

## A Note on Translation

The Old Irish tale entitled *Orgain Denna Ríg* has been edited by Whitley Stokes and, more recently, but less completely, by David Greene.<sup>1</sup> Both editions are based on the *Book of Leinster* text. A glance at the variant readings in Stokes's edition makes clear the fact that the Rawlinson version differs from that of LL-YBL in some curious ways which Greene suggests may be the result of oral transmission at some stage (p. 16). One such divergence occurs at p. 3, l. 13 of Stokes's edition (ll. 317–18 in Greene's edition). LL reads: "*Is meth 7 milliud dond fhir. Is tabarta i n-éslis.*" YBL has *mell* for *milliud*, but is otherwise identical, while R has, "*is toirisiu conid meth 7 conid milliud 7 conid tabartha i n-eisleis in fer-sa o shunn.*" This statement in its various forms is made by Lóegaire Lorc about his brother, Cobthach Coel, (who has lured Lóegaire to him in order to kill him and seize the kingship of Ireland from him) after Cobthach has accused Lóegaire of stripping him of his wealth because he broke the leg of a chicken when entering the house. Cobthach asks Lóegaire to bring him the chicken so that he can bandage its leg and Lóegaire's reply (presumably *sotto voce*) is, "*Is tabarta i n-éslis.*"

Stokes translates this sentence, "He is delivered into neglect," apparently taking into account R's "*in fer-sa*" but failing to note that *tabarta* is verbal of necessity. Greene, on the other

---

<sup>1</sup> Whitley Stokes, *ZCP* III (1901), 1–14; David Greene, "Orgain Denna Ríg", in *Fingal Rónáin and Other Stories* (Dublin, Institute for Advanced Studies, 1955) (Medieval and Modern Irish Series XVI). The tale is found in MS. Rawlinson B502, *The Book of Leinster* and the *Yellow Book of Lecan* (Greene, p. 16); following Greene I use the form of the title found in Rawl. B502. The title appears as *Orgain Dinn Ríg* in the saga lists in LL and T.C.D. H. 3. 17 (Greene, p. 16).