

not matter if some of the boys and girls do topple over asleep, or even some of the older folk as the hour gets late ; the tales meet no interruption in their even, unbroken flow. And here we have the most Celtic and the most natural environments which the Fairy-Faith enjoys in Scotland.

There are still the Southern Highlands in the country around Oban, and the islands near them ; and of all these isles none is so picturesque in history as the one Columba loved so well. Though Iona enjoys less of the wildness of the Hebrides furthest west, it has their storm-winds and fogs and dark days, and their strangeness of isolation. On it, as Adamnan tells us, the holy man fought with black demons who came to invade his monastery, and saw angelic hosts ; and when the angels took his soul at midnight in that little chapel by the sea-shore there was a mystic light which illuminated all the altar like the brightest sunshine. But nowadays, where the saint saw demons and angels the Islanders see ghosts and ' good people ', and when one of these islanders is taken in death it is not by angels—it is by fairies.

IN THE ISLE OF MAN

In the midst of the Irish Sea, almost equidistant from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and concentrating in itself the psychical and magnetic influences from these three Celtic lands, and from Celto-Saxon England too, lies the beautiful kingdom of the great Tuatha De Danann god, Manannan Mac Lir, or, as his loyal Manx subjects prefer to call him, Mannanan-Beg-Mac-y-Leir. In no other land of the Celt does Nature show so many moods and contrasts, such perfect repose at one time and at another time the mightiness of its unloosed powers, when the baffled sea throws itself angrily against a high rock-bound coast, as wild and almost as weather-worn as the western coasts of Ireland and the Hebrides.

But it is Nature's calmer moods which have greater effect upon the Manx people : on the summit of his ancient stronghold, South Barrule Mountain, the god Manannan yet dwells invisible to mortal eyes, and whenever on a warm day he throws off his magic mist-blanket with which he is wont to