LEABHAR IMUINN: THE BOOK OF HYMNS OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH OF IRELAND, PP. 121-303

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JAMES HENTHORN TODD

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Leabhar Imnuinn. *The Book of Hymns of the Ancient Church of Ireland.*

Fasciculus II.

Containing

V. The Hymn of St. Colman Mac Ui Cluasaigh.
VI. The Hymn of St. Cuchuimne.
VII. The Hymn of St. Hilary in Praise of Christ.
VIII. The Hymn of St. Colman Mac Murchon, in Praise of Michael the Archangel.
IX. The Hymn of St. Oengus Mac Tipraite in Praise of St. Martin.
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XIV. The Hymn of St. Columba, "Altus Prosator."
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XVII. The Prayer of St. John the Evangelist.
XVIII. The Epistle of Christ to Abgarus, King of Edessa.
XIX. Prefatory Remarks on the Hymn of St. Fiacc, in Praise of St. Patrick.

EDITED,

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT IN THE LIBRARY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,

With Translation and Notes,

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MDCCCLXIX.

19, DAWSON-STREET, DUBLIN,
November, 1869.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Fasciculus contains all the sheets which the late lamented Editor signed for the Press, before ill health and other obstacles interrupted the progress of the work. It is issued by direction of the Council in its present state, as a second instalment of the publication from the Editor's pen; with the reasonable hope that, as Doctor TODD has left some materials for the continuation, and as there are two Members of the Society prepared to take up the work where he left off, another Fasciculus, carrying on the pagination and matter as originally proposed, will be ready for delivery at no distant period.

J. T. GILBERT, *Hon. Secretary.*

19, DAWSON-STREET, DUBLIN,
November, 1869.

V. THE HYMN OF ST. COLMAN MAC UI CLUASAIGH.

THE following composition is of the nature of what the ancient Irish ecclesiastics called a *Luireach*, or *Lorica*, i. e., a Hymn to be recited as a protection against pestilence, assaults of demons, or other apprehended evils. The recitation of such hymns, or prayers, was regarded as the buckling on of spiritual armour, and hence they received the name of *Lorica*, in allusion probably to Eph. vi. 14, *seq.*, or rather perhaps to Ps. xci. (Vulg. xc.) 4, 5, 6. An example of a hymn of this kind, which is evidently Irish, and is attributed to one "Lathacan[1] Scotigena," will be found in Mone's collection, *Hymn. Lat. Medii Ævi*, vol. 1. p. 367.

Of the Colman who is said to have been the author of the following Hymn, we know little except what we learn from the Preface of the Scholiast. He is there said to have been the son of the grandson of Cluasach; but who this Cluasach was, or what family bore his name, the Editor is unable to say. It appears, however, that Colman was a *Fer-Leghinn*, i. e., Lecturer or Professor, in the theological school or seminary of Cork, and that the Hymn was composed as a protection against the great pestilence which devastated Ireland in the seventh century. This seems to fix the date of its composition to shortly before A. D. 664, in which year (according to the chronology of the Four Masters) the two sons of Aedh Slaine, Diarmaid and Blathmac, joint kings of Ireland, with a great number of eminent saints and ecclesiastics, perished in the plague. There can be little doubt that the Colman to whom

[1] *Lathacan.*—This is probably the name which in Irish authorities is written Laidhgeann. Saints of this name are celebrated in the Irish Calendars, at Jan. 12, May 20, Oct. 23, and Nov. 28; but it is not easy to identify any of them with this "Lathacan." The Four Masters record the death of a Laidhgenn, son of Baeth, of Clonfert Molua, A. D. 630; the Annals of Ulster call him "Laidggenn *sapiens* mac Baith Bannaigh."