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Corpus of Electronic Texts Edition

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Author: [unknown]

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Whitley Stokes

compiled by Marcos Balé and Benjamin Hazard

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Sources

Manuscript sources

London, British Library, Harleian MS 5280, 63a-70b (Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum, by Robin Flower (London, 1926) vol. 2, 318-319).

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The edition used in the digital edition:

Whitley Stokes, The Second Battle of Moytura in *Revue Celtique*. Volume 12, Paris, F. Vieweg (1891) page 52-130, 306-308

Encoding

Project Description

CELT: Corpus of Electronic Texts

Sampling Declaration

The present text represents odd pages 57-111 of Whitley Stokes' printed edition.

Editorial Declaration

Correction

Text has been proof-read three times.

Normalization

The electronic text represents the edited text. Spelling errors have been corrected silently. Text supplied by the editor is marked sup resp="WS"; for Stokes' more important footnotes, note type="auth" n="" has been used. Text omitted from the printed edition for obscurity or other reasons is indicated by gap.

Quotation

Quotations are rendered q.

Hyphenation

When a hyphenated word (hard or soft) crosses a page-break, the page-break is marked after the completion of the hyphenated word.

Segmentation

div0=the whole text; div1=the section, corresponding to Stokes' paragraph. Metrical quatrains are marked and numbered and individual lines of verse are marked. Metrical texts are embedded as separate texts in the relevant entries.

Interpretation

Names of persons (given names) and places are not tagged. Some Irish words are tagged frn.

Canonical References

This text uses the DIV1 element to represent the section.

Profile Description

Created: Translation by Whitley Stokes (1891)

Use of language

Language: EN

The text is in English.

Language: GA

Some Irish words occur.

Revision History

(2004-01-16)

Beatrix Färber (ed.)

File proofed (3); more structural and content markup applied; minor additions to header; file re-parsed; HTML file created.

(2003-10-30)

Benjamin Hazard (ed.)

File proofed (2); further structural markup added.

(2003-10-30)

Benjamin Hazard (ed.)

Header inserted from Irish companion file and modified, file parsed using NSGMLS.

(2003-10)

Marcos Balé (ed.)

Structural markup applied.

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Text captured by scanning and proofed (1).

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The Second Battle of Moytura: Author: [unknown]

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The Tuatha Dé Danonn were in the northern isles of the world, learning lore and magic and druidism and wizardry and cunning, until they surpassed the sages of the arts of heathendom.

There were four cities in which they were learning lore and science and diabolic arts, to wit Falias and Gorias, Murias and Findias.

Out of Falias was brought the Stone of Fál, which was in Tara. It used to roar under every king that would take the realm of Ireland.

Out of Gorias was brought the Spear that Lugh had. No battle was ever won against it or him who held it in his hand.

Out of Findias was brought the Sword of Nuada. When it was drawn from its deadly sheath, no one ever escaped from it, and it was irresistible.

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Out of Murias was brought the Dagdae's Caldron. No company ever went from it unthankful.

Four wizards there were in those four cities. Mór-fesae was in Falias: Esras was in Gorias: Uscias was in Findias: Semias was in Murias. Those are the four poets of whom the Tuatha Dé learnt lore and science.

Now the Tuatha Dé made an alliance with the Fomorians, and Balor, grandson of Nét, gave his daughter Ethne to Cian son of Dian- cecht, and she brought forth the gifted child, even Lugh.

The Tuath Dé came with a great fleet unto Ireland to take it perforce from the Fir Bolg. They burnt their barques at once on reaching the district of Corcu-Belgatan that is, Connemara today, so that they should not think of retreating to them; and the smoke and the mist that came from the vessels filled the neighbouring land and air. Therefore it was conceived that they had arrived in clouds of mist.

The first battle of Moytura was fought between them and the Fir Bolg; and the Fir Bolg were routed, and a hundred thousand of them were slain, including their king Eochaid son of Erc.

In that battle, moreover, Nuada's hand was stricken off—it was Sreng son of Sengann that struck it off him— so Dian-cecht the leech put on him a hand of silver with the motion of every hand; and Credne the brazier was helping the leech.

Now the Tuath Dé Danonn lost many men in the battle, including Edleo son of Alla, and Ernmas, and Fiachra and Turill Bicroo.

But such of the Fir Bolg as escaped from the battle went in flight unto the Fomorians, and settled in Arran and in Islay and in Mann and in Rathlin.

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A contention as to the sovranity of the men of Ireland arose between the Tuath Dé and their women; because Nuada, after his hand had been stricken off, was disqualified to be king. They said that it would be fitter for them to bestow the kingdom on Bres son of Elatha, on their own adopted son; and that giving the kingdom to him would bind the alliance of the Fomorians to them. For his father, even Elatha son of Delbaeth, was king of the Fomorians.

Now the conception of Bres came to pass in this wise:

Eri, Delbaeth's daughter, a woman of the Tuath Dé, was one day looking at the sea and the land from the house of Maeth Sceni, and she beheld the sea in perfect calm as if it were a level board. And as she was there she saw somewhat. A vessel of silver was revealed to her on the sea. Its size she deemed great, save that its form did not appear to her. And the stream of the wave bore it on to land. Then she saw that in it was a man of fairest

form. Golden-yellow hair was on him as far as his two shoulders. A mantle with bands of golden thread was around him. His shirt had trimmings of golden thread. On his breast was a brooch of gold, with the sheen of a precious stone therein. Two white silver spears, and in them two smooth riveted shafts of bronze. Five circlets of gold on his neck. A golden-hilted sword with (inlayings) of silver and studs of gold.

The man said to her: 'Is this the time that our lying with thee will be easy?' 'I have not made a tryst with thee, verily', said the woman. 'Come against the (trystings) ', saith he.

Then they stretched themselves down together. Now the woman wept when the man would rise.

'Why weepest thou?' saith he.

'I have two things for which I should lament', saith the woman. 'Severing from thee (however) we have met. The fair youths of the Tuatha Dea Danonn they have been entreating me in vain, and my desire is for thee as thou hast possessed me '.

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'Thy anxiety shall be taken away from these two things', saith he. He draws his golden ring from his middlefinger, and put it into her hand, and told her that she should not part with it, by sale or by gift, save to one whose finger it should fit.

'I have another sorrow', saith the woman. 'I know not who hath come to me'.

'Thou shalt not be ignorant of that', saith he. 'Elotha son of Delbaeth, king of the Fomorians, hath come to thee. And of our meeting thou shalt bear a boy, and no name shall be given him save Eochaid Bres, that is Eochaid the beautiful; for every beautiful thing that is seen in Ireland, whether plain or fortress or ale or torch or woman or man or steed, will be (compared) to that boy, so that men will say of it then 'it is a Bres'.'

After that the man went back again by the way he had come, and the woman fared to her house, and unto her was given the famous conception.

Then she brought forth the boy, and he was named as Elotha had said, even Eochaid Bres. When a week after the woman's lying-in was complete the boy had a fortnight's growth; and he maintained that increase till the end of his first seven years, when he reached a growth of fourteen years.

Because of that contest which took place among the Tuath Dé the sovranity of Ireland was given to that boy; and he gave seven hostages to Ireland's champions, that is, to her chiefs, for restoring the sovranity if his own (misdeeds) should so give cause. His mother afterwards bestowed land upon him, and on the land he had a fortress built, even Dún Brese; and it was the Dagdae that built that fortress.

Now when Bres had assumed the kingship, Fomorians, even Indech son of De Domnann and Elatha son of Delbaeth, and Tethra, three Fomorian kings, bound their tribute upon Ireland, so that there was not a smoke from a roof in

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Ireland that was not under tribute to them. The champions were also reduced to his service, to wit, Ogma had to carry a bundle of firewood, and the Dagdae was a rath-builder, wherefore he, the Dagdae, trenched Rath

Brese.

So the Dagdae was weary at the work, and he used to (meet) in the house an idle blind man named Cridenbél, whose mouth was out of his breast. Cridénbel thought his own ration small and the Dagdae's large. Whereupon he said: 'O Dagdae! of thy honour let the three best bits of thy ration be given to me!' So the Dagdae used to give them to him every night. Large, however, were the lampooner's bits, the size of a good pig, this was the bit. But those three bits were the third of the Dagdae's ration. The Dagdae's (health) was the worse of that.

One day, then, as the Dagdae was in the trench, he saw the Mac Óc coming to him. 'That is good, O Dagdae', says the Mac Óc. 'Even so', says the Dagdae. 'What makes thee look so ill?' says the Mac Óc. 'I have cause for it', says the Dagdae. 'Every evening Cridenbél the lampooner demands the three best bits of my portion'.

'I have a counsel for thee', says the Mac Óc. He puts his hand into his pouch, and takes thereout three crowns of gold, and gives them to him.

'Put', says the Mac Óc, 'these three crowns into the three bits which thou givest at close of day to Cridenbél. These bits will then be the goodliest on thy dish; and the gold will turn in his belly so that he will die thereof, and the judgment of Bres thereon will be wrong. Men will say to the king: 'The Dagdae has killed Cridenbél by means of a deadly herb which he gave him.' Then the king will order thee to be slain. But thou shalt say to him: 'What thou utterest, O king of the warriors of the Féne, is not a prince's truth. For I was watched by Cridenbél when I was at my work, and he used to say to me 'Give me, O Dagdae, the three best bits of thy portion. Bad is my housekeeping tonight'.

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So I should have perished thereby had not the three shillings which I found today helped me. I put them on my ration. I then gave it to Cridenbél, for the gold is the best thing that was before me. Hence, then, the gold is inside Cridenbél, and he died of it".

'It is clear', says the king. 'Let the lampooner's belly be cut open to know if the gold be found therein. If it be not found, thou shalt die. If, however, it be found, thou shalt have life'.

After that they cut off the lampooner's belly, and the three crowns of gold were found in his stomach, and so the Dagdae was saved.

Then the Dagdae went to his work on the following morning, and to him came the Mac Óc and said: 'Thou wilt soon finish thy work, and thou shalt not seek reward till the cattle of Ireland are brought to thee, and of them choose a heifer black-maned, black
[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word]

Thereafter the Dagdae brought his work to an end, and Bres asked him what he would take in guerdon of his labour. The Dagdae answered: 'I (charge) thee', saith he, 'to gather the cattle of Ireland into one place'. The king did this as the Dagdae said, and the Dagdae chose of them the heifer which the Mac Óc had told him to choose. That seemed weakness unto Bres: he thought that the Dagdae would have chosen somewhat more.

Now Nuada was in his sickness, and Dian-cecht put on him a hand of silver with the motion of every hand therein. That seemed evil to his son Miach. He went to the hand which had been struck off Dian-cecht, and he said 'joint to joint of it and sinew to sinew,' and he healed Nuada in thrice three days and nights. The first seventy-two hours he put it over against his side, and it became covered with skin. The second seventy-two hours he put it on his breasts. The third

seventy-two hours he would cast white [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] of black bulrushes when they were blackened in fire.

That cure seemed evil to Dian-cecht. He flung a sword on the crown of his son's head and cut the skin down to the flesh. The lad healed the wound by means of his skill. Dian-cecht smote him again and cut the flesh till he reached the bone. The lad healed this by the same means. He struck him the third blow and came to the membrane of his brain. The lad healed this also by the same means. Then he struck the fourth blow and cut out the brain, so that Miach died, and Dian-cecht said that the leech himself could not heal him of that blow.

Thereafter Miach was buried by Dian-cecht, and herbs three hundred and sixty five, according to the number of his joints and sinews, grew through the grave. Then Airmed opened her mantle and separated those herbs according to their properties. But Dian-cecht came to her, and he confused the herbs, so that no one knows their proper cures unless the Holy Spirit should teach them afterwards. And Dian-cecht said 'If Miach be not, Airmed shall remain'.

So Bres held the sovereignty as it had been conferred upon him. But the chiefs of the Tuath Dé murmured greatly against him, for their knives were not greased by him, and however often they visited him their breaths did not smell of ale. Moreover, they saw not their poets or their bards or their lampooners or their harpers or their pipers or their hornblowers or their jugglers or their fools amusing them in the household. They did not go to the contests of their athletes. They saw not their champions proving their prowess at the king's, save only one man, Ogma son of Etáin.

This was the duty which he had, to bring fuel to the fortress. He used to carry a bundle every day from the Clew Bay islands. And because he was weak from want of food the sea would sweep away from him two thirds of his bundle.

So he could only carry one third, and yet he had to supply the host from day to day.

Neither service nor wergild from the tribes continued, and the treasures of the tribe were not delivered by the act of the whole tribe.

Once upon a time the poet came a-guesting to Bres' house, even Corpre son of Etáin, poet of the Tuath Dé. He entered a cabin narrow, black, dark, wherein there was neither fire nor furniture nor bed. Three small cakes, and they dry, were brought to him on a little dish. On the morrow he arose and he was not thankful. As he went across the garth he said:

Without food quickly on a dish:

without a cow's milk whereon a calf grows:

without a man's abode under the (gloom) of night:

without paying a company of story-tellers, let that be Bres' condition.

'So there is no amain in Bres', saith he. Now that was true. Nought save decay was on him from that hour. That is the first satire that was made in Ireland.

Now after that the Tuath Dea went together to have speech with their fosterson, Bres son of Elatha, and demanded of him their sureties. He gave them the restitution of the realm, and he was not (well-pleased) with them for that. He begged to be allowed to remain till the end of seven years.

‘Thou shalt have this’, says the same assembly together, ‘but thou shalt come on the same security

[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word]

every fruit

[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word]

to thy hand, both house and land and gold and silver, kine and food, and freedom from rent and wergild until then’. ‘Ye shall have’, says Bres, ‘as ye say’.

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This is why they were asked for the delay, that he might gather the champions of the Fairy-Mound, even the Fomorians, to seize the tribes perforce, provided that [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: three words]. Grievous to him seemed his expulsion from his kingdom.

Then he went to his mother and asks her whence was his race? ‘I am certain of that’, saith she; and she went on to the hill whence she had seen the vessel of silver in the sea. She then went on to the strand, and his mother gave him the ring which had been left with her for him, and he put it round his middle-finger, and it fitted him. For sake of no one had she delivered it, either by sale or gift. Until that day there was none of them whom it suited.

Then they went forward till they reached the land of the Fomorians. They came to a great plain with many assemblies therein. They advanced to the fairest of these assemblies. Tidings were demanded of them therein. They replied that they were of the men of Ireland. They were then asked whether they had hounds; for at that time it was the custom, when a body of men went to another assembly, to challenge them to a friendly contest. ‘We have hounds’, saith Bres. Then the hounds had a coursing-match, and the hounds of the Tuath Dé were swifter than the hounds of the Fomorians. Then they were asked whether they had steeds for a horse-race. They answered, ‘We have’; and their steeds were swifter than the steeds of the Fomorians.

They were then asked whether they had any one who was good at sword-play. None was found save Bres alone. So when he sets his hand to the sword his father recognises the ring on his finger, and inquires who was the hero. His mother answered on his behalf and told the king that Bres was a son of his. Then she related to him the whole story even as we have recounted it.

His father was sorrowful at him. Said the father: ‘What need has brought thee out of the land wherein thou ruledst?’ Bres replied: ‘Nothing has brought me save my own injustice and arrogance. I stript them of their jewels and treasures and their own food. Neither tribute nor wergild was taken from them till today’.

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‘That is bad’, says the father. ‘Better were their prosperity than their kingship. Better their prayers than their curses. Why hast thou come hither?’ says his father.

‘I have come to ask you for champions’, saith he. ‘I would take that land perforce’.

‘Thou shouldst not gain it by injustice if thou gain it not by justice’, said the father.

‘Query, then, what counsel hast thou for me?’ says Bres.

Thereafter he sent him to the champion, to Balor grandson of Nett; the king of the Isles, and to Indech son of Déa Domnand the king of the Fomorians; and these assembled all the forces from Lochlann westwards unto Ireland, to impose their tribute and their rule perforce on the Tuath Dé, so that they made one bridge of vessels from the Foreigners' Isles to Erin.

Never came to Ireland a host more horrible or fearful than that host of the Fomorians. The man from Scythia of Lochlann and the man out of the Western Isles were rivals in that expedition.

Now as to the Tuath Dé, this is what is here dealt with.

After Bres, Nuada was again in sovranity over the Tuath Dé. At that time he held for the Tuath Dé a mighty feast at Tara. Now there was a certain warrior on his way to Tara, whose name was Samildánach. 1 And there were then two doorkeepers at Tara, namely Gamal son of Figal and Camall son of Riagall. When one of these was there he sees a strange company coming towards him. A young warrior fair and shapely, with a king's trappings, was in the forefront of that band.

They told the doorkeeper to announce their arrival at Tara. The doorkeeper asked: 'Who is there?'

'Here there is Lugh Lonnansclech son of Cian son of Dian-cecht, and of Ethne daughter of Balor. Fosterson, he,

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of Tallan daughter of Magmor king of Spain and of Echaid the Rough, son of Duach.'

The doorkeeper asked of Samildánach: 'What art dost thou practise?' saith he; 'for no one without an art enters Tara.'

'Question me', saith he; 'I am a wright.' The doorkeeper answered: 'We need thee not. We have a wright already, even Luchtae son of Luachaid.'

He said: 'Question me, O doorkeeper! I am a smith.' The doorkeeper answered him: 'We have a smith already, even Colum Cualléinech of the three new processes.'

He said: 'Question me: I am a champion.' The doorkeeper answered: 'We need thee not. We have a champion already, even Ogma son of Ethliu.'

He said again: 'Question me', saith he, 'I am a harper.' 'We need thee not. We have a harper already, even Abhcán son of Bicelmos whom the Men of the three gods (chose) in the fairy hills.'

Said he: 'Question me: I am a hero.' 'The doorkeeper answered: 'We need thee not. We have a hero already, even Bresal Echarlam² son of Echaid Baethlam.'

Then he said: 'Question me, O doorkeeper! I am a poet and I am a historian.'. 'We need thee not. We have already a poet and historian, even En son of Ethaman.'

He said: 'Question me', says he, 'I am a sorcerer.' 'We need thee not. We have sorcerers already. Many are our wizards and our folk of might.'

He said: 'Question me: I am a leech.'

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'We need thee not. We have for a leech Dian-cecht.'

'Question me', saith he: 'I am a cupbearer.' 'We need thee not. We have cupbearers already, even Delt and Drucht and Daithe, Taé and Talom and Trog, Gleí and Glan and Glési.'

He said: 'Question me. I am a good brazier.' 'We need thee not. We have a brazier already, even Credne Cerd.'

He said again: 'Ask the king', saith he, 'whether he has a single man who (possesses) all these arts, and if he has I will not enter Tara.'

Then the doorkeeper went into the palace and declared all to the king. 'A warrior has come before the garth' saith he. 'His name is Samildánach, and all the arts which thy household practise he alone possesses, so that he is the man of each and every art.'

This he the king said then, that the chessboards of Tara should be fetched to him Samildánach and he won all the stakes, so that then he made the Cró of Lugh.³ But if chess was invented at the (epoch) of the Trojan war, it had not reached Ireland then, for the battle of Moytura and the destruction of Troy occurred at the same time.⁴

Then that was related to Nuada. 'Let him into the garth', says Nuada. 'for never before has man like him entered this fortress.'

Then the doorkeeper lets Lugh pass him, and he entered the fortress and sat down in the sage's seat, for he was a sage in every art.

Then the great flag-stone, to move which required the effort of four-score yoke of oxen, Ogma hurled through the house, so that it lay on the outside of Tara. This was a challenge to Lugh. But Lugh cast it back, so that it lay in the centre of the palace; and he put the piece which

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it had carried away into the side of the palace and made it whole.

'Let a harp be played for us', say the hosts. So the warrior played a sleep-strain for the hosts and for the king the first night. He cast them into sleep from that hour to the same time on the following day. He played a wail-strain, so that they were crying and lamenting. He played a smile-strain, so that they were in merriment and joyance.

Now Nuada, when he beheld the warrior's many powers, considered whether he Samildánach could put away from them the bondage which they suffered from the Fomorians. So they held a council concerning the warrior. This is the decision to which Nuada came, to change seats with the warrior. So Samildánach went to the king's seat, and the king rose up before him till thirteen days had ended.

Then on the morrow he met with the two brothers, even Dagdae and Ogma, on Grellach Dollaid.⁵ And his brothers Goibniu and Dian-cecht were summoned to them.

A full year were they in that secret converse, wherefore Grellach Dollaid is called Amrun of the Men of the Goddess.

Thereafter the wizards of Ireland were summoned to them, and their leeches and charioteers and smiths and farmers and brehons. They held speech with them in secret.

Then Nuada inquired of the sorcerer whose name was Mathgen, what power he could wield? He answered that through his contrivance he would cast the mountains of Ireland on the Fomorians, and roll their summits against the ground. And he declared to them that the twelve chief mountains of the land of Erin would support the Tuatha Dé Danonn, in battling for them, to wit, Slieve League, and Denna Ulad and the Mourne Mountains, and Bri Ruri and Slieve Bloom and Sliab Snechtai, Slemish and Blai-sliab and Nemthenn and Sliab Maccu Belgodon and Segais and Cruachan Aigle.

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Then he asks of the cupbearer, what power he could wield? He answered that he would bring the twelve chief loughs of Ireland before the Fomorians, and that they would not find water therein, whatever thirst might seize them. These are those loughs: Derg-loch, Loch Luimnigh, Lough Corrib, Lough Ree, Lough Mask, Strangford Lough, Loch Laeig, Lough Neagh, Lough Foyle, Lough Gara, Lough Reagh, Márloch.⁶ They would betake themselves to the twelve chief rivers of Ireland, even Bush, Boyne, Baa, Nem, Lee, Shannon, Moy, Sligo, Erne, Finn, Liffey, Suir; and they will all be hidden from the Fomorians, so that they will not find a drop therein. Drink shall be provided for the men of Ireland, though they bide in the battle to the end of seven years.

Then said Figol son of Mamos, their druid: 'I will cause three showers of fire to pour on the faces of the Fomorian host, and I will take out of them two thirds of their valour and their bravery and their strength, and I will bind their urine in their own bodies and in the bodies of their horses. Every breath that the men of Ireland shall exhale will be an increase of valour and bravery and strength to them. Though they bide in the battle till the end of seven years they will not be weary in any wise.'

Said the Dagdae: 'The power which ye boast I shall wield it all by myself.' 'It is thou art the Dagdae (good hand)' saith everyone: wherefore thenceforward the name 'Dagdae' adhered to him.

Then they separate from the council, agreeing to meet again that day three years.

Now when the (provision) of the battle had then been settled Lugh and Dagdae and Ogma went to the three Gods of Danu, and these give Lugh the [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] of the battle; and for seven years they were preparing for it and making their weapons.

The Dagdae had a house in Glenn Etin in the north.

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Now the Dagdae had to meet a woman in Glenn Etin on that day year about the Allhallowtide of the battle. The river Unius of Connaught roars to the south of it. He beheld the woman in Unius in Corann, washing herself, with one of her two feet at Allod Echae i. e. Echumech, to the south of the water, and the other at Loscuinn, to the north of the water. Nine loosened tresses were on her head. The Dagdae conversed with her, and they make a union. 'The Bed of the Couple' is the name of the stead thenceforward. The woman that is here mentioned is the Morrígan Lamia.

Then she told the Dagdae that the Fomorians would land at Magh Scetne, and that he should (summon) Erin's men of art to meet her at the Ford of Uinius, and that she would go into Scetne to destroy Indech son of Dé Donann, the king of the Fomorians, and would deprive him of the blood of his heart and the kidneys of his valour.⁷ Now she afterwards gave her two handfuls of that blood to the hosts that were waiting at the Ford of Uinius. 'Ford of Destruction' became its name, because of that destruction of the king.

Then that was done by the artists, and they chanted spells on the hosts of the Fomorians.

This was a week before Allhallowtide, and each of them separated from the other until all the men of Ireland came together on Allhallowseve. Six times thirty hundred was their number, that is, twice thirty hundred in every third.

Then Lugh sent the Dagdae to spy out the Fomorians and to delay them until the men of Ireland should come to the battle.

So the Dagdae went to the camp of the Fomorians and asked them for a truce of battle. This was granted to him as he asked. Porridge is then made for him by the Fomorians, and this was done to mock him, for great was his love for porridge. They fill for him the king's caldron, five fists deep,

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into which went four-score gallons of new milk and the like quantity of meal and fat. Goats and sheep and swine are put into it, and they are all boiled together with the porridge. They are spilt for him into a hole in the ground, and Indech told him that he would be put to death unless he consumed it all; he should eat his fill so that he might not reproach the Fomorians with inhospitality.

Then the Dagdae took his ladle, and it was big enough for a man and woman to lie on the middle of it. These then are the bits that were in it, halves of salted swine and a quarter of lard.

Then said the Dagdae: 'Good food this, if its broth attains what its taste attains'. But when he used to put the ladle full into his mouth, then he would say: 'Its [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] do not spoil it, says the old man.'

Then at the end he puts his curved finger over the bottom of the hole among mould and gravel. Sleep came upon him then after eating his porridge. Bigger than a house-caldron was his belly, so that the Fomorians laughed at it.

Then he went away from them to the strand of Eba. Not easy was it for the hero to move along owing to the bigness of his belly. Unseemly was his apparel. A cape to the hollow of his two elbows. A dun tunic around him, as far as the swelling of his rump. It is, moreover, long-breasted, with a hole in the peak. Two brogues on him of horse-hide, with the hair outside. A wheeled [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] fork to carry which required the effort of eight men, behind him so that its track after him was enough for the boundary-ditch of a province. Wherefore it is called The Track of the Dagdae's Club. [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: a few lines]⁸

Then the Fomorians march till their [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] were in Scetne.

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The men of Ireland were in Magh Aurlaigh. Then these two hosts were threatening battle. 'The men of Ireland venture to offer the battle to us', says Bres son of Elier to Indech son of Dia Domnann. 'I give this anon', says Indech, 'so that their bones will be small unless they pay their tribute.'

Because of Lugh's knowledge the men of Ireland had made a resolution not to let him go into the battle. So his nine fosterers are left to protect him, even Tollus-dam and Ech-dam and Eru, Rechtaid the white and Fosad and Fedlimid, Ibor and Scibar and Minn. They feared an early death for the hero owing to the multitude of his arts. Therefore they did not let him forth to the fight.

Then the chiefs of the Tuath Dé Danann were gathered round Lugh. And he asked his smith, even Goibniu, what power he wielded for them?

'Not hard to say', quoth he. 'Though the men of Erin bide in the battle to the end of seven years, for every spear that parts from its shaft, or sword that shall break therein, I will provide a new weapon in its place. No spearpoint which my hand shall forge', saith he, 'shall make a missing cast. No skin which it pierces shall taste life afterwards. That has not been done by Dolb the smith of the Fomorians. I am now
[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word]
for the battle of Magh Tuired'.

'And thou, O Dian-cecht', saith Lugh, 'what power can you wield in sooth?'

'Not hard to say', saith he. 'Every man who shall be wounded there, unless his head be cut off, or the membrane of his brain or his (spinal) marrow be severed, I will make quite whole in the battle on the morrow.'

'And thou, O Credne', says Lugh to his brazier, 'what is thy power in the battle?'

'Not hard to say', quoth Credne, 'Rivets for their spears, and hilts for their swords, and bosses and rims for their shields, I will supply them all'.

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'And thou, O Luchta', says Lugh to his wright, 'what power wouldst thou attain to in the battle?'

'Not hard to say', quoth Luchta. 'All the shields and javelin-shafts they require, I will supply them all'.

'And thou, O Ogma', saith Lugh to his champion, 'what is thy power in the battle?'

'Not hard to say', quoth he: 'repelling the king and repelling three enneads of his friends, and capturing the battalion up to a third by the men of Ireland'.

'And thou, O Morrigan', saith Lugh, 'what power wilt thou wield?'

'Not hard to say', quoth she. 'What I shall follow I shall (hunt): what I shall strike has been

[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word]

: what I have cut out shall be

[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word]

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'And ye, O sorcerers', saith Lugh, 'what power will ye wield?'

'Not hard to say', quoth the sorcerers. 'Their white soles on them when they have been overthrown by our craft, till their heroes are slain, and to deprive then of two thirds of their might, with constraint on their urine'.

'And ye, O cupbearers', saith Lugh, 'what power?'

'Not hard to say', quoth the cupbearers. 'We will bring a strong thirst upon them, and they shall not find drink to quench it'.

'And ye, O druids', saith Lugh, 'what power?'

'Not hard to say', quoth the druids. 'We will bring showers of fire on the faces of the Fomorians, so that they cannot look upwards, and so that the warriors who are contending with them may slay them by their might'.

'And thou, O Carpre son of Etain', saith Lugh to his poet, 'what power can you wield in the battle?'

'Not hard to say', quoth Carpre. 'I will make a glam dicinn on them. And I will satirize them and shame

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them, so that through the spell of my art they will not resist warriors'.

'And ye, O Bé-chulle and O Dianann', saith Lugh to his two witches, 'what power can ye wield in the battle?'

'Not hard to say', quoth they; 'we will enchant the trees and the stones and the sods of the earth, so that they shall become a host under arms against them, and shall rout them in flight with horror and (affliction)'.

'And thou, O Dagdae', saith Lugh, 'what power canst thou wield on the Fomorian host in the battle?'

'Not hard to say', quoth the Dagdae. 'I will take the side of the men of Erin both in mutual smiting and destruction and wizardry. Their bones under my club will be as many as hailstones under feet of herds of horses

[gap: meaning of text unclear]

where ye meet

[gap: meaning of text unclear]

on the battlefield of Moytura.'

So in that wise Lugh had speech as to their arts with everyone of them in turn; and he strengthened and (addressed) his army, so that each man of them had the spirit of a king or a mighty lord.

Now every day the battle was (joined) between the tribe of the Fomorians and the Tuatha Dé, save only that kings or princes were not delivering it, but only keen and haughty folk.

Now the Fomorians marvelled at one thing which was revealed to them in the battle. Their weapons, their spears and their swords, to wit, were blunted and broken and such of their men as were slain used not to come on the morrow. But it was not so with the Tuatha Dé. For though their weapons were blunted and broken to-day, they were renewed on the morrow, because Goibniu the Smith was in the forge making swords and spears and javelins. For he would make those weapons by three turns. Then Luchtaine the Wright would make the spearshafts by three chippings, and the third

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chipping was a finish and would set them in the ring of the spear. When the spearheads were stuck in the side of the forge he would throw the rings with the shafts, and it was needless to set them again. Then Credne the Brazier would make the rivets by three turns, and would cast the rings of the spears to them, and it was needless to [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] before them; and thus they used to cleave together.

This then is what used to put fire into the warriors who were slain there, so that they were swifter on the morrow. Because Dian-cecht and his two sons, even Octriuil and Miach, and his daughter Airmed were singing spells over the well named Sláine. Now their mortally wounded men were cast into it as they would be slain. They were alive when they would come out. Their mortally wounded became whole through the might of the chant of the four leeches who were about the well.

Now that was harmful to the Fomorians, so they told a man of them to inspect the battle and the (custom) of the Tuath Dea, namely Ruadán son of Bres and of Brígh the Dagda's daughter. For he was a son and a grandson of the Tuath Dé. Then he related to the Fomorians the work of the Smith and the Wright and the Brazier and the four Leeches who were around the well. He was sent again to kill one of the artists, even Goibniu. From him he begged a spear, its rivets from the Brazier and its shaft from the Wright. So all was given to him as he asked. Now there was a woman there grinding the weapons, even Cron mother of Fianlug, she it is that ground Ruadán's spear. Now the spear was given to Ruadán by a chief, wherefore the name 'a chief's spear' is still given to weavers' beams in Erin.

Now after the spear had been given him, Ruadán turned and wounded Goibniu. But he plucked out the spear and cast it at Ruadán, so that it went through him, and he died in the presence of his father in the assembly of the Fomorians. Then Brígh comes and bewailed her son. She shrieked at first, she cried at last. So that then for the first time crying

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and shrieking were heard in Erin. Now it is that Brígh who invented a whistle for signalling at night.

Then Goibniu went into the well, and he became whole. There was a warrior with the Fomorians, even Octriallach son of Indech son of Dé Domnann, son of the Fomorian king. He told the Fomorians that each man of them should bring a stone of the stones of Drowes to cast into the well of Slaine in Achad Abla to the west of Moytura, to the east of Loch Arboch. So they went, and a stone for each man was brought on the well. Wherefore the cairn thus made is called Octriallach's Cairn. But another name for that well is Loch Luibe, for Dian-cecht used to put into it one of every herb lub that grew in Erin.

Now when the meeting of the great battle came, the Fomorians marched out of their camp outside, and formed themselves into strong indestructible battalions. Not a chief nor man of prowess of them was without a hauberk against his skin, a helmet on his head, a broad, (sounding) spear in his right hand, a heavy sharp sword on his belt, a firm shield on his shoulder. To attack the Fomorian host on that day was 'striking a head against a cliff' was 'a hand in a serpent's nest', was 'a face up to fire'.

These were the kings and chiefs that were heartening the host of the Fomorians, namely, Balor son of Dot son of Nét, Bres son of Elathu, Tuirí Tortbuillech son of Lobos, Goll and Irgoll. Loscenn-lomm son of Lomnglúnech, Indech son of Dé Domnann, the king of the Fomorians, Octriallach son of Indech, Omna and Bagna, Elathu son of Delbaeth.

On the other side the Tuath Dé Donann arose and left his nine comrades keeping Lugh, and they marched to the meeting of the battle. Then when the battle (follows) Lugh escaped from the keeping in which he was, as his charioteer, so that it was he who was in front of the battalion of the Tuath Dea. So then a keen and cruel battle

was fought

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between the tribe of the Fomorians and the men of Ireland. Lugh was heartening the men of Ireland that they should fight the battle fervently so that they should not be any longer in bondage. For it was better for them to find death in protecting their fatherland than to bide under bondage and tribute as they had been. Wherefore then Lugh sang this chant below, as he went round the men of Erin, on one foot and with one eye closed:

Arotroi cath comartan,

etc.

The hosts uttered a great shout as they entered the battle. Then they came together and each of them began to smite the other.

Many beautiful men fell there in the stall of death. Great the slaughter and the grave-lying that was there! Pride and shame were there side by side. There was anger and indignation. Abundant was the stream of blood there over the white skin of young warriors mangled by hands of eager men while fleeing the danger for [gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: one word] Harsh was the [...] and [...] of the heroes and the champions mutually fending their spears and their shields and their bodies when the others were smiting them with spears and with swords. Harsh, moreover, was the thunder that was there throughout the battle, the shouting of the warriors and the clashing of the shields, the flashing and whistling of the glaives and the ivory-hilted swords, the rattling and jingling of the quivers, the sound and winging of the darts and the javelins, and the crashing of the weapons!

The ends of their fingers and of their feet almost met in the mutual striking, and owing to the slipperiness of the blood under the feet of the soldiers, they would fall from their upright posture and beat their heads together as they sat. A battle was upheaved, gory, shivering, (crowded), sanguinary, and then the river Unnsenn ran in corpses of foes.

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Then Nuada Silverhand and Macha daughter of Ernmass fell by Balor grandson of Nét. And Cassmael fell by Octriallach son of Indech. Lugh and Balor of the Piercing Eye met in the battle. An evil eye had Balor. That eye was never opened save only on a battle-field. Four men used to lift up the lid of the eye with a (polished) handle which passed through its lid. If an army looked at that eye, though they were many thousands in number they could not resist a few warriors. Hence had it that poisonous power. His father's druids were concocting charms. He came and looked over the window, and the fume of the concoction came under it, so that the poison of the concoction afterwards came on the eye that looked. Then he and Lugh meet. [gap: meaning of text unclear]9

'Lift up mine eyelid, my lad', says Balor, 'that I may see the babbler who is conversing with me'.

The lid is raised from Balor's eye. Then Lugh cast a sling-stone at him, which carried the eye through his head. And so it was his own army that looked at it. And it fell on the host of the Fomorians, and thrice nine of them died beside it, so that the crowns of their heads came against the breast of Indech son of Dé Domnann, and a gush of blood sprang over his lips.

Says Indech: 'Let Loch Half-green my poet be summoned to me!' Half-green was he from the ground to the crown of his head. Loch goes to the king. 'Make known to me', saith Indech, 'who has (flung) this cast on me?'

Then the Morrígan, daughter of Ernmass, came, and was heartening the Tuatha Dea to fight the battle fiercely and fervently. So then she sang this lay below:

'Kings arise to the battle', etc.

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Thereafter the battle became a rout, and the Fomorians were beaten to the sea. The champion Ogma son of Elathu, and Indech son of Dé Domnann, the king of the Fomorians, fell in single combat.

Loch Half-green besought Lugh for quarter. 'Give me my three wishes', says Lugh.

'Thou shalt have them', says Loch. 'Till Doom I will ward off from Ireland all plundering by the Fomorians, and what

[gap: meaning of text unclear/extent: a few words]
at the end of the world for every ailment'.

So Loch was spared. Then he sang to the Gael the 'decree of fastening': Gebat foss, etc.

Then Loch said that he would bestow names on Lugh's nine chariots because of the quarter that had been given him. So Lugh told him to name them. Loch answered and said, 'Luachta, Anagat', etc.

'Query, what are the names of the charioteers who were in them?' 'Medol, Medon, Moth', etc.

'What are the names of the rods that were in their hands?' 'Not hard to say; Fes, Res, Roches', etc.

'What are the names of the horses?' 'Can, Doriadha', etc.

'Query: what is the number of the slain?' says Lugh to Loch. 'I know not the number of peasants and rabble. As to the number of Fomorian lords and nobles and champions and kings' sons and overkings, I know, even five thousand and three score and three men: two thousand and three fifties: four score thousand and nine times five: eight score and eight; four score and seven: four score and six: eight score and five: two and forty including Nét's grandson. That is the number of the slain of the Fomorian overkings and high nobles who fell in the battle.'

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'Howbeit as to the number of peasants and common people and rabble, and folk of every art besides who came in company with the great army—for every champion and every high chieftain and every overking of the Fomorians came with his host to the battle, so that all fell there, both his freemen and his slaves—we reckon only a few of the servants of the overkings. This then is the number that I have reckoned of these as I beheld: seven hundred, seven score and seven men

[gap: extent: a few numbers]

together with Sab Uanchennach son of Carpre Colc, son was he of a servant of Indech son of De Domnann, that is, a son of a servant of the Fomorian king.'

'As to what fell besides of 'half-men' and of

[gap: extent: three words]

who reached not the heart of the battle, these are in no wise numbered till we number stars of heaven, sand of

sea, flakes of snow, dew on lawn, hailstones, grass under feet of herds, and the Son of Ler's horses in a sea-storm'.

Thereafter they Lugh and his comrades found Bres son of Elathu unguarded. He said: 'It is better to give me quarter than to slay me'.

'What then will follow from that?' says Lugh. 'If I be spared', says Bres, 'the kine of Erin will always be in milk'. 'I will set this forth to our wise men', says Lugh.

Hence Lugh went to Maeltne Mór-brethach, and said to him: 'Shall Bres have quarter for giving constant milk to the kine of Erin?'

'He shall not have quarter', saith Maeltne; 'he has no power over their age or their (offspring) though he can milk them so long as they are alive'.

Lugh said to Bres: 'That does not save thee: thou hast no power over their age and their (offspring) though thou canst milk them'.

Said Bres: 'Forbotha', etc. [...]

'Is there aught else that will save thee, O Bres?' says Lugh.

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'There is in sooth. Tell your brehon that for sparing me the men of Ireland shall reap a harvest in every quarter of the year'.

Said Lugh to Moeltne: 'Shall Bres be spared for giving the men of Ireland a harvest of corn every quarter?'

'This has suited us'; saith Maeltne: 'the spring for ploughing and sowing, and the beginning of summer for the end of the strength of corn, and the beginning of autumn for the end of the ripeness of corn and for reaping it. Winter for consuming it.'

'That does not rescue thee', saith Lugh to Bres. 'Forbotha' etc., [...] saith he.

'Less than that rescues thee', saith Lugh. 'What?' says Bres.

'How shall the men of Ireland plough? How shall they sow? How shall they reap? After making known these three things thou wilt be spared'. 'Tell them' says Bres 'that their ploughing be on a Tuesday, their casting seed into the field be on a Tuesday, their reaping on a Tuesday.'

So through that stratagem Bres was let go free.

In that fight, then, Ogma the champion found Orna the sword of Tethra, a king of the Fomorians. Ogma unsheathed the sword and cleansed it. Then the sword related whatsoever had been done by it; for it was the custom of swords at that time, when unsheathed, to set forth the deeds that had been done by them. And therefore swords are entitled to the tribute of cleansing them after they have been unsheathed. Hence, also, charms are preserved in swords thenceforward. Now the reason why demons used to speak from weapons at that time was because weapons were worshipped by human beings at that epoch, and the weapons were among the safeguards of that time. It is of that sword that Loch Lethglas sang this lay:

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Now Lugh and the Dagdae and Ogma pursued the Fomorians, for they had carried off the Dagdae's harper, whose name was Uaitne. Then they reached the banqueting-house in which were Bres son of Elatha and Elathan son of Delbaeth. There hung the harp on the wall. That is the harp in which the Dagdae had bound the melodies so that they sounded not until by his call he summoned them forth; when he said this below:

Come Daurdabla!
Come Coir-cethar-chuir!
Come summer, Come winter!
Mouths of harps and bags and pipes!

(Now that harp had two names, even Dur-da-bla, 'Oak of two (greens)' and Coir-cetharchuir, 'Four-angled music').

Then the harp went forth from the wall, and kills nine men, and came to the Dagdae. And he played for them the three things whereby harpers are distinguished, to wit, sleep-strain and smile-strain and wail-strain. He played wail-strain to them, so that their tearful women wept. He played smile-strain to them, so their women and children laughed. He played sleep-strain to them, and the hosts fell asleep. Through that sleep the three of them escaped unhurt from the Fomorians though these desired to slay them.

Then the Dagdae brought with him [gap: text omitted in original] through the lowing of the heifer which had been given him for his labour. For when she called her calf all the cattle of Ireland which the Fomorians had taken as their tribute, grazed.

Now after the battle was won and the corpses cleared away, the Morrígan daughter of Ernmas proceeded to proclaim that battle and the mighty victory which had taken place, to the royal heights of Ireland and to its fairy hosts and its chief

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waters and its rivermouths. And hence it is that Badb also describes high deeds. 'Hast thou any tale?' saith everyone to her then. And she said:

Peace up to heaven,
Heaven down to earth,
Earth under heaven,
Strength in everyone, etc.

Then, moreover, she was prophesying the end of the world, and foretelling every evil that would be therein, and every disease and every vengeance. Wherefore then she sang this lay below:

I shall not see a world that will be dear to me.
Summer without flowers,
Kine will be without milk,
Women without modesty,
Men without valour,
Captures without a king.

[gap: extent: approx. 6 words]

Woods without mast,
Sea without produce,

[gap: extent: approx. 40 words]

Wrong judgments of old men,
False precedents of brehons,
Every man a betrayer,
Every boy a reaver.
Son will enter his father's bed,
Father will enter his son's bed,
Everyone will be his brother's brother-in-law.

[gap: extent: 8 words]

An evil time!
Son will deceive his father,
Daughter will deceive her mother.

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