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IRISCHE TEXTE

MIT ÜBERSETZUNGEN UND WÖRTERBUCH

HERAUSGEGEBEN

VON

WH. STOKES UND E. WINDISCH

4 2
VIERTE SERIE. 2. HEFT.

LEIPZIG

VERLAG VON S. HIRZEL

1909.

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~~Professor Carl Marstrand's samling~~

IN CATH CATHARDA

THE CIVIL WAR OF THE ROMANS

AN IRISH VERSION OF LUCAN'S PHARSALIA

EDITED AND TRANSLATED

BY

WHITLEY STOKES

LEIPZIG

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РОССИЙСКАЯ
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННАЯ
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Preface.

Next to the *Táin bó Cúalgne*¹ and the *Acallam na Senórach*², the *Cath Catharda*, the Civil War of the Romans, is the longest prose composition of the mediaeval Irish. It is a free adaptation of Books I—VII of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, a poem which seems to have been popular in Gaeldom, not because of its poetic merits³, but from its stirring accounts of battles, onfalls, sieges, its reports of visions and speeches, and its vivid descriptions of magical processes for dispelling disease and ascertaining the future. Even its less praiseworthy characteristics — its pedantic language, its unnatural similes — must have gratified the Irish literary taste, the debasement of which seems to have begun in the fourteenth, and grown in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries⁴).

Though the *Cath Catharda* is an adaptation of the *Pharsalia*, the Irish adapter has not denied himself the pleasure of making sundry additions to his text. These fall under the heads (1) of history, and (2) of folklore. Thus he starts with a list of the six world-monarchies, doubtless suggested by the

¹ ed. E. Windisch, Leipzig 1905.

² ed. W. S. Leipzig 1900.

³ Lucan, according to Quintilian, is *magis oratoribus quam poetis imitandus*, and Frederick the Great called the whole *Pharsalia* 'eine schwülstige Gazette'. See Dr. Th. Creizenach, *Die Aeneis, die vierte Ecloge und die Pharsalia im Mittelalter*, Frankfurt am Main 1864.

⁴ See as to the strings of alliterating adjectives, *The Banquet of Dún na nGédh*, p. IX, and the preface to *Acallam na Senórach*, p. XIV.

four in Daniel's vision (Daniel II 19, 37 et seq.). The horrible death of Crassus is told, probably, out of Florus' *Epitome*. Caesar's invasion of Britain is related with additions from Beda, *Hist. Eccl.* I, 2.

So far as I know there are eight manuscripts of *In Cath Catharda*, all, save one, imperfect. The present edition is based on the following four:

H. The vellum fifteenth-century ms. in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, formerly marked H. 2. 7, now 1298. Our text begins at p. 376, breaks off at p. 390, where there is a gap, corresponding with ll. 741—1191 of the present edition; pp. 390—415 contain ll. 1192—2400, where a leaf is lost; pp. 416—417 contain ll. 2491—2579, where the text ends in this Ms.

S. The Stowe ms. D. IV. 2, in the library of the Royal Irish Academy. It is headed: A(d)sit nobis sancti spiritus gracia. amen. The text begins in p. 1, a leaf is lost after p. 40 (ll. 2805—3087), another leaf is lost after p. 42 (ll. 3222—3344), and the text breaks off in p. 44 with the words: ro teclamit cuigi clocha, = l. 3429 of the present edition. There is a bad description of this ms. in O'Conor's *Bibliotheca Ms. Stowensis*, vol. I, 280.

C. Another ms. in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, now marked C. VI. 2.^v This ms. is acephalous. It begins with l. 2640 of the present edition, and ends with ro fagsat na aucdair cetnu righpersannu, = l. 6192. It is dated 1633.

F. The Franciscan ms. This complete copy is on paper, was written in 1616 and contains 139 folios, with twenty lines in each page. The scribe is careful, though he often omits marks of length and marks of lenition and puts, after the fashion of his century, cc for g, cch for gh, sꝯ (i. e. sed) for acht or cht. There are headings from ff. 4^r to 97^r.

Folios 4^r—5^r are headed: Sloicced Cesair an inis Bretan (l. 148),

f. 5^v—8^r: Adbair in catha catharda (l. 205),