Happiness and success may be attained not through a life of constant action, but through meditation and quiet listening for the promptings of the spirit. In the legends there was almost an identification of man with nature, i.e. so close was their connection that nature seemed to assume human attributes. In Mr. Yeats this connection is not so close. The line of distinction is clearly drawn.

Thirdly, the characters in the legends are clear and definite. They are all very human even though they are possessed of supernatural powers. In Mr. Yeats' poetry there is, of course, very little character drawing. His genius is lyric, rather than epic or dramatic. Since 1889, however, he has spent the greater part of his time writing plays for the Abbey Theater. This necessitated a more faithful adherence to real life and real characters. It seems very difficult for him to portray real men and women. When he strives for reality he seems to lose much of lyric beauty. Of the plays we considered "On Baile's Strand" and "The Green Helmet" attempt rather faithfully to reconstruct heroic times and characters, and yet we would far

more willingly give them up than "The Shadowy Waters" or "The King's Threshold". In "Deirdre" Mr. Yeats has succeeded in retaining lyric beauty and has also drawn Deirdre's character with firm, sure outlines. The other characters are not so well bodied forth. We may say then in general that Mr. Yeats, in using the material of the legends, attempts not so much to build up for us an exact picture of heroic days as to interpret the legends to us from his own personal viewpoint.

III.

TABLE OF REFERENCE FOR LADY GREGORY'S USE OF LEGEND.

Cycle	Play	Lady Gregory's version
2	Grania	Gods and Fighting Men pp.343-400.

Lady Gregory stands so close to Mr. Yeats in the furthering of the literary revival that it would be almost impossible to speak of the genius and work of the one without including the other. Lady Gregory has inspired, and encouraged, and advised Mr. Yeats in nearly every possible way. She has been his chief helper in the collection of folk-lore and has directly collaborated with him in at least one of his plays. He in turn criticised and helped

her in her two legend books. Together they have been the heart and soul of the Abbey Theater project. Without their enthusiasm and unceasing labor Ireland might never have witnessed the unfolding of a beautiful national drama. She more than any one else has been instrumental in the great outburst of play writing of the last five or six years. Not content, however, with the opening of Irish legend to the poets and dramatists, she has herself written a number of folk-history plays and comedies. They are not great dramas; they are somewhat loose in construction and weak in characterization, but they are all interesting and they are all made rich and beautiful by their language. Of the six folk-history plays three are tragedies and three comedies. Only one of the six is based directly on legend. If one were asked to choose just one subject from the legends for a tragedy, the choice would in nearly every case fall on the sorrowful story of Deirdre. Lady Gregory, however, has chosen to write of Grania. In explaining her choice Lady Gregory says, "I think I turned to Grania because so many have written about sad, lovely Deirdre, who when overtaken by sorrow, made no good battle at the last. Grania had more power of will, and for good or evil twice took the shaping of her life into her own hands. The riddle she asks us through the ages is, 'Why did I, having left great grey-haired Finn for comely Diarmuid, turn back to Finn in the end when he had consented to Diarmuid's death?'¹ From the story of these three lovers Lady Gregory has de-

1. Gregory: Irish Folk-History Plays, Vol. I, Notes, p. 295.

veloped a three-act play. It may seem as though she has unduly expanded her material for the small number of characters, but as she says in the note to the play, "Love itself, with its shadow Jealousy, is the true protagonist." With these two great forces at play the material is inexhaustible. When she told Mr. Yeats there were but three characters in the play he was incredulous and said, "They must have a great deal to talk about." Lady Gregory replied, "And so they have, for the talk of lovers is inexhaustible, being of themselves and one another."¹

Lady Gregory has not followed the legend closely. As she says, she has used it only as a "sod of grass" on which to place her three characters. In the legend Finn goes to Teamhair to bring Grania back to Almuin. Grania meets and loves Diarmuid, and much against his will persuades him to take her away. They are pursued by Finn and helped by Aengus. At last peace is brought about and Diarmuid and Grania live quietly at Rath Grania for a number of years. Five children are born to them. At the end of that time Diarmuid meets Finn and the Fianna one day when they are hunting the Boar of Beinn Gulbain. He joins them, has a terrific struggle with the Boar, and at last is fatally wounded by it. Finn will not bring him water and he dies. Then comes the inexplicable turning of Grania to Finn, her husband's murderer. This breach of faith has branded her as a "light" woman and given her forever the epithet of fickle. In her version of the play Lady Gregory

1. Gregory: Irish Folk-History Plays, Vol. I, p. 196.

has made plausible this sudden shifting of love. In the first act Grania comes to Almuin and recognizes Diarmuid as her unknown lover whom she had met by chance some years before. She tells him of her love and he takes her away, promising Finn, however, that he will not make her his wife until Finn's anger has cooled and he is willing to let her marry. In the second act the oath is broken. After seven years of wandering, Grania is attacked one day by the King of Foreign. The sight of Grania in another man's arms rouses Diarmuid, and forgetting all else but his love he makes Grania his wife. The thought of the seven wasted years makes Grania resentful. She becomes weary of their wandering life, and wants Diarmuid to bring her back to the "thronged places". Finn appears disguised as a beggar, and taunts Diarmuid because he allowed the King of Foreign to escape. Diarmuid becomes infuriated, and rushes out to seek the man whose attempt to carry off Grania had thrown them together for the first time. In the third act Finn appears in his own person to Grania, and tells her that it was he who sent Diarmuid out to fight. He prophesies, too, that Diarmuid will not return alive, and that Grania will go back to Almuin with him. Just then Diarmuid's body is brought in. While Grania is pitifully keening him, he returns to consciousness, but all his thoughts and words are for Finn. He dies asking forgiveness for some wrong done to Finn, something he cannot remember. Then to Grania,

who had risked all for love, comes the tragic realization that to this man, her husband, love is only a secondary thing. Then comes the sudden turn to Finn. There is something very human and very noble in Grania's quick decision, although her love and faith have been broken she demands that life shall still yield her respect and high position. Grania's character is splendidly drawn, and if the characters of Finn and Diarmuid had been as well portrayed, the play would have been truly great. As it is, however, it is the best of the tragedies and a fine and moving thing. We cannot but wish that Lady Gregory had chosen more of the themes of her plays from the legend material which she has retold so beautifully. Judging from this one play, we may say that Lady Gregory's treatment of legend story is very different from Mr. Yeats'. His plays are filled with a gentle melancholy, and regret for the quick passing of all beautiful things. His characters are in the main occupied with the search for some shadowy happiness, some "land of heart's desire", rather than with life itself. He uses the legends as the framework for his own mysticism. Lady Gregory, however, while she does not closely follow the legend story, reconstructs for us a clear, vivid, and truthful picture of heroic times. The persons of her play are animated by human desires and passions, they are vitally interested in life, and are not seeking some dim spiritual land where they can be at peace. Lady Gregory's simple

virile language adds much to the beauty of the play. Although it is written in prose, many passages are as musical and rhythmical as poetry. Such is the speech of Finn to Diarmuid before Grania has forsaken him. "As for youngsters, they do not know how to love, because there is always some to-morrow's love possible in the shadow of the love of to-day. It is only the old it goes through and through entirely, because they know all the last honey of the summer time has come to its ferment in their cup, and that there is no new summer coming to meet them forever."¹ Cornelius Weygandt in his summary of Lady Gregory's work makes this statement, "Lady Gregory is an artist in words who is to be valued as a presenter of Irish life, past and present, with a beauty that was not in English literature before she made it."²

IV.

TABLE OF REFERENCE FOR GEORGE RUSSELL'S USE OF LEGEND.

<u>Cycle</u>	<u>Poem</u>	<u>Lady Gregory's version</u>
-	"The Gates of Dreamland"	- -No definite source in legend p.3.
1-	"The Nuts of Knowledge"	- -"Gods and Fighting Men" p.14. p.2.
1-	"The Twilight of the Earth"	- -" p.17. p.2.
1-	"Dana"	- -" p.9. p.2.

1. Gregory: Folk-History Plays, "Grania", p.15.
2. Weygandt: op.cit., p.159.

2-"The Call of the Sidhe"- - "Gods and Fighting Men"

p.31.

p.96.

1-"The Everlasting Battle"- - "

p.76.

p.51.

1-"The Children of Lir" - - "

p.47.

p.140.

Dramas

3-"Deirdre"

- - "Cuchulain of Muirthemne"

p.104.

Mr. George Russell, or A.E. as he is more generally known, is one of the most versatile writers of the movement. He is not only a mystical poet and a playwright, but also an artist, an art critic, an economist, and a practical man of business. He seems to combine within himself the two extremes of mysticism and practicality. His three small volumes of verse are filled with mystic dreams, the poetry we should say of a recluse and a visionary, yet Mr. Russell is one of the most active supporters of the Abbey Theater project and is also the head of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society.

None of Mr. Russell's practical life has, however, found its way into his poetry. The very titles of his books of verse indicate their character. He has called them "Homeward: Songs by the Way", "The Earth Breath", and "The Divine Vision". His philosophy of life is much like that of

Emerson. We are born out of the Primal or Ancestral Self, the Oversoul that surrounds and permeates everything, and our life is simply a long pilgrimage at the end of which we are reabsorbed once more. Earthly life with its limitations and unreality is simply a dream to be lived through. All pain comes from the striving of the spirit to be at one with its source, all joy comes from our brief periods of union with that source and our hope of ultimate union at death. Through communion with nature, and particularly her softer, gentler aspects, do we come into closest touch with the fountain of being. Therefore Mr. Russell's poetry is filled with poems of twilight, dawn, soft starry nights, and pearl-grey landscapes. In his preface to "Homeward: Songs by the Way" he states as explicitly as we could wish the subject matter and spirit of the poems. "I moved among men and places, and in living I learned the truth at last. I know I am a spirit, and that I went forth in old time from the self-ancestral to labours yet unaccomplished; but filled ever and again with homesickness I made these songs by the way."¹ The poems in this volume and in "The Earth Breath" are almost monotonous in the uniformity with which they voice the poet's desire to lose himself in the great source. There are practically no love poems and the subjects are abstract rather than concrete. Glancing at the index of the first volume, we find for instance; "The Place of Rest", "The Great Breath", "Dusk", "Night", "Dawn", "Waiting", "The Pain of

1. Russell: "Homeward: Songs by the Way", Preface, p. 1.

Earth", "A Vision of Beauty", and "Symbolism". The latter poem illustrates splendidly Mr. Russell's typical mood.

"Now when the giant in us wakes and broods,
 Filled with home yearnings, drowsily he flings
 From his deep heart high dreams and mystic moods,
 Mixed with the memory of the loved earth things:
 Clothing the vast with a familiar face;
 Reaching his right hand forth to greet the starry race.

- - - - -
 Nearer to Thee, not by delusion led,
 Though there no house-fires burn nor bright eyes gaze:
 We rise, but by the symbol charioted,
 Through loved things rising up to Love's own ways:
 By these the soul unto the vast has wings
 And sets the seal celestial on all mortal things."¹

The legends and folk-lore are to him only beautiful symbols through which he can express his dreams of the Universal Spirit. It is in the third volume, "The Divine Vision", that we find the poems whose subjects and symbols are in the main taken from the legends. In the prologue he tells the conditions of his inspiration:

"When twilight flutters the mountains over,
 The faery lights from the earth unfold:
 And over the caves enchanted hover
 The giant heroes and gods of old."²

Then it is that the "child of earth" dreams dreams and his spirit goes home to the great ancestral spirit. In the

1. Russell: "Homeward: Songs by the Way", p. 70.

2. " " "The Divine Vision", Prologue, p. IX.

"Gates of Dreamland" he follows "a lonely road through bogland to the lake at Carrowmore". There fairy lips that were dyed red by the sacred berries of the hazel tree whispered to him of the beauty and delight of the Land of Youth. The revealing place of poetry and knowledge in Irish legend was always by a sacred fountain. Four streams ran out from the fountain and a hazel tree hung over it. The berries dropped into the water and were eaten by salmon. Whoever was fortunate enough to eat the flesh of one of these fish was blessed with the gift of knowledge and poetry. In another poem, "The Nuts of Knowledge" he refers to the same belief. There the well is spoken of as "Connla's Well", and in his notes at the end of the book Mr. Russell explains it as "a Celtic equivalent of the First Fountain of mysticism. The Sacred Hazel is the Celtic tree of life. It grew over Connla's Well, and the fruit which fell from it were the Nuts of Knowledge which gave wisdom and inspiration."¹ In "The Twilight of the Earth" the poet laments that

"The Sacred Hazel's blooms are shed,

The Nuts of Knowledge harvested."

The "paradise of memories" is dwindling and

"The world's great night will soon begin."

He acknowledges, however, that our prison bars are not fixed and that if we will follow the "glory" we may find

"Beyond the Gateways of the Day

Dominion and ancestral sway."

1. Russell: "The Divine Vision," notes, p.95.

In another poem, "Dana", he makes the mother of the gods one with the universal spirit. She calls her children away from the "duns of men", and reveals herself to them through the trees, the rocks, and the earth.

"I am the heartbreak over fallen things,
The sudden gentleness that stays the blow.
And I am in the kiss that foemen give
Pausing in battle, and in the tears that fall
Over the vanquished foe, and in the highest,
Among the Danaan gods, I am the last
Council of mercy in their hearts where they
Met justice from a thousand starry thrones."

In "The Call of the Sidhe" he hears "earth's faery children" bidding him let his heart drift from dream to dream, bidding him flit away with them past the dim stars

"Unto the Light of Lights in burning adoration."

"The Everlasting Battle" recalls the conflict between the Tuatha De Danaan and the Fomorians, the symbolical story of the age long battle between the forces of light and darkness. Mr. Russell's interpretation of "The Children of Lir" is typical of his treatment of the legends. Lir is to him the infinite father from whom the children go forth at first without sorrow or fear. Their pilgrimage is long and difficult, but they are upborne by the thought that the time will come when they will

"Fly through the twilights of time till the home lights
of heaven appear;

Our spirits through love and through longing made
one in the infinite Lir."

In addition to these poems drawn from legend Mr. Russell has written one drama. Unfortunately it is now out of print, and we have not been able to get a copy. It was written in a great hurry in 1902 to form part of the repertoire of the Abbey Theater company. The subject he chose was that of "Deirdre". Because it was written in such a hurry and somewhat under compulsion, Mr. Russell was not very proud of it. Speaking of it and of its dramatic success, he said, "Of course, I was very familiar with the story of Deirdre, and I had thought of its dramatic effectiveness, but I knew nothing of the stage and I was very much surprised it went so well."¹ Mr. Weygandt, who saw it shortly after its first presentation, says of it, "Despite its intensely dramatic situations, it is, however, essentially a decorative rather than a dramatic play, and its exalted prose is seldom true dramatic speech. But you carry from it the memory of beautiful pictures, and a feeling that something noble has passed your way, to enter into and become a part of you."²

From the poems, however, that we have considered we can see that it is the legend material of the first cycle that appeals to Mr. Russell. The shadowy figures of the gods and goddesses are much more fitting symbols of the spiritual life than the more human characters of the other two cycles.

1. Quoted from Weygandt: op. cit., p. 118.

2. Weygandt: op. cit., p. 118.

His treatment is different from that of Mr. Yeats who sometimes reconstructs the simple legend story or more often infuses into the story his own beliefs and interpretations, and different also from Lady Gregory, who simply attempts to picture the old heroic times. Mr. Russell uses the legends as media through which he can project his own idea of our life, its aim and goal. He desires to make men realize the unreality of substantial things, that this world and all its beauties is but a faint shadow of the invisible, immortal world. Fragile and mystical as most of his poems are, their appeal has been wide, and second only to Mr. Yeats, Mr. Russell has influenced and inspired the younger writers of the renaissance.

V.

TABLE OF REFERENCE FOR JOHN SYNGE'S USE OF LEGEND.

<u>Cycle</u>	<u>Play</u>	<u>Lady Gregory's version.</u>
3 -	"Deirdre of the Sorrows" -	"Cuchulain of Muirthemne". p.104.

While Yeats and A.E. represent the best of the lyric and mystic poetry which the movement has produced, John Synge is undoubtedly its greatest dramatist. It took him many years to discover that the drama was his rightful mode of self-expression. He tried painting, music, and journalism; he wandered over the Continent seeking satisfaction in the study of symbolistic decadent poetry; he finally settled in

France and attempted to write poetry of his own that embodied the theories he had been studying. Here Mr. Yeats found him about 1897 and urged him to go back to Ireland. "Give up Paris; you will never create anything by reading Racine and Arthur Symonds will always be a better critic of French literature. Go to the Aran Islands. Live there as if you were one of the people themselves; express a life that has never found expression."¹ The fact that Synge immediately took Mr. Yeats' advice is proof enough that he himself realized that he was not doing the thing he was best fitted for. He did go to Aran and lived there the life of the people, learning their most intimate traits and peculiarities. He found a life primitive in its simplicity, absolutely untouched by modern civilization. He has left a splendid record of what he found here in his book of sketches, "The Aran Islands". Here he found himself and realized that the life of the Irish peasantry was his real subject matter. Darrell Figgis in an article on "The Art of J.M. Synge" makes the statement that the Aran Islands "weaned Synge to artistic maturity. That they should have provided him with the scene for one play, and given him the plot for another, is a small matter. They bred his soul; they fed him with their own great silences; they sang him the music of speech to which his soul at once responded with the shout of discovery; they found him the cadence he cried for. His artistic soul came to them a starveling; it went out a grown man in full vigour of health."²

1. Quoted by Bickley: J.M. Synge and the Irish Dramatic Movement, p. 12.

2. Figgis: Fortnightly Review, Vol. 112, p. 1057.

Synge's six plays are probably the fruit of his journeys to these islands. Through poetry and sketches he came at last to his true form, the drama. When his plays were acted in the Abbey Theater they met, however, with unfriendly and even hostile treatment. Synge did not yield an inch, and Yeats and Lady Gregory, realizing the worth of the plays, supported him staunchly. Through his long apprenticeship Synge had evolved a very definite idea of what a drama should be. He had no sympathy with squalid naturalistic plays, nor didactic problem plays, nor shadowy symbolistic plays. Drama for him must picture real life, not real in the sense of picturing modern everyday conditions, but real in showing flesh-and-blood human beings in vital human relationships. He found the stories of his first five plays in the lives and folklore of the peasants of Wicklow and Aran. The characters although Irish are universal, prototypes of humanity just as Shakespeare's are. His wanderings on the Continent and his study of foreign literatures had equipped him with a breadth of view which is not found in any other Irish writer.

In his preface to "The Playboy of the Western World" Synge sets forth his dramatic creed. "On the stage one must have reality, and one must have joy; and that is why the intellectual modern drama has failed, and people have grown sick of the false joy of the musical

of reality. Although its setting and characters are taken from the ancient times, its atmosphere is intensely real and human. In treatment of the legend it illustrates the very antithesis of Mr. Yeats' treatment.

The latter took all the harshness and much of the virility out of the old story, filled it with his own dreamy mysticism, and made Deirdre a half shadowy queen, a symbol of all beauty. He reduced the story to a beautiful one-act lyric poem-play and dealt only with the crisis. Synge, however, has written three acts and tells the whole story. He makes no attempt to preserve the heroic atmosphere; the language is the same in which he told the story of Pegeen Mike and Christy. When we find such expressions as: "Conchubar'll be in a blue stew this night and herself abroad", or "It's a poor thing to be so lonesome you'd squeeze kisses on a cur dog's nose", we can better imagine that we are reading "The Playboy" or "The Well of the Saints" than a tragic tale of kings and queens.

In the first act Deirdre is pictured as a wild untamed girl, happy and content in her circumscribed life until she meets Naisi. Then she "puts on womanhood" and goes with Naisi and his brothers to Scotland. The seven flawless years have elapsed between the first act and the second. Fergus comes from Emain Macha with overtures of peace from Conchubar. In this act Synge introduces the grotesque and rather sinister character of Owen. He serves as foil and contrast, and by introducing a note of harsh-

ness, keeps the story vigorous and real. After Fergus arrives, Deirdre hears Naisi confessing to him that he dreads the day when their love will become weary. Deirdre knows that death would be better than that fate, so she makes them return to Ireland. "It's a heartbreak to the wise that it's for a short space we have the same things only."¹

This note of the inevitable passing of beautiful things fills the whole play. Deirdre's farewell to Alban voices it most pathetically.

"Weeds of Cuan, woods of Cuan, dear country of the east! It's seven years we've had a life was joy only, and this day we're going west, this day we're facing death, maybe, and death should be a poor, untidy thing, though it's a queen that dies."²

The last act shows the return to Emain Macha, the treacherous slaying of the three brothers, and Deirdre's own death by Naisi's grave. The action is swift and rises without faltering to the climax. Deirdre's own sorrow and passion are superb and yet very human. We feel with her that death is better than a life lived on after love is cold. "It should be a sweet thing to have what is best and richest, if it's for a short space only."³

"Deirdre" was written while Synge was in the hospital very near death. Miss Marie Allgood, the talented actress to whom Synge was engaged, used to come and act the play in his sick-room and give him heart to continue. Knowing the circumstances under which it was written, we

1. Synge: "Deirdre of the Sorrows", p. 66.

2. " " " " " , p. 40.

3. " " " " " , p. 51.

cannot help but feel that in Deirdre's triumph over death we are witnessing also Synge's. He with Deirdre felt that "it should be a sweet thing to have what is best and richest, if it's for a short space only." It was, indeed, for a short space of years that he had "what is best and richest"--"a full life, lived largely in Ireland that he loved; the artist's joy in making that life into a new beauty, a beauty that was all compact of exaltation and extravagance and irony; and love for a woman in whom his man's life and his artist's life were united, for her who embodied his dream of Pegeen Mike and added her life and her art of the stage to his dream of Deirdre, as day by day it emerged from his mind."¹

Synge's "Deirdre" is by far the best drama that the beautiful legend has inspired. It is the best because he has made the story pulse again with life, not the shadowy dream life Mr. Yeats put into it, but virile human life that is the same to-day as when Deirdre fled with Naisi. The fact, too, that the play was Synge's own swan-song, that he with Deirdre realized that "death is a poor, untidy thing at best" gives it a supreme beauty and pathos. Because he himself was bidding farewell to life, Deirdre's laments and renunciation are truly great.

VI.

TABLE OF REFERENCE FOR WILLIAM SHARP'S USE OF LEGEND.

1. Weygandt: op. cit., p. 163.

<u>Cycle</u>	<u>Poem</u>	<u>Lady Gregory's version.</u>
1	"The Sorrow of the House of Lir" - "Gods and Fighting Men"	
	p.124.	p.140.
1	"The Song of Aelifa" - -	"
	p.122.	p. "
1	"The Song of Fionula" - -	"
	p.126.	p. "
1	"The Dirge of the Four Cities" -	"
	p.	p.1.
2	"I-Brasil" - -	"
	p.	p.96,p.432
2	"A Cry on the Wind" - -	"
	p.245.	p.176.
--	"Dreams Within Dreams" - -	"
	p.244.	No definite source in legend
2	"The Love-Kiss of Dermid and Grainne	"Gods and Fighting Men".
	p.	p.381.
3	"The Washer of the Ford" - -	"Cuchulain of Muirthemne".
	p.159.	p.335.
3	"The Lament of Darthool" - -	"
	p.146.	p.120.

Plays

1	"The Immortal Hour" - -	"Gods and Fighting Men".
	p.	p.88.
3	"The House of Usna" - -	"Cuchulain of Muirthemne".
	p.	p.104.

William Sharp, the last in the group of five that we have been considering, is a unique figure in the movement. He is a Scotchman, and was one of the first to take note of the work done by the young Irish writers. In reading and commenting upon them, he in time came to write like them. Under the pseudonym of Fiona Macleod he gave expression to his Celtic dreams.

As a child he had spent much time on the rugged western coast of Scotland. Frequently he wandered about alone, making friends with the silent fisherman and shepherds. Sometimes he went with his nurse Barbara, a Highland woman, who told him many legends and stories of the old heroic times. During this solitary childhood, he dreamed dreams and saw visions that he later embodied in his work.

Most of his youth and manhood had to be spent in prosaic journalistic work, in writing reviews, biographies, and various other things that would meet the approval of the publishers. By 1895, however, he had attained a sufficiently comfortable income to turn back to his earlier dreams and visions. The work of the Irish Celtic writers was exactly in accord with what he wished to do. Feeling, however, that the public and the publishers would not understand such new and different work from his pen, he thought best to write under another name and chose that of Fiona Macleod. His choice of a woman's name is not as

strange as it first appears. His chief inspirer in this new work was a woman friend, and he probably felt also that a woman's name would prove a more effectual disguise. The particular name that he chose is easy to explain. Fiona is the woman's name most like to Iona--the island which proved such an inspiration to him, and Macleod is the name of the shepherd from whom he learned so many of his legends and stories. So from 1895 until his death ten years later he maintained two distinct literary personalities. As William Sharp he continued to write biographies and criticism; as Fiona Macleod he wrote a large number of essays, tales, sketches, poems, and two dramas.

His earlier work as Fiona Macleod was more or less restrained by his careful habits of criticism, but his later work became more and more mystical and further removed from life. He uses many of the legends in his poems and plays, but he burdens them so with strange shadowy symbols that they lose all their original clearness and strength.

Fiona Macleod's poetry reminds us inevitably of Yeats and A.E. It is full of mysticism and symbolism, and the legends merely furnish background and characters for the "misty vapourings" of the poet's mind. Even in A.E.'s most remote and shadowy poems we know with a fair degree of certainty what he is trying to express, but in the poems of Fiona Macleod we are often left helpless, and find our-

selves wandering in a misty twilight region, doubting often whether the poet himself knew what he was trying to symbolize.

Of the poems that are based on or deal with legend material the majority are concerned with stories and characters from the first or mythological cycle. This we found to be the case with A.E.'s poems. It is self-evident that the more and shadowy cycle should be stronger in its appeal to mystic poets than the later clearer heroic cycles. Three of the poems are based on "The Fate of the Children of Lir". Two of them, "The Song of Aeifa" and "The Sorrow of the House of Lir" voice plaintively the pitiful lot of the swan children. The third one, "The Song of Fionula", takes almost the opposite point of view. Fionula counsels her brothers to sleep and dream.

"Life is a storm-swept gleam
In a rain of tears:
Why wake to a bitter hour, to sigh, to weep?
How better far to sleep--
To sleep and dream."¹

Four poems are centered around the four mythological cities of the Tuatha De Danaan--Finias, Falias, Murias, and Gorias. Each city at a different point of the compass is given a mystic symbol--a spear, a dividing sword, a stone of death, and a hollow filled with water and fading light. These symbols are not made intelligible and so we do not

1. Macleod: Poems and Dramas, p. 126.

know what idea or emotion Mr. Sharp wished to convey in his "Dirge of the Four Cities". "I-Brasil" is the same call to the Land of Heart's Desire that we found so often in Yeats and A.E. It is musical and is not spoiled by cloudiness. "A Cry on the Wind" is an attempt to interpret the sighs of the breeze as the lament for Oisín's mother who was turned into a hind.

"Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are
blind:

Pity the great with love, time out of mind:

This is the song of the grey-haired wandering wind
Since Oisín's mother fled to the hill a spell-bound
hind."¹

"Dreams Within Dreams" illustrates well the poet's extreme mysticism.

"I have come back from the hidden, silent lands of
faery

And have forgotten the music of its ancient streams:
And now flame and wind and the long, grey, wandering
wave

And beauty and peace and sorrow are dreams within
dreams."²

In "The Washer of the Ford" he changes the very real and terrible figure of a war goddess, whose washing at the ford was always an omen of approaching disaster, into

"A shadowy shape of cloud and mist, of gloom and dusk,"
a purger of souls, who stands with a whirling sword, and

1. Macleod: Poems and Dramas, p. 245.

2. " " " " , p. 244.

washes away the sins of men.

"The Love-Kiss of Dermid and Grainne" tells of Grainne's desire for Dermid's love and of his struggle to be loyal to his promise to Finn. Grainne at last makes him kiss her, and awakens love in him beyond his power to control. Dermid, however, even in his passion knows that their doom will soon be upon them and he sees his own wraith shaking its spear against "a phantom deer" in a "phantom dell". This is clearer and more human than any of the other legend poems. In "The Lament of Darthool" we have Sharp's version of Deirdre's lament as she leaves Scotland for Ireland. She calls upon the different places that have known her happiness and bids them an eternal farewell.

"Glen of the Roes, Glen of the Roes,

In thee I have dreamed to the full my happy dream:

O that where the shallow bickering Ruel flows,

I might hear again, o'er its flashing gleam,

The cuckoos calling by the murmuring stream."¹

It is plaintive and beautiful, but when we compare it with the much shorter prose lament of Synge's Deirdre, Sharp's poem seems pale and lifeless.

From the poems that we have examined I think we may reiterate our first statement that Fiona Macleod's treatment of the legends in poetry is mystical and shadowy, that the people and places often become vague unintelligible symbols, and in most cases have entirely lost

1. Macleod: Poems and Dramas, p. 147.

their original clear outlines.

Fiona Macleod's two dramas are both based on legend. The first one, "The Immortal Hour", follows the story of Midhir and Etain which is found in the first cycle. In the foreword to the plays the author says that it was written to give voice to two elemental emotions, "the emotion of the inevitableness of destiny and the emotion of tragical loveliness."¹ He feels that the Midhir and Etain story originally had a deep significance, that "it symbolized the winning of life back to the world after an enforced thralldom: the renewal of spring. In other words Etain is the Gaelic Eurydice, Midhir, a Gaelic Orpheus, who penetrated the dismal region of Eochaidh, and Eochaidh but a humanised Dis."² After this explanation the author adds the interpretation that he himself gives to the story. In Etain he sees a symbol of the wayward, but home-wandering soul, and in Midhir a symbol of the spirit, and in Eochaidh a symbol of the mundane life, of mortal love. It is legitimate enough for the dramatist to state what it is that he intends his characters to symbolize, but unless he has very clearly in mind the emotion or idea that he wishes to convey, he will not arouse in the minds of his readers any similar emotion or idea. I feel that in this case Mr. Sharp did not have clearly in mind the things he wished to convey, and for that reason his reinterpretation of the legend is neither strong or beautiful.

In Lady Gregory's version of the original story

1. Macleod: Poems and Dramas, Foreword, p. 297.

2. " " " " " " , p. 298.

we see Etain wedded to Midhir, transformed into a fly, and blown about for seven years through the evil machinations of Midhir's first wife, swallowed by a mortal queen, born as her daughter, given the same name, married later to Eochaidh, and at last wooed back to the people of the Sidhe by Midhir, her first lover. The story is strong and simple, the characters are all distinct and act from common human motives. In Mr. Sharp's reinterpretation much that is vital and human is left out, and that which is added is so vague and shadowy, and meaningless that the story loses by the addition. The new character in the play Mr. Sharp calls Dalua, or the fairy fool. This personage does not appear at all in the legend. It seems to symbolize fatefulness or destiny, and since it was introduced merely for the sake of the symbol it is absolutely colorless and without vitality.

The play opens in a dim old wood. Dalua, the Dark Fool, carries on a long colloquy with a chorus of hidden spirits--a colloquy which seems to have no function in the play since it neither explains the presence of Dalua or foreshadows any of the later events of the play. At the end Etain appears. She is lost but seems to have no knowledge of her destination. She only knows that "by dreams and visions" she has been led to "this grey lonely loch", that she is Etain of the people of the Sidhe. After another long dialogue Dalua suddenly seems to realize why they are

there. He tells Etain that a mortal king is approaching, a king who will seek and win her love. Etain is then sent on into the wood and Eochaidh, the High King, enters. Dalua makes appear before him a fountain in which "a great fish swims, and on the moveless wave the scarlet berries float." This fountain with its berries and the dim face in the depths is only another instance of the unnecessary symbolism which chokes the play.

Later Etain and Eochaidh meet in a peasant's cottage, and blindly, not knowing why or wherefore, give each other their love.

The next act is laid in the royal dun at Tara, and the time is a year later. It is evening, and Etain leaves the hall of the king on the plea that she is weary and that for several nights she has been troubled by strange dreams. After she has left a stranger enters the hall and asks as his boon that he be allowed to play a game of chess with the king. The latter agrees, and when the game is over, the stranger, who has won, demands as his guerdon the right to kiss the hand of the queen and sing a song to her. This is much inferior in strength and interest to the legend itself, where Midhir allows Eochaidh to beat him twice and performs for the king the tasks he sets, and then the third time when he himself wins demands the queen as his prize. Eochaidh objects and Midhir compromises with a promise from the king that he may kiss the queen once. In the presence of all the court Etain is brought forth. Midhir

puts his arm around her, kisses her, and together they rise and disappear through the roof of the hall.

In the play *Etain* comes forth in the same dazed bewildered condition she has been in most of the time. Midhir sings her a song of the country of the Sidhe. Slowly her memory seems to come back. She does not heed or hear the pleadings of Eochaidh. As Midhir leaves the hall singing, she follows him. A sudden darkness falls. As it lifts Dalua appears at Eochaidh's side. The latter despite the agony we should suppose him to be in turns to the Fairy Fool and says in smooth unbroken verse,

"It is the same Dalua whom I met

Long since, in that grey shadowy wood

About the verge of the old broken earth

Where, at the last, moss-clad, it hangs in cloud."¹

When he asks for his dream, Dalua touches him, and says,

"There is none left but this--the dream of death."

Then the king becomes stiff and falls to the ground. There is neither beauty or tragedy in such a death. We may say of the play as a whole that it is lacking in clearness of outline, and in strong human characters. Since he himself was so confused about the emotion and symbols he wished to convey, the reader gets nothing but a vague set of images moving across an equally vague and misty background.

In his second drama, "*The House of Usna*" Mr. Sharp

1. Macleod: *Poems and Dramas*, p. 395.

wishes to convey again the two emotions: the emotion of the inevitableness of destiny and the emotion of tragical loveliness. He is dealing here with the beautiful story of Deirdre, the story which has lured nearly every Irish poet to a retelling. His version, however, is very different from the majority. In order to emphasize more clearly the sorrow caused by the passing away of beauty Mr. Sharp begins his play a year after Deirdre's death. Conchubar, the king, is slowly being consumed by his sorrow and remorse for his treachery. Cormac, his son, because of his father's loss of honor, had departed to join the forces of Queen Maeve. At the opening of the play, he has decided to return but on the way is seduced by his love for the wife of Cravetheen, a harper, and while he is with her is burned to death by Cravetheen. Conchubar does not know of this new calamity which has come upon his house. In the two last scenes of the play Conchubar paces up and down in the moonlight outside his dun. He cannot make himself believe that Deirdre is dead. He speaks of her to Maine, the boy, and Duach, the Druid, but their only reply is "Deirdre is dead! Deirdre the beautiful is dead, is dead!" Maine sings a slow mystical song of Deirdre that begins,

"Dim face of beauty, haunting all the world,

Fair face of beauty, all too fair to see."¹

This song with its vague shadowy mysticism is typical of the play. We get nothing of Deirdre's human loveliness. If

1. Macleod: Poems and Dramas, p. 420.

Deirdre is "a dim face of Beauty, all too fair to see", we cannot feel the tragedy of her death.

Conchubar and Duach continue their mournful dialogue until Cravetheen is brought in a prisoner. When Conchubar learns of the death of his son, he commands that Cravetheen be put to death. The latter, as he is led away, sings back triumphantly,

"The gods do not sleep. I am the voice of the
House of Usna, O King!

As the play closes the king bows his head and murmurs,

"It is the cry of the House of Usna."

Then Maine, the boy, breathes on his flute and chants,

"Deirdre is dead, Deirdre the beautiful is dead, is
dead."

This is not the spirit of the legend. There all is life and vivid beauty. We see Deirdre herself dying splendidly because of her great love for Naoise. We realize her wonderful beauty of body and spirit, and feel keenly the tragedy of her death. In Mr. Sharp's play, however, there is no real action, nothing that can rightfully be called a drama. There is a great deal of brooding and a lot of vague mysticism, but all the beauty and glamour of the heroic legend is gone.

In Mr. Sharp's psychic drama, or theater of the soul, of which these two dramas were to form a part, we cannot help but feel that he was influenced far more by

Maeterlinck's static plays than by any real inspiration that came to him from the old legends themselves. Although he has written a great deal on Celtic subjects we cannot class him with Mr. Yeats and Synge who have caught so much more truly the spirit of the legends.

VII.

By way of summary let us go back and briefly point out in the case of each one of the five writers whom we have been considering; (1) the probable reason for the use of legend material, (2) the legend subject matter chosen, (3) the treatment of the subject matter. As a general classification we may say that the five fall rather naturally into two groups; the mystics--Yeats, Russell, and Sharp; and the realists--Lady Gregory and Synge.

- I. The fundamental appeal of the legends to Mr. Yeats lies in their remoteness from our present life, and in the pictures which they give us of a free, untrammelled existence. The vivid coloring and the love of beauty which permeates them also appeals to Mr. Yeats' lyrical turn of mind.

Because of this appeal, the subject matter Mr. Yeats has chosen is almost wholly to be found in the second and third cycles, those which present the clearest and most vivid pictures of the free life of the old heroic days. Stories of sojourns in wonderful fairy

lands, stories of men and women seeking some beautiful haven, and sad sweet stories of lovers to whom love meant far more than life form the largest part of the material he has chosen to use.

His treatment of this material is almost wholly personal and subjective. The stories of love and quests are all filled with his own ideas and ideals, his own yearnings for a land of heart's desire. He respects the legends, however, and even when he is most apparently projecting himself into the story, he tries to maintain an heroic spirit and an ancient note.

- II. The appeal of the legends to Lady Gregory as subject matter is certainly due to the amount of thought and work which she has spent upon the originals in adapting and retelling them to the people. She wants to acquaint the people with these beautiful stories of Ireland's past, and make them realize the worth of their heritage. She has also hoped that the retelling of the legends would inspire poets and writers to choose their themes from this rich storehouse, and thus create for Ireland a truly national literature. So she herself, in writing her folk history plays, chose as the subject of the first one of the most dramatic of the legends.

Her choice of this particular story she herself explained. It was a dramatic story with many possibilities.

ties of development, and in her mind it had not received adequate modern treatment.

Her treatment is objective. As faithfully as possible she reconstructs this bit of heroic life. The characters stand out distinctly, and reflect their own rather than the author's personality.

III. Mr Russell was attracted by the legends because of their spiritual transcendental elements, because they represent the childhood of the race when the people were still very near the Infinite Mother.

Since it is the spiritual element only which attracts him, it is quite natural that he has chosen his subject matter from the mythological cycle; the characters are not human, but are rather forces of nature, parts of the great Oversoul. Dana, Mannanan, Lugh, and Lir lose their individuality and become simply phases of the Ancestral Self toward which our souls are journeying.

His treatment, of course, is purely subjective. There is no attempt to tell any of the stories or to present pictures of the olden time. To him the mythological personages are simply symbols which the race consciousness has evolved. By dwelling on these symbols he hopes to draw the attention of the people from insubstantial material things to the real spiritual world.

IV. John Synge was attracted to the legends not by any shadowy spiritual elements they possessed, but because they pictured to him a very real and interesting life; because they showed him Celtic human nature in its earliest development. He was seeking for life, rich, abundant, and untainted by introspection.

The one story that he chose from the legends is from the third cycle, and is richer in dramatic possibilities, in beauty, and in tragedy than any of the others. The story of Deirdre belongs among the great stories of the world. Since Synge only lived long enough to develop this one legendary theme, we cannot but be grateful that he chose the greatest.

Since, too, he was interested in the legends not as legends, but as pictures of life, he does not attempt to preserve the remote and antique atmosphere. The characters are not shadowy kings and queens, but real men and women, who talk in a very plain and concrete way. He, like Shakespeare, has made his characters universal, and we can come nearer to Synge's Deirdre than to any other modern conception of the sorrowful queen.

V. Mr. Sharp was attracted to the legends because they formed the most remote and yet the most familiar framework on which he could weave his own dreams and visions.

His choice of subject matter was in the main from the mythological cycle. These less human personages are more easily robbed of their individuality and transformed into symbols than the characters of the other cycles. In his interpretation of the Deirdre story we have seen how he minimized and practically lost sight of the human element.

His treatment is as personal and subjective as A.E.'s and yet in a very different way. Even in A.E.'s most mystic poems the symbols are clear and distinct and carry with them an emotional significance that we cannot fail to catch. Mr. Sharp, however, often disregards the original racial significance of the symbols he uses and robs them of all clearness. They become dim and smoky, whereas Mr. Russell's symbols shine clear and bright. Of the three mystic poets Mr. Sharp is undoubtedly the least successful in the conveying of his truths through the medium of the legends.

Chapter IV.

THE CELTIC SPIRIT AND ITS VALUE IN MODERN LITERATURE.

I.

After having examined the main cycles of Irish legend and the use of these legends by five of the leading modern writers of the revival, it shall be our purpose in this last chapter; first, to make as definite a statement as possible of the Celtic spirit, and second, to point out the value of this spirit in modern literature.

From the middle of the nineteenth century until the present there have been numerous attempts to analyze and define that elusive thing we call the 'Celtic spirit'. Five of these attempt stand out as most interesting both because of their authors and their approximation to the truth. The first one, Ernest Renan's essay on "The Poetry of the Celtic Races", inaugurated and set the precedent for all the succeeding ones. It appeared in 1859. To Renan the key of explanation to Celtic characteristics was the isolation of the race. The Celts have all the failings and all the good qualities of solitary men. They are at once "proud and timid, strong in feeling, and feeble in action."¹ Their history of invasion and defeat has colored their lives and literature with sadness. Their songs "weep more defeats than they sing victories. If at times it (the race) seems to be cheerful, a tear is not slow to glisten behind its

1. Renan: op. cit., p. 5.

smile."¹ Closely akin to this racial sadness is their innate delicacy and refinement of feeling. This characteristic is best illustrated by their ideals of woman and of love. To their melancholy and their delicacy Renan adds one other quality--intense imaginative power. "Compared with the classical imagination, the Celtic imagination is indeed the infinite contrasted with the finite."² "It has worn itself out in mistaking dreams for realities, and in pursuing its splendid visions."³ The unknown always seems more desirable than the known, and lures both saints and warriors into its dangerous quest. This imaginative power has invested nature with human or superhuman qualities. It is a "realistic naturalism, the love of nature for herself, the vivid impression of her magic, accompanied by the sorrowful feeling that man knows, when, face to face with her, he believes that he hears her commune with him concerning his origin and destiny."⁴ To sum up, melancholy, delicacy of feeling, and imaginative power are to Renan the most important phases of the Celtic spirit. When we consider that Renan based his judgments in large part on the folk-lore of his own Brittany and on the Welsh Mabinogion stories and knew none of the great body of Irish literature, our respect for his intuition increases.

Eight years after Renan's essay, Matthew Arnold published the substance of his four lectures on the study of Celtic literature. His knowledge of his subject matter was not much greater than that of his predecessor. He drew

1. Renan: op. cit., p. 7

2. " " " p. 9

3. " " " p. 9.

4. " " " p. 22.

his conclusions from the fragments of early Welsh poetry and from Macpherson's "Ossian". However, his training as a literary critic and his native insight were greater than Renan's, so he took the best of the latter's conclusions, elaborated on them, and established certain theses, which have remained unchallenged until very recent years. To him the key-note of the Celtic character is its sentimentality, not sentimentality as we ordinarily conceive of that word, but rather "a passionate, turbulent, indomitable reaction against the despotism of fact."¹ This includes Renan's two points, imaginative power and melancholy. The restricted restrained life of the Celtic peoples has made them melancholy; they have been forced to seek their happiness within themselves, hence they have developed their imaginative powers to a high degree. This rebellion against fact has lamed the Celt in many ways. It has robbed him of patience and steadfastness, and has kept him from accomplishing anything that required great formative and shaping ability. The three other characteristics of the Celtic spirit, in so far as it shows itself in the literature which Arnold examined, are "a turn for style, a turn for melancholy, and a turn for natural magic."² Instead, however, of dwelling on these beauties in the Celtic literature he had at hand, Arnold devotes the larger part of his essay in endeavoring to pick out these Celtic elements in English poetry. The "turn for style" Arnold defines as "a peculiar re-casting and heightening, under a certain condition of spiritual excite-

1. Arnold: On the Study of Celtic Literature, p. 117.

2. " " " " " " " " p. 113.

ment of what a man has to say, in such a manner as to add dignity and distinction to it."¹ "Celtic poetry seems to make up to itself for being unable to master the world and give an adequate interpretation of it, by throwing all its force into style, by bending language at any rate to its will, and expressing the ideas it has with unsurpassable intensity, elevation, and effect."² The turn for melancholy is closely bound up with their reaction against the despotism of fact, and their adverse destiny. This Titanism, as Arnold calls it, "this vein of piercing regret and passion" which appears so often in English poetry Arnold traces directly to the Celts. By the third characteristic, the turn for natural magic, Arnold means a keen sensitive perception of the mystery and magic of nature. The Greeks and the Latins perceived the beauty of nature; but the Celt not only perceives the beauty but endows it with a subtle charm and mystery. These four characteristic qualities, sentimentality, style, melancholy, and natural magic, were for years accepted as the last word in Celtic criticism. From the time Arnold's essay appeared until very recent years, all attempts to analyze the Celtic spirit have simply been amplifications of Arnold's theses. The influence of his essay and that of Renan in stimulating interest in Celtic studies can hardly be overestimated.

In 1897 Mr. Yeats wrote an essay on "The Celtic Element in Literature". Coming from the man who is the heart and soul of the 'Celtic movement', this attempt is

1. Arnold: op. cit., p. 117.

2. " " " p. 121.

particularly interesting. Mr. Yeats accepts Arnold's statements, but attributes them rather to all primitive people than to the Celts alone. In all old literatures he thinks are to be found the feeling of the divinity and changeableness of nature. "Natural magic is but the ancient religion of the world, the ancient worship of nature and that troubled ecstasy before her, that certainty of all beautiful places being haunted, which it brought into men's minds."¹ Melancholy, too, is found among all ancient peoples. "Life was so weighed down by the emptiness of the great forests, and by the mystery of all things, and by the greatness of its own desires, and, as I think, by the loneliness of much beauty and so little, so fragile, and so brief, that nothing could be more sweet in the memory than a tale that ended in death and parting."² Modern literature becomes dead and passionless unless it is frequently recreated by the beliefs of ancient times. The imagination of the world is ready now for a new intoxication, and it will come, Mr. Yeats believes, through the opening of the Celtic legends. They, not by virtue of any peculiarly Celtic characteristics, but because they are a rich and abundant fountain of ancient belief, "may well give the new century its most memorable symbols."³

In 1904 Mr. George Bernard Shaw wrote his "John Bull's Other Island", at Mr. Yeats' request, as a contribution to the repertory of the Irish Literary Theater. As Mr. Shaw expresses it, "Mr. Yeats got more than he bargained for." The play is not in sympathy with the Celtic movement

1. Yeats: Ideas of Good and Evil, p. 275.

2. " " " " " " p. 285.

3. " " " " " " p. 295.

which is endeavoring to create a new and ideal Ireland. Mr. Shaw presents a picture of "the real old Ireland". His statements of Irish characteristics are interesting, because in a way he is typical of that large number of brilliant Irishmen from Swift and Goldsmith down to Wilde and Shaw himself who have deliberately chosen to become Englishmen. As is usual, Mr. Shaw in his preface gives us the gist of the play and a little more. He makes a strong forceful plea for Home Rule by showing how completely all other development in Ireland is arrested because of the struggle for national government. He does not analyze the Irish temperament by itself, but rather compares the typical Englishman and the typical Irishman, and the Englishman suffers by the comparison. According to Shaw, he is idolatrous, hysterical, nonsense-crammed, fact-proof, truth-terrified, and wholly at the mercy of his imagination. The Irishman has a far more sensitive imagination than his English neighbor, subtler and more fastidious, and yet he has at the same time an abiding sense of the reality of things, "he has one eye always on things as they are."¹ No matter how distressing facts may be, the Irishman never forgets that they are facts and must be faced. He is clear-headed and has usually a great fund of nervous industry. His keen imagination, however, keeps him dreaming, dreaming. Surrounded by conditions which seem irremediable, with no legitimate outlet for his energy, he either loses himself in drink, or becomes sneering and cynical in a vain attempt to get away from his too active

1. Shaw: op.cit., Preface, p.XI.

imagination. At first glance this statement of Irish character seems radically different from Renan's, Arnold's, and Yeats', but fundamentally they have much in common. All agree in attributing to the Irishman a highly sensitive imagination. He sees and feels life keenly. Conditions surrounding him have more often been unpleasant and adverse than agreeable, so that his imagination is forever at work building, scheming, dreaming. He has his eye on things as they are, but his imagination is always forcing him to revolt against "the despotism of fact".

The last essay to be considered is that of Alfred Nutt, one of the most thorough of the modern Celtic scholars. He has recently edited Matthew Arnold's essay, and in a most suggestive introduction and notes he has pointed out how later knowledge and research have confirmed or modified Arnold's statements. He gives due credit to Arnold's remarkably keen and correct intuition, but he shows on the other hand how meager and untrustworthy was the material from which he deduced his results.

In discussing Arnold's first thesis--the tendency of the Irish to revolt against the despotism of fact, Mr. Nutt combines with it the other closely related characteristic--the turn for melancholy. He draws attention to the fact that Arnold drew his conclusions from Macpherson's "Ossian" and from the Welsh poems of Llywarch Hen. He grants that Macpherson may have drawn his "note of mournful dwelling upon the glories of the past, of piercing regret for the pride and splendor of vanished youth"¹ from genu-

1. Nutt: op. cit., Introduction, p. XXI.

ine archaic literature, but that the popularity of his book was due to the fact that he was expressing the fashionable spirit of his day, invested with "the appeal and sanctity of antiquity"¹ He further maintains that the defiant tone and accent of the genuine Oisín poems and those of Llywarch Hen are not characteristic of the great body of Celtic literature. "On the contrary, so sharply do they contrast with the bulk of that literature, that it might almost be questioned if an alien intrusive spirit is not at work."² He feels that the chief characteristic of the Celtic spirit, as it has exhibited itself in literature, "is not so much a passionate reaction against the despotism of fact as an imaginative transcendence of fact."³ The expression of this transcendence he finds to be more often optimistic than pessimistic, and very fancy-full. Shelley, rather than Byron, whom Arnold quotes, is more truly Celtic. The former with his "invincible bent to weave a wonder-world of dream-like beauty in which he loses himself"⁴ is closely akin in mood and spirit to the Irish poets who sang of the land of the ever-living and invested Ireland's past with a soft and shimmering silver haze."⁵

With Arnold's other definitions Mr. Nutt has little fault to find. Increased knowledge of Celtic literature has only served to point out new examples of the Celtic "turn for style" and for "natural magic". Mr. Nutt, however, emphasizes again the fact that Arnold based his conclusions

1. Nutt: op. cit., Introduction, p. XXII.

2. " " " " p. "

3. " " " " p. "

4. " " " " p. XXIII.

5. " " " " p. "

upon very meager material, and considering the correctness of his intuitive perceptions, it is greatly to be regretted that he cannot to-day approach the same problem with the advantage of increased material and surer historic knowledge.

These five attempts at Celtic characterization are the best of the many attempts that have been made. The whole matter has been well summed up from a psychological point of view in Miss Sophie Bryant's book on "The Genius of the Gael". From her book, from the other attempts, and from the legends, plays, and poetry which we have examined we shall draw our own conclusions.

- I. The fundamental trait of Celtic character seems to be a keen positive consciousness. The Celt is fully alive, with every faculty sharp-edged. He not only is quick to grasp an idea, but with every idea come a large number of associated ideas. His "fringe of consciousness is extraordinarily rich. In any question he is able to see not only the point in hand, but also all associated points, even those directly opposed. This may account for his alleged inability to put long concentrated effort on any one thing. He cannot long devote himself single-heartedly to any one cause because he always sees so clearly the claims of other causes. To this keenness of consciousness we must attribute both his humor and his essential sanity. One who can always see both sides of a question is rarely apt to become

fanatic. Whenever he grows vehement his sense of humor overtakes him and he laughs at himself. A large amount of energy and rather intense feelings also result from this type of consciousness. Laziness and a quick alert mind are rarely found together. This energy, of course, may just as often work itself out in evil channels as good. So many times the Celt in Ireland has found avenue after avenue closed to him until he has become discouraged and wasted himself in drink and rascality. In literature this keenness of consciousness is usually manifested by a clear, smooth-flowing style. He not only has many ideas to express, but he has many ways of expressing them. Words come to him quickly and images crowd in upon his mind. Because of this close connection between word and thought the Celt is nearly always a ready and persuasive talker.

- II. In both the legends and the plays and poetry we found a marked sense of closeness to spiritual things. This results from what I feel to be the second most characteristic trait of Celtic nature--a strong idealism combined with a sane realism. Perhaps the modern idealism is a heritage from the old heroic times when gods and mortals mingled freely, and chosen mortals were allowed to visit wonderful spiritual lands; or, perhaps, it has resulted from Ireland's adverse history. Restricted and restrained on all sides, the Irish Celt has been able to find little real satisfaction in actual life. So he builds beautiful imaginative realms where he may

wander at will. In all his dreaming ,however,he has,as Shaw expressed it," one eye on things as they are." He finds a very real and vital pleasure in stressing the spiritual rather than the material,but he is never for a moment deluded into accepting his dreams as realities, This abiding sense of reality is in all the descriptions of the otherworlds which we found in the legends.

Included within or dependent upon these two fundamental traits we can find all the minor characteristics which we have pointed out in our study of the legends and the plays and poetry:love and appreciation of nature,always to be found among a people keenly conscious of the world about them;an acute and intense feeling that nature is filled with spiritual presences, a trait which we may attribute to their omnipresent idealism;and,lastly,delicate and refined rather than coarse feelings,due to a sane well-poised consciousness.

II.

With a slightly more definite idea of some of the traits that go to make up the complex Celtic spirit,we may endeavor to point out the value of this spirit to literature. In discussing some of the instances of the close under-lying connection between Celtic legend and European literature,we noticed that each contact brought into this larger literature elements of romance, delicacy,and love of nature. The stories of the voyages

to the beautiful otherworlds inspired a great number of like tales in a number of European countries, and furnished, perhaps, vital inspiration to Dante in the writing of his Divine Comedy. The Arthurian stories rejuvenated the literature of the middle ages, bringing into it elements of love and chivalry that completely changed men's ideals, and gave and are still giving beautiful themes to poets of all lands. The "Ossian" of the eighteenth century, false and artificial as it was, had a powerful effect in freeing literature from the sway of classicism. Aside from these well-defined cases of contact, there are hundreds of unknown or, perhaps, unrecognized instances in which Celtic legend and literature have furnished both themes and inspiration to poets and writers.

If then certain definite results have come every previous contact of the Celtic spirit with literature, may we not prophesy as to the value of the present movement? As we said in the very beginning, the Irish Literary Revival has received much criticism and not a little ridicule. Many have doubted its chances for affecting literature in any beneficial way because of its speculative and mystical character, and because its symbols are drawn from an unfamiliar mythology. Neither objection is valid. The complaint against the mysticism of the movement is probably due to that tendency in our modern hurried life that demands that everything be clear and logical. Logic is not a necessary ingredient for true poetry. It is the artist's task and

privilege to interpret his finest dreams of the possibilities of our human life. He must strive always toward the ideal, and is not to be bound within the narrow limits of "things as they are". Any art, be it wildly speculative or mystical, is justified if it expresses beautiful ideas that make for the betterment of life.

The second objection, that the writers draw mainly from a body of unfamiliar mythology, simply shows on the part of the critics an unwillingness to familiarize themselves with this new body of legend. They have studied the mythology of Greece and Rome; they know the Arthurian stories, and have become acquainted with the two mythologies from which Wagner and Ibsen drew their inspiration. Why should they object to the use of a new and beautiful mythology simply on the ground that it is unfamiliar?

If the writers of the Revival have had any one definite aim, it has been the creating of a national literature for Ireland. If they had attained simply this end, the movement might have been narrow in influence and appeal. They have, however, unconsciously perhaps, transcended their original goal and have made powerful in modern literature elements which had become almost inactive. To them we must attribute an appreciation and deep love of the beautiful in its every manifestation, clear insight into the real and spiritual meaning of life, and a recognition of divinity revealed through nature. These elements have spread abroad from Ireland and have leavened much of our modern material-

istic literature. The influences of the present movement are only a repetition, in a stronger and more self-conscious way, of the influences of all previous contacts of Celtic with other literatures. It is too soon, of course, to pronounce judgment as to the permanence of the present literary awakening. Whatever its fate at the hands of time, it has opened for us a splendid mythology and, working mainly through this material, has turned our eyes, "if for a short space only", to the contemplation of beautiful spiritual things.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Legends.

Dunn, Joseph: The Ancient Irish Epic Tale, Tain Bo Cualnge, London, 1914, David Nutt.

Paraday, Winifred L.: The Cattle Raid of Cualnge, London, 1904, David Nutt.

Gregory, Lady: Gods and Fighting Men: the Story of the Tuatha De Danaan and of the Fianna of Ireland. With a preface by W.B. Yeats, London, 1910, John Murray.

Gregory, Lady: Cuchulain of Muirthemne: the Story of the Men of the Red Branch of Ulster, with a preface by W.B. Yeats, London, 1911, John Murray.

Hull, Eleanor: Cuchulain, the Hound of Ulster, London, 1911, George G. Harrap and Co.

Joyce, P.W.: Old Celtic Romances, London, New York, and Bombay, 1907, Longmans, Green, and Co.

Rolleston, T.W.: The High Deeds of Finn, with an introduction by Stopford Brooke, London, 1910, George G. Harrap and Co.

2. Plays and Poetry.

A.E. (George Russell): Homeward: Songs by the Way, Portland, Maine, 1904, Thomas B. Mosher.

A.E.(George Russell): The Earth Breath, New York and
London, 1906, John Lane Company.

A.E.(George Russell): The Divine Vision, London and
New York, 1904, The Macmillan Company.

Gregory, Lady: Irish Folk-History Plays. First Series:
The Tragedies, New York and London, 1912,
G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Macleod, Fiona (William Sharp): Poems and Dramas, New York,
1911, Duffield and Company.

Synge, John Millington: Deirdre of the Sorrows, Dublin
and London, 1912, Maunsel and Company, Ltd.

Yeats, W.B.: Poetical Works, 2 vols., Vol. I: Lyrical Poems,
Vol. II: Dramatic Poems, New York and London,
1911, The Macmillan Company.

Yeats, W.B.: The Green Helmet and Other Poems, New York
and London, 1912, The Macmillan Company.

3. Critical and Historical.

Arnold, Matthew: The Study of Celtic Literature, with
Introduction, Notes, and Appendix by Alfred
Nutt, London, 1910, David Nutt.

Bickley, Francis: John Millington Synge and the Irish
Dramatic Movement, Boston and New York, 1912,
Houghton Mifflin Company.

Boswell, C.S.: An Irish Precursor of Dante, London, 1908,
David Nutt.

- Bourgeois, Maurice: John M. Synge and the Irish Theater,
London, 1913, Constable and Company, Ltd.
- Bryant, Sophie: The Genius of the Gael: A Study in Celtic Psychology, London and Leipzig, 1913, T. Fisher Unwin.
- Dictionary of National Biography: Edited by Sir Sidney Lee. Second Supplement, Vol. III, London, 1912, Smith, Elder and Company.
- Dukes, Ashley: Modern Dramatists, London, 1911, F. Palmer.
- Elton, Oliver: Modern Studies, London, 1907, Edward Arnold.
- Duffy, Sir Charles Gavan: The Revival of Irish Literature.
Contains also essays on "Irish Literature" by George Sigerson, and "The Necessity of De-Anglicizing Ireland" by Douglas Hyde. London, 1894, T. Fisher Unwin.
- Hull, Eleanor: A Text Book of Irish Literature, 2 vols., Dublin and London, 1906, M.H. Gill and Son.
- Hyde, Douglas: A Literary History of Ireland, London, 1903, T. Fisher Unwin.
- Hyde, Douglas: The Necessity of De-Anglicizing Ireland.
See Duffy above.
- Kellner, Leon: Die Englische Literatur im Zeitalter der Königen Viktoria, Leipzig, 1909, Bernhard Tauchnitz.
- Krans, Horatio Sheafe: William Butler Yeats and the Irish Literary Revival, New York, 1904, McClure, Phillips, and Company.

Macleod, Fiona (William Sharp): The Winged Destiny, New York, 1911, Duffield and Company.

Meyer, Kuno and Nutt, Alfred: The Voyage of Bran, with Translation, Notes, and Glossary by Kuno Meyer and an essay upon the Irish Vision of the Happy Otherworld and the Celtic Doctrine of Re-birth by Alfred Nutt, London, 1895, David Nutt.

More, Paul Elmer: Shelburne Essays, First Series, New York and London, 1904, G.P. Putnam's Sons.

More, Paul Elmer: The Drift of Romanticism, Shelburne Essays, Eighth Series, New York and Boston, 1913, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Morley, John: English Writers, Vol. I, London, Paris, and Melbourne, 1891, Cassell and Company, Ltd.

Renan, Ernest: The Poetry of the Celtic Races, London and New York, 1896, Walter Scott Publishing Company, Ltd.

Shaw, George Bernard: John Bull's Other Island and Major Barbara, New York, 1911, Brentano's.

Sigerson, George: Irish Literature, see Duffy above.

Weygandt, Cornelius: Irish Plays and Playwrights, New York and Boston, 1913, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Yeats, W.B.: Ideas of Good and Evil, London, 1907, A.H. Bullen; Dublin, 1907, Maunsel and Company, Ltd.

Zimmer, Heinrich: The Irish Element in Mediaeval Culture, translated by Jane L. Edwards, New York and London, 1913, G.P. Putnam's Sons

4. Reviews and Periodicals.

Academy, 58:235 (1900), "The Irish Literary Movement.

Mr. Yeats as Shepherd," Anon.

Athenaeum, 1:395 (1904), Review of Lady Gregory's "Gods
and Fighting Men", Anon.

Atlantic, 92:965 (1903), "Individuality in the Work of
Mr. Yeats", H.W. Boynton.

Bookman, 10:499 (1900), Review of Douglas Hyde's "Liter-
ary History of Ireland", Thomas Walsh.

Bookman, 33:30 (1911), "John Millington Synge", Darrell
Figgis.

Century, 73:327 (1907), "The Ancient Irish Sagas", Theodore
Roosevelt.

Century, 74:111 (1907), "William Sharp and 'Fiona Macleod'"
Ernest Rhys.

Century, 85:864 (1913), "Realism and Reality in Fiction",
William Lyon Phelps.

Contemporary Review, 89:203 (1906), "The Celtic Spirit in
Literature", Havelock Ellis.

Contemporary Review, 92:179 (1907), "Gods and Saints of
Ancient Ireland" T.W. Rolleston.

Contemporary Review, 102:602 (1912), "Lady Gregory's Irish
Plays", C.T.

Critic, 45:152 (1904), "Verse-Recent and Old", Ridgely Tor-
rence.

Current Literature, 34:458 (1903), "The Grip of the Past",
anon.

Current Literature, 41:405 (1906), "The Real Significance
of Irish Poetry", A.T. Quiller-Couch.

Current Literature, 53:695 (1912), "Immortalizing Synge",
anon.

Dial, 28:191 (1900), "Reality of the Ideal", Henry C. Payne.

Dial, 37:116 (1904), Review of A.E.'s "Divine Vision", anon.

Dial, 37:295 (1904), "Romance and Realism", Clayton Hamilton.

Dial, 40:185 (1906), "The Quality of Celtic Genius", C.L.
Moore.

Edinburgh Review, 209:115 (1909), "A School of Irish Poetry",
anon.

Fortnightly Review, 96:545, (1911), "Some Writers of the
Celtic Renaissance", K.L. Montgomery.

Forum, 48:465 (1912), "Lady Gregory and the Lore of Ireland",
Katherine Bregy.

Harper's Weekly, 47:958 (1903), "Irish Literary Revival",
anon.

Harper's Weekly, 51:344 (1907), "The Irish Peasant as a Dra-
matic Issue", S. Brooks.

Independent, 52:1792 (1900), "Realism and Romanticism",
Kate Upson Clark.

Independent, 70:792 (1911), "An Irish Playwright", W.B. Blake.

Independent, 74:54 (1913), "Sharp and Symbolism", anon.

Independent, 74:515 (1913), "Irish Plays and Players", W.B.
Blake.

Literary Digest, 38:652 (1909), "Ireland's Greatest Dramatist",
anon.

Living Age, 212:564 (1897), "The New Reality", H. Traill.

Living Age, 222:780 (1899), "The Humors of 'Ter-na-Nog'",

L.O. Cooper.

Living Age, 223:110 (1899), "Recent Fuss About the Irish Language", J.P. Mahaffy.

Living Age, 230:190 (1901), "The Revival of Irish Literature and Language", Justin McCarthy.

Living Age, 234:298 (1902), "The Great Irish Epic-Cuchulain", W.S. Blunt.

Living Age, 236:483 (1903), "The Celtic Sagas", Stephen Gwynn.

Living Age, 239:430 (1903), "Romance or Naturalism", H.B. Marriott Watson.

Living Age, 241:189 (1904), "The Irish Literary Revival", L. MacManus.

Living Age, 244:177 (1908), "W.B. Yeats", C.F.G. Masterman.

Living Age, 250:816 (1906), "Celtic Poetry and Legend", anon.

Living Age, 254:94 (1907), "The Irish Battle of the Books", Stanley Lane-Poole.

Living Age, 256:235 (1908), "The Literary Movement in Ireland", George A. Birmingham.

Living Age, 264:802 (1910), "The Development of Yeats", Francis Bickley.

Living Age, 269:163 (1911), "Works of Synge", anon.

Living Age, 269:399 (1911), "Irish Books", J. Eglington.

Living Age, 269:655 (1911), "Fairies from Shakespeare to Yeats", H. Grierson.

Living Age, 276:483 (1913), "The Fairy Poetry of Mr. Yeats", anon.

- Living Age, 277:771 (1913), "Realistic Drama", W.L. Courtney.
- Nation, 69:17 (1899), "The Cuchulain Saga in Irish Literature",
Review of Miss Hull's book, "Cuchulain, the
Hound of Ulster", anon.
- Nation, 73:395 (1901), "The Irish Literary Theater", M.W. Samp-
son.
- Nation, 94:572 (1912), Review of Lady Gregory's "Folk-Hist-
ory Plays", anon.
- Nation, 95:365 (1912), "The Poetical Works of Mr. Yeats", anon.
- Nineteenth Century, 44:769 (1898), "Ireland, Real and Ideal",
Lady Gregory.
- Nineteenth Century, 49:285 (1901), "A Plea for the Soul of
the Irish People", George Moore.
- North American, 169:855 (1899), "The Literary Movement in
Ireland", W.B. Yeats.
- North American, 179:685 (1904), "The Irish Muse", Fiona Ma-
cleod.
- North American, 183:771 (1906), "Is the Celtic Revival
Really Irish?", Mary K. Ford.
- North American, 195:820 (1912), "Realism in Fiction", Arthur
C. Benson.
- Outlook, 63:867, (1899), "Spiritual Reaction in Literature",
anon.
- Outlook, 64:570 (1900), "The Passing of Naturalism", anon.
- Outlook, 98:480 (1911), "Viking and Celt", anon.
- Outlook, 99:483 (1911), "A Great Irish Play and Some Irish-
men", anon.

Outlook, 102:34 (1912), "Traits of Celtic Poetry", Shane
Leslie.

Poet-Lore, 16:40, (1904), "The Irish Literary Drama", Vida
D.Scudder.

Review of Reviews, 46:750 (1912), Review of P.P.Howe's
"J.M.Synge: A Critical Study", anon.

Sewanee Review, 12:420 (1904), "The Irish Literary Revival",
Cornelius Weygandt.

DUE	RETURNED
NOV 26 1965	
NOV 27 1965	
Dec 10 '65	JAN 31 1966
	JUN 2 1966
FEB 24 '84 MU	MAR 06 '84 MU
JAN 31 '85 MU	DEC 19 '85 MU
Form 104	

University of Missouri - Columbia

010-100691743

378.7m71
XB413