

I. OF THE MIRACLES OF CAIRNECH HERE.

SARRAN assumed the sovereignty of Britain after this, and established his power over the Saxons and Cruithnians. And he took to wife the daughter of the king of Alban, viz., Babona, daughter of Loarn, son of Erc. And it was not she that was married to him, but her sister, viz., Erc, daughter of Loarn, until she eloped with Muiredhach, son of Eoghan, son of Niall, to Eri, and she bore him four sons, viz. Muircheartach Mac Erca, and Fearadhach, and Tighearnach, and Maian.

And Sarran had issue by Babona; and there were begotten by them five sons, viz., Luirig, and Cairnech, and Bishop Dallain, and Caemlach; and he i.e. Sarran died after victory and after triumph in the house of Martin.

Luirig then succeeded to the throne, and he extended his power over the Saxons, and he forcibly built a fort within the precincts of the monastery of Cairnech his brother. Muircheartach Mac Erca happened to be at that time with the king of Britain, learning military science, after he was expelled from Ireland for having killed the Crossans, and after having been subsequently expelled from Alba, for having killed his grandfather, Loarn, king of Alba. It happened that he was at that time getting his arms consecrated by Cairnech, the son of his mother's sister; then Cairnech said to him, 'Thou shalt be king of Eri and of Britain for ever, and shalt go to heaven after, provided thou canst but prevent Luirig from exercising his power against the Church.' Then Mac Erca went to the king, and after he came he told his message, viz.: 'Build not thy city' (said he) 'in the precincts of Cairnech the bishop.' 'As God is my judge,' says Luirig, 'I think more of the power of the pet wild fawn he has, than of his own power, or of the power of the Lord God whom he adores.' Mac Erca returned to Cairnech, and told him the result. Great wrath suddenly seized Cairnech, et dixit, 'My prayer to my Lord, to my God, is, that that very fawn may be the cause of his death, and by thy hand, O Mac Erca!' Cairnech then commanded Mac Erca to go forth and destroy his brother, and he Mac Erca immediately took upon himself to fight him; and he went forth at the command of Cairnech to destroy the king. And God worked a great miracle there for Cairnech, viz. he sent a wild fawn out of the mountain into the king's assembly, and the host all went in pursuit of it except the king himself and his women. Et dixit Mac Erca, 'If you had been just, my Lord, towards your cleric, it is certain that it would give increased happiness to have the royal robe on Luirig.' Then Mac Erca thrust his battle staff into the king's side, so that it was balanced: and he returned to his cleric, and the head of the king with him, as a token; et dixit, 'Lo, here is thy brother's head for thee, O Cairnech.' Et dixit Cairnech, 'Leave me the bone, and eat thou the marrow, and every third coarb shall be thine for ever, here and in Eri.'

Then he (Mac Erca) took the hostages and the power of the district into his own hands, conjointly with Cairnech, for seven years, as also the supreme sovereignty of Britain, and Cat, and Orc, and Saxonland.

And Mac Erca then committed an additional sin, that is, he took to himself the wife of Luirig, after many battles and conflicts with the king of France, to take his daughter from him, until at last the daughter fell into Mac Erca's hands, and she bare him four sons, viz. Constantine, and Gaedhal-Ficht (from whom descend the kings of Britain, and the kings of Britain-Cornn); Nellenn (a quo gens Nellan), and Scannal, the other son, a quo gens Scannail; i. e. it is in Eri the descendants of the two last are.

Now a great synod of the clergy of Europe was made at Tours of Martin, viz., three hundred and thirty-seven bishops, with the coarb of Peter, to meet Cairnech, Bishop of Tours and Britain-Cornn, and of all the British, to cast out every heresy, and to reduce every country to the discipline of the Church. And the chieftainship of the martyrs of the world was given to Cairnech, because martyrdom was his own choice. And Cairnech found thrice fifty bishops who made it also their choice to accompany Cairnech in pilgrimage, and that number went to Lien in pilgrimage for the sake of Mac Erca and Muiredhach.

Cairnech then set out to the Britons of Cornn or Carnticeon, and a city was built by him under ground, in order that he might not see the earth, nor the country, nor the sky; and he increased the strength and sovereignty of Mac Erca for a year, and he (i.e. Cairnech) came to Eri before him, so that he was the first bishop of the Clann-Niall and of Temhar (Tara), and he was the first martyr and the first monk of Eri, and the first Brehon of the men of Eri also. Now, after this the Franks and the Saxons made war against Mac Erca, and he destroyed their country and their cities after a long contest; and the country and the power of the territories adjacent to him were also destroyed by the greatness of his power and of his strength; and after this he came with a large fleet to take the sovereignty of Eri. He landed at Fan-na-long on the Boyne, where he burned his ships, from which circumstance comes the name of Fan-na-long; and he killed the provincial kings of Ireland afterwards, and took their sovereignty by right for ever, for himself and for his descendants. And then the power and strength of Britain was destroyed after him.

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