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BATTLE OF GABIRA.

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1854.
CAT SABHRA.1

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and able to hunt a pack of hounds.

Decies are now

WATERFORD.

The account opens with a piece of history nowhere else to be met with, namely, the intended marriage of the monarch Cairbre's daughter with a Monian prince, and the tribute or tax claimed by the Fenians even from royalty itself for permission to celebrate the nuptials of the princess of Ireland. This information is of itself valuable, and therefore claims the right of recording the whole, as it proves, beyond doubt, the state of utter slavery which the Fenians imposed upon the ancient Irish, and would warrant the opinion that the enslavers were not of the same race as the enslaved—an opinion entertained by some men who have made Fenian lore their particular study.

The remaining portions of history detailed are monotonous and barren of interest; one chieftain's combat with his antagonist is detailed in the high-sounding superabounding compound words which can hardly bear an English translation. The style adopted would mark the composition as that of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century, when such mode of writing was considered elegant and descriptive. Nevertheless, here and there are some curious accounts of the chief combatants which should by no means be permitted to lie hid in obscurity.

1 The following argument or Prose Account of the Battle of Gabhra, which is now presented to our readers, in a somewhat rare document; but thought it can by no means be called a piece of genuine history, it nevertheless deserves to be preserved, because it is older than any other account of that great battle. Hence the Council of the Ossianic Society determined to publish it, with the sole view of enabling the members of the Society to draw their own conclusions from all the existing portions of history which can now be collected relative to this great event. It is evident that the writer, whoever he may have been, had reminiscences of Irish history crowding on his mind to such an extent that he confounded names and facts, throwing them all together in one confused mass. This, however, is no reason for withholding such a document from the perusal of the antiquary, especially since the candid and critical investigator of genuine history may be enabled to learn something useful therefrom. The reader must perceive at a glance that more than one great battle fought for the preservation of the liberty of the ancient Irish is confounded with that of Gabhra; but the compiler of the document may have had more authorities to guide him than we of the present day possess. Hence, what appear to be anachronisms to us may be yet found genuine in the main.

THE BATTLE OF GABIIRA.

Cairbre, the son of Art, the son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, had a fair, mild-eyed, dignified, and modest daughter. Sginmhsholas (Light of Beauty), was her name, and Moal-shachlainn O'Fualain, son of the king or lord of the Decies, came to seek her as his wife. When Fionn and the Fenians
of Ireland heard of this, they despatched messengers to Caireb, to remind him to pay the tribute, viz. twenty ungas (ingots or ounces) of gold, or the right of cohabiting with the princes the night previous to her marriage. Caireb became very indignant upon hearing this message, and declared he never would submit to either of these conditions. Fionn thereupon sent him word that he should pay either, or that the head of the princess only should satisfy the violation of the privilege. Upon hearing this, Caireb became exceedingly enraged, and lost no time in despatching heralds to Conall Cionnbagair, king of the province of Ulster; to Crimthian Culhuiadh, king of Leinster; and to Fiacha Muilleathan, king of Munster. They all assembled at one place, and Caireb explained to them the nature of his difficulty, and the thraldom under which he and his people were held by Fionn and the Fenians of Ireland, being such as they could no longer bear, especially since they were imposed on them by a race of people inferior to themselves; and that there was not a king, prince, lord, or chief, of the race of Conn in Ireland, who was not oppressed with the slavish yoke of the followers of Cumhall.

The kings and nobles of Ireland, thereupon became exceedingly enraged, and came to the conclusion not to endure or tolerate such slavery any longer. They all returned to their own provinces, and having held council with their people, came to the resolution of expelling the Fenians from Ireland, instead of submitting to them. Caireb then sent to inform the Fenians that he would never pay them tribute or submit to their exactions or to those of any other individual in Ireland any longer. Fionn and all the Fenians became exceedingly enraged at this announcement; and Fionn sent heralds to Caireb, proclaiming war against him. Caireb