

a salad. Although the writer knows no reference in the Irish language to the custom of eating it and none earlier than the 16th century, the evidence for its use is reasonably conclusive. It is cited as food in the State Papers in 1581,<sup>1</sup> by Spenser in 1596,<sup>2</sup> by Moryson in the first decades of the 17th century,<sup>3</sup> by Piers in 1682<sup>4</sup> and by Moffett in 1728.<sup>5</sup> The exact identity of the plant in question in these contexts is in doubt: it may have been the wood sorrel (*Oxalis*) or the plant now popularly recognized as the shamrock (*Medicago* or *Trifolium*). *Creamh*, which is usually translated as 'wild garlic', was also relished. It is mentioned among other 'edible herbs' in a life of St. Kevin,<sup>6</sup> in *Agallamh na Senorach*<sup>7</sup> and in the Laws.<sup>8</sup> It is, probably, to be identified as one of the three species of wild garlic or leek (*Allium*) native to the country. Of these, the wild leek (*A. babingtonii*) is very rare and is found only in rocky and sandy places along the west coast from Donegal to Clare; the crow garlic (*A. vineale*) is rather rare and local and almost confined to the southern half of the country; while only the wild garlic (*A. ursinum*) is fairly frequent. It is at present local in distribution and confined to woods and damp shady places but it must be remembered that in ancient and medieval times the widespread oak forests would have provided a congenial habitat for it so that it was, probably, much more common then than now. All things considered, the identification of *creamh* with the wild garlic (*A. ursinum*) seems correct. This identification is the accepted one among writers on Irish botanical terminology.<sup>9</sup>

A species of plant called *cainnenn*, variously translated as 'leek', 'onion' or 'garlic', was in common use. It was, undoubtedly, used chiefly as a flavouring. In the first place, it is usually specified in comparatively small amounts: 'a handful' or 'two handfuls'.<sup>10</sup> In the second place, it generally appears among the 'condiments' or relishes for food.<sup>11</sup> Thirdly, there is a passage in the *Vision of MacConglinne* which proves it to have been a flavouring. It occurs in the description of the doorkeeper of a fortress, who, like everything else, animate and inanimate, in the *Vision* is composed of different kinds of food. Of him, it is said that there was 'a seven-filleted crown of butter on his head, in each fillet of which was the produce of seven ridges of pure leeks (*ocus bátar secht n-immatre do f[h]irchainnind*

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. S.P.I., 1574-1585*, p. 318.

<sup>2</sup> *View*, pp. 166-167.

<sup>3</sup> *Itinerary*, vol. 4, p. 200.

<sup>4</sup> *Westmeath*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>5</sup> *Hudibras*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>6</sup> *Irish Saints*, vol. 2, p. 160.

<sup>7</sup> *Silv. Gad.*, Irish text, p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> *Laws*, vol. 2, p. 326.

<sup>9</sup> Hogan, F. Edmund, et al. *Irish and Scottish Gaelic Names of Herbs, Plants, Trees, etc.* Dublin, 1900, p. 23; Moloney, Michael F. *Irish Ethno-Botany*. Dublin, 1919, p. 43.

<sup>10</sup> *Laws*, vol. 2, p. 255; vol. 4, p. 303.

<sup>11</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, pp. 303, 309, 311; vol. 5, p. 41.

*in cach coraind dib-side fóleth*).<sup>1</sup> Taken by itself, this might be construed as meaning that leeks were stuck in a fringe in each tier of this tiara of butter merely to give a decorative effect. Dineley, however, writing in 1681, includes among the articles of Irish diet: 'Butter layd up in wicker basketts, mixed with store [blank in original], a sort of garlick, and buried for some time in a bog, to make provision of an high tast for Lent.'<sup>2</sup> This throws an entirely new light on the *Vision* passage which, obviously, must be interpreted as meaning that every tier of the butter-crown was flavoured with the produce of seven ridges of leeks. Further, these two passages, taken together, would be enough to establish the identity of *cainnenn* as some kind of plant of the onion genus (*Allium*), even if there were no other evidence on this point. As 'green *cainnenn* (*glas cainnenn*)' is mentioned in the Laws,<sup>3</sup> we are probably justified in concluding that the bulbs were used as well as the leaves. Indeed, it seems more likely that chopped or grated bulbs rather than the leaves would have been used to flavour the butter referred to by Dineley, since it would have been easier to incorporate them in it than the leaves and, moreover, no specimen of bog butter so far discovered has, to the writer's knowledge, revealed the fragments of leaves which would, almost certainly, have been preserved and remained visible in such a homogeneous substance.

That *cainnenn* was a cultivated plant could, virtually, be presumed from the way it is assumed in the Laws to be readily available for refectations,<sup>4</sup> food-rents<sup>5</sup> and food for the sick.<sup>6</sup> The passage from the *Vision of Mac-Conglinne* just quoted, however, affords conclusive evidence that it was specially grown, since it shows that it was set in ridges. There are other contexts which disclose that it was cultivated. In a statement in the Laws about the rights of private property, it is laid down that a man who absconds from his tenancy in the land of another is entitled to compensation for 'roidh [i.e. dye-plants] or onions (*cainnenn*) or apple trees which his own hand had planted'.<sup>7</sup> Referring to the trespass of hens, another passage states: 'Their three trespasses are soft swallowing of bees, and the injury of "roidh"-plants and garlic (*coindenn*).'<sup>8</sup> A further context defines trespass as 'breaking of stakes or fences, and injury of the "roidh"-plant and onions'.<sup>9</sup> It is clear from these quotations that *cainnenn* was grown in a fenced plot or garden.

In some instances the name *cainnenn* stands alone but in others the

<sup>1</sup> *Aislinge*, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Observations*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Laws*, vol. 2, p. 255.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, pp. 309, 311.

<sup>5</sup> *Laws*, vol. 5, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> *Eriu*, vol. 12 (1938), pp. 21, 37, 41.

<sup>7</sup> *Laws*, vol. 5, p. 501.

<sup>8</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, p. 119.

<sup>9</sup> *Laws*, vol. 3, p. 76, footnote.

prefix *fír* is added to it, i.e. *fír-chainnenn*, meaning 'real or true onions/leeks/garlic'.<sup>1</sup> Binchy translates *fír* in this case as 'fresh'.<sup>2</sup> If *fír* is taken to mean 'true' or 'genuine', there must have been two sorts of *cainnenn*, one of which was regarded as of better quality than the other. If Binchy's rendering as 'fresh' is accepted, the question of a distinction between two varieties does not arise.

Another plant-name which has been translated as 'leek' is *folt-chep*. The second element in the name may be the Latin *cepa*, onion. The word occurs in the only context known to the writer which gives any information about the appearance of the ancient Irish onion or leek. It occurs in the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*:

Then disease attacked Ailill's pregnant wife in such wise that death was near unto her. Patrick asked what had befallen her? The woman answered, 'I beheld an herb in the air; and on earth I never saw its equal; and I shall die, or the child that is in my womb will die, or we shall both die, unless I eat that herb.' Patrick said to her: 'What is the semblance of the herb?' 'Like rushes,' saith the woman. Patrick blessed the rushes, so that they became a leek (*folt-chep*). The woman ate it afterwards and was whole at once; . . .<sup>3</sup>

The comparison with rushes is in harmony with the plant being some type of onion, chives, leek or garlic. It may well have been the same as *cainnenn*.

In addition to *creamh*, *cainnenn* and *folt-chep*, there is a fourth term which is commonly equated with 'leek'. This is the word *lus* or *barrlus*. 'Three or four sprigs of leeks (*lus*)' were among the foods allowed to the Culdees;<sup>4</sup> leeks (*lus*) appear in a monastic menu;<sup>5</sup> two handfuls of leeks (*barrlus*) are specified in a food-rent;<sup>6</sup> and the *Vision of MacConglinne* speaks of 'a forest of tall real leeks (*fírlossa*)'.<sup>7</sup> In the last two instances, *barrlus* and *fírlossa* are coupled with the word *cainnenn*, so that it is extremely unlikely that *lus* is merely an alternative name for *cainnenn*. Perhaps, another kind of onion is intended.

In later times leeks and onions are frequently mentioned in the Anglo-Norman documents: in the accounts of the manor of Carlow;<sup>8</sup> in the lists of goods on which tolls might be levied in New Ross, 1374,<sup>9</sup> and in Drogheda, 1404.<sup>10</sup> Leeks appear among the altarages of the Hospital of the

<sup>1</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, pp. 41, 311; *Ériu*, vol. 1 (1904), p. 40; *Ériu*, vol. 12 (1938), p. 37; *Aislinge*, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Ériu*, vol. 12 (1938), p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Trip. Life*, vol. 1, p. 201.

<sup>4</sup> *T.R.I.A.*, vol. 24 (1873), p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> *Oengus*, p. 55.

<sup>6</sup> *Laws*, vol. 2, p. 255.

<sup>7</sup> *Aislinge*, p. 38.

<sup>8</sup> Hore, Philip Herbert, *History of the Town and County of Wexford. Old and New Ross*. London, 1900, pp. 30, 31.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

<sup>10</sup> *Cal. Charter Rolls*, vol. 5, p. 425.

Crutched Friars in Ardee in 1540<sup>1</sup> and leek and onion seed coming into Clonmel in 1591 were subject to toll.<sup>2</sup>

It does not seem possible to establish when peas and beans were introduced into the country but the writer knows no literary reference which would suggest that they were cultivated in pre-Norman Ireland. It may be that they made their first appearance here in the new husbandry introduced by the monastic orders. At all events, they were well established as crops soon after the Norman invasion, at least in those parts of the country subject to their system. A mandate of 1303/4 to the justiciary to raise provisions for the king's campaign in Scotland specifies '600 quarters of beans and peas', which can hardly be mere clerkly wishful thinking.<sup>3</sup> In the presentments of the juries at New Ross in 1368, we find a man accused of appropriating certain farm produce which included peas.<sup>4</sup> Peas and beans are included in the goods on which toll might be levied in the charter granted by Edwards III to New Ross in 1374.<sup>5</sup> In 1471, the *Annals of Connacht* record showers of hail falling before and after May Day: 'Destroying much blossoms and beans and fruit in all parts of Ireland where they fell',<sup>6</sup> an entry which indicates that they were widely grown at the time. There are frequent references to peas and beans in the Patent and Close Rolls of the 15th century.<sup>7</sup> In his History, published in Lisbon in 1621, Philip O'Sullivan Beare gives an account of the retreat of the O'Sullivans from the south and states that when they reached a district in Co. Longford they appropriated 'sacks of wheat, beans and barley' from the houses.<sup>8</sup> Beans are mentioned among the crops grown by the peasantry in the mid-17th century satire *Parlement Chloinne Tomáís*.<sup>9</sup> In 1647, the State Papers record a payment made to Francis Dowde 'for 40 barrels of white beans and 8 barrels of black beans', bought from him for the army<sup>10</sup> and an anonymous description of Ireland of 1673 says that the bread of the 'common people' is often made with an admixture of beans and peas.<sup>11</sup>

Some kind of root vegetable called *meacan* was eaten from early times. Hogan lists over thirty plants to which the term is applied<sup>12</sup> but, taking into account that in modern Irish the word, so far as culinary vegetables are concerned, relates to the parsnip and the carrot, it is extremely probable that some variety of carrot or parsnip was always in question. St. Ciaran

<sup>1</sup> *Extents*, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls Eliz.*, vol. 2, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. Docs. Ireland, 1302-1307*, pp. 99, 100.

<sup>4</sup> Hore *op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>5</sup> Hore *op. cit.*, p. 203.

<sup>6</sup> *A. Conn.*, p. 555.

<sup>7</sup> *Rot. Pat. & Claus.*, vol. 1, pp. 214, 238.

<sup>8</sup> *O. S. Letters, Galway*, vol. 1, pp. 538-539 (typescript).

<sup>9</sup> *Gadelica*, vol. 1 (1912-1913), p. 46.

<sup>10</sup> *Cal. S.P.I., 1633-1647*, p. 783.

<sup>11</sup> *Present State*, pp. 151-152.

<sup>12</sup> Hogan *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

of Saigher's dinner every night included two *mecon do murrathaig* as a relish.<sup>1</sup> Stokes ventures a translation as 'two roots of seafern', taking the word *murráthach* to be connected with the sea, but O'Sullivan, construing it as an enclosed garden, renders the vegetable as 'parsnip'.<sup>2</sup> There are other early references to the plant none of which, apparently, throws any light on what it might be or the extent to which it was cultivated, if at all. *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis* gives the impression that it was popular among the cottiers and small farmers about the middle of the 17th century<sup>3</sup> and it would appear as if the *meacan* of the period was definitely the parsnip, for the account of 1673 previously quoted states that the Irish 'feed much also upon parsnips, potatoes and watercresses'.<sup>4</sup> What was, it seems, another root vegetable called *cerrbacán*, and which has been translated as 'carrot', is mentioned in the *Vision of MacConglinne*,<sup>5</sup> while *biatas* or beet occurs in the *Pairlement*.<sup>6</sup> Of individual plants, it only remains to say that along the coast seaweeds of different kinds appear to have been used as food from ancient times to the present day. *Duilesc* or dulse, in particular, is mentioned among the refectations due to a tenant<sup>7</sup> and receives recognition elsewhere in the Laws.<sup>8</sup> Dineley, in 1681, says that the 'vulgar Irish' living near the shore eat 'dillisk and slugane, i.e. [*sleabhacán* or sloke]'.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to data about particular plants, there is a good deal of information of a vaguer kind about the consumption of vegetable food in general. The law tract *Bretha Crolige* says:

No person on sick maintenance is entitled in Irish law to any condiment except garden herbs; for it is for this purpose that gardens have been made, viz. for the care of the sick.<sup>10</sup>

Taken literally and by itself, this statement would reduce the role of vegetables to invalid food but, while they must have bulked very small in the diet as a whole, we have seen that they were a normal and regular part of the food. In the monastic life they probably formed a larger share of the food and there are references in the lives of the saints which confirm the likelihood of this.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Oengus, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Manners and Customs*, vol. 1, p. ccclxvi, footnote.

<sup>3</sup> *Gadelica*, vol. 1 (1912-1913), p. 128.

<sup>4</sup> *Present State*, pp. 151-152.

<sup>5</sup> *Aislinge*, pp. 38, 98.

<sup>6</sup> *Gadelica*, vol. 1 (1913-1913), p. 130.

<sup>7</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, p. 309.

<sup>8</sup> *Laws*, vol. 1, p. 170; vol. 5, p. 484.

<sup>9</sup> *Observations*, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> *Ériu*, vol. 12 (1938), p. 23.

<sup>11</sup> *V.S.H.*, vol. 2, pp. 13, 99, 132.

## FRUITS

It is only to be expected that the ancient Irish appreciated the wild fruits which the country afforded. There is, however, only a very limited number of these and the sloe, wild cherry, raspberry, blackberry, strawberry, rowan, crabapple, elderberry, whortleberry and cranberry virtually exhaust the list. Of these, the sloe and cherry are bitter, while the cranberry is to be found only in a few places in the centre of the country. Of the remainder, by far the most popular, then as now, was the blackberry and there are innumerable contexts which show how much it was in favour. Rowan berries were also eaten, for in the *Táin Bó Fraeich* Ailill desires Fraeich to fetch him some since he loves them<sup>1</sup> and in a 12th century Fenian poem, it is said: 'I will eat good apples in the glen, and fragrant berries of rowan tree.'<sup>2</sup> Raspberries, strawberries and woodbine berries are mentioned in a poem of 15th/16th century date as edible dainties.<sup>3</sup> Botanically speaking, nuts are, of course, fruit and the nuts which are mentioned so often in Irish literature are hazel nuts, for the walnut is an importation. A bush named *spín*, translated as 'gooseberry', is cited among the 'bramble trees' in the *Laws*<sup>4</sup> but the writer has found no conclusive evidence that it was, in fact, that species. There would appear to be no information to show that any of the above fruits were the subjects of cultivation and there seem to be no data about when cultivated varieties of fruit were introduced into the country.

The fruit which is most frequently referred to in early Irish documents is the apple. It is usually spoken of in glowing language: fragrant in smell, delicious to the taste and, even in colour, delectably red or golden. Apples appear everywhere: in the sagas, e.g. *Tochmarc Emire*, where Cuchulainn is helped across the Plain of Ill Luck by a warrior who gives him an apple which he follows along the ground;<sup>5</sup> in the voyages, e.g. *Voyage of the Hui Corra*, where the mariners come to an island, one of the delights of which is 'a beautiful bright grove of fragrant apple trees';<sup>6</sup> in the *Laws*, where it is reckoned among 'the chieftain trees';<sup>7</sup> and in the poetry, e.g. in the stanzas which the strange woman sings in the house of Bran.<sup>8</sup> They are found in the place-name lore,<sup>9</sup> repeatedly in the lives of the saints,<sup>10</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup> P.R.I.A., Irish MSS. series, vol. 1, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Duanaire Finn*, Part 1, p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> *Duanaire Finn*, Part 2, p. 375.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, p. 149.

<sup>5</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, vol. 2 (1890), p. 447.

<sup>6</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, 14 (1893), p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, p. 147.

<sup>8</sup> *Bran*, vol. 1, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Rev. Celt.*, vols. 15 (1894), p. 310; 16 (1895), p. 279.

<sup>10</sup> *V.S.H.*, vol. 1, pp. 78, 167, 178, 182, 184-185, 251; vol. 2, pp. 9, 12, 24, 161, 309; *Adannan*, p. 105.

Fenian tales<sup>1</sup> and even in the annals, where, under the year 1109, we read: abundance of apples this year<sup>2</sup> and, under 1486, 'apples were abundant in gardens and woods this year'.<sup>3</sup> Apples are specified in the minute regulations governing the food of the Culdees: 'In case of apples, if they be large, five or six of them, with the bread, are sufficient; but if they be small, twelve of them are sufficient',<sup>4</sup> while the unfortunate chieftain to whose lot it fell to entertain the ravenous king, Cathal Mac Finguine, had, among other things, to provide a bushel of them to take the edge off his insatiable appetite.<sup>5</sup>

There seems to be little doubt that the apples in question in most of these contexts belonged to a cultivated kind. Wild apples are frequently mentioned in other contemporary texts, a fact which implies that there were others which were not wild.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, in a number of places we find references to the planting of appletrees, an operation unlikely to be applied to a wild species, St. Patrick planted an appletree which he had taken out of a fort, i.e. a dwelling site;<sup>7</sup> the Laws enjoin that a tenant who absconds from his holding is entitled to compensation for 'apple trees which his own hand had planted';<sup>8</sup> St. Comgall blessed the garden (*hortum*) from which thieves were stealing the apples of his monastic brethren and the culprits were struck blind;<sup>9</sup> and St. Moedoc accidentally planted the seeds of other trees instead of apple seeds but, such was his sanctity, they grew up as appletrees.<sup>10</sup>

We have seen a little of the frequency with which apples are referred to in the older literature and of the high esteem in which they were held. They continued to be the chief fruit of the country through the succeeding centuries. When we come to the period of the Anglo-Norman documents, we find that apple orchards form an integral part of country manors and urban settlements alike. About 1200, we find them in Dublin city<sup>11</sup> and, in 1250, in Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin, and Moyglare, Co. Meath.<sup>12</sup> Returns of the sale of apples are made in the accounts of the manor of Carlow at the end of the 13th century<sup>13</sup> and they were the subject of tithe in Donagh-

<sup>1</sup> *Silv. Gad.*, pp. 111, 121, 171-172.

<sup>2</sup> *A.I.*, p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> *A.U.*, vol. 3, p. 309.

<sup>4</sup> *T.R.I.A.*, vol. 24 (1873), p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> *Aislinge*, p. 44.

<sup>6</sup> *Laws*, vol. 5, p. 475.

<sup>7</sup> *Trip. Life.*, vol. 1, p. 233.

<sup>8</sup> *Laws*, vol. 5, p. 501.

<sup>9</sup> *V.S.H.*, vol. 2, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> *V.S.H.*, vol. 2, p. 161.

<sup>11</sup> *Register of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Dublin*. Edited by Eric St. John Brooks, Dublin, 1936, p. 91.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>13</sup> *Hore op. cit.*, pp. 9, 26, 35.

more, Co. Tipperary, in 1326.<sup>1</sup> In the 14th century there are records of orchards in counties Dublin,<sup>2</sup> Louth<sup>3</sup> and Wexford,<sup>4</sup> but they are not confined to Leinster for the annals record the destruction of orchards in Co. Mayo in the course of war in 1386.<sup>5</sup> Even a cursory examination of 15th century documents reveals that orchards were widely distributed in the counties of Kildare,<sup>6</sup> Louth,<sup>7</sup> Meath<sup>8</sup> and Dublin.<sup>9</sup> In the 16th century, records of one kind and another relating to the suppressed religious houses show that, apparently, every one of them had an orchard attached to it.<sup>10</sup> Orchards were also common within the walls of the various towns. We find them, for example, in Naas (1559),<sup>11</sup> Athy (1516),<sup>12</sup> Inistioge (1540),<sup>13</sup> Kilkenny (1540),<sup>14</sup> Kells (1540),<sup>15</sup> Drogheda (1569),<sup>16</sup> Cashel (1578),<sup>17</sup> and Trim (1593),<sup>18</sup> to mention only some of the cases. From the 17th century, records ranging from 1603 to 1697 show the existence of orchards at various places in the counties of Dublin,<sup>19</sup> Louth,<sup>20</sup> Kilkenny,<sup>21</sup> Meath,<sup>22</sup> Westmeath,<sup>23</sup> Kildare,<sup>24</sup> Wexford,<sup>25</sup> Carlow,<sup>26</sup> Donegal,<sup>27</sup> Fermanagh<sup>28</sup> and Armagh.<sup>29</sup> Although this survey of the evidence is far indeed from being exhaustive, enough data have been adduced to demonstrate how common orchards were in the country from the 12th to the 17th century. Apparently, these orchards consisted almost exclusively of apple trees for the writer has discovered few references to any other kind of fruit tree in the period.<sup>30</sup> If the conclusions drawn from the whole body of information relating to fruit are correct, the apple is the only kind which was cultivated in Ireland in pre-

<sup>1</sup> *Register of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, Dublin*. Edited by Eric St. John Brooks. Dublin, 1936, p. 293.

<sup>2</sup> *Registrum de Kilmainham*. Edited by Charles MacNeill. Dublin, n.d., p. 25; *Rot. Pat. et Claus.*, vol. 1, p. 153.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119. <sup>4</sup> *Hore op. cit.*, p. 192. <sup>5</sup> *F.M.*, vol. 4, p. 705.

<sup>6</sup> *Rot. Pat et Claus*, vol. 1, p. 222. <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227. <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235. <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 256.

<sup>10</sup> *Extents passim*.

<sup>11</sup> *Inquisitions*, vol. 1, Eliz. 2, no. 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Eliz. 5, no. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Fiants Edward VI*, p. 43.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>16</sup> *Fiants Eliz.*, p. 219.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 243.

<sup>19</sup> *Inquisitions*, vol. 1, Jac. I, nos. 7, 9; Car. I, nos. 17, 23, 25.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Jac. I, no. 1; Car. I, nos. 3, 9; Gul. III, no. 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Jac. I, nos. 3, 9, 13, 17, 20, 27, 36; Car. I, nos. 2, 8, 17.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Jac. I, no. 45.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, Jac. I, nos. 4, 5, 6, 16, 37; Car. I, no. 133.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Jac. I, nos. 7, 10, 36; Car. I, no. 65.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Jac. I, no. 20; Car. I, nos. 38, 127; Car. II, no. 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, Car. I, nos. 2, 56.

<sup>27</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls. James I, Ireland*, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> *Inquisitions*, vol. 2, appendix.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Car. I, no. 40.

<sup>30</sup> *Christ Church Deeds. Appendix to 24th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland*, pp. 139-140 (Dublin City, 1545: pears); p. 191 (Dublin City, 1595/6: cherries, plums, damsons).



Norman times and, probably, the only one in common cultivation from the 12th to the 17th century.

#### MISCELLANEOUS FOODS

The domestic fowl of the period with which we are dealing were geese and hens but, although the shell of a hen egg was a measure of capacity,<sup>1</sup> although the trespasses of geese and hens are discussed at length,<sup>2</sup> although fines relating to both are specified,<sup>3</sup> although the value of hen eggs is set out,<sup>4</sup> and although the ratio of geese to other animals in common pasture is laid down,<sup>5</sup> there are strangely few references to eggs as food. They do not, for instance, to the writer's knowledge, appear in any of the food rents. They were among the foods allowed to the Culdees in the relaxation at Easter<sup>6</sup> but they do not appear at all in the long list of edibles enumerated in the *Vision of MacConglinne*. The only instance known to the writer where they form part of a literary episode is in the *Banquet of Dun na nGedh* where goose eggs play a part in the plot.<sup>7</sup>

Honey was, of course, the only sweetening agent and was so commonly used that it is unnecessary to refer to it in detail.

#### DRINKS

It is not proposed to deal minutely with the history and relative importance of the drinks used in ancient and medieval Ireland. Milk and whey have been discussed above. From the earliest times, ale (*coirm*) was the common intoxicant and the mead, which popular fancy pictures as the chosen drink of ancient days, seems, in reality, to have been of little importance. In rural districts, domestic brewing, except in well-to-do households in exceptional localities, died out during the 18th century and was virtually unknown by the 19th. The import of wine probably dates back to Roman times but it must always have been too expensive to have been anything but a luxury, beyond the reach of all except those of the highest social standing. The distillation of *aqua vitæ* or whiskey (*uisce beatha*) appears to have been introduced in the medieval period and it was widely practised from the 15th century onwards. Although private distillation has for long been prohibited, it is still carried on by a small and decreasing number of persons by traditional methods and according to traditional formulæ.

<sup>1</sup> *Laws*, vol. 1, p. 107; vol. 2, pp. 335, 337.

<sup>2</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, pp. 87, 115, 117, 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Laws*, vol. 3, pp. 379, 381.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws*, vol. 5, pp. 83, 85.

<sup>5</sup> *Laws*, vol. 4, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> *T.R.I.A.*, vol. 24 (1873), p. 203.

<sup>7</sup> *The Banquet of Dun na nGedh*. Translated by John O'Donovan. Dublin, 1842, pp. 19, 21, 25, 29.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES

N.B.—In bilingual texts the references are given to the English pagination.

- A. Clon.: *Annals of Clonmacnoise*. Edited by Rev. Denis Murphy, S.J. Dublin, 1896.  
 A. Conn.: *Annals of Connacht*. Edited by A. Martin Freeman. Dublin, 1944.  
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 Cal. Carew MSS.: *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts*.  
 Cal. Docs. Ireland: *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland, 1302-1307*.  
 Cal. Pat. Rolls Eliz.: *Calendar of Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland, 18th-45th Elizabeth*.  
 Cal. S.P.I.: *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*.  
 Celt. Lex.: *Archiv für Celtische Lexikographie*.  
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