

Saint Carannog.

BY THE REV. S. BARING GOULD, M.A.

CARANNOG is said to have been son of Corun ab Ceredig, by Rees in his "Essay on the Welsh Saints", and a *Life* is in the MS. Cotton., Vespasian A. xiv, which has been printed in the *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints*, Llandovery, 1853. Having recently come upon another *Life*, which is in the Breviary of the Church of Léon, printed in 1516, and of which only two copies exist, and which seems to be generally unknown, I venture to note a few particulars relative to this very remarkable man, as a prelude to this Léon *Life*, which I propose to give.

Apparently there were two saints of a very similar name, and their stories have been fused together. The second Carannog, or as the Irish call him, Cairnech, was the son of Saran, King in Oriel, and of Babona, daughter of Loarn, King of Alba (503-508). Earca, sister of Babona, married first Murtoigh, son of Eoghain, son of Niall of the Nine Hostages (378-405), and was the mother of Murtoigh mac Earca, King of Ireland (513-533); and Murtoigh mac Earca married the widow of Lurig, brother of S. Cairnech. Earca married, secondly, Fergus, son of Conall Gulban (d. 464), and by him was mother of Fedlilim, and grandmother of S. Columba of Hy. The period at which Cairnech lived is accordingly pretty well fixed. He died in 545 (*Irish Nennius*, ed. Todd & Herbert, p. cx).

From this it will be seen that Carannog ab Corun belonged to an earlier period.

In the *Life of S. Carannog* (Vespasian A. xiv) we are informed that at the time when he was born, "The Scots (Irish) overcame Britain for thirty years, the names of whose generals were Briscus, Thuthaius, Machleius, and Anpachus." And again: "Ceredig held Ceredigion, and from him it received its name. And after he held it, the Scots came and fought with them, and seized all the country." So in the *Léon Life*: "In those days came the Scots and occupied the British region", and this was when Ceredig was "an old man". Here we have an intimation of two invasions, one before Ceredig arrived and expelled them, another, later, when they attempted to recover what they had lost.

The names of the Irish chiefs of the first invasion are not easy to identify in their Latin form; Tuathius may be Dathi, King of Ireland 405-408, and Anpachus may be Amalghaid, King of Connaught 438-449, and the name of a Mac Lear (Laoghaire) may be disguised under Machleius.

According to the Latin *Lives*, Carannog, in Latin Carantocus, was son of Ceredig and not grandson. He went to Ireland "in the year of the birth of Saint David, son of Sandde." Unfortunately, it is exceedingly doubtful what year that was.

"He went to Ireland, Patrick having preceded him; and they met each other and resided together. And they consulted together what they should do, and they agreed that they should separate, one go to the left, and the other to the right, because many clerics walked with them, and others because they wanted health. And Carantoc went to the right part, and Patrick to the left, and they agreed that they should meet once a year."

The *Léon Life* is fuller. On account of the invasion by the Irish, and the advanced age of Ceredig, the chiefs met and desired to set his eldest son, Carannog, at their head. He, however, declined the honour, loving the Kingdom of Heaven better than earthly kingdoms, and he fled with staff and wallet till he came to a place called Guerith Karantoc, where he set up his rest. But after some time an angel bade him go to Ireland and assist Patrick in his labours there. Accordingly he departed, and built a monastery in Ireland. This, apparently, is his foundation at Dulane, in Meath.

In the histories of S. Patrick, which we have, Carannog does not seem to have been intimately associated with him, except on one notable occasion; and the *Life* (Vesp. A. xiv) implies as much; the sphere of Patrick was in the north, that of Carannog in the south. The notable occasion referred to is the drawing up of the Seanchus Mor. When the bulk of the population of Ireland had accepted Christianity, it became advisable that the laws should be readjusted to meet the new condition of affairs. King Laoghaire saw this, and although not himself a Christian he is traditionally said to have appointed a joint Commission for the revision and codification of the laws. The Commission consisted of three Kings, three Brehons or Druids, and three Christian Bishops. Patrick, Benignus, and Carantoc sat as representatives of the Church. The code remained in force among the Irish throughout the Middle Ages, and in Clare even down to 1600.

The Latin *Lives* say not a word about this, which occupied Carannog and the other Commissioners three years, and was completed in or about 438, and which was the most important and far-reaching act of his life.

Whilst in Ireland, Carannog received as his pupil one who is called in Brittany Tennenan, and who is represented

as son of an Irish King, Tinidor. The names have not an Irish sound, but they are evidently corrupt. Tennenan being a leper, was excluded from the succession, and embraced the ecclesiastical life under Carannog, who, according to the legend, healed him of his leprosy. This may have an allegorical meaning, and imply no more than that by baptism he purged him of the leprosy of sin, or that whilst undergoing his training in the Monastery of Carannog, he got rid of a distressing skin disease which had troubled him in his youth. Can Tennenan be Finnian?

The *Léon Life* speaks of an Irish King Dulcemius contributing timber to the erection of the church for Carannog, but under this name it is not possible to determine what chieftain of South Ireland is meant.

After a while Carannog retired from active work in Ireland, and the Latin published *Life* goes on to relate that he retreated to a cave in Ceredigion, and founded the Church of Llangranog. After a while, taking his portable altar with him, he went to the Severn, and threw his altar in, resolving to settle wherever it was washed up. Then we are told that in those days Cado and Arthur ruled the land, and the latter had his dwelling at Dindrarthron. In the adjoining district of Carron was a dragon, which Arthur induced Carannog to overcome. Arthur meanwhile got hold of Carannog's altar-table and purposed appropriating it to his own use. However, when Carannog had tamed the dragon, he reluctantly surrendered the altar, which Carannog again threw into the sea.

Dindrarthron is Dinedor, in Herefordshire, and Carron is the marshy region of the Garran. Here there is a church called Llangaran. All this portion of the legend must be dismissed as an anachronism. It is not possible to make Carannog, who assisted at the compilation of the

Seachus Mor in 438, a contemporary of Arthur, who fell in 537. It applies to the second Carantoc, or Cairnech, son of Saran.

Carannog crossed to Cornwall, and landed at a place called in the *Life* Gwellit (the Grassy). It was probably the long curious creek called the Gannel. Here he resolved to settle, and he borrowed a spade from a poor man, wherewith to dig the ground. He also cut for himself a staff, and at intervals, when tired of digging, he wittled the handle of the staff.

Presently he observed a wood-pigeon fly out of the adjoining grove, and carry off in its beak some of the shavings from his staff. He resolved on following the bird, and he found that she had dropped the chips in one particular spot. He determined to build a church there, and place in it his altar, which had been washed up on the shore.

We are then told that "a voice came to him from heaven and said he should go into exile, and leave his family. Innumerable persons were buried in that city, but he alone went to Ireland." Here we have the first summons, as given in the *Léon Life*, and this is an instance of the sad jumble of which the *Life* (Vesp. A. xiv) is made up. It is not possible to decide, with anything approaching to certainty, what the real order of events was in the life of Carannog; but this, at least, seems clear, that after having been for a while living a solitary life in Wales, he went to Ireland and did missionary work there, then, for some reason that we shall shortly consider, he left Ireland, and came to Cornwall, where he founded the church now called Crantock, and perhaps at the same time Carhampton in Somersetshire, a mile and a-half from Dunster, of which church he was considered the patron. The church passed into the

possession of Bath Abbey, where the festival of the Saint was observed on May 16 (Bath Calendar, *circ.* 1383, in Brit. Mus. Add. MSS. 10,628).

Now it is very noteworthy that Carannog or Carantoc has an extended cult in Brittany. There is a parish, Carantec, and another Tregarantec, that bear his name in Finistère, but he is also widely known as S. Caradec, as patron of St. Caradec, near Loudéac, of Saint Caradec, Priziac, and of S. Carreuc. He has, as well, chapels at Mellac, at Pontaven, and is honoured at Quimperlé. He has been dealt with by two writers, B. Oneix, *S. Caradoc en Bretagne*, S. Briec, Prud'homme, 1880, and by De la Borderière, *Les deux Saints Caradec*, Paris, Champion, 1883, but neither being in possession of all known about him in Wales and Ireland, have been able to altogether unriddle the puzzle of his presence in Armorica. That Caradec or Carreuc is the same as Carantoc is shown by the commemoration of this saint being always on May 16, which is that of Carantoc in the Irish Martyrologies, and also by his identification in the Breviary lessons with the son (or grandson) of Ceredig. His main settlement was Saint Caradoc near Loudéac, in Côtes du Nord, which is spoken of in the 13th cent. as "Monasterium Caradoci". He is mentioned in the *Life of S. Guenael*. That Saint had been to Britain, and he returned laden with books and followed by forty disciples. He landed first in the Ile de Groix, and then went overland to visit Caradoc, whom he held in high esteem. According to local tradition S. Gonnec or Connoc, and S. Gonery, were among the pupils of Caradoc. That Tennenan was so—but in Ireland—we have already seen. In Morbiban, as well, Carannog has two churches, S. Caradoc Hennebont, and S. Caradec Thégomel; and he is commemorated in the Vannes Breviaries on May 16, the same day of S. Carantoc.

Now it seems to me that the settlements in Cornwall and Brittany of such assistants of S. Patrick as Carannog and Mancen, or Ninio, mean a great deal, for which we look in vain into such scanty documents as have reached us, to find an explanation.

Patrick was supplied with a stream of missionaries serving under him from Britain and Armorica. There was a great nursery at Witherne, in Galway, that furnished him with men for work in the North of Ireland; and at Ty Gwyn, in Pembrokeshire, he had a great college under Mancen, otherwise called Ninio the Old, which sent over a supply for the mission field in South Ireland. But we find Mancen also in Cornwall and in Brittany, under the form of Mawgan or Méaugon, in Wales as Meugan. There are two Mawgans in Cornwall. The identity would seem to be established by Mawgan-in-Pyder Feast being observed on July 25, which is the day of Meugant or Ninio in the Irish Martyrologies. In Brittany, near S. Brieuç, is la Méaugon (Llan-Meugant), where the Pardon is observed on the same day. Is it not conceivable that Meugant or Mancen had branch establishments in Armorica and Cornwall to serve as feeders in Ty Gwyn? We know that there was close intercourse between Brittany and Wales and Ireland in the fifth and sixth centuries. And in like manner I would conjecture that the object of Carannog's leaving Ireland was to undertake the very important task of establishing monastic settlements in Cornwall and in Armorica to serve the same purpose as those of Meugant or Mancen.

Tennenan, the disciple of Carannog in Ireland, followed his master. We have unfortunately no early life of this saint, all we know of him is from the lessons in the ancient Breviaries of Léon and Folgoët, which are full of fable. He is there said to have been the pupil of Karadoc

or Karentec, and to have been cured by him of leprosy in Ireland. Afterwards he embarked with S. Senan and S. Ronan, and crossed the sea to Armorica, and landed in the harbour of Brest, near where is now the little town of Landerneau, and founded the church of Ploubennec, near Plabennec. Together with S. Senan (of Iniscathy) and S. Ronan, he had with him two others, who are named Armen and Glanmeus, the latter a priest. M. de la Borderiè considers that there were more saints than one that bore the name of Tennenan or Tinidor—for he is known by both names in Brittany. The diocese of Léon is supposed to have had a Tennenan as its bishop, after S. Goulven, but if so, he belongs to the beginning of the seventh century, and as he is ignored by the early writers who composed the list of the Bishops of Léon, the existence of such a bishop is doubtful. One interesting fact is that in the parish of Tregarantec, which by its name shows that it was a tref of Carantoc, S. Tennenan is held to be the patron of the church.

Senan of Iniscathy, who is said to have come over with Tennenan, is widely venerated in Brittany, and finds his place in the ancient Breviaries on March 6. Another Irish Colonist, Kenan, is confounded with Kianan, Bishop of Duleek; his name is contracted to Kay or Quay, and he is the same as the Cornish S. Kea. He is commemorated in Brittany on Sept. 13 and Nov. 5.

Goulven, who is also brought in contact with Carannog, was born in Armorica; his parents, Glaudan and Gologuenn, were refugees from Britain, who landed in the broad shallow bay that now goes by the name of the Anse de Goulven. He was bishop of Léon after Cetemerin, who succeeded Paul of Léon.

Unfortunately we know neither the date of the death of Carannog nor the place where he died, but

there is remarkable consensus as to the day on which he is to be honoured. The Welsh, as well as the Irish, Calendars give that day as May 16. In a MS. Breviary of the diocese of Tréguier, of the fifteenth century, is the entry: "xvii Kal. Junii, Caranauci abb." On the same day, in the Léon Breviary of 1516 in the library of the Frères Lamennais, at Ploërmel: "xvii Kal. Junii, Caradoci abb." In the Vannes Missals of 1530 and 1535 it is the same. Whytford's *Martyrologe*, 1526, an English rendering of the Bridgetine Martyrology of Sion House, also gives the same day. This is the day of the Village Feast at Crantock in Cornwall, and of the Pardon at Carantec in Brittany. The Feliré of Aengus, on May 16, has this entry: "The illustrious death of Cainnech the powerful," and the gloss adds, "*i.e.* Carnech of Tuilec, in the neighbourhood of Cenannas (Kells), and he is of the Britons of Cern (Cornwall)." The Exeter Calendars give his day as May 16.

In the Celtic Litany of the tenth century, published by Mabillon, from a Rheims MS., he is invoked between S. Brendan and S. Gildas.

As to the date of his death, that can only be fixed tentatively. It most probably occurred later than that of Patrick, but scarcely later than 470, for he can hardly have been a young man when engaged on the revision of the laws of Ireland in 438. A brother of S. Carannog was S. Pedr, according to the Welsh genealogists, and it is rather remarkable that a holy well bearing that name should be found in the parish of S. Columb Minor, that adjoins Crantock. The Holy Well of S. Carantock himself is in the midst of the village of Crantock, and a stream steadily flows from it.

The *Life* in the Léon Breviary follows. I will first premise that of this Breviary only two copies are known

to exist, one is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and is imperfect: it is without the calendar, and the sanctoriale is wanting from the end of November to the end of June. The other copy is in the possession of the Brothers of Christian Instruction, or Frères Laménais at Ploërmel. It has the calendar, but is deficient in the names of the saints from November 29 to June 12. It was printed by Didier Maheu, Paris, 1516. I have not printed all the abbreviations.

LECT. I.

Quodam tempore fuit vir nomine Cereticus et hic vir habuit multos filios: quorum unus erat Karadocus nomine. In illis diebus venerunt Scoti et occupaverunt regionem britannicam. Cereticus autem erat senex: et dixerunt seniores, Senex es tu non potes dimicare: debes unum ordinare de filiis tuis qui est senior. Dixerunt illi Karadoco: Oportet te esse regem: Karadocus autem plus diligebat esse regem celestem quam terrenum: et postquam audivit fugam iniit ne invenirent eum. Accepit ergo Karadocus peram cum baculo et sacculo a quodam paupere, et venit in locum qui dicitur Guerith Karantoc et mansit ibi per aliquod temporis. Post multos autem dies venit ad Sanctum Karadocum vox de celo precepitque ut quia hic latere non poterat et quanto ignotior et remotior a suis tanto fieret servus dei utilior: Patricium sequeretur in hyberniam. Karadocus igitur discedit in hyberniam, et ibi incepit construere monasterium. Relatum erat Karadoco in partibus illis apud quemdam tyrannum Dulcemium nomine esse quemdam arborem ornatam atque caram que principis sui fuerat. Venit Karadocus et petiit arborem. Utrum melior es tu dixit tyrannus omnibus sanctis qui postulaverunt eam, non sum dixit Karadocus.

LECT. II.

Tyrannus dixit Voca tamen deum tuum et si ceciderit tua est. Respondit Karadocus: Non est impossibile deo quicquam: et hec dicens oravit Dominum: completa oratione cecidit arbor radicibus extirpatis et stabant attoniti infideles. Credidit ergo tyrannus et baptizatus est et omnes sui cum illo conversi sunt ad fidem: et receperunt sacramentum. Hoc lignum artifices portaverunt in crastino ad opus inchoatum et scinderunt in quatuor bases. Quadam nocte venerunt religiosi quidam aliunde ad locum et deerant ligna foco ad usum pernoctantium: tunc surrexit Karadocus ad unam basem de quattuor absciditque particulam ex illa. Artifex autem hoc intuens vehementer indignatus est: et decrevit abire: et ait Karadocus: Fili mi mane in hac nocte. Ille vero mansit invitus. Sole autem orto surrexit ut abiret: et exiens circa ecclesiam vidit basam illam similem aliis basibus non habentem in se cissuram.

LECT. III.

Erat illis diebus quidam sanctus in hybernia nomine Tenenanus et hic erat leprosus. Vinit igitur ad sanctum Karadocum: sed antequam venisset nunciavit ei angelus venturum ad se Tenenanum: Karadocus cum gaudio et exultatione preparavit balneum suo hospiti. Veniens ille cum exisset jam ecclesiam et orasset occurrit iste obviam illi et osculati sunt invicem benedicentes. Et ducto eo a monasterio ad refectarium cogebat eum oppido ut introiret lavacrum. Ille negabat et inveniebat causas satis ydoneas: denique Karadocus ait: si non intraveris non vives in vita eterna. Cum hoc audisset Tenenanus coactus intravit balneum: accedebat iterum Karadocus ut lavaret eum. Animadvertens igitur Tenenanus quoniam ad se abluendum accederet dixit. Non lavabis me in eter-

num. Respondit Karadocus : Nec tu vives in eternum si non laveris te. Lotus est itaque et statim ut tetigit eum Karadocus sanatus est a lepra : et conquerebatur dicens : Non bene fecisti in me frater : quia forte superbus fiam a modo et multum deceptus ero. Nequaquam ille ait : sed pulchrior eris : et tua caro non erit fetida : tunc sanctus Tenenanus ait : Ingredere et tu ut laveris. Adjuratus ipse ingressus est balneum : Surrexit Tenenanus ut faceret obsequia. Habebat enim Karadocus septem cingula ferrea circa se : et mox ubi tetigit ea Tenenanus fracta sunt omnia. Tunc ait Karadocus : non bene egisti : tibi verum tamen dampnum hoc videtur reparabile. Ait Tenenanus : Nequaquam quia si venerint omnes fabri : non poterunt tibi fabricare cingulum : Et post hec verba laudaverunt deum et facta est pax et unitas inter ipsos.

I may add, in conclusion, that after many and vain efforts to obtain a copy of M. de la Borderiè's article on *The Two Saints Caradec*, on my application, the Bollandist Fathers at Antwerp have most courteously lent me their copy. I find in it that M. de la Borderiè has printed the Latin life from the copy of the Breviary he found in Paris. There are only two or three trifling differences between my transcript and his.