

to the Continent the work of the great schools was carried on and there was considerable literary activity;¹ in 914 and 924, respectively, the great crosses at Clonmacnois and Monasterboice were set up; cumhdachs, or book-shrines of plated gold and silver, were made for the three great manuscripts, the *Book of Kells*, the *Book of Durrow* and the *Book of Armagh*; carved gold, silver, and bronze work reached a high level of excellence in the famous Ardagh Chalice and the Tara Brooch; and during the years which intervened between the battles of Gleann Mama and Clontarf, Romanesque architecture was introduced into Ireland. Irish art did not remain wholly free from Scandinavian influence. In the Cross of Cong (A.D. 1123) the Celtic interlaced patterns are found side by side with the "worm-dragon" ornament, while the crosier of Clonmacnois, the psalter of Ricemarth and the shrine of St. Patrick's Bell are decorated in the style known as "Hiberno-Danish."²

The Vikings, on the other hand, came under the influences of Irish art and literature. We find marks of Celtic influence not only in the sculptured crosses erected by the Norsemen in the North of England and Man, but even in Scandinavia itself.³ Moreover, there are strong reasons for supposing that the rise of the prose saga among the Icelanders may be the outcome of their intercourse with the Irish in the ninth and tenth centuries.

i.e., Bitter is the wind to-night,
It tosses the ocean's white hair;
To-night I fear not the fierce warriors of Norway
Coursing on the Irish Sea.
(Translation by Kuno Meyer: *Ancient Irish Poetry*, p. 101.)

¹ See Margaret Stokes: *Early Christian Architecture in Ireland*, p. 127.

² G. Coffey: *A Guide to the Celtic Antiquities of the Christian Period* (National Museum, Dublin) pp. 29, 49 and 62.

³ *Ib.*, p. 17.