

with an army against them," because Emrys himself lay ill at Winchester, and Uther with great concern found that he had not a sufficient power to meet their combined forces. Pasgen and Gillamori, on their part, congratulated each other on the sickness of Emrys presuming that Uther alone would not hazard a battle. In the mean time one Eppa, a Saxon, came and enquired of Pasgen, what reward he might expect, if he should destroy Emrys. To which Pasgen answered, that he should have ¹ an ample pecuniary reward, his friendship through life, and should he obtain the crown, a farther gratification to his full content. Eppa then told him that he was well skilled in the medical art, and ² "in the language" and customs of the Britons; and having required and received a pledge of Pasgen's promise, he undertook to be the means of the death of Emrys.

For this purpose he disguised himself by shaving his head and beard in the manner of a monk, and then presented himself to some of the attendants of the palace of Emrys, and offered his service, as one of great medical skill. The attendants with joy communicated the information to Emrys, and he took a poisoned draught, which Eppa had prepared for him. This traitor then advised him to sleep, so that the poison had the quicker effect; and in the mean time Eppa made his escape from the palace, "under pretext of gathering simples."

At this time ³ a star of amazing size appeared. It had one beam, and on the head of the beam was a ball of fire resembling a dragon;

¹ Literally the general expression of a *thousand pounds*, which M. B. magnifies to *three thousand*.

² Ms. G. O. &c.

³ In the catalogue of comets given by Sherburne at the end of his *Manilius*, a comet is described as having appeared, A. D. 454 or 457, so nearly in the same terms as to make it probable the descrip-

tion was taken from G. M. Another of A. D. 504, *crowned with a dragon*, is more probably the same that is said to have been seen by Uther. Henry of Huntingdon dates the death of Emrys, A. D. 503. It is therefore probable, that the comet of A. D. 504 was the one seen by Uther, and if so, we have the true date of the death of Emrys.

and from the jaws of the dragon two beams ascended, the one towards the extremity of France, and the other towards Ireland, subdividing itself into seven small beams.

¹ Uther and all around him, alarmed by such an appearance, enquired of the learned men what it might portend. Merddyn bursting into tears, exclaimed, 'Sons of Britain, ye have suffered an irrecoverable loss, ye are widowed of Emrys the Great. But still ye have a king. Haste thou therefore, Uther, and engage the enemy, for the whole island shall be thine. For it is thou, Uther, who art signified by this star with the head of a dragon. By the beam pointing over France is denoted a son of thine, who shall be great in wealth, and extensive in sway, and by that directed towards Ireland, a daughter, whose sons and grandsons shall successively govern the whole.'²

Thus encouraged, Uther, though he thought it a risque, engaged the enemy, and after a battle, long doubtful, at length was victorious, and drove Pasgen and Gillamori to their ships with great slaughter.

After the victory, Uther returned to Winchester to inter his brother. Thither also came all the archbishops,³ "bishops" and abbots,⁴ "and laymen of rank,"⁵ of the island; and Emrys was buried within the circle of the Heroes, and near the monastery of Ambri. Those who were present had been invited by Uther, and by their common consent he was crowned king, the crown of sovereignty being put on his head.

Uther recollecting the words of Merddyn, when the ceremony was over, commanded two dragons of gold, and of exquisite work-

¹ Who were then on a march to Cambria, G. M. *In Cambria*, B. G.

² *This Island*, G. O. and Ms. B. The kingdom of Britain, B. G.

³ Ms. G. O. B. G. and Ms. B.

⁴ Ms. G. O.

⁵ *Of the province*, G. M.

manship, to be made, in form similar to that which he had seen on the head of the comet's beam of light. One of these he deposited in the principal church at Winchester, the other he made his standard to be carried before his army. From ¹ this circumstance he was thenceforward called Uther Pendragon, (*Uther of the dragon's head.*)

And now Octa, the son of Hengist, and Ossa, declaring themselves free from their engagement to Emrys, invited the Saxons to join them, and sent both to Germany, and to Pasgen to solicit troops; and having collected a considerable force, they fell upon Lægria, and proceeded as far as York. But, whilst they were assailing the town, Uther with his army came up with, and after a severe engagement completely routed them, and drove them to the mountain ² Dannel. ³ For this was a lofty and craggy mountain, ⁴ "and had cells on its summit." That night Uther convened a council, in which Gorlais, Earl of Cornwall proposed that, as the night was dark, and the Britons

¹ From this passage I am tempted to believe, that Stonehenge was a *Dracontium*, and that from the appearance of the comet before the coronation of Uther, the occasion was taken, by converting the circumstance into an omen, and inducing him to bear the image of a serpent on his standard, to attach Uther to the religion of the temple, and constitute him its patron. Upon this supposition, the reason is evident why he alone had the title. At least it is not said in any ancient history of this country, that I know of, to have been given to any one else.

The worship of the serpent or dragon is well known to have been of great antiquity, and so much has been written concerning it, that I will only offer a conjecture as to the name *Dragon*. I conceive it to have been originally און דרך *Derech On*, or *The path of the Sun*, that is the ecliptic repre-

sented under the form of a serpent, and that the original name was corrupted by the Greeks into Δρακων.

² Damen, B. G. &c. The copy B. T. and Ms. G. O. both attribute the superiority near York to the Britons, whereas the copies B. G. Ms. B. and G. M. attribute it to the Saxons.

³ B. G. G. M. and Ms. G. O.

⁴ Ms. G. O. says expressly *cells in the rock*. The original word *Celli*, may be a plural of *Collen*, a *hazel tree*; or of *Cell*, a *cell*, and hence Geoffrey with his usual good fortune, has translated it to *hazel trees*. It is however a proof that he did *translate*. Such cells as are here mentioned are noticed as sound on Pen-maen-mawr, in the accurate and entertaining tour of one, whose name is an honour to his country, Mr. Pennant.