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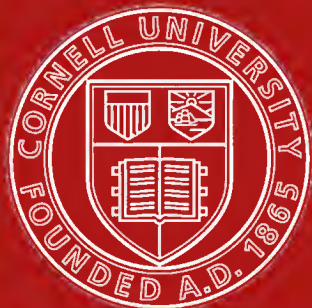
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Old stone crosses of the vale of Clwyd a



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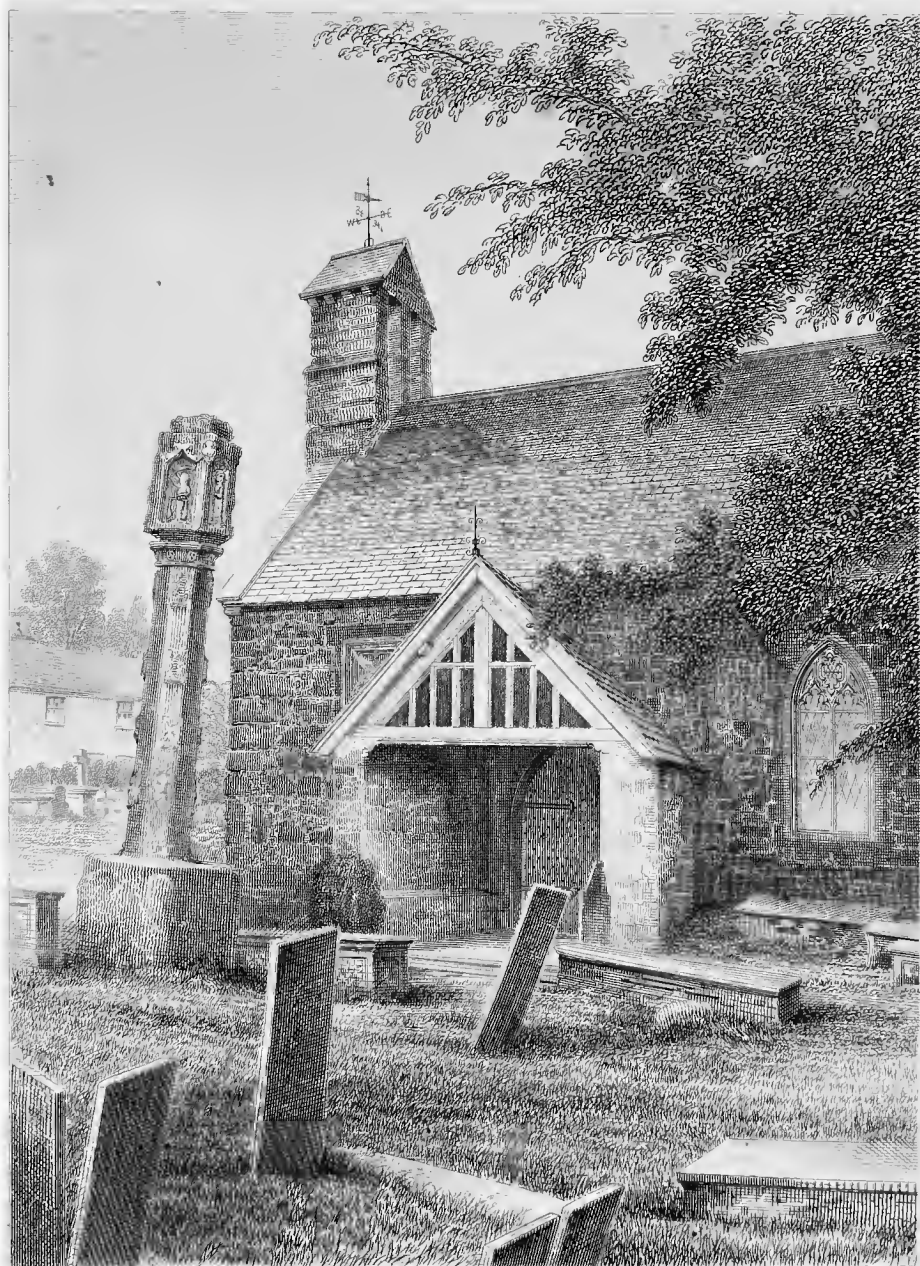


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DERWEN CHURCH AND CROSS.

Frontispiece .

OLD STONE CROSSES

OF THE

VALE OF CLWYD AND NEIGHBOURING PARISHES,

TOGETHER WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE

ANCIENT MANNERS AND CUSTOMS AND LEGENDARY LORE

CONNECTED WITH THE PARISHES.

BY THE

REV. ELIAS OWEN, M.A.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON COPPER AND WOOD.

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P R E F A C E .

During the spare moments of the last seven years the writer has been engaged in producing the following work on the Old Stone Crosses of the Vale of Clwyd and neighbouring parishes, together with some account of the ancient manners and customs, and Legendary Lore connected with the District.

Most of the crosses are now for the first time described and delineated, and additional matter has been collected about such crosses as had previously been described.

The folk-lore has been collected from various sources, but chiefly from the aged inhabitants, many of whom are now no more, and in most cases, if not in every case, the writer has given his authority, or mentioned the name of his informant.

This part of the work is capable of much enlargement. Wales teems with folk-lore of great variety and interest, and in the grave of the aged, as they one after the other leave us, is buried for ever some tale of by-gone days, which we could wish had been retained. The writer hopes that he has rescued a few of these tales from oblivion.

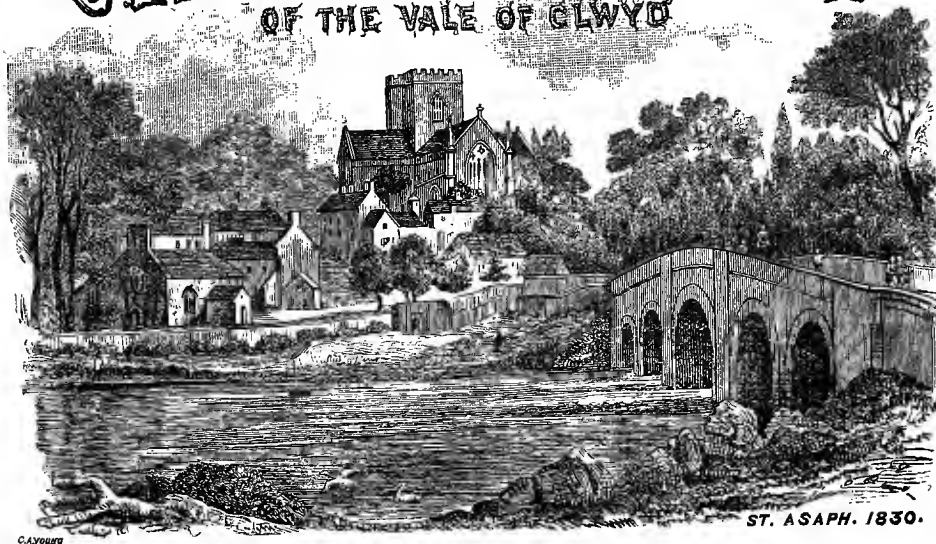
There are expressions in Welsh that can only be understood by a knowledge of customs no longer practised. The word *ymgroesi*, to cross oneself, is still used, but the practice has ceased. Death in some parts of Wales is implied by words which mean "he is under his cross," from a custom once common of placing a wooden cross on the breast of the departed. Much curious information can be obtained by following the hint supplied by a word, and here and there in the following pages the reader will observe that many obsolete customs still live in the language of the people. This, however, is a source of information that has not been exhausted.

In the course of the work, the writer has acknowledged the kind assistance received from several gentlemen, but he wishes specially to thank Mr. Beedham, of Kimbolton, for invaluable extracts taken from rare books in the British Museum and elsewhere, and also the Rev. Canon Thomas, Mr. Howel W. Lloyd, and the Rev. John Williams, Glanmor, for willing and valuable aid which he has received from them.

Efenechtyd Rectory, January, 1886.

OLD STONE CROSSES

OF THE VALE OF GLWYD

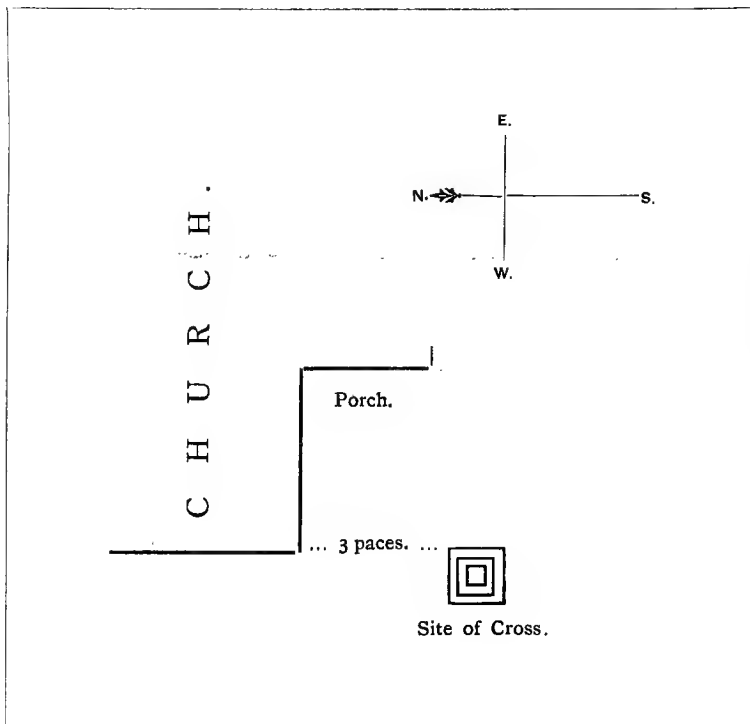


BRYN-EGLWYS.



WHEN I visited this Church in 1878, the steps and basement of the Churchyard Cross were in existence, but all other parts had disappeared; visiting it later I found that even these had been removed by the parish clerk without the knowledge of the Vicar. The present incumbent, the Rev. R. Owen, who was appointed to the living in 1870, and has restored his Church, does not remember having seen any portion of the Cross standing. From a sketch, taken in 1878, it appears that the stone which received the shaft was then entire, but it was not a massive one; apparently it was about nine inches thick, and it rested upon a large flat stone, about three feet square, which lay upon a slightly raised mound. The Cross stood nearly on a level with the west wall

of the Church, three paces to the south of it. The accompanying ground plan shows its position. Although so little can be said of this Cross, it is thought fit that, at least, some record of it should be preserved, particularly as the last vestige has been lately removed, and nothing now remains to mark the spot where the Cross once stood.





CERRIG-Y-DRUDION.



HERE is no Cross in Cerrig-y-drudion churchyard, but built into the wall, above the east window, is a crucifix in a good state of preservation. It is cut out of a single stone, and apparently, for dimensions were not taken, it measures two feet by one foot. The figure of our Lord is in bold relief, but it lacks artistic merit, and the work seems to be a comparatively modern production; probably it dates from the fifteenth century. It looks even worse than it otherwise would, because it is painted, the figure, white, and the ground, black. The feet, which are crossed, stand on a foot rest, and one nail penetrates both feet; the niche is sevenfoiled. (See Fig. page 6.)

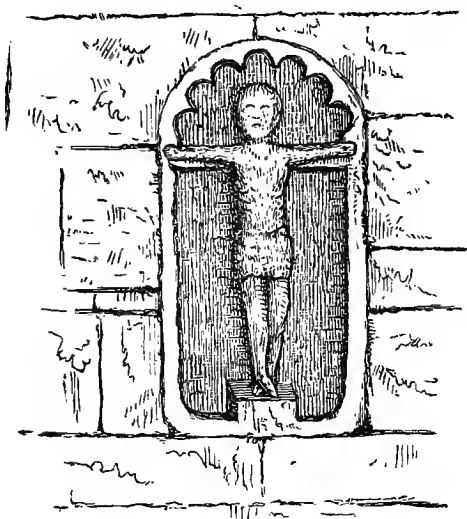
The Rector, the Rev. John Jones, informs me that the crucifix occupies the same position now as it did before the Church was restored by the late Rector, the Rev. Jenkin Jones, and he says:—"It was taken down in order to build the wall again, but replaced in the same position as before."

This is the only church, to my knowledge, in the Diocese of St. Asaph, which has a crucifix in the church walls, but in the neighbouring Diocese of Bangor there are at least two churches similarly ornamented.

The Rev. Edward Hughes, rector of Llanbedr, near Conway, gives the following description of the crucifixes just referred to. Speaking of that on his own church, Mr. Hughes writes:—"The crucifix, a rough sandstone in bold relief, is about 18 inches, or two feet, long, and about a foot, or less, wide. It is imbedded in the gable end, west side, too high up for measurement, under the bell, outside;" and of the other crucifix he adds—"So is the one at Caerhun; they are alike in shape and size. I have never been able to find any reference to them in either parish. There is no inscription on the crucifix, so far as I have been able to see."

What Mr. Hughes says about the absence of tradition or other evidence respecting the crucifixes at Llanbedr and Caerhun is true with regard to that at Cerrig-y-drudion.

There are several stones in Cerrig-y-drudion Church walls, on the east side, with letters or words on them, but no intelligible inscription



could be made out of these letters. The word *mulier* appears on one of the stones. The Church has undergone restoration several times, and it is not improbable that the stones in the walls have been disarranged by the process, and, if this conjecture is correct, masons have separated stones which once adjoined each other, and possibly buried others in the walls, so that if these detached letters ever formed an inscription, or inscriptions, it would now be most difficult, if not altogether impossible, to place the letters in consecutive order. That there was a tendency to place memorials

in the walls appears from the fact that former rectors have had their names engraven on stones in the north wall. On one stone is the following—GABRIEL : HVGHES : 1639. This is now in the vestry, but it occupies, I am told, the same position as it did before the restoration, the vestry being an addition to the Church, on that side. Another stone perpetuates the memory of—ROBERTVS WYNNE HVGVS PAROCHIAE RECTOR 1657. Underneath this inscription is a stone inscribed with a few letters.

There is a tradition in the parish that the stones of which the Church is built were procured from a quarry in those parts, and so even was their surface that they were placed undressed in the walls. When I asked my informant whether the quarry still produced equally even-surfaced stones, I was answered in the negative. The appearance of the stones in the Church walls is quite consistent with the tradition.

In the rectory ground is a portion of a seat, or of the old church screen, with these words on it :—DEVs NOBIs IN TRIBVLATIONIBVs AVXILIVM, in sixteenth century characters, and lying about, near the rectory, is a freestone window sill, belonging to the old church, with scorings on it.



CILCEN.



THIS Cross is on the south side of the Church, and stands about sixteen paces from, and nearly opposite to, the Priest's door, which has been blocked up. The basement, a single flat stone, 2ft. 4in. square, has been much worn, apparently by sharpening implements upon it. Thus there is on one side an artificial groove, a quarter of an inch broad, three quarters of an inch deep, and ten inches long. Such an incision could only be made by arrows, pikes, or some similarly pointed objects. On another side of the pedestal are indentations made by whetting knives, or some operation of the kind. The shaft is a tapering octagonal, 7ft. 7in. in height, squared by broaches at the base and top. It measures, at the base, 11 inches square ; at the top, 8 inches. The shaft is cracked in several places, and altogether it is greatly weather-worn and dilapidated. Portions of the side facing the Church have entirely disappeared. The remains of iron plugs and braces show that former generations were desirous that the Cross should be kept intact, but in our days no care is taken of it ; the iron bands have corroded, and with the exception of a few shreds they are no more, and consequently the upper part of the shaft, which these braces secured, is in imminent danger of falling. The Cross has departed considerably from the perpendicular, and looks as if it could not possibly weather the first storm which visits Cilcen. The head of the Cross is not in existence ; at least, it is not to be found in the churchyard. The Cross belongs to the fourteenth century,



Many tombs surround this ancient stone, and it appears that in former days people were anxious to be buried under the shadow of the Churchyard Cross. Not only do the crowded graves in close proximity prove this, but there is documentary evidence to show that our forefathers were wishful to place their bodies under the protection of the Cross. The following extracts from original wills, communicated by the Rev. T. P. Wadley, Rector of Naunton Beauchamp, to my friend Mr. Beedham, to whom I am indebted for them, show how common the desire was :—

1406. Sept. 24. Nicholas Conipaignonn; to be buried in the cemetery of St. Warburgh, near the burial place of his late wife, “*p’ crucem.*”

Wills in the Bristol Orphan Book.

1508. Aug. 12. Thomas Byrkyn, fishmonger, of the city of Worcester, makes his will directing that he should be buried “in Seynt Mary Churcher yarde bifore the crosse bytwene my two wiffe.”

Will proved 8 July 1511: registered at Somerset House, *Fetiplace*, folio 2.

The Cross in this case is that which formerly stood in the Cathedral churchyard at Worcester.

Again Mr Wadley writes :—“In the will of Thomas Edmons of Ipsley, co. Warwick, made 17 Nov. 1540, proved 24 Sept. 1544, and registered at Worcester,” it is stated :—

My bodye to be buryed in the Churcher yarde of o^r blessed lady of Ippesley nere the crosse there standinge.

From original wills in the Bristol Orphan Book, it appears that William Lane, of the city of Worcester, mercer, who made his will in Latin, 16 May, 1506, desired to be buried in the Cathedral churchyard, “*coram magna cruce ib’ m.*”

With one other quotation, culled from the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society* (vol. vi., p. 30), I will bring this subject to a close. It is there said that :—

Robert Saundres of Bristol by Will dated 15th June 1391 desires to be buried in the cemetery of the church of Holy Cross Temple of Bristol opposite the southern cross there.

From the last two extracts it would appear that more than one Cross existed in some churchyards.

There is in Cilcen churchyard a sun-dial shaft, of freestone, octagonal, but brought to a square at the base and top by chiseled broaches. The socket had evidently been applied to some other use before it became the stand of the dial, for it has along one side a

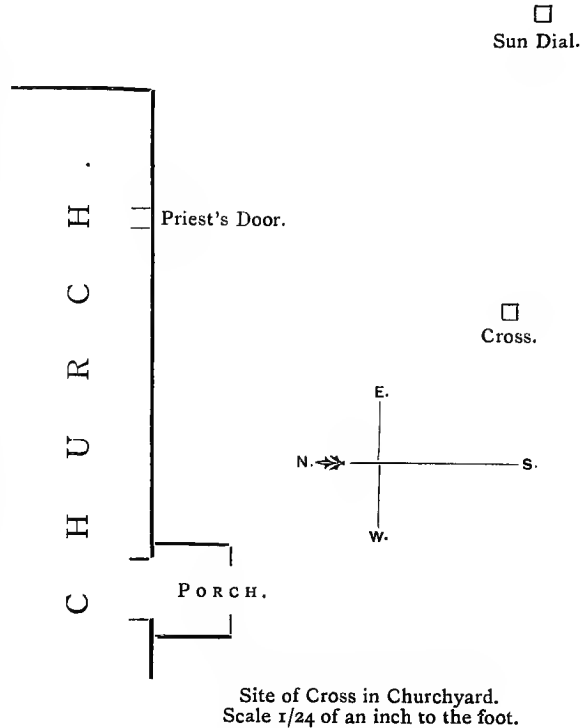
moulding, whilst the other sides are rough and unornamented. The indicator has disappeared, and the shaft, through exposure to the weather, has been much worn, until, at present, it is almost round. The workmanship is apparently the same as that of the Cross. If cursorily noticed this dial shaft would be taken for that of a cross, but a careful inspection will show that it was nothing more than a sun-dial.

On the north side of the Church, the windows have shutter hinges, and irons turning on pivots to secure the shutters to the walls. The Church is a short distance from the road, and is separated from it by a rather high stone wall, so that shutters were not wanted to protect the windows from stone-throwers; but they point to the custom of ball-playing, in former days, on the north wall of the Church. This play

would necessitate the protection of the windows by shutters, and this is the reason, as will be shown hereafter, why our country churches have shutters to the windows on their north side or west end.

The churchyard, like many others in Wales, is nearly circular in form.

There are two doors to this Church blocked up, viz., the Priest's Door, and that on the north side. In the belfry are a few beams with heads, or other engravings, on the corbels, similar to those in the roof of the Church, which roof, tradition says, was brought from Basingwerk Abbey. These unused beams have helped to support the tradition; for it would appear that a greater quantity of roof beams were taken



from the Abbey than was required for the Church, and the surplus wood was packed away in the tower.

There is a tradition in the parish that the north aisle of the Church was burnt down in a *Plygain*, or early Christmas morning service, many years ago. This tradition is mentioned by B. Willis, who says:—"The North Isle of Kilcen Church (was) burnt down early in the morning upon Christmas Day in 1532, when the parishioners were assembled to pray and sing carols upon the occasion, in imitation of the High Mass, a custom peculiar to Wales, and which is called *Plygain*." (Willis's *Survey of St. Asaph*, vol. i., p. 230). The tradition is that the Church remained in ruins eighty years, but here tradition seems to be at fault. Willis places the catastrophe in the year 1532, and he founds his statement on the following stanza, which he observed on a brass plate in the Church, but which has since disappeared:—

Mil pum cant, rhifant y rhai'n
 Nôd addas, a deuddeg ar hugain,
 Oedd y Gair am FAB Mair fain
 Pan ddaeth y Golcaith i Gilcen.

Willis's St. Asaph, vol. i., p. 230.

These lines state that the conflagration took place in the year 1532. But the Church was not restored until the year 1746, as shown by a brass plate at present (1880) on the north wall. The inscription is as follows:—

The North Isle of this Church was rebuilt in the year 1746 at the sole Expende of the Revnd Richard Davies M.A. Rector of this parish Kilcen.

The Church consequently seems to have been in ruins, not for eighty, but for 214 years.

It would appear from the decorated window at the east end of the north aisle that that wall was left standing after the fire.

The *Plygain* or early Christmas morning service is still very popular in the parish. The word is perhaps of doubtful origin. In a derivative form it occurs in the Welsh Bible, thus:—

"A'r boreu yn *blygeiniol* iawn."—S. *Mark*, ch. i., v. 35.

Welsh hymn-writers also have used the word for very early in the morning. It is synonymous with cockcrowing. In Davies's Welsh and Latin Dictionary, published 1632, the reader is referred from *Plygain* to *Pylgain*, and there its Latin equivalent is *galli cantus* or cockcrowing. The word is pronounced differently in different parts

of Wales; in North Wales it is usually *Plygan*, but in some parts, such as Denbighshire, it becomes *Plygen*. It approaches the full *Plygain* in Carnarvonshire; but even there the *i* is not invariably distinctly sounded. In Cardiganshire it is pronounced, *Pulgan*, or *Pylgan*, and this will account for the transposition of the letters *l* and *y* by Dr. Davies, and at the same time throw light upon the derivation. Dr. Owen Pughe, as is his custom, gives the word as pure Welsh, the component parts being, according to him: *Ply*, that is "flexible or tender," and *cain*, "bright," and thus *Plygain* is "the return of light." This derivation is opposed to the popular etymology of the word, which makes *Plygan* or *Pylgan* mean "the crowing of the cock." This is also the meaning of the word given by Pennant.

Mr. Trevor Parkins, in a very interesting contribution to *The Cheshire Sheaf* (vol. ii., p. 208) on the *Plygan*, writes:—

The etymology of the word is perhaps doubtful. *Plygain* is explained by Dr. Owen Pughe as a purely Welsh word, signifying "the return of light;" but the popular derivation of it from *Pulli cantus*, "the crowing of the cock," appears to be adopted by the best authorities. It would be satisfactory to ascertain whether this mediæval Latin term, *Pulli cantus*, was used generally, or only by the inhabitants of Wales, as a substitute for the well-known classical expression which denoted cock-crowing in the days of Horace:—

"Agricolam laudat juris legumque peritus,
Sub galli cantum consultor ubi ostia pulsat."

Horace, Sat. I., lines 9-10.

So much on the derivation of the word. Let me now proceed to describe the service.

On Christmas morn, tradition says, the church bell was rung in Cilcen from five to six o'clock, at which latter hour the service began. In other parishes the hour was four. The service usually consisted of a selection of appropriate portions of the Prayer Book, with or without a brief admonitory address by the clergyman, and then the carol-singing began. Any one who desired to sing was at liberty to do so. Sometimes a party sang in chorus, and sometimes a single voice was heard, and this service of song was continued until the dawn of day, when the Benediction was pronounced, and the congregation separated.

Those who took part in the carol-singing supplied themselves with their own home-made candles, but the church authorities partially lit up the church for the occasion. As there were formerly no evening services in the churches, and the *gospèr* or *vespers* began at three o'clock in the

afternoon, when no lights were required, it was necessary that the churchwardens should provide candles and candlesticks for the *Plygan* on Christmas morn. This they did by procuring lumps of soft clay into which candles were stuck ; and these extemporized candleholders were arranged along the walls, or placed on ledges in the church. The Rector of Llanfihangel, Montgomeryshire, the Rev. E. Evans, drew my attention to several of these candlesticks which he had found in his church, and which he preserved as curiosities ; and so did the Rev. D. Evans, Vicar of Abergele, to some which he had discovered at the restoration of Abergele Church, stowed away in various places. These churches are far apart, and the discovery of these candlesticks shows how commonly clay, in days gone by, took the place of stick, as a candle holder. With such imperfect means of lighting churches, we are surprised, not that Cilcen Church was burnt down, but that conflagrations were not more common.

Old people tell us that great disorder prevailed in the *Plygan*, and this, they say, was caused by drunken men who frequented the service after a night's revelry. It was, it appears, a common practice for men to sit up all night drinking, and then to proceed in a state of intoxication to the church. The riotous conduct of inebriates brought about the discontinuance of the *Plygan* in many places.

Two stories, which I will here relate, show what disorder sometimes prevailed in these meetings. The Rev. E. Jones, Vicar of Cilcen, informed me that he was told by old Richard Roberts, Tanllan, Treuddyn, now dead, of an event which took place at a *Plygan* in Hope Church. R. Roberts was then a young man, and with everybody else he went to the *Plygan*. In church he happened to stand behind a young man with a bushy head of red hair. A companion suggested that it would be rare fun to set the head of red hair on fire. Roberts thought so too, and acting upon the impulse of the moment, placed his candle under the young man's hair, and in an instant it was all in a blaze. Recounting this event in old age to Mr. Jones, Roberts, in tones of self-reproach, said—" I do not know what possessed me to do such a thing."

The next story was told me by the Rev. D. James, Rector of Garthbeibio, Montgomeryshire. At a *Plygan* in Garthbeibio Church, a man in drink threw from the west end gallery a rotten turnip at the head of the Rev. G. Howell, who was the officiating minister. Mr. Howell marked the man, and when the service was over walked

down the aisle of the church, the people standing the while, as was then the custom ; but instead of leaving the building he locked the door, and proceeded to the singing loft, where he broke his walking stick across the back of the culprit.

This Christmas morning service was not confined to Wales. It was also common along the borders. In *Philip Henry's Diary*, lately published, and edited by the Rev. M. H. Lee, is the following entry :—

1661. Dec. 25. Service at Worthenb. afore-day, an old custome, the ground of it I knowe not ; the Christians in time of persecution had their hymnos antelucanos. Tertull. Sermon at 10 a clock. Text, Zech. 13. 1.

Philip Henry's Diary, p. 102.

It would seem from this entry that the afore-day service was one of song, as it was in Wales proper, and the sermon was at ten o'clock.

Mr. Trevor Parkins, in his article already referred to, writes :—

I find several notices of it (the Plygan) in the Churchwardens' accounts at Gresford, a parish that lies upon the borders, and where Welsh customs might be expected to pass away. Thus, to quote an instance, Edward Partyn, who was Churchwarden in 1739, states in his account that he had "Paid for candles for ye Plagan..... 0 : 2 : 0"—and (adds Mr. Parkins) there is reason to believe that the practice lingered on in this semi-English district down to the commencement of the present century.

Pennant's description of the *Plygan*, as it was held in his days, that is, a hundred years ago, is so appropriate, that I will conclude my account of the service with his words :—

Upon Christmas-day, about three o'clock in the morning, most of the parishioners assembled in Church, and after prayers and a sermon, continued there singing psalms and hymns with great devotion till broad day ; and if, through age and infirmity, any are disabled from attending, they never fail having prayers at home, and carols on our Saviour's nativity. The former part of the custom is still preserved ; but too often perverted into intemperance. This act of devotion is called *Plygan*, or the *Crowing of the Cock*. It has been a general belief among the superstitious, that instantly,

“at his warning,

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine.”

But during the holy season, the cock was supposed to exert his power throughout the night ; from which, undoubtedly, originated the *Welsh* word *Plygan*, as applied to this custom.

Tour in Wales, vol. ii., p. 353, ed. 1784.

GOSPER CANWYLLAU OR CANDLE VESPERS.

As Christmas day began with an early service, so it ended with a late service, which was popularly called in Welsh—*Gosper canwyllau*, or Candle Vespers. It was so named from the fact that it was the only service in the year in which candles were used at Vespers or evening prayer. The usual hour for vespers in Wales, as I have said, was three o'clock in the afternoon, but on Christmas day it was changed from three to six, and hence the necessity for candles; hence also the name applied to this service, viz., *Gosper canwyllau*, *gosper* being a corruption of the word *vesper*, and *canwyllau* being the Welsh word for candles. There are, even now, a few churches in Wales which have no night services. In these churches the evening service begins in winter at three o'clock, and in summer at six o'clock. In the *Gosper canwyllau*, as in the *Plygan*, many contrivances were resorted to for illuminating the church. The service in the *Gosper canwyllau* was the ordinary evening prayer, with or without a sermon, but carols were always sung on Christmas evening. The feature of the service was the innumerable candles used on the occasion. Every one provided himself or herself with a candle, and lights were stuck on the ends of the seats, on the window sills, and in other available places, by the churchwardens, so that this service was rightly called *Candle Vespers*. The Rev. Canon Wynne Edwards remembers the service being held in Meifod Church, and other living clergymen in other parts of Wales have conducted it before evening services at six o'clock had become general.

MAES-Y-GROES CROSS.

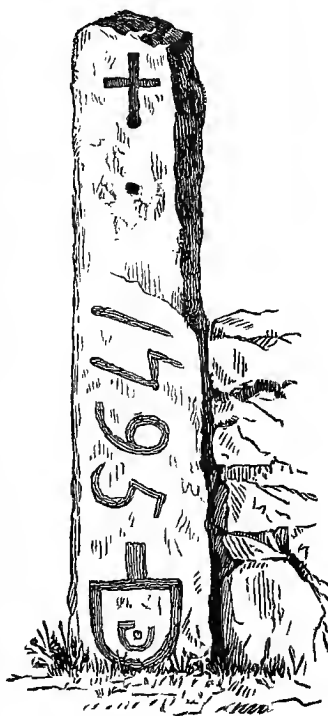
One of the townships in Cilcen parish is called *Maes-y-groes*, the field of the cross, and in this township is an old house, evidently at one time a superior kind of abode, and it, also, is called *Maes-y-groes*. This house is about a mile from the Loggerheads Inn, and stands on the right-hand side of the road or lane connecting Cilcen with the Mold and Ruthin road. *Maes-y-groes* farm yard abuts upon the lane, and it has two entrances, one from the lane, and the other from the direction of the house; on the right-hand gatepost of this latter entrance is a cross deeply cut into the stone post. (See figure.)

The stone on which the cross is, is 4ft. 8in. high, 1ft. broad at the base, and 8in. thick. It is limestone, as are all the gate posts in the neighbourhood.

The cross, which is a small Latin cross, is near the top of the stone, the arms measure 2 inches each, whilst the lower limb is 5 inches long. A little more than a foot below the cross is the date 1795, cut lengthwise into the stone. These figures, apparently, are more modern than the cross. Immediately below the date is a figure resembling a shovel with a short handle, and in this figure near its extremity is incised a semi-circle, or rather a semi-ellipse, with a portion of its diameter proceeding from left to right, and about the centre of this semi-ellipse is a single dot.

I am informed by Mr. Davies, the schoolmaster at Llanferres, the parish which adjoins Cilcen, that there is an old road, one of the oldest in the district, leading from the ancient mansion of Maes-y-groes to the river Alun, and that some people say that many years ago an army crossed the river Alun, just below the house, on their way to fight the Saxons at Mold or Chester, and that the name *Maes-y-groes* was ever afterwards given to the spot, because it was—"Y *maes* lle y darfuiddynt *groesi*," i.e., because it was "the *field* where they *crossed* over," and that in after years the inhabitants erected this pillar, with a cross on it, to commemorate this event.

Such is the tradition, if tradition it may be called, for it appears more like an attempt to account for a name than anything else. There is another farm called Maes-y-groes close to Cilcen village, and in various parts of Wales there are farms bearing this name with no rivers nor extant crosses in their vicinity. It may be, of course, that there is a germ of truth in the tradition, and that the pillar was erected to denote the spot where a battle was fought, or a hero died.



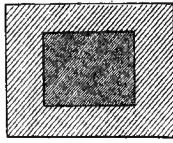


CORWEN.

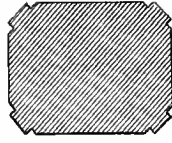


PENNANT, in his *Tour in Wales*, speaking of Corwen, mentions this Cross:—"A most singular cross in the churchyard merits attention: the shaft is let into a flat stone, and that again is supported by four or five rude stones, as if the whole had been formed in imitation of, and in veneration of, the sacred Cromlech of very early time." The flat stone noticed by Pennant is still in existence, but the "four or five rude stones," upon which the basement stood, have disappeared. The stone now rests on the ground. The Cross is on the west side of the church, and, in the absence of records and traditions, it would be difficult to ascertain whether its present was its original position. Churchyard crosses are generally found on the south side of the church, but the probability is that this Cross occupies the same spot as in Pennant's time, though the disappearance of the supporting stones could be better accounted for if we supposed that it had been removed.

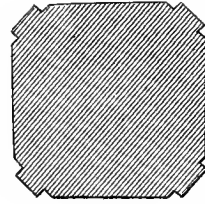
The stone basement in which the shaft is placed is elliptical in form, with transverse and conjugate diameters measuring respectively sixty-four and sixty inches; it is twelve inches or so thick, is of a slaty nature, and might have been procured in the neighbourhood. The crevices of the circular hole in which the shaft is fixed are filled up with stones, and in this way the shaft is made to fit closely into the pedestal. There are seven peculiar artificial depressions along the surface of the pedestal, strongly resembling the cup-markings which are found occasionally on the capstones of cromlechau, etc. They are irregularly arranged: on the north side there are three, almost in a line; and on other parts of the stone there are four of these marks. They differ somewhat from each other in size and shape, but they are for the most part circular, though one is more of an oblong than a circle. They vary also in depth, one being two and



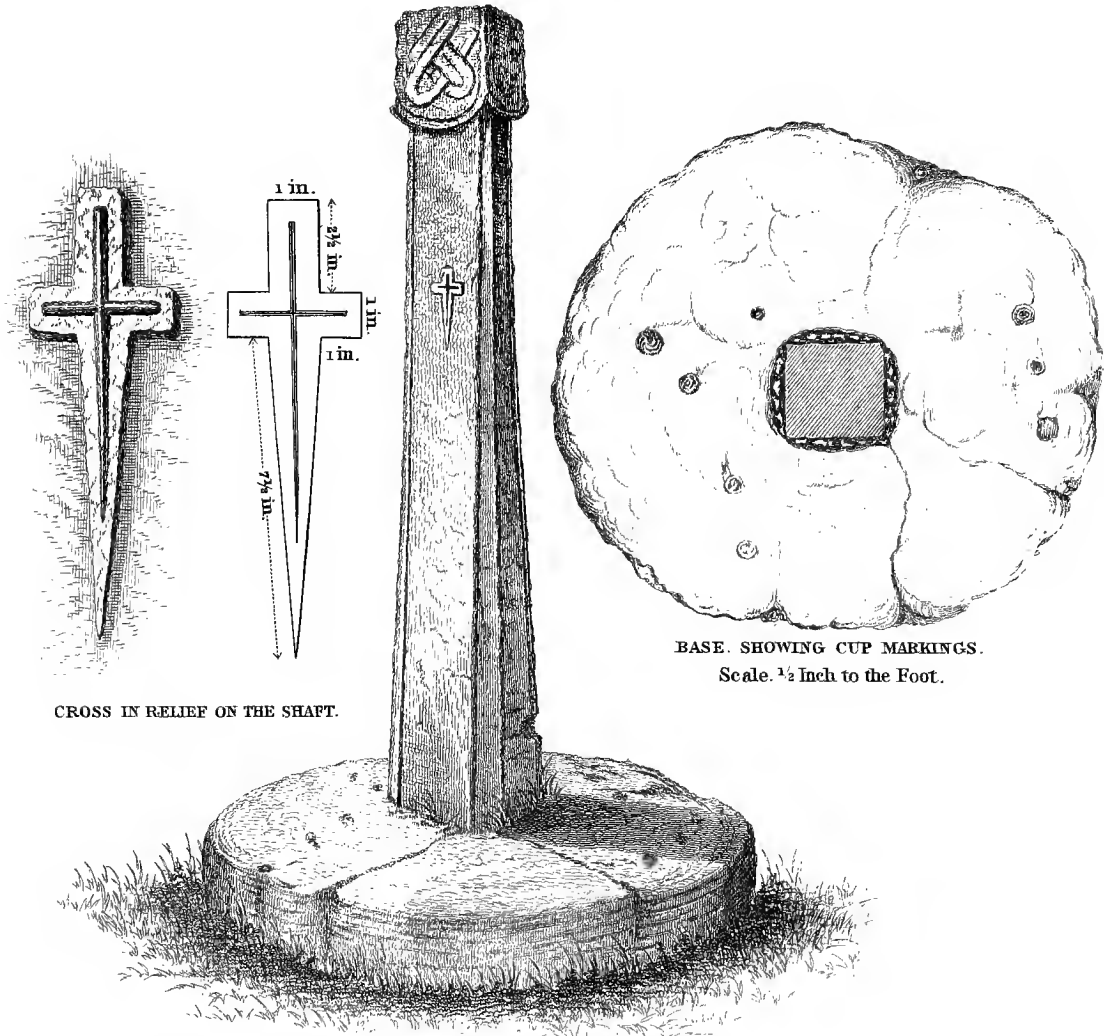
CAPITAL TOP.



TOP OF SHAFT.



BASE OF SHAFT.



CROSS IN RELIEF ON THE SHAFT.

BASE. SHOWING CUP MARKINGS.
Scale. 1/2 Inch to the Foot.

CORWEN.

a half inches deep, while the others are shallow. The largest is three inches in diameter; the others are not so broad. It is only lately that the attention of antiquaries has been called to these strange markings, and those on Corwen Cross have hitherto been entirely overlooked. The accompanying drawing shows the position of the cups.

The Rev. E. L. Barnwell, in a paper on "Marked Stones in Wales," published in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* (3rd series, No. L., pp. 150-156), alludes to the prevalence of these cup-shaped hollows, and states that they "are found to exist from the extreme south of England to the north of Scotland." Mr. Barnwell says that at the time he wrote (1867) there were only two known instances in Wales of stones thus marked, viz., Clynnog Cromlech, and a small stone in a field in Llanbedr parish, near Harlech. A view of the top slab of Clynnog Cromlech is given by Mr. Barnwell, and it "is covered with small artificial hollows, apparently placed without any attempt at order." I quote from Mr. Barnwell's paper, and this gentleman, who is so well able to offer an opinion, says there is little doubt that they were cut at a very early period. It is singular that these markings should be found along the basement of Corwen Cross, and also on the capstone of a Carnarvonshire cromlech. It is difficult to state positively that the depressions on the Corwen stone are ancient, but, when cleared out, they certainly appeared to be so, and in character with the rude side dressings of the stone itself. In connection with these markings it is well to bear in mind what Pennant says about the cromlech-like form of the Cross in his days.

It is not only in the British isles that these cup-markings are found; they have been discovered in various parts of the world. In an article by Mr. C. W. Dymond on "Cup-markings on Burley Moor," in Yorkshire, published in the *Journal of the British Archæological Association* (Dec. 31, 1880, vol. xxxvi., pt. iv., pp. 413-417), the widespread use in ancient times of cup-markings and such devices is clearly shown. Mr. Dymond writes:—"Ornaments similar to the cup-markings and rings are seen on vases from Dali, Cyprus . . . cup-and-ring-like ornaments are almost the only ones used in the decoration of glass and stone whorl-shaped beads found in Cyprus." . . . "Among the relics found at Hissarlik by Dr. Schlieman was a potlid, ornamented as it were with cup-like indentations." (*Troy*, pp. 310-311.) "Among the objects found by Dr. Keller in lake-

dwellings were three stones, with cups cut in their surfaces, some of them connected by grooves." These quotations carry us back far into pre-historic times to search for the origin and use of these peculiar marks. In the British islands we have them, not on manufactured articles, but, probably in their more primitive form, on stones, in wild unfrequented districts; and, it may be, in remote ages, these cup-marks were associated with religious observances. Before leaving this subject, it may be stated that the late Professor Sir J. Y. Simpson published an excellent treatise on Cup and Ring Markings, which, if not the first, was one of the first books of the kind ever published.

Since the foregoing notes were written, I have had the pleasure of perusing a most interesting paper entitled, "Notes on some undescribed Stones with Cup-markings in Scotland," by J. Romilly Allen, with a table showing the geographical distribution of cup-marked stones, from which I learn that there are:—

In Scotland	...	...	...	204	stones with cup-marks on them.
In England and Wales...	...	...	...	102	" " "
(Wales itself has only 2 given)					
In Ireland	...	...	...	42	" " "
In France	...	...	...	21	" " "
In Switzerland	...	...	...	32	" " "
In Scandinavia (including Denmark)	...	...	...	42	" " "

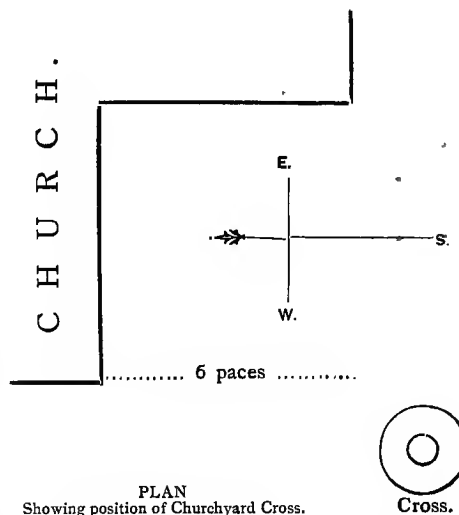
All these stones are ancient remains of by-gone days, but in the same volume of the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, in which Mr. Romilly Allen's paper appears (1881-82, pp. 302-401), is another on the same subject, giving a list of cup-marked stones in churchyards, and one of these stones has on it an inscription dated 1722 A.D. The stones in graveyards in Scotland with these marks on them are generally dressed stones, and are oblong in shape; so that we have in the northern part of the kingdom a continuation of these peculiar marks from remote to modern times. If an inference can be drawn from the continuance of these markings on modern grave-stones from the times when the cromlech served the same purpose, then these peculiar depressions have perhaps a hidden meaning connecting them with the ancient dead.

The shaft of Corwen Cross is quadrangular, with angles formed into rectangular mouldings. Its dimensions are:—Height, 7ft. 1½in.; base 1ft. square; top, underneath capital, 10in. by 8in.; capital, 10½in. high by 11in. broad. From these measurements it will be seen

that the stone is slightly narrower at the top than the base. It will also be observed from the sketch, that, although the shaft tapers throughout its entire length, it loses its gradient, and also its symmetry, owing to a fault in the stone, at about a third of its length from the base. The capital, which is part of the shaft, slightly projects from the shaft, and measures, at the top, 11 in. by 8 in.; into it is cut a socket, measuring 6 in. by $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. on the surface, and 6 in. deep. This socket received the head-stone, which has disappeared. The capital resembles a shield, being circular at the bottom and rectangular at the top; it has on the east side interlaced rope-like ornamentation, which has, through age, become much defaced. When the author of *Lapidarium Walliæ* visited the Cross in 1835, he could not find the octagonal capstone depicted in Gough's *Camden*, as surmounting the shaft.

On the east side of the shaft, $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches below the capital, is a cross in relief, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and 3 inches broad from arm to arm. It has an incised line running crossways through the limbs. This cross resembles a short sword or dagger, and locally it is connected, in some way or other, with Owain Glyndwr. When the Church was being restored, an ancient sword was found, and the person who told me of the discovery spoke of the sword confidently enough as having belonged to Glyndwr.

At present, the Cross declines slightly, but there is no immediate danger of its falling. It is a hard grit stone, foreign to that part of the country, and may have been procured from the neighbourhood of Ruabon. The paring away of the angles, and the running up of a groove each side, conceals the bareness of the stone, and, simple though this contrivance is, it has a very pleasing effect.



PLAN
Showing position of Churchyard Cross.



Cross.

The Cross has certain Norman characteristics, and in some details resembles the old cross by Valle Crucis Abbey. It probably belongs to the Norman period.

CROSS ON STONE BUILT INTO CHURCH WALL.

This stone, which now forms the lintel to the Priest's Door, is not in its original position, and it has been cracked by the weight of the superincumbent wall. The lower part of the stone disappears in the wall, so that its entire length cannot be ascertained. The cross, which is incised, is near the top of the stone. It measures in length 22 inches; the upper limb is 5 inches long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad; the cross limbs measure, from extremity to extremity, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and their breadth is about the same as that of the upper limb. The three upper limbs are somewhat dilated, whilst the lower one is pointed, and it deviates from the straight line for about the last 5 inches of its length.

Local tradition speaks of this cross as being the impression of Owain Glyndwr's dagger. It says that Glyndwr hurled the dagger from the summit of the conical hill, or rock, which stands on the south side of the Church and overlooks the town, with such force, that it made a deep indentation in the stone it came in contact with. The distance of the rock from the Church, instead of indicating the improbability of the tale, has only added lustre to the achievement.

The following extract from the Rev. D. R. Thomas's *History of the Diocese of St. Asaph* accounts for this cross in a more rational way:—

The legend of its (the Church's) original foundation, which states that all attempts to build the Church in any other spot than where stood the "Carreg y Big yn y fach rewlyd," i.e., "The pointed stone in the icy nook," were frustrated by the influence of certain adverse powers, appears also to supply the clue to the name, viz., Corfaen, "the enclosure or choir of the stone," rather than Corwen, "the white choir or church." This stone is now built into the north porch, but probably marked at first one of the mission stations in the district; another of which is indicated by the stone



marked with a cross, which now forms the lintel of the priest's door on the south side of the chancel, and is commonly shown as the impress of Owain Glyndwr's dagger; and which, from its association with his name, may very likely have been transferred hither from "Bryn y Groes" in Carrog Issa, on his estate.

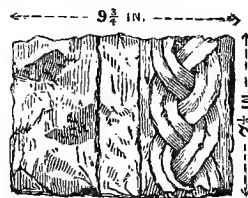
The tradition respecting the cross being the impression of a dagger is probably derived from some historic event, which, in the lapse of time, has passed from memory, and is now presented in a mythical form.

The Birmingham antiquary, Hutton, in his *Remarks upon North Wales* (pub. 1803), mentions what he saw at Corwen, and alludes to the cross on the stone above the Priest's Door:—

Owain (Glyndwr) usually attended divine service at Corwen Church, where I was shown a doorway now made up through which he entered to his pew in the chancel. Upon one of the stones is cut, half an inch deep, the figure of a dagger, and my guide told me, with a face more serious than my own, that upon the Berwyn mountain, behind the Church, was a place called Glyndwr's seat, from which he threw his dagger, and made the impression upon the stone. If this had happened in our day, the whole bench of bishops would have united in pronouncing him *Jacobin*. Exclusive of the improbability of the tale, my friend forgot that it refutes itself, for the mark of the dagger is upon the very door-way through which Owain passed, which probably was not built up in his day. I climbed the mountain to what is called Owain's seat, among the rocks, and concluded he must have been more agreeably employed than in throwing his dagger, for the prospect is most charming.—*Remarks on North Wales*, pp. 50, 51.

PORTION OF ORNAMENTAL STONE.

A broken piece of stone, with ribbon ornamentation on it, was picked up by Mrs. Ab Ithel Williams, of the College, Corwen, in the churchyard. At first sight, this remnant might be supposed to have been a portion of the missing head-stone of the Churchyard Cross, for the workmanship, and the character of the stone, are identical; but from its size and design it would rather seem to have belonged either to a sepulchral slab, or to some other cross, rather than to the one at present in the churchyard. The accompanying sketch, which is not drawn according to scale, shows the kind of engraving with which the stone is ornamented.



PRAYING OVER THE DEAD.

In Corwen churchyard there are gravestones of a very peculiar form, evidently pointing to the old custom of praying for or over the dead.



They are only a few inches above the ground, placed at the head and foot of the grave, with holes for the knees of those who pray. The accompanying sketches shew the shape of these stones. It will be observed from the drawings that there are knee-rests at both

ends of the grave. This is not always the rule; occasionally only one stone has such conveniences, as is the case in Llangar, and when this is so, it is the headstone. Between the two stones there is usually a flat slab with the initials of the dead engraven upon it, and the date of the death. But there are some entirely devoid of letters and figures, and where these appear they are rudely executed. One of the stones in Corwen churchyard bears the date 1771; another, 1810; from which it would seem at first that the custom of praying at the tomb continued in Corwen to the year 1810: but the rustic stone-cutter in the beginning of this century may have merely copied the form of older stones, without knowing the meaning of their peculiar shape. In a neighbouring parish, Llansantffraid, there are numbers of grave-stones like these in Corwen churchyard, and Mr. Roberts, the school-master, informed me of a tradition, that in former years, before the Church Service began, the relatives of the dead were in the habit of kneeling at the grave for prayer, and that the grave-stones were formed as described so as to allow them to do so without inconvenience or risk in rainy weather. I have noticed similar stones in several churchyards in the neighbourhood of Corwen: Llangar old churchyard contains several; so does Gwyddelwern. These memorials are touchingly simple in their construction. They could be formed by a relation, or a friend, without the aid of a stone-cutter. Apparently one grave contains a family. Thus, in Llansantffraid churchyard a flat stone has on it—

T. I.	1780
E. H.	1780
H. D.	1786

And underneath these comes a modern inscription to the memory of persons lately interred. Another gives the initials and age of the departed :—

S. K. 60.
1764

Other dates in Llansantffraid were 1769 and 1783 ; and the following are the dimensions of one of the stones there :—Height, 8in. ; kneerests, 6in. apart, 6in. broad, and 3in. deep.

The parish clerk of Llansantffraid corroborated the schoolmaster's remark as to the use of these stones, and he also said that he had used many similar knee-stones in building the chancel of the church, and taken numbers up to make room for stones of more modern design.

The following quotation from Pennant throws considerable light on this matter. Speaking of the religious customs of the Welsh, Pennant says :—

In some places it was customary for the friends of the dead to kneel, and say the Lord's Prayer over the grave for several Sundays after the interment, and then to dress the grave with flowers.—Vol. ii., p. 353.

This custom most likely lingered long in secluded districts, which held but little intercourse with the outer world, and the probability is that even so late as the beginning of the present century people prayed for or over their dead in and about Corwen.

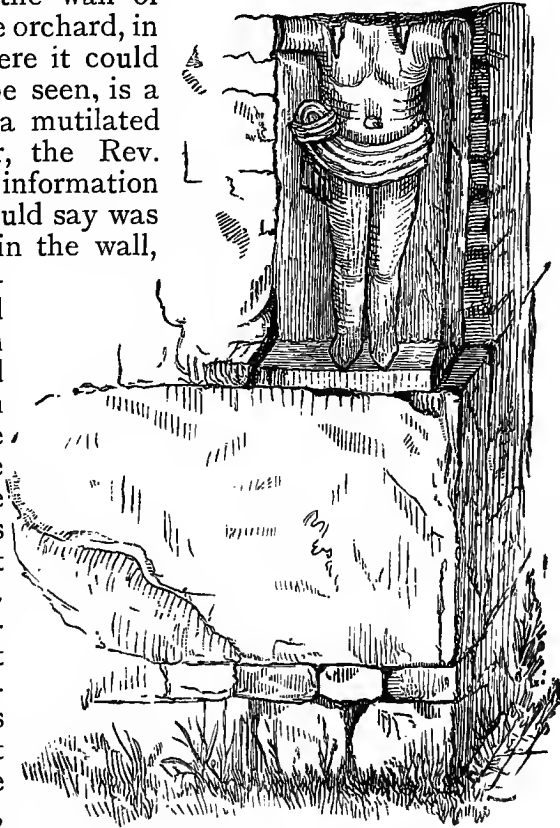




C W M .



ALTHOUGH Cwm Church is an ancient structure, there is no vestige of a cross in the churchyard ; but, built into the wall of the vicarage orchard, in a place where it could not easily be seen, is a portion of a mutilated stone crucifix. The Vicar, the Rev. J. Morris, could give no information about this Cross ; all he could say was that he had discovered it in the wall, and left it there. The probability is that it was placed in the wall for preservation by a former vicar, who found it lying about the Church premises. It stands on the left-hand side of the entrance to the orchard, and faces the public road ; but evergreens overgrow the wall, and almost hide the figure from view. Upon referring to the illustration, it will be seen that the Cross was wantonly disfigured. The head and arms have been knocked off, but the remaining portion of the body is in good preservation, and it is a well-executed piece of workmanship. The stem of the



crucifix, which is all that now exists, consists of an oblong slab, measuring 15 inches by 8 inches, and its thickness is 3 inches or thereabouts. On this stone is carved in relief a figure of our Lord. It is so well preserved that it is difficult to believe it has always been exposed to the weather. Underneath the left arm is an iron plug secured by lead, apparently placed there as a prop; the section of the other arm is not exposed to view, and therefore it could not be ascertained whether there was a similar plug on that side.





DENBIGH.

OLD HIGH CROSS.



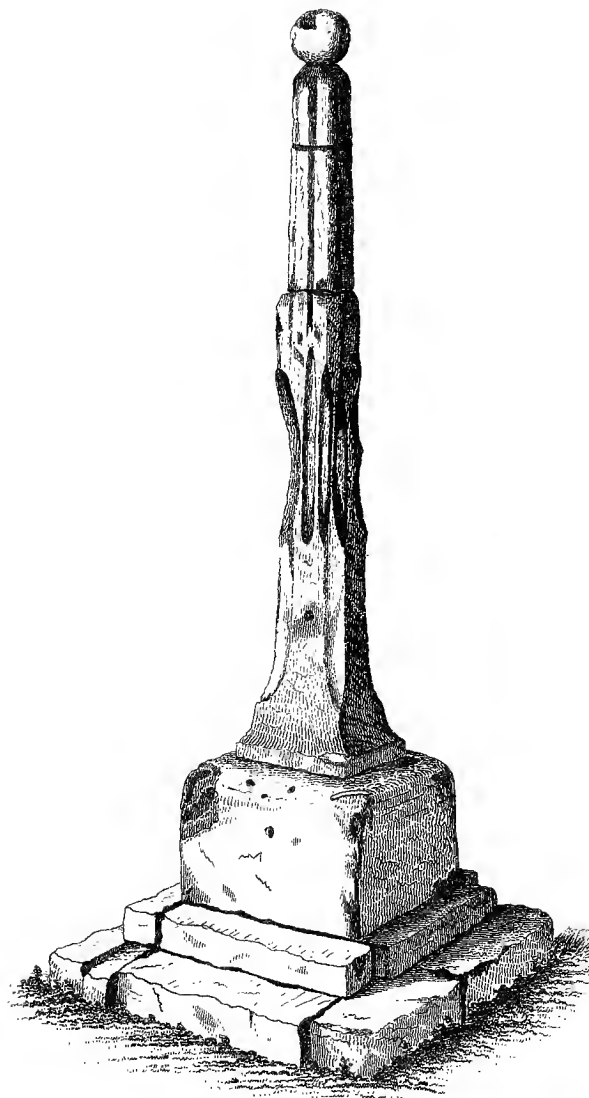
DENBIGH Old High Cross formerly stood in the square at the top of the town, in the place now occupied by a lamp-post, which is called locally the High Cross, but was removed some forty or fifty years ago, when the Town Hall was built, to the Bowling Green, adjoining the old castle walls. There it rests safely on a mound in a corner of the grounds. The writer was informed by the keeper of the Bowling Green, who remembers the Cross in the square, that it was removed bodily, and that even the stones in the steps occupy now pretty nearly the same relative position as before. The Cross, therefore, is just as it used to be.

Two steps lead to the pedestal or socket of the Cross. They measure respectively, in breadth, 6 feet and 4 feet; in height, 7 inches and 6 inches. The stones composing the steps are loosely put together, nor do they look old or worn. The socket is a large block of free-stone, measuring $28\frac{1}{2}$ inches square, and 19 inches high; its upper surface and angles are much worn. The shaft, a tapering octagonal, squared at the base, and fixed with lead into the socket, consists of two stones. The lower, or more ancient part, is 59 inches long; the upper, or modern addition, measures 27 inches; and it is surmounted by a ball 7 inches or so in diameter. The total height from the ground to the top of the ball is 12 feet 5 inches.

There is a date, 1760, cut into the modern part of the shaft, and most probably this points to the time when this portion was erected. (Fig. I.) It is not unlikely that it took the place of a cross head,



Fig. 1.



DENBIGH HIGH CROSS.

WOODALL, MINSHALL & CO. LITHOS., OSWESTRY.

which was then removed from the High Cross, properly so called, to make room for a lamp. The Cross itself belongs to the fifteenth century, but it might have superseded a previous market cross.

Latterly, and up to the time of its removal to the Bowling Green, this interesting monument was utilized as a lamp post, and the marks of the iron bands which secured the lamp to the pillar are distinctly seen, as will be observed upon referring to the accompanying sketch.

Denbigh High Cross in years gone by was the centre of markets and fairs. Buyers and sellers congregated around it, and stalls of the same kind always occupied the same spots. Next to the Cross stood the farmers with their wheat, further removed were the stocking and yarn vendors, and hat-sellers, &c. Three sides of the Cross itself were taken possession of by butchers. The third was unoccupied, as it was required for the purpose of trimming the lamp and replenishing it with oil. The butchers had a kind of shutter-awning fastened to the shaft of the Cross, to protect the meat from the weather; and when the market was over the shutters were let down and secured by padlocks to the Cross. Several holes plugged with lead, an iron staple, and other remaining marks, indicate the use that was made of the Cross. The shaft is free-stone, and it is grooved on all sides; the abrasions, which are deep, and must have endangered the safety of the Cross, were made by sharpening knives on the stone.

After the erection of the new hall the market was transferred from the street to the building close by.

THE ORIGIN OF MARKET CROSSES.

The fact that the Denbigh Cross was the centre of fairs, points to its origin. In years long gone by, markets were held in churchyards, and even in the churches. This perhaps shocks our sense of propriety; but in the country, six hundred years ago, the church and churchyard were, in most parishes, the only public place of resort. The people of Wales, as we learn from *Giraldus Cambrensis*, were not devoid of reverence, but, on the contrary, they showed greater respect than other nations to churches, crosses, ecclesiastical persons, etc.; yet they saw nothing wrong in transacting ordinary business on consecrated ground; indeed, it may have been that they chose the consecrated ground, intending thus to place even their ordinary

transactions, as between man and man, under the protection of the Church and the restriction of religious obligations.

Attempts, however, were made in very early times by the Church authorities to put down churchyard fairs and games. Markets and fairs were ultimately removed from churchyards to towns and other places. Upon the removal of fairs, market crosses were erected in the place where markets were held, and the fairs were opened by the priest, and in this way these proceedings received the sanctions of religion just as they did in consecrated ground. Many a market cross in Wales owes its origin to this cause; and these crosses were erected to encourage honesty. Milner, in his *History of Winchester*, says:—“The general intent of market crosses was to incite public homage to the religion of Christ crucified, and to inspire men with a sense of morality and piety amidst the ordinary transactions of life” (see Rimmer’s *Ancient Stone Crosses of England*, pp. 8, 9); and I take the following extract from Brady’s *Clavis Calendaria* (3rd ed., London, 1815, vol. i., p. 359):—“Every town had its cross, at which engagements, whether of a religious or worldly interest, were entered into.”

Rimmer further states that “Market crosses originated in towns where there were monastic establishments, and the Order sent a monk, or friar, on market days to preach to the assembled market people” (*Ancient Stone Crosses*, etc., p. 8). And again, he says:—“These relics also gave the religious house a central point to collect the tolls paid by farmers and dealers in country produce for the privilege of selling within the limits of the town; and until very lately this same tax was held by certain families in England, who exacted a toll from each head of cattle that was brought into the market-town for sale; indeed, it probably exists in some remote country places at the present time” (p. 9).

It may here be said, in corroboration of Mr. Rimmer’s remark, that there was a house of Carmelites, or White Friars, at the bottom of the hill on which Denbigh is built, and tolls for cattle entering fairs are still collected in many towns in Wales, but these tolls are not now, if they once were, the property of the Church. That a connection probably did exist between the High Cross and the clergy of Denbigh we learn from the municipal documents. From these papers, which are still extant, the following is taken:—

A toll of oatmeal sold within the borough was given the officiating clergyman for reading prayers before the opening of the market.—*Williams’s Ancient and Modern Denbigh*, pp. 138, 283.

We may, therefore, infer that the clergy of Denbigh, from olden times, opened the fairs, and this would naturally be done by them from the Cross, the centre of the market.

If the Market Cross at Denbigh was erected by the Carmelites, it dates from the latter part of the thirteenth century; but it probably belongs to a later period, most likely to the latter part of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century.

SUNDAY FAIRS.

Fairs were formerly held on Sundays and holy days, and even as late as 1571 the only restraint placed upon them was to stop proceedings during divine service. Archbishop Grindal thus alludes to this matter:—

That in fairs and common markets upon the Sundays, there be no shewing of any wares, before all the morning service and the sermon (if there be any) be done.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 269.

However, in the fourteenth century, some doubts of the propriety of holding fairs on Sunday appear to have taken possession of the minds of the inhabitants of Wrexham. In that year the steeple of their church was burnt down on a Sunday, and the calamity led to the changing of the fair from Sunday to Thursday. Browne Willis mentions this fact. He writes:—

In some old accounts I have seen of this town in the Welsh Chronicles, the steeple is said to have been cast down on November 25th, 1330, and the market changed next year, anno 1331, from Sunday to Thursday, as it now continues.

Fairs on Sunday ceased throughout Wales in the beginning of the present century.

CYFLOG Y GROES, OR THE WAGE OF THE CROSS.

In days gone by, and the custom has not altogether ceased, it was usual for men who wished to be hired for harvest work, to congregate about the High Cross at Denbigh very early in the morning of week days, and on Sunday in the afternoon, and there the farmers went to engage them. The wages given at the Cross was the standard or market price of labour. It was called *Cyflog y Groes*, or, the wages agreed upon at the Cross. The wages in the neighbourhood were regulated by that given at the Cross. Most towns had their cross

wage; but when treating of Rhuddlan Cross, which was a famous labour cross, I shall more particularly enter into this subject. I will only add of Denbigh Cross that engagements made there were binding for one day only, and consequently during harvest time there was a daily labour market in this town.

Dr. Johnson, who visited Denbigh, September 4th (Sunday), 1774, notices in his journal the men standing to be hired:—

We dined with Mr. Myddelton, the clergyman, at Denbigh, where I saw the harvestmen very decently dressed, after the afternoon service, standing to be hired.—On other days, they stand at about four in the morning—they are hired from day to day.—*A Journey into North Wales* (Duppa's edition), pp. 123-4.

These engagements made at the Cross were considered strictly binding on all parties concerned.

PROCLAMATIONS MADE AT THE MARKET CROSS.

When I paid a visit to Denbigh I found the High Cross, so called, surrounded by a number of loiterers, come together to discuss or hear news. In former days this was the very spot where people congregated to hear or relate the current news of the times. The poor people whom I saw were only perpetuating a custom once fashionable and necessary. It was at the Cross that announcements of importance were made; and also proclamations of all kinds, of a private or public nature. Advantage was taken of the concourse of people assembled on market days to publish there matters of importance, and we find parliamentary instructions given, that certain notices, such as contemplated marriages, should be given on market days at the town or market cross. From very ancient times, up almost to our own days, legal, and civil, and private proclamations were made at the cross. I will give a few instances of these:—

Walter Frompton of Bristol by his Will dated 8th December, 1388, gives certain property to his wife Isabel for her life, on conditions that she carefully preserves all the said possessions; but if she should marry again, or live unchastely, they are to be sold, *after three proclamations at the High Cross*, "cum tuba, et plus offerenti;" the money thereby raised to be divided into four equal parts and appropriated to certain specified pious and charitable uses.

A summary of the will of Frompton is given in vol. vi., p. 19, of the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society*.

In the times of the Commonwealth banns of marriage were published at market crosses, and people were there united in marriage by justices of the peace. In the parish register of Kislingbury, Northamptonshire, is this entry :—

William Nicholles and Cassandra Cooke wear published in a contract of marriage at *three markitt daies at the cross* of Northampton the 8th and the 15th and the 22nd dayes of March 1655 and were married the 23rd daye.—*Elliott's Parish Registers of Northampton* (printed privately), p. 19.

In the *Cheshire Sheaf*, which is a reprint of antiquarian notes published in the *Chester Courant*, there are given instances of civil marriages celebrated in the city of Chester. Mr. Hughes, the able editor of the *Sheaf*, found the following in the parish registers of Chester (St. Oswald's) :—

Richard Hughes of Newton, in ye countie of Chest'r, smith, and Jane Worrall of Shurlach, in ye same countie, Widdow, vpon the 20th day of Sept 1654 tendared unto the Wor'Il William Ince, Ald'rm' & Justice of peace within the Cittie of Chest'r, a sertificate subscribed by Tho: Humphreys, Notarie Publiq', & Parish Regist'r of Peters in Chest'r afforesaid, intimating that an Intenc'on of there Mariage was published in the Market place within the said parish of Peters three market days in three severall weekes; whereupon hee p'mitted them to solem'ize there said Mariage, according to ye forme proscribed in an Act of Parliam't; which was p'formed in ye p'sence of Hugh Rutter, William Milington, John Hughs, Arabella Dewsbury, witnesses p'sent at ye s'd Mariage.—Vol. ii., pp. 229-30.

The market cross is not mentioned here; "market place" stands in its stead; but in an entry made in the Register for Holy Trinity parish it appears . . . "published, at the Market Cross in Chester." This latter marriage was celebrated June 22nd, 1654.

Without further burdening my description with quotations, I bring these remarks on proclamations at crosses to an end. I might have added many extracts to those already given, but sufficient have been used to show what important announcements were made at market crosses.

One other kind of business which was sometimes transacted at such crosses, I must mention: the dispensing of justice. In Stow's *Survey of London*, edited by Strype (London, 1720, folio), is this entry :—

In the high street, near unto the strand, sometime stood a cross of stone, against the Bishop of Coventry, or Chester his house, whereof I

read, that in the year 1294, and divers other times, the Justices Itinerant sate without London, at the stone cross overagainst the Bishop of Coventry's House, and sometimes they sate in the Bishop's House, which was by the strand.—Book iv., p. 105.

Newspapers, market halls, and other products of later days, have brought to an end the primitive customs associated with market and other crosses.

THE ABBEY CROSS, DENBIGH.

All that remains of this Cross is the head-stone, which was fortunately discovered by the late Dr. Cumming in the grounds of the Abbey. The doctor had it removed to his house, called Dolhyfryd, about a mile from Denbigh, and there erected by the side of a well. On the sale of Dolhyfryd to Mr. Blackwell, father of the present owner, the Cross passed with the property, and was removed from the well to the premises attached to the house, where it now remains; and I have to thank Mr. Blackwell for his courtesy in allowing me to sketch this interesting remnant of the Abbey Cross.

The stone measures 25 inches in length, 11 inches in width, and 8 inches in thickness.

Four decorated niches ornament its sides. The subjects, sculptured in relief, are more or less defaced by the action of the elements, or other causes.

In one of the broader niches is a carving of the Crucifixion (Fig. 1.), and on each side of the cross are the emblems of the passion. To the right are the pincers, nails, hammer, anvil, and two scourges; to the left are the ladder and spear, with sponge at the end, and a single nail. This niche is trefoil-headed; the shafts at the angles have disappeared, and the ornamentation at the top is much worn.

The opposite face is occupied by a figure of the Virgin and Child (Fig. II.). The hair of the Virgin falls over the shoulders, and her head is encircled with a crown.

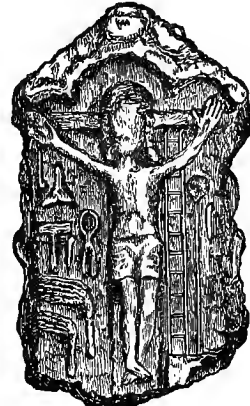


Fig. 1.



Fig. II.

In one of the side niches is the figure of an ecclesiastic (Fig. III.) in the act of devotion, robed in alb, chasuble, and maniple. Traces of a series of Y crosses are observable on the chasuble. The lower portion of the figure has been mutilated.

In the remaining niche is a male figure clothed in a flowing robe (Fig. IV.), the left hand holding a book, the right, three, or perhaps four, balls. The sleeves of the garment do not come lower than the elbow. This figure probably represents St. John.

The Abbey to which this Cross belonged was formerly a house of Carmelite Friars, and it was founded by John Salisbury, of Llewenny, in 1289. It continued to be the mausoleum of the family until the Reformation. Many mutilated effigies and fragments of tombs have from time to time been found in the ruins, and some of these are still preserved, and carefully kept, by Mrs. Owen of the Abbey, the name given to the residence adjoining the ruins. But the Abbey itself is in a pitiable state of neglect, and serves the purpose of outbuildings to the Abbey farm.



Fig. III.

Indeed, Denbigh is famous for containing more ruined ecclesiastical buildings than any other town in North Wales. Here is the Abbey, at the bottom of the town, in a deplorable state of neglect; St. Hilary's Chapel, on the summit of the hill, is untenantable; the fine ruins, near by, of a church which was intended to supersede the cathedral at St. Asaph, are mere skeleton walls; St. Anne's Chapel, mentioned by Leland, is no more, and its site is supposed to be occupied by a public-house, the Chirk Castle Arms; the ancient parish church called Whitchurch is rather a mortuary chapel than anything else; and the Queen's Chapel, in the castle, completes the list of neglected religious houses in the parish of Denbigh.

The Abbey Cross belongs probably to the early part of the fourteenth century, but it may have been erected, when the Abbey was built, at the close of the thirteenth century.



Fig. IV.



D E R W E N .

CHURCHYARD CROSS.

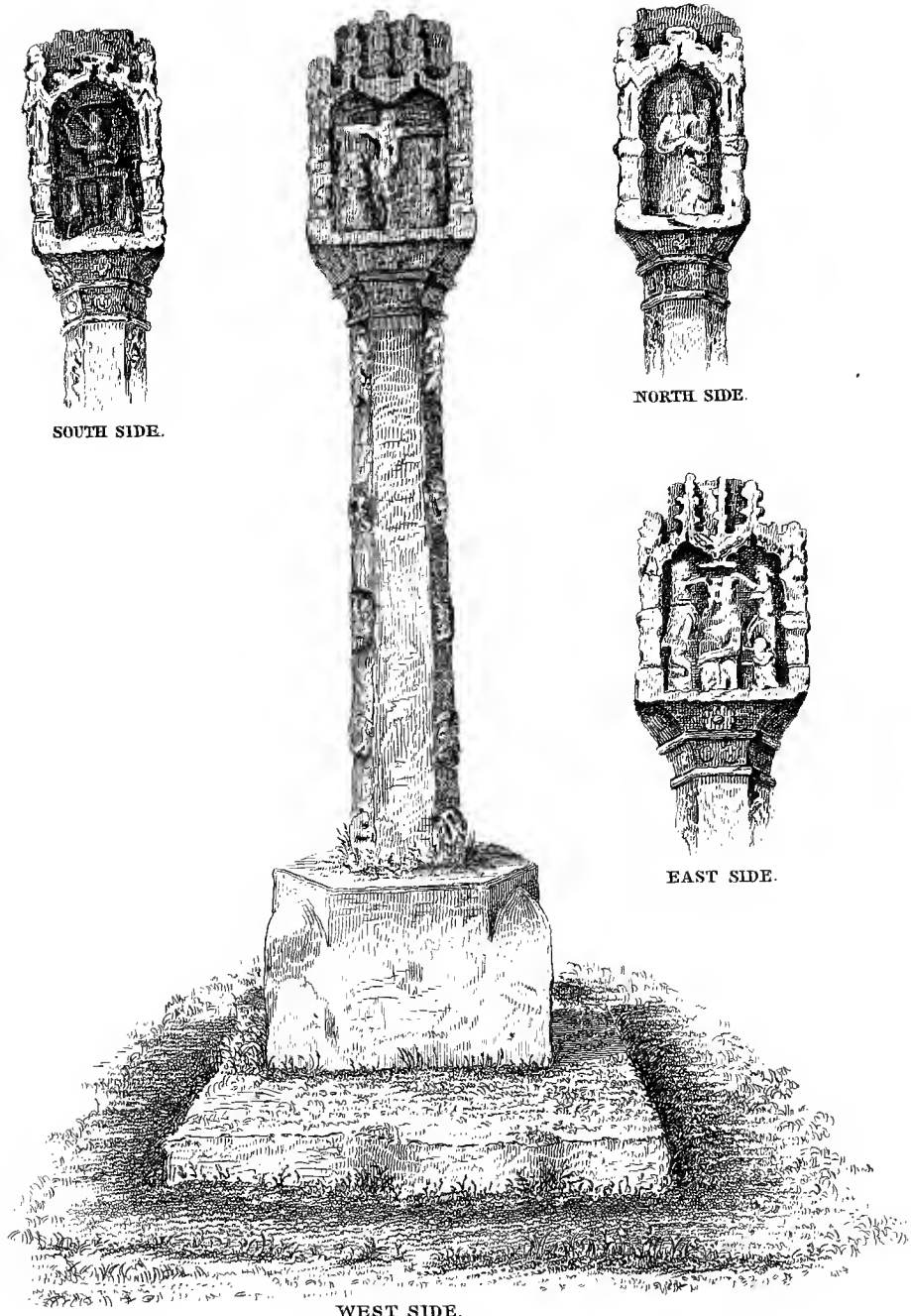


THIS is the most elaborate and perfect Cross in the Vale of Clwyd. It stands on the south side of the church, opposite the porch, and is a prominent feature in the churchyard. Very old and weather-worn it appears, leaning towards the ground.

There are two steps leading up to the pedestal or socket of the Cross. The lower portion of the basement has only some of its stones remaining in position, and these are, for the most part, overgrown with grass; this portion measures 7ft. 4in. by 8ft. 3in.; in height, the step is 8in., in breadth, 1ft. The second part measures 6ft. 1in. by 5ft. 6in.; in height the step is 10in., in breadth, 1ft. 4in. The stones forming these steps are large. From the measurements it will be seen that the Cross stands, at present, upon an oblong basement.

The pedestal is a ponderous stone, 2ft. 9in. square at the base, and 2ft. 4in. high; the upper bed is brought to an octagon by broaches of convex outline, and the upper edge is slightly canted.

The shaft, which is mortised into the pedestal, is 13in. square at the base, but, by sculptured heads, which serve as broaches, it becomes octagonal. On each side of the smaller alternate faces of the shaft are, sculptured in relief, equidistant from each other, three figures, representing, some of them, angels, and others, men's heads, said, locally, to represent the twelve apostles; and at the top, underneath a fillet moulding, are oak leaves. Between two mouldings at the upper extremity of the shaft, one on each of the six smaller sides, alternately arranged, are a head, and a rose of fourfoils, whilst, on the two larger opposite sides, is similar ornamentation, two on each face; and also, underneath the head-stone, one on each face, are heads and roses. Height, to first moulding, 6ft. 1in., and from same moulding to niche, 9in.



SOUTH SIDE.

NORTH SIDE.

EAST SIDE.

WEST SIDE.
DERWEN.

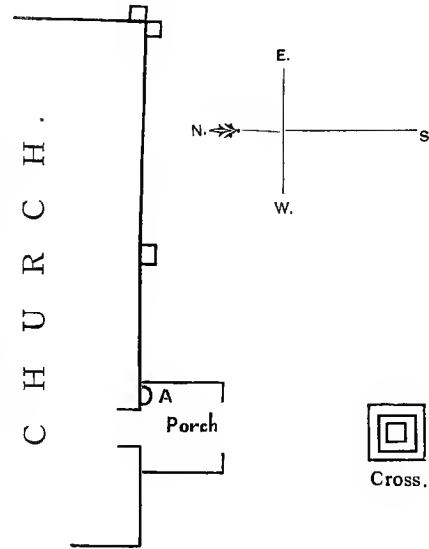
The head, or capstone, measures 1ft. 9in. in width, and 1ft. 1in. in depth, and its height is 2ft. 10in. It is divided into four niches, containing sculptured figures with canopy and pinnacles.

The Cross is weather-worn, or otherwise disfigured, and it is difficult to decipher the sculpturing on its surface, and consequently this is variously read. The Rev. D. R. Thomas, in the History of the Diocese, expresses himself as follows respecting Derwen Cross, and his thoughtful opinion is ever worthy of consideration:—
 “The churchyard cross, now much weather-worn, has on its four faces canopied niches with subjects carved in relief, to represent respectively, the Crucifixion of our Lord, and Justice, Mercy, and Truth. The work belongs apparently to the twelfth or thirteenth century.”

After many visits to the Cross, and its careful observation in many lights, I have failed to make out all the figures, but my journeys have not been entirely in vain. They have been rewarded by the revelation of details that had escaped detection at previous visits, and they have increased my admiration for the painstaking labour and skill of the unknown artist who five centuries ago worked upon the Cross, forming it out of a single stone.

In the west niche is a crucifix, with the figures of St. John and the Virgin, one on each side, all greatly defaced, not by time, but by the spoiler.

In the south compartment is an angel, holding a scale in the left hand, while with his uplifted right hand he grasps a sword, which is seen above the head, and from the mouth proceeds a trumpet. A portion of the angel’s wing is visible at the top of the left corner of the compartment, and the feet stand on a somewhat rounded surface. The scene represents the summoning of the dead to judgment, and it is therefore an appropriate symbol for a churchyard.



SITE OF CHURCHYARD CROSS.
 Scale 1-24th inch to the foot. A Holy Water Stoup.

The east face is sadly defaced and worn by time, and the figures are indistinct. In the centre of the niche is a chair on which is seated a person clothed in flowing garments; on each side are two figures, an adult and a child; so that the compartment contains figures of five persons. It has been supposed that the group represents the Wisdom of Solomon, but it is more probable that it was intended for the Virgin and Child, and possibly the second child stands for the infant Forerunner of Christ.

The north face, the one opposite the Church porch, has like the east face suffered greatly, and all that is traceable in this niche is an erect image robed in loose raiment; and probably this also was intended to represent the Virgin.

The total height of the Cross, including the steps and socket, is 13 feet 1 inch, and when complete and perfect it was higher, for the top part of the head stone has disappeared.

The Cross belongs to the fourteenth century.

It has departed from the perpendicular, and inclines from 1 to 2 degrees eastward. Formerly, when the parish school was held in the room formed out of the lich gate, the churchyard was the children's play ground, and their great feat was to climb up the Cross, and seat themselves on the top. I have been informed that this was occasionally accomplished. If so, the repeated attempts would damage the engravings on the shaft, for the climbers would use them as props for their feet; but it must have been difficult for a child to ascend to the top, as the head stone projects considerably from the shaft. The achievement was consequently accompanied with bodily danger sufficient to retard all but the rash and reckless from attempting its accomplishment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE BY PARISH CLERKS FROM STEPS OF CROSS.

The custom of publishing parochial matters by the parish clerk from the steps of the Cross in Derwen parish reached our own days. The present clerk, Mr. John Morris, an intelligent and respectable man, who has filled the office for upwards of forty years, has himself published notices of local interest from the Cross; but he has not lately done so. Printed circulars have superseded this kind of advertisement. The notices were announced by the parish clerk after the morning service, and the people were in the habit of waiting outside the Church until his appearance to ascertain whether he had

any news to give them; if he had, he proclaimed it, standing on the upper step of the Cross. Such was the custom in this parish, and also in some other parishes in the Vale; but crosses latterly did not exist in every churchyard, and where there was no cross, the parish clerk stood in the porch. Mr. Morris said that the Sunday announcements made by him were often issued at the command of the justices of the peace.

Various were the announcements made by the parish clerk on Sunday morning. Sometimes he had to inform the people when the tithes were to be paid, or when an auction was to take place, or of the sports to be played. Agricultural matters formed a part of these announcements. Where sheep were kept on the hills, they at certain seasons of the year came into the proclamations of the parish clerk. In fact, all matters of a secular kind incidental to farm life, and the exigencies of the country, were published, without compunction, on Sunday, by the clerk. The Rev. M. Hughes, Rector of Derwen, informed me that in South Wales the same thing formerly took place, and that the parish clerk of Llanedy was in the habit of publishing auctions, and enumerating the things to be sold, jumbling them up in a ludicrous manner. Mr. Jones, schoolmaster at Llanfihangel-Glyn-Myfyr, told me that his mother had informed him that she remembered races, etc., announced by the parish clerk of Llandyrnog, a parish in the Vale of Clwyd, on Sunday, after morning service. I was also informed by natives of Llanfihangel-Glyn-Myfyr that athletic contests were formerly notified on Sunday by the clerk in the churchyard.

As the parish clerk was formerly the public crier outside the church, so was it also his duty to announce inside matters connected with the services. I have heard a parish clerk in Carnarvonshire give notice of a watch-night (*gwylnos*), a religious service held the night before the burial, in the house where a corpse lies, and also of the time when the funeral procession would start. In the English-speaking parts of Wales the parish clerk was in the habit of giving notices in church, and queer mistakes were sometimes made by these officials.

SUNDAY GAMES.

Sunday games date from most ancient times, and they continued in Wales up to and into the present century. Many an old man has told me that he has seen hand-ball played on Sunday morning

against the church walls, and that when the church bell ceased, players and spectators in a body entered the church. The testimony of the living is amply corroborated by many writers. Robert Hughes, Tyissa, Efenectyd, 83 years old, told me that he remembered ball-playing at Clocaenog Church on Sunday mornings. He said that the game was continued to the last minute before the service began, and that then everybody walked into the church. Sunday playing, Hughes says, ceased when he was a lad. John Roberts, Penfedw, Llanfwrog, told me that it was a usual thing, according to the testimony of an old man, long dead, who was fond of speaking of his younger days, for the parson of a certain parish in the Vale of Clwyd to act as marker in important games, and that when the time for beginning the service approached, he would say, "Come, lads, it is high time to go to church," and immediately the game stopped, and they all followed the clergyman. The vicar mentioned died in 1809. Innumerable instances of Sunday sports in the Vale could be adduced, but enough for the present has been said. It was not in the Vale only that such games were carried on in the days of men still living. David Watkin, servant man at the Rectory, Llanfechain, Montgomeryshire, told me that he had seen bandy played in Llanfechain churchyard at the back of the church, the north side, on Sunday, when he was a lad. He told me he was 68 years old, and this was two years ago.

Hand-ball was usually played on the gable end of the church, where there was no window; but if the west end was not suitable, then the north wall was used. This wall in old churches had no windows in it, excepting a small one in the chancel, and it was therefore available for games of "fives"; but should there be windows in the walls, likely to interfere with the game, they were protected with shutters. The north side of the churchyard was devoted to games, and formerly no one was buried in that part. In Llanfechain churchyard there is a cock-pit still traceable, amphitheatre-like in form, on the north side of the church.

The games played on Sunday were various: hammer-throwing and heavy-stone-throwing were both common; nine-pins, prison-bars, ball (both hand and foot), dancing, etc., were all common games. Prison-bars, or prisoners' bars, or base, as it is called in Shakespeare, nine-pins and ball playing, were the favourite pastimes in more recent days.

Contests between parish and parish were popular, and hard words and harder blows too frequently accompanied these friendly encounters. Tradition says that the *gospur* (vesper) service was put off occasionally to enable the young men to continue their games uninterruptedly. This afternoon service was not so much thought of as the morning service, and was but indifferently attended. Usually there was a sermon on Sunday morning in church, but not in the afternoon.

The writer was informed by a friend, Mr. Elias Williams, Bronydd, Llanllechid, Carnarvonshire, of an event which took place in his father's days, and in which, I think, he said his father took a part. A football match had been arranged for a certain Sunday, on a hill midway between Llanbedr and Llanllechid, between the young men of those parishes. On the day appointed it rained, and though the Llanllechid men were on the ground, their opponents failed to appear. The weather was propitious on the following Sunday; but, as no arrangement had been made for that day, a few only of the Llanllechid people presented themselves, whilst those of Llanbedr came in force. The game began, but the few opposed to the many could not even hold their own, and in their distress they despatched one of their number to the parish church, which was a good way off, to bring up assistance. The messenger rushed along over walls and fields, and, heated and exhausted, ran into the church, shouting out that the boys of Llanbedr had come, and that they were kicking the ball before them to Llanbedr parish. At these words every man in the church rose and left the building, and made for the hill with might and main. They came up to the victorious Llanbedr boys, who were kicking the ball over the mountain towards their own village. The ball was rapidly turned the other way, and the day ended with a "glorious licking for the Llanbedrites." Such a day became a red-letter day, and my dear old friend related with animation the famous encounter here recorded.

Sunday games seem to have been accompanied with much drinking, if not with much drunkenness. In very many instances the next house to the village church was the village inn, and it often abutted upon the churchyard walls. A clerical friend, who some years ago restored his church, informed me that when he first went to the living he noticed a small recess in the wall of the church, on the north side, and upon making inquiries, he was told that it was

the *twill chwart*, or quart hole, and that when a game of fives was being played a quart jug filled with ale was always there for the use of the players; and he further said that the stakes were generally a quart of ale. His church had shutters to the windows on the side where ball was played. It need hardly be said that the *twill chwart* and shutters disappeared when the church was restored. This church was in Carmarthenshire, South Wales.

These Sunday games outlived injunctions and laws, but they have in this century entirely disappeared from Wales. In some parishes they lingered longer than in others, and Derwen was one of these. In this parish there is a quillet of ground called *Yr erw fowlio*, the bowling quillet, where of a Sunday the natives exhibited their skill at *chwareu ceilyls*, or nine-pins. It is no longer used on Sunday, or any other day, for this purpose.

Hand-ball, or fives, was usually played here, as in other parishes, against the church walls, and Sunday was the ordinary time for playing this and other games. Fives was a dry game, and the players often resorted to the Blue Bell to quench their thirst. There was a door opening into the churchyard from the inn, and thus no time was lost in going through the churchyard gate, or over the stile, to the public-house. The gable end of the village inn at Derwen is built upon the very boundary of the churchyard, forming, in fact, the boundary wall, and whether the owners of the Blue Bell had ever a right of way into the churchyard direct from the house or not, they had a door which formerly gave ingress and egress. This privilege appears to have been obnoxious in later times, for a wall has been erected right in front of the door, thus stopping the passage.

In the neighbouring parish of Llanfwrog, a public-house, the Labour in Vain, also abuts upon the churchyard, and here, too, is a door in the gable end opening into it. This door is not blocked up, but it is quite disused in these days. The churches at Llanferres and Llanynys likewise have public-houses adjoining the churchyards. In the village of Bettws-Gwerfil-Goch, near Corwen, the public-house adjoins the churchyard, and has a back door, even at present in use, that opens into it. At Dolgelley a door opening into the churchyard from the adjoining inn was closed fifteen years ago. There may be other instances of the juxtaposition of church and tavern in the Vale of Clwyd and other

places, that have been unnoticed by me, but those which I have now enumerated are more than sufficient to prove that in days gone by the public-house was in great request. There was a time when singers thought they ought to have a glass of beer between the singing of one part of the service and another, and then these entries into public-houses would be great conveniences; and the door opening directly from the singing-loft to the churchyard would enable the sitters in the west-end gallery to escape unnoticed, whenever they liked, from the church.

At every restoration of a church, some distinguishing, if disfiguring, feature disappears, and west-end galleries, very shortly, will be things of the past. Stone steps, leading direct to the church gallery from the churchyard, have, I believe, entirely gone; the last to be removed in or near the Vale of Clwyd was that at Bettws-Gwerfil-Goch Church.

Many extracts might be made from books showing the prevalence of Sunday games in Wales and England up to a late period, but two shall suffice.

In the *Life of the Rev. Thomas Charles*, by the Rev. W. Hughes, Vicar of Llanuwchllyn, near Bala, Mr. Charles, speaking of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and scenes which he had himself observed, says:—

On Sunday mornings the poor were more constant in their attendance at church than the gentry; but the Sunday evenings (afternoons up to dark) were spent by all in idle amusements. Every Sabbath there was what was called *Y chwareu-gamp*, a sort of sport in which all the young men of the neighbourhood had a trial of strength, and the people assembled from the surrounding country to see their feats. . . . In this town (Bala) they used to employ the Sundays in dancing and singing to the harp, and in playing tennis against the town hall. In every corner of the town some sport or other went on, till the light of the Sabbath-day had faded away.

But it was not in Wales only that the things now mentioned took place; they were also common in England.

In the *Records of the Life of the Rev. W. H. Havergal*, by his daughter, it is stated that Miss Havergal visited Coaley, Gloucestershire, to tread in her father's footsteps, where he had been officiating from 1819 to 1822. She says:—

Another man told me that when my father first came to Coaley, as soon as ever the church was over, the game of fives was played against the

tower wall, but for shame they could not play after hearing such sermons.
—*Home Words*, xii., p. 256.

When we recall the measures which were taken to put down Sunday games, we find how unwilling the people were to forego these recreations. An account of these measures is given in the Appendix.

LLOFFT-Y-GROG, OR ROOD-LOFT.

Derwen is the only church in the Vale of Clwyd which has a rood-loft, or, as it is called in Welsh, *Llofft-y-grog*, i.e., the Loft of the Cross. This rood-loft occupies its original position between the nave and chancel of the Church. Until the late restoration, the loft was entered from the body of the Church by stairs that abutted upon the north wall, but at present it is reached by stairs built into the north wall. It extends the whole breadth of the Church, and measures 25ft. long by 9ft. 4in. broad. The wooden cross that formerly stood in the uppermost beam, facing the nave, has disappeared, but the mortise into which it entered still exists, and measures 7in. by 1¼in.

The parish clerk informs me that he remembers the loft occupied by parishioners, and he states that there were in it two movable benches for their use. My informant says that on the great festivals the rood-loft, the west-end gallery, which has been taken down, and the body of the Church, were crowded with people, and on such occasions the north side door, now closed, and the south door, were thrown open to enable the congregation to leave the Church. He also states that the people who were in the habit of frequenting the rood-loft, when the parishioners generally attended the Church, continued doing so from choice, and not necessity, to the end of their lives.

The rood-lofts, as I have said, have disappeared from the churches in and about the Vale of Clwyd, but there is evidence in several buildings of their former existence. Llanrhaidr Church was lately restored, and a small window, high up in the south wall, was brought to light, which evidently was intended and required for the rood-loft. The small narrow windows on the south and north sides of Cerrig-y-drudion Church show that at one time there was a rood-loft. In Llanelidan Church are beams that seem to have been portions of a rood-loft, and in the *Village Churches in Denbighshire* a sketch of a part of it will be found. Other churches bear indications of rood-lofts that were taken down years ago, so far back that even tradition is silent about them. In Efenechtyd Church is a battlemented and

paneled beam of wood, now used as a partition between the chancel and nave, which was a part of the rood-loft. The screen at Clocaenog Church retains traces of the rood-loft that once surmounted it, and from the date, 1672, on a piece of wood nailed to the screen, we may infer that the loft was then improved away.

The destruction of rood-lofts began as early as the days of Henry VIII. In a letter from Cranmer to Henry VIII., dated January 24, 1546, he refers to the king's commands "to take down the lofts," &c. (See *The Miscellaneous Writings, &c., of Thomas Cranmer*, page 415, *Parker Society*.)

An entry in the parish register of South Littleton, Worcestershire, under date 1552, refers to the rood-loft there. It is: "Received . . . for ou^r Rode loffte."

Passing over a few years we find another allusion to rood-lofts. In Archbishop Parker's articles to be inquired of within the diocese of Canterbury in his visitation in 1569 is the following question:—

Whether the roode lofte be pulled downe, according to the order prescribed; and if the partition betweene the chauncell and the church be kepte.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 259.

In 1571 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners gave orders for the removal of rood-lofts:—

It is thus decreed and ordained that the roodlofts, as yet being at this day aforesaid (the tenth day of October) untransposed, shall be so altered that the upper parts of the same with sollar, be quite taken down unto the upper parts of the vaults and the beams running in length over the said vaults, by putting some convenient crest upon the said beam, &c.—*Remains of Grindal*, pp. 154-5, *Parker Society*.

Articles to the same effect as the foregoing were issued by Edmund, Archbishop of York (Grindal). And in the same Archbishop's injunctions for the laity, issued also in 1571, are the following words:—

All altars to be pulled down to the ground, and the altar stones defaced and bestowed to some common use: and rood lofts altered. The materials to be sold for the use of the church.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 269.

Upon his translation to Canterbury, the Archbishop issued like

Articles of Enquiry within his province of Canterbury. This he did in the 18th year of Queen Elizabeth, A.D. 1576:—

Art. 4. whether in ye church all altars be taken And whether y^e roodlofts be taken and altered so that the upper parts thereof with the soller or loft be quite taken down unto the cross beam, &c.

By taking away the “soller” or loft, in which people congregated, a simple screen was left standing, and this will account for the number of screens without a loft that are still to be met with in the Vale of Clwyd and other parts of Wales.

In a very interesting History of the Parish of Llanerfyl by the Rev. G. Edwards, M.A., Rector of Llangadfan, which appears in the *Montgomeryshire Collections* (vol. xvi., p. 266), is an account of a Vestry held July 15th, 1675, Lord Herbert presiding, in which it was resolved to remove the rood-loft. The demolition of this loft involved, possibly, no greater principle than that its removal was necessary for the contemplated improvements in the church. Be this as it may, the Vestry resolved:—

1. The rood-loft was ordered to be taken down, all except the door under it, which was to be left to make a distinction between the body of the church and the chancel.
2. With the additional timber, the seats, by way of a gallery, to be erected below the font for the parishioners in lieu of the said rood.

These resolutions were carried out, as is shewn by the records of a subsequent vestry. The manner in which the rood-loft was removed reminds us of Archbishop Parker's injunctions in 1569, that a “partition betweene the chauncell and the church be kepte,” and the substitution of a gallery in lieu of the rood “soller” shows that in other places as well as in Derwen rood-lofts were occupied by the people, and without them the accommodation was evidently insufficient for the congregation.

It is fortunate that Derwen has retained its screen and loft. A few years ago it was the fashion to remove, as encumbrances, or for some other reason, all these interesting and valuable records of art in years gone by, but at present they are, deservedly, highly appreciated and preserved. The late Bishop of Bangor, Bishop Bethel, subscribed handsomely towards the restoration of Derwen Church in 1857, upon the condition that the screen and rood-loft should be left undisturbed. This was complied with, and so the handsome and invaluable fourteenth century screen remains intact, and, if not

tampered with, it will last for centuries. There is a beautiful screen in good preservation in Llanwnog Church, Montgomeryshire, and another in Llanrwst Parish Church.

EASTER-TIDE FESTIVITIES.

The observance of Good Friday and Easter in the last century was very different from what it is now in Wales. The parish clerk of Derwen tells me, and I have heard the same thing in other parishes, that at Easter-tide all the adults in the parish were in the habit of partaking of the Holy Communion. There were three celebrations at that season, one on Good Friday, one on Saturday, and one on Easterday. In some parishes I have also heard of a celebration on Easter Monday. The parishioners did not all partake at the same time ; servants, farmers, and gentry, partook on different days. This division of classes appears to have been common, for the same thing was the rule in Llanasa, and other churches also. I know not the exact date when what I have now related ceased, but the living state that in the time of their fathers all the parishioners communicated on one of the three days named ; and the immediate predecessor of the present parish clerk at Derwen used to say that so many communicated in his early days that he "thought they would never end."

The afternoon of Easter Saturday was formerly a half holiday. Servants claimed it as a matter of right, and spent it in various games, but they attended church in the morning of the day.

But Easter Monday was the great gala day, alike with masters and servants. It was spent in jollity, games, and exhibitions of strength and wrestling. Derwen had its *Erw ysgwt*, or wrestling quillet, as well as its *Erw fowlio*, or bowling quillet. There was one singular custom in this parish which happily has passed away. It was called *Gwneyd Bragod*, and was described to me by Mr. Morris, the parish clerk, who remembers it.

Gwneyd Bragod, or making bragget, took its name from a kind of liquor in use among the Welsh, consisting of a mixture of mead and spiced beer. This was a beverage specially prepared for Easter Monday. It was an old custom, so Mr. Morris informs me, for the young women of the parish, on Easter Monday, to invite to the public-house all the young men they met on their way to the village, to have a drink of *Bragod*. With such a custom in the parish, it is

not to be wondered at that John Langford, who was Rector from the year 1672 to 1718, wrote the following elegiacs in the parish register :—

Baptizatorum tibi nomina singula signo
Atq' ita defunctos ordine quosq' loco
Sed junctos memoro sociali fœdere paucos
Transiliit metas luxuriosa cohors.

There was in other places, at Easter time, something similar to this liquor-drinking and gallantry. Strutt says that it was customary in the Scilly Isles for “the young people to exercise a sort of gallantry called goose-dancing, when the maidens are dressed up for young men, and the young men for maidens; thus disguised they visit their neighbours in companies, where they dance. . . . When the music and dancing is done, they are treated with liquor, and then they go to the next house of entertainment” (*Sports and Pastimes*, p. 349).





DYSERTH.



IN the south side of the Parish Church, in the churchyard, stands a Cross which, tradition says, originally marked the spot, on the hill-side, where Einion, son of Ririd Flaidd, fell, pierced with an arrow, while engaged in the siege of the castle that stood on the summit of the rock above the Church. The piece of ground on which the National School stands was formerly called Bryn Einion, but it is now named Bryn-yr-Ysgol, or the Mount of the School. On this Bryn the Cross is said to have stood, but the exact spot is unmarked and unknown. The inhabitants state that years ago the Cross was, for safety's sake, removed from the hill-side to its present position.

If this were verily *Croes Einion*, Einion's Cross, it would be valuable and interesting as showing the kind of crosses erected to the memory of the brave, six or more centuries ago. But its identity is not proved. Pennant says:—

It was at a siege of this place that *Eineon*, the son of *Ririd Vlaidd*, was slain. A cross was erected on the spot, called *Croes Eineon*, the shaft of which, ornamented with strange sculpture, now is supposed to form the stile into the churchyard of *Dyserth*; in which is another cross, of very curious workmanship.—*Tour in Wales*, vol. ii., pp. 7, 8.

Thus briefly, and guardedly, does Pennant express himself respecting the crosses he observed in Dyserth. At present there is only one Cross in the churchyard. When Professor Westwood was at Dyserth, he saw two crosses, which are figured in the *Lapidarium Walliæ*. The Professor was at Dyserth thirty-five years ago, and since that time one of the crosses has entirely disappeared. The other is still in existence, and most probably it is the one which is last mentioned by Pennant, as being in the churchyard, "of very curious workmanship." Pennant visited Dyserth in the last century. The existing Cross could not have formed the stile into the churchyard, for its surfaces do not exhibit marks of having been so used.

The cross which Pennant found as a stile, and which was then supposed to have been the shaft of *Croes Einion*, has latterly disappeared. Somehow or other the present Cross has usurped the honour due to Einion's Cross, but Professor Westwood detected the fraud. He writes:—

This Cross is stated to have been brought from an adjoining hill, and to have been erected on the spot where Einion, son of Ririd Vlaidd, was slain by an arrow at the time the castle was destroyed by Llewellyn ap Gruffydd, about 1260. The Cross is, however, of a much earlier date, having been ascribed to the eighth century, which is certainly too early. . . . It is also stated that there was an inscription on the Cross, which, according to Griffith Hiraethog, was read:—

“Oc si petatur lapis yste kausa notatur
Einon oxi Ririd Flaidd filius hoc memoratur.”

No trace, however, exists of such an inscription, nor does there seem to be sufficient space for it on any part of the stone.—*Lapidarium Walliæ*, p. 209.

That there was no writing of any kind on this Cross is further proved by information which the Rev. D. Jones, Vicar of the parish, gave the writer. Mr. Jones stated that a few years ago the Cross was removed bodily, and that he certainly did not detect traces of any inscription on that part of the shaft which was buried in the ground. He estimated the length of the shaft in the ground at about three feet. There are no letters, nor space for any letters, on the exposed part of the Cross. Mr. Jones said that the Cross was replaced on its original site when it was re-erected in the churchyard. Taking all these things into consideration, it cannot be maintained that the present Cross commemorates Einion's death.

The writer is indebted to the kindness of Mr. Howel W. Lloyd for the following interesting transcript from Robert Vaughan's Pedigrees respecting Einion, son of Ririd Flaidd:—

His (Ririd Flaidd's) eldest son was Madoc, Einion the second, and Howel the third . . . The said Einion was killed in a fight at Diserth in Flintshire, in memorie of whome a Crosse was erected there, and called Croes Einion, yt is, Einion's Crosse, and thereon was engraven this distic.

Mr. Lloyd remarks:—“Here an hiatus occurs in R. V.'s MS., but the distich is supplied by W. W. E. Wynne, Esq., of Peniarth, from another Hengwrt MS., Griffith Hiraethog's MS. Book of Pedigrees, entitled *Llyfr Casgl o law G. H.* (fol. 110), which is written in

a very illegible hand, so that R. V. may have failed to read it to his satisfaction." The distich is given as follows:—

Ok sy petatur lapis yste kaussa notatur
Enion oxi rritit flaid filius hoc memoratur.

The Cross which at present exists in Dyserth churchyard is 63 inches high. It is a monolith, of a slaty, destructible nature. About one half of the head, which was circular, has been broken off; the shaft tapers throughout its length. On the west side of the circular head is cut a Maltese cross, the extremities of which project slightly beyond the circle; this cross proceeds from a central boss 5 inches in diameter, and the limbs of the cross measure, therefrom to the circumference, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The head, when perfect, measured 18 inches in diameter; but, if measured from the extremity of the limbs of the Maltese cross, the entire breadth of the head would be 20 inches. Between the arms of the cross are rather deeply cut trilobed incisions, $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches long; and between the trilobes and the circumference are a series of oval or elliptical impressions, four on each limb of the cross, and four on each space between the limbs; and thus there would be, when the cross was complete, thirty-two of these elongated incisions around the circular head. At present there are only fourteen more or less visible. A circular incision, at present but indistinctly seen, separated these impressions from the trilobes. On the only arm of the Maltese Cross that is entire, between the elliptical markings and the central boss, is a cross formed by two lines intersecting each other, having on either side a couple of lines parallel therewith, which meet each other and form angles. The other arm that partly exists has indistinct interlaced ribbon ornamentation.

The stem of the Cross on this side, *i.e.*, the west side, has interlaced ribbon ornamentation, which is represented as terminating just beneath a lobe-like ornamentation close to the lower arm of the Maltese cross; but the work in this part is very much weather-worn and indistinct. Near the base of the shaft is a quadrangular pattern, similar to that on the arm of the Cross, divided by diagonal lines into a series of triangles, which form a cross within the quadrangle. The length of the stem is 46 inches; breadth, underneath the head, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches; at the surface of the ground, 11 inches; the width, 4 to 5 inches.

The side of the Cross facing eastward is also embellished. The

circular head has two trilobed incisions, and traces of a third; so that on this side, as on the other, there were originally four trilobed incisions. In the centre is a boldly projecting boss, ornamented with spiral lines. The boss is 5 inches in diameter, and 3 in projection. The space between the trilobes and the circumference is filled with interlaced work, while that between the trilobes is taken up by spiral lines, and underneath the boss is a knot representing two ropes entwined. From this part, to within 11 inches of the ground, the shaft is plain, the stone having peeled off; but at the bottom there is a portion of an interlaced line ornamentation similar to that on the other side.

The edges of the stem are ornamented with interlaced ribbon work, broken into two by a moulding 8 inches below the head of the Cross; in the spaces between the ribbon work are small raised bosses.

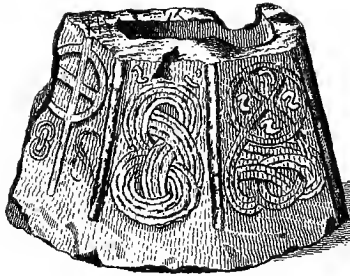
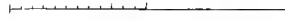
Although the Cross is elaborately embellished, the workmanship is rough, and the notches of the stonemason's tool are visible. The stone itself is overgrown with lichen, is greatly weather-worn, and has a tendency to split. Unfortunately, even within the last forty years, a large portion of one side has dropped off. The part that has disappeared is delineated in Professor Westwood's excellent work already several times alluded to. The drawings which illustrate my own remarks were taken in 1880.

SOCKET OF CROSS.

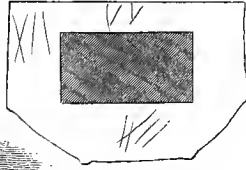
The socket or pedestal of a Cross was brought to light at the restoration of the Church. It was found imbedded in one of the walls. The Church underwent alterations in 1579, 1603, and 1636, and probably in one of these the socket was built into the wall for preservation, or it might have been so placed by a utilitarian builder, to save trouble and expense. The stone is at present in the church porch; a few years ago it was lying about the churchyard. It deserves a safe resting place.

It is a block of irregular shape. (Figs. I., II., and III.) The total height is 19 inches; the base is much broader than the top. Five of its sides are ornamented, but one is plain. Evidently at one time this pedestal was only partially exposed. The extremity was intended to be buried in the ground, the lower 5 inches being rough and unornamented; while the upper 14 inches are beautified with interlaced and other designs; and there is one long unornamented

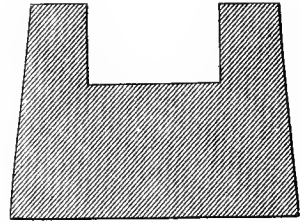
Scale. 1 Inch to the Foot.



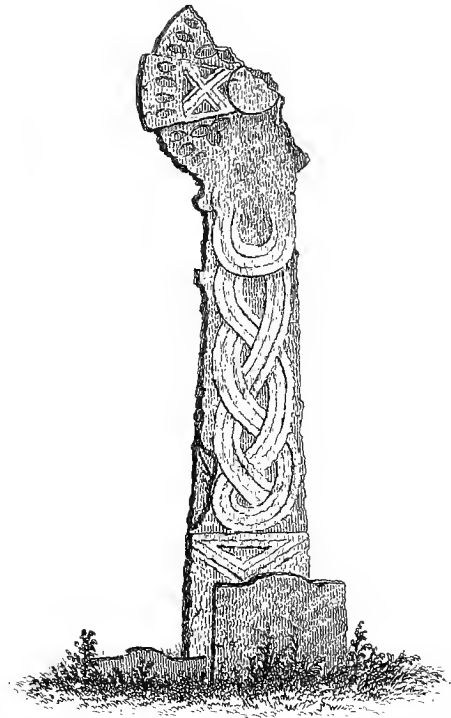
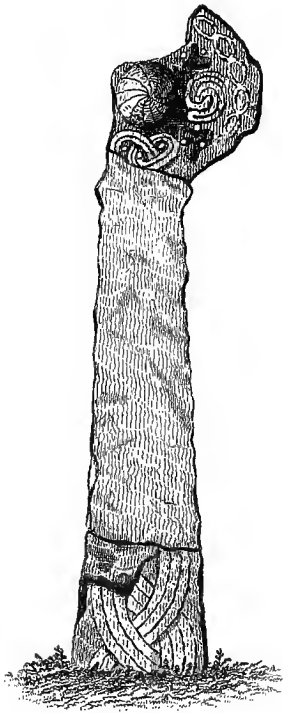
PEDESTAL OF CROSS.
Fig. 1.



TOP OF PEDESTAL
Fig. 3.



SECTION OF PEDESTAL.
Fig. 2.



DYSERTH.

side, which apparently was also originally hidden from view, or it would have been decorated like the other sides.

The socket measures 12 inches long, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and 7 inches deep. These dimensions will admit of its having been the pedestal of the Cross now in the churchyard; and, furthermore, the engravings upon it are identical in character with those on the Cross. One side has on it a circle, inclosing a cross, two arms of which extend beyond the circle, while the transverse arms terminate with the circumference; the next side to this has interlaced work, similar to that on the Cross; then comes another circle divided into four compartments, having within each compartment a figure resembling the letter **S**. The two next divisions have interlaced work; but both these sides have been greatly damaged, and the design on one of them has almost disappeared. The interstices between the designs are filled with mortar, and this makes it difficult to trace correctly the interlaced work. There are several grooves or incisions on the top of the pedestal, as shown in the accompanying plan (Fig. III.).

Built into the wall, where possibly the stile was which Pennant mentions, is a long block of limestone, measuring 5ft. 10in. by 16in. broad, but one side only of this block is exposed.

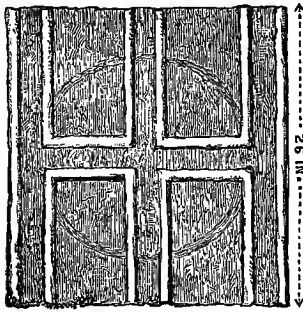


Fig. V.

There was found lately, in the churchyard, a stone which is still preserved, with a cross upon it. An engraving of it is here given (Fig. IV.). It

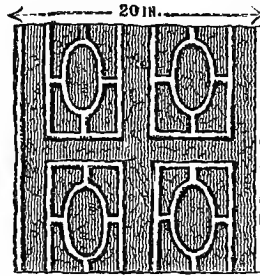


Fig. IV.

seems to have been one of the panels in an altar tomb. It was accidentally dug up, and is in a very good state of preservation.

Another visit to the churchyard was lately made, and I observed a stone (Fig. V.) lying, among other stones, against the east wall of the church; this, too, was probably a panel in an altar tomb.



EFENECHTYD.

SUPPOSED CHURCHYARD CROSS.



WHEN Efenechtyd Church was being re-built, in the year 1873, an ornamented stone was found embedded in the wall, and this stone, Mr. Baker, the architect, supposes, was a portion of the Churchyard Cross. I am indebted to this gentleman for tracings of his drawings of this stone, which are here reproduced on a reduced scale (Figs. I. and II.)

This fragment appears to have been twice subjected to the stone-cutter's chisel, for both the top of the stone and two of its sides are ornamented. The top of the stone has a singular spiral figure cut into it, which is shown in the accompanying illustration (Fig. I.). This part of the

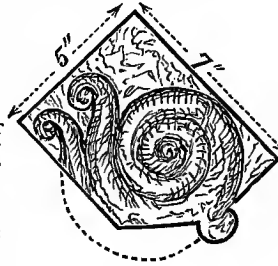


Fig. I.

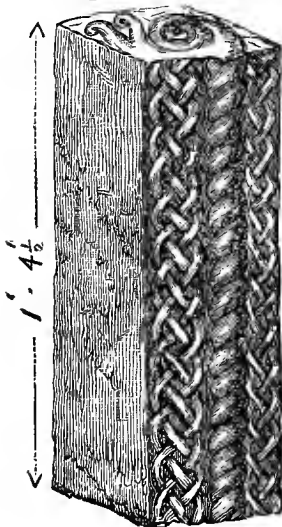


Fig. II.

stone measures 5 inches by 7 inches. It will be observed, upon referring to the sketch, that the figure is incomplete, as indicated by the dotted lines, and if it was ever perfect, the stone must have been originally of greater dimensions than it is at present. The figure on the top apparently has been partly cut away to make room for the ornamented work on the sides, and if this was the case, then this stone has occupied at various periods two distinct positions, and has been used for two different purposes. It is difficult to say positively what these two uses were. All that can be said is that it is very probable that the coiled design on the top is more ancient than the interlaced work on the side of the stone. It may be

interesting to note that at the restoration of Bangor Cathedral there were discovered several Norman fragments, including a curious sepulchral cross, which had been used to form the base of the central buttress of the south transept. In this case, as in that of Efenechtyd, the stone had been re-dressed to make it suitable for its new position.

The Efenechtyd fragment measures 1 foot $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height. A cable moulding running down the stone separates two designs of the ribbon or interlaced pattern (Fig. II.). Both this stone relic, and the oak font in the church, cut out of a single trunk, are Norman. A portion of a stone with sculpturing on it is preserved in the Rectory grounds, and it is not improbable that it is the one found in the church wall, though, having been subjected to rough treatment, it differs somewhat from that delineated by Mr. Baker. A sketch of the stone in the Rectory grounds is here given (Fig. III.).

At present there is no vestige of the Church-yard Cross; and another cross seems also to have disappeared from the neighbourhood. Just over the hill to the east of the church is a farm called *Cil-y-groes-lwyd*, the nook of the grey cross, but no traces of a cross remain, though the name of the place appears to indicate that formerly a cross stood there.

Of crosses proper we have, therefore, but a small fragment in Efenechtyd, and even that is somewhat doubtful; but in other respects the parish is interesting, and its folk-lore valuable. It is chiefly because of its customs that it occupies a place in these pages.

The customs that linger in this sequestered nook were, perhaps, once common to all North Wales, and they lived longer in this quiet retreat than in most parishes, but they are now forsaking their last home. Owing to various causes the population of the parish has become migratory, and the farms often change hands. This is inimical to the preservation of customs, and also to parochial patriotism, but the same evil is only too prevalent in Wales generally, and hence the necessity for collecting and recording customs that are rapidly disappearing before the sound of the railway whistle.



Fig. III.

I will begin by noticing such customs as may be called Church Customs.

THE CONGREGATION STOOD AS THE CLERGYMAN WAS LEAVING
THE CHURCH.

This custom was once common throughout Wales. Latterly it has disappeared from most parishes, and it ceased to exist at Efenechtyd in the days of those now living. An old parishioner, Robert Davies, Tyntwll, as a young man, was in the habit of attending church, but became a Nonconformist before he had reached middle age. Davies came to church on the Christmas evening of 1882, and in a conversation I had with him, after this casual visit, he volunteered the following information. "People," said he, "do not behave now in church as they did when I was a young man. I stood up, as I was in the habit of doing, on Christmas night, after the service was over, for the clergyman to leave the church first, but I found the congregation leaving before you had time to come down, and so I followed. The congregation always stayed in church in former days until the clergyman had reached the porch." Davies is apparently over seventy. Thus this custom has disappeared from Efenechtyd within the last fifty years or so. In other parts of Wales it was prevalent at the beginning of the century. About twenty-five years ago I was acquainted with an old man, Robert Hughes, from seventy to eighty years old, an inhabitant of Ro-wen, near Conway, who as a lad frequented Llangelynin Old Church, near Penmaenmawr, and there the congregation stood up when the clergyman walked down the aisle. Robert, however, one Sunday bolted out of the church just before the parson; but, said he, when recounting the fact to me, "I had not gone above a few steps before I received such a slap on the side of my head from the parson as sent me reeling;" and, added old Hughes, "never did I again attempt to leave the church before the clergyman had gone down the alley."

THE PASSING BELL.

The death of a person is announced by tolling the church bell. The passing bell, as this is called, is rung the evening of the day on which the death occurs, and not as the soul is departing. The

custom still continues in this parish, but is not universally observed. By varying the number of pulls, the parishioners know whose passing bell is being rung, for it is the custom to observe the following rule when announcing a death. Four pulls, thrice repeated, with a pause between each set of pulls, implies that a girl-child is dead, i.e., the bell is tolled twelve times for a girl's death; five pulls, thrice repeated, with a pause after each fifth, indicates the death of a boy-child; and six, seven, eight, and nine pulls, thrice repeated, imply respectively that a single woman, an unmarried man, a married woman or a married man, has departed this life. In Llanfair parish the pulls are not thrice repeated, and this is the only difference between the two parishes, as far as concerns the passing bell. The custom has descended to us from remote times. It is thus alluded to in the year 1564:—

That when any Christian bodye is in passing, that the bell be tolled, and that the curate be specially called for to comforte the sicke person, and after the time of his passinge to ring no more but one shorte peale, and one before the buriall, and another shorte peale after the buriall.—
Concilia, vol. iv., p. 249.

With the exception of the “shorte peale after the buriall,” which is not now generally observed, the practice above mentioned has in substance reached our days. Even the ringing of the bell after the funeral is still common in some parishes. In Llanasa and Caerwys parishes, as soon as the grave is filled in, the church bell is rung, and in these parishes the passing bell is tolled the evening before the funeral.

GWYLNOS, OR WATCHNIGHT.

The *gwylnos*, which is literally a night of watching for the dead, is held the night preceding the funeral. The custom has all but disappeared from the Vale of Clwyd, but it is observed in the mountain districts bordering upon the Vale. I have been told that in the parish of Tremeirchion, near St. Asaph, a prayer meeting is held in the house where the corpse lies, the evening before the funeral. Mr. John Roberts, Plas Einion, Llanfair D.C., remembers a *gwylnos* being held for William Jones, Plasuchaf, in Llanfair parish, consisting of hymn-singing and prayers. This is the usual way of keeping a *gwylnos* in Carnarvonshire, where the custom still flourishes, but

sometimes, when a clergyman conducts the service, a sermon or exhortation forms part of the proceedings.

The following quotation shows how the *gwylnos* was observed towards the close of the last century in Carnarvonshire, and the description may be true of all such gatherings in other parts of North Wales. The writer says :—

When the parish-bell announces the death of a person, it is immediately enquired upon what day the funeral is to be ; and on the night preceding that day, all the neighbours assemble at the house where the corpse is, which they call *Ty corph*, i.e., “The corpse’s house.” The coffin, with the remains of the deceased, is then placed on stools in an open part of the house, covered with black cloth, or, if the deceased was unmarried, with a clean white sheet, with three candles burning on it. Every person on entering the house falls devoutly on his knees before the corpse, and repeats to himself the Lord’s Prayer, or any other prayer that he chooses. Afterwards, if he is a smoker, a pipe and tobacco are offered to him. This meeting is called *Gwylnos*, and in some places *Pydreua*. The first word means *Vigil* ; the other is, no doubt, a corrupt word from *Paderau*, or *Padereuau*, that is *Paters*, or *Pater-nosters*. When the assembly is full, the parish-clerk reads the common service appointed for the Burial of the Dead ; at the conclusion of which, psalms, hymns, and other godly songs are sung ; and since Methodism is become so universal, some one stands up and delivers an oration on the melancholy subject, and then the company drop away by degrees.—*Williams’s Observations on the Snowdon Mountains*, pp. 13, 14.

OFFERINGS ON THE COFFIN.

Offerings at the house of the deceased, for the benefit of the surviving members of the family, are common in many parts of Wales, and in the Vale they still exist. After the coffin is brought out of the house, it is placed on two chairs, and if there is to be an offering on the coffin, or, as it is called in Welsh, *Offrynnu ar yr arch*, those present at the funeral walk up and deposit a coin. Formerly it was customary after a funeral for the men and women to go to the village public-house : the men, to drink beer, and the women, tea. To defray this expense there was a *Shot gladdu*, or a funeral shot, of sixpence or a shilling, which became the property of the innkeeper. But this custom has now ceased in most, though not in all places, and instead of the shot in the public-house, money is given in the house from which the funeral starts by all who partake of the refreshments there provided, to the nearest relative of the deceased.

STARTING THE FUNERAL.

The funeral in our days is not started without a short service, consisting of reading the Bible, singing, prayer, and occasionally an address or addresses. The form is varied, and differs according to the social position of the deceased. Nonconformists and Churchmen alike adhere to the practice. This is called *Codi'r corph*, or raising the corpse. In cases where the clergyman is present, he usually is requested to start the funeral; in his absence, the parish clerk does so, by repeating the Lord's Prayer. This occurs where the deceased belonged to the Church, but if he was a Nonconformist, then the service is performed by a minister, if one is present, or by some other chapel official.

This custom dates from ancient times. It is alluded to in the Injunctions of Edward VI., 1547, wherein priests are informed that they are not bound "to fetch any coarse before it be brought to the churchyard" (*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 7). Again in 1549 allusion is made to the same matter, for in that year the clergy are instructed "to receive no corps, but at the churchyard" (*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 32); and in 1571 the people are instructed thus:—

Nor to say the "De profundis" for the dead. Nor rest at any cross in carrying any corps to burying. Nor to leave any little crosses of wood there.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., pp. 269-70.

Notwithstanding these and like injunctions the custom in a certain form has survived, and reached our days. It is true that now the funeral procession does not rest awhile at cross roads, nor do the people repeat the *Pader* in such places, as they once did, but instead, hymns are often sung, as the procession passes hamlets on its way to the church.

NEXT OF KIN CARRY THE BIER.

The custom of the next of kin, being males, starting the funeral, has reached our days. They also carry the bier from the lich-gate into the church, and again from the church to the grave, and they also lower the coffin into the grave.

OFFERINGS AT FUNERALS.

In many parishes in Wales there are no burial fees, but instead there are offerings, and these constitute the clergyman's fees. Where offerings are made, the proceedings are carried out as follows. After

the clergyman has read that portion of the burial service which is to be said in church, the nearest relatives of the deceased walk up to the chancel, and deposit in the appointed place a coin, generally a silver piece. When they have returned to their seats, the congregation, first the men and then the women, offer, and they generally give a penny. The amount thus offered depends greatly upon the respectability of the deceased, and often it reaches a large sum. The writer has heard that upon the occasion of a well-known and highly-connected gentleman's funeral, the offering came to upwards of twenty pounds. Usually it amounts to a few shillings, but of course it fluctuates considerably. In this parish it varies from three or four shillings to upwards of a pound.

In some parishes it was, and possibly still is, a custom for the parish clerk to count the offerings before the funeral leaves the church, and then publish the amount: an incentive to many to offer largely.

In Tremeirchion the parish clerk claims the most valuable coin given in the church, and he has also, in addition, an offering for himself at the grave. This is a local usage.

After the people have offered, the clergyman proceeds down the aisle, and he is followed by the mourners to the grave, where the remaining portion of the service is read. At the close, the clerk says the *Pader*, and then goes about with a ladle to receive the offerings given to him by the relatives of the deceased and others. Then the grave is decorated by a woman, who, it may be, has laid out the dead, and so the funeral ceremonies come to an end.

SUL COFFA, OR COMMEMORATION SUNDAY.

The Sunday succeeding a funeral, or in some parishes, the second Sunday after the burial, is called *Sul Coffa*, or Commemoration Sunday. It is customary for relatives and friends of the deceased to come to church on the morning of this day. But the relatives proceed to the grave before entering the church, and there they remain awhile. In some parishes in the Vale the men, while at the grave, stand with uncovered heads. But formerly, in the early part of this century, the near relatives of the dead knelt around the new made grave on *Sul Coffa*, and repeated the *Pader*. Thomas Davies, parish clerk of Llanychan, near Ruthin, who is now alive, and is not apparently seventy years old, told the writer that he remembered

planks being placed each side the grave for the convenience of the mourners; and Amelia Pierce, who is mentioned in connection with Gwyddelwern Church, states that she remembers mourners kneeling at the head and feet of the departed, and that the stones with knee rests (which are described under the head of Corwen) were for their convenience.

In Montgomeryshire, and in other parts of Wales, Commemoration Sunday is observed; but there and elsewhere it is called *Ail gladdedi-gaeth*, or second funeral. People, in many Welsh parishes, still come to church on *Sul Coffa* in large numbers. And often they walk many miles to be present on the day when the dead are commemorated.

It appears that formerly there was an annual commemoration of the dead, but at present only one day is observed.

For the sake of comparison it will not be amiss to give here what Pennant says of Welsh funeral customs, but it should always be borne in mind that customs differ in different localities, and what Pennant noticed might have been local, and not common to the whole of Wales. He states that:—

Previous to a funeral, it was customary, when the corpse was brought out of the house and laid upon the bier, for the next of kin, be it widow, mother, sister, or daughter (for it must be a female), to give, over the coffin, a quantity of white loaves, in a great dish, and sometimes a cheese, with a piece of money stuck in it, to certain poor persons. After that they present, in the same manner, a cup of drink, and require the person to drink a little of it immediately. When that is done, all present kneel down; and the minister, if present, says the Lord's Prayer: after which they proceed with the corpse; and at every cross-way, between the house and the church, they lay down the bier, kneel, and again repeat the Lord's Prayer; and do the same when they first enter the churchyard. It is also customary, in many places, to sing psalms on the way; by which the stillness of rural life is often broken into, in a manner finely productive of religious reflections. To this hour, the bier is carried by the next of kin; a custom considered as the highest respect that filial piety can pay to the deceased.—*Tour in Wales*, vol. ii., p. 352.

BURYING IN SHEETS.

The late parish clerk of Aber, Carnarvonshire, John Parry, informed the writer that he remembered the last person in that parish who was buried in a sheet. He stated that formerly all the poor were so buried. They were carried to the grave, he said, in a wooden coffin, which was the property of the parish, but they were

deposited in the grave wrapped up in a common sheet. It is strange that this ancient custom continued so long. In former days stone coffins were in general use for the upper classes, but it will be seen from the illuminations of ancient missals that dead bodies wrapped in a sheet or cloth were put into the ground. I find from the *Penny Cyclopædia*, vol. viii., under the word "coffin," that Matthew Paris says that the monks of St. Alban's were thus buried till the time of Abbot Waren, who died 1195. This Abbot ordered that henceforth the dead brothers were to be buried in stone coffins, as being more decent; for this command Matthew Paris accuses him of innovating on ecclesiastical customs to please the multitude. The poor continued, not only in the Norman but also in later times, to be buried according to the old custom, and it appears that even in modern times in Wales, unseemly though it be in our eyes, the practice was continued. The following quotation from the *Diary of Philip Henry* (p. 305) shows that in the latter part of the seventeenth century people were occasionally at least buried without a coffin:—

leiftenant Williams of Llangollen in Denb. having layn in prison some time upon the writ de excom. cap. was sick and had favor by y^e B^p to return home awhile & dy'd & after 10 dayes lying in y^e Churchyard was, by Commissary Edwards order, taken up & bury'd by his Friends in his garden. *Having no coffin*, it was the more offensive to y^e sexton, who fel sick upon it.

CYMHORTH: AID OR CONTRIBUTIONS.

Akin to offerings were *Cymhorthau*, or aids. They consisted of presents sent upon certain occasions, such as weddings, burials, christenings, etc., by neighbours to friends. A marriage in this sparsely populated parish is a rare event, but this year (1884) a well-to-do parishioner took to himself a wife, and old customs were revived, and presents flowed into his house. But these *Cymhorthau* are not what they have been. At one time the *Cymhorth* was quite an institution, and families kept a register of all things received, with the names of the donors, so that on a fitting occasion a like gift could be returned. The Rev. J. Pugh Evans, Rector of Llangar, informed the writer that he had seen a book of this sort kept in Cardiganshire by persons in affluent circumstances. In our days this class is rather above receiving *Cymhorth*. It has reached its last stage, and with other customs, fostered no longer by rich and poor alike, is doomed to

decay and disappearance. In harvest and seed time a helping hand was once forthcoming, and the laggard was not left uncared for. *Cymhorth* from his neighbours rescued him from his difficulties. This brotherly help is becoming rare, though genuine sympathy expressed in kind actions is still to be found in Wild Wales. The abuse of the custom led to its abandonment. In Dr. Owen Pughe's Dictionary, under the word *Cymhorth*, the following information is given:—

Cwrw Cymhorth, ale of contribution. It is customary for poor people, in Wales, to brew ale, or to provide any other entertainment, and invite the neighbourhood to partake, when a collection is made on the occasion; and they have *priodas gymhorth*, or marriage of contribution, to which every guest brings a present of some sort of provision, or money, to enable the new couple to begin the world.

The clergyman formerly received *Cymhorth* in harvest time, and the farmers hauled anything he might require without charge. The village blacksmith's coal was also hauled by the farmers free of charge, and this act of kindness was called *Cymhorth Glo*, or Coal Aid.

The following invitation to a wedding, which is given in an interesting and valuable paper on "Some Ancient Welsh Customs," by the Rev. E. L. Barnwell, in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1872 (p. 330), exhibits another phase of the *Cymhorthau*. Mr. Barnwell found it in Peter Roberts's *Cambrian Popular Antiquities* (1815):—

Carmarthen, March 20, 1802.

As I intend to enter the matrimonial state on Easter Monday, the 19th day of April next, I am encouraged by my friends to make a *Bidding* on the occasion the same day at my dwelling-house, known by the sign of the "Green Dragon," in Lammas Street, where the favour of your good company is humbly solicited, and whatever donation you will be pleased to confer on me then will be gratefully received and cheerfully repaid whenever demanded on a similar occasion, by

Your humble Servant, DAVID THOMAS.

P.S.—The young man's mother, brother, and sister (Hannah, Richard, and Phœbe Thomas) desire that all gifts of the above nature due to them shall be returned to the young man on the same day, and will be thankful for any additional favour bestowed upon him.

Mr. Barnwell adds that "the names of the visitors are registered in a book, so that the compliment may be returned on the proper occasion."

OF SOME MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

Many young couples formerly attended the wedding in church. There were often as many as twenty or thirty groomsmen and bridesmaids.

There was a curious custom called running for the wedding cake, which has disappeared in the life-time of the aged. It was carried out in the following manner. As soon as the young couple were pronounced to be man and wife, the young men present in church rushed out, and started for the bride's house, and the first who arrived and announced the marriage received the wedding cake. Richard Parry, a farmer in Carnarvonshire, told me that he had run when a young man four miles against thirty young men, and beat them all, and obtained the cake. Parry, who is now growing old, occupies a farm called Plasuchaf, in Llanllechid parish, Carnarvonshire.

Offerings appear to have been made to the clergyman in church after a wedding. Mr. Barnwell, in the article already referred to, writes:—

On some occasions, at least in North Wales, where the married couple occupy a more elevated position, as that of wealthy farmers, or superior tradesmen, offerings in money are made to the officiating clergyman by all present. An instance of this occurred in Denbighshire within the last half century.

Cadwneithior, or keeping the wedding feast, which usually lasted all night, is a custom which disappeared in the lives of our grandparents. The night used to be spent in songs, merriment, and dances. Dr. Owen Pughe speaks of it as being in existence in his days, and he states that the *Neithiawr* was kept on a sixth day after the wedding, generally the following Sunday, when the guests brought presents to the newly married couple. In South Wales these presents were made on the wedding day, as already stated.

Should a younger child in a family be married before the elder brothers or sisters, the unmarried seniors, at the marriage feast, were obliged to dance shoeless, in the presence of the company. This custom has come down to the days of the living, and a married woman, between fifty and sixty years old, told me that her brother had, upon her marriage, undergone this penalty for permitting her, a junior, to get married before him. The custom was also observed, in the case of daughters, on the other side of the Border, in Shropshire, and Miss Burne, in *Shropshire Folk Lore* (pp. 290-1), mentions an instance at Hodnet even as late as 1881.

There is an expression, occasionally heard in North Wales, which would imply that people think a marriage might be contracted by jumping over a besom. A parishioner of mine, Gwen Williams,

told me that she thought no more of marriage in the Registrar's office than of a marriage by jumping over a besom. Questioned about the expression, she said she had heard that in olden times people could be married by jumping over a broom-stick. From further inquiries, I find that such marriages are spoken of in many parts of North Wales, and, when properly attested, they are supposed to have been considered valid.

GWYLMABSANT, OR WAKE OF THE PATRON SAINT.

The *Gwylmabsant Efenechtyd*, or festival of the patron saint, was the most important annual event in the parish. The Church is dedicated to St. Michael, whose feast occurs at the most opportune time of the year for a rural population to enjoy themselves. The harvest is over, and winter has not arrived, and they are now at liberty to rest. This they were not loth to do. The multiplied means of amusement of these days of railway travelling did not exist fifty years ago, and consequently the agriculturists intensified their pleasures by concentrating them into certain seasons, and then they enjoyed themselves without restraint in the midst of their friends in their own parishes.

St. Michael was a favourite saint in many parts of Wales, and many churches are dedicated to him. There is in this parish a meadow designated *Gweirglawdd Mihangel*, or Michael's meadow.

The wakes began on the Sunday before the Dedication Day, and on that Sunday it was customary for all the parishioners, arrayed in their best clothes, generally new, to attend the Church services, so that we are not surprised to hear old people say that on this day the Church was crowded to excess.

It was a long feast, for it lasted until Friday evening. Dancing, singing with the harp, trials of strength and agility, and other manly sports, filled the hours of the afternoon, and, it is said, extended into the small hours of the night. Drinking to excess and fighting were not uncommon during the festivities. As long as the feast lasted, the hamlet was crowded with strangers from the surrounding parishes.

A plant, the Michaelmas Daisy, which blossoms in the fall of the year, is locally called *Blodau Gwylmabsant 'Nechtyd*, or the blossoms of the patron saint of 'Nechtyd (*Efenechtyd*). It was customary for every one to wear a bunch of these flowers during the feast, and strangers begged them of the cottagers, who willingly gave a sprig,

for they had taken care to cultivate the plant for this special purpose. Mr. Lewis Jones, Brynffynnon, a farmer in the parish, from whom I have obtained this information about the flowers, told me that his mother was in the habit of calling his attention to the approach of the wakes by saying, "Look, Lewis, the wakes are approaching, for see the saint's flowers begin to blossom." Lewis was then a small child, and he remembers his mother taking him to the wakes once and only once. Since Lewis Jones is between 40 and 50 years old, it would seem that the wakes were kept in this parish up to about 40 years ago, but they had deteriorated before this, and as far as I can judge, from many enquiries, they were not in their glory even 50 years back. But there are many old people living who remember them well, and have been present at the wakes.

Mention has been made of wearing new clothes at the feast. In connection with this custom Evan Davies, wheelwright, of Brynllan, Efenechtyd, an old but hale man, told me the following story:— Samuel Hughes, Tydraw, tailor, who was always unusually busy about Michaelmas, remembered, on the Saturday previously to the wakes, that he had forgotten to make a pair of breeches for John Williams, of Pen-y-graig. He thought that if he worked through Saturday night he could finish the garment, keep his word, and retain a good customer. This he did, but early on Sunday morning he was disturbed by his neighbour, who, hearing a noise in his house, thought that instead of striking file, flint, and tinder, she would procure a light from Samuel. So Nancy Jones opened the door, and was horrified to find Samuel hard at work with his needle on the Lord's Day. However, as she had come for fire, this she asked Samuel to give her, and he, without stirring from the table on which he was seated, told her to take as much as she liked. Just as Nancy was shutting the door, she said, looking towards the tailor—"Sam, Sam, the Lord will pay you for this work." "No, he won't," was Sam's rejoinder, "I am not working for Him." This story reminds one of some of the tales in Dean Ramsay's *Reminiscences*, which combine levity and wit.

Samuel lies in Efenechtyd Churchyard under the shadow of the east wall of the Church, and on his gravestone are these words:—

Here lieth the body of
Samuel Hughes, Tydraw,
Tailor, was buried June 21st,
1832, aged 69.

This date marks not only Samuel's death, but also within a few years that of the *Gwylmabsant*. In other parts of Wales the celebration of the wakes has likewise disappeared within the last thirty or forty years. The rising generation in this parish do not even know the time when the wakes were observed, and when the old people are gone, the remembrance of the once celebrated festival will have disappeared. It was the dissipation, the brutal fights and bickerings, that brought about the end of these feasts. They included much that was innocent and pleasurable. The dancing, penillion singing, games and sports, and trials of strength, in themselves are unobjectionable, and they are conducive to manly and chivalrous conduct. When we look at the state of the country, and the admiration which physical strength accompanied with bravery ever commands, we can understand how the wakes, notwithstanding their failings, lasted so long.

Again, it is not to be wondered at that such a merry-making as this was popular, nor that it was looked forward to by young and old alike, for, in fact, it had become a part of the social system of the country. Parochial events were remembered by their having occurred so many weeks, or months, before or after the *Gwylmabsant*. The first goose was killed in this week. The potato harvest began on the Wednesday in the wakes. Hospitality was profuse, and distant friends were welcomed to every house in the parish. Natives who had settled down in other parts came home for the wakes. In this way friendships were cemented, and old acquaintances renewed. Boys and girls who had gone to service once more visited home, and recounted to willing ears their joys and troubles. They, in return, received the history of the parish. Happy were these re-unions that brought annually together a whole parish, and suffered no one to forget, through lapse of years, the features of an early friend.

Such re-unions as these gave an individuality to parochial life and fostered parish patriotism, but, on the other hand, they often generated antagonisms between parish and parish, which lasted longer than the wakes. Opposing champions ended, not unfrequently, their struggles for pre-eminence in sports, by an appeal to brute force and dogged courage. In this way parish became opposed to parish, and wherever the young men belonging to different parishes met they fought savagely, from no personal animosity, but from a mistaken notion

that it was a duty incumbent upon them to settle in this way old parochial misunderstandings; or battles were fought because some feud of remote, unknown origin existed between one parish and another.

The riotings attending the wakes in other parts than Wales have been the subject of injunctions; and in consequence of abuses endeavours were made to put them down. As early as the time of Edward VI., in 1548, appears an injunction given by his Majesty against the observing of wakes in the Deanery of Duncastre, which presumedly extended to other parts. It is:—

Forasmuch as drunkenness, idleness, brawls, dissentions, and many other inconveniences do chance between neighbor and neighbor, by the assembly of people together at wakes, and on the plough mundays; it is therefore ordered and enjoined, that hereafter the people shall use, make, or observe no more such wakes, plough mundays, or drawing of the same with any such assembly or rout of people, or otherwise, as hath been accustomed, upon pain of forfeiting to the king's highness forty shillings for every default, to be paid by the owner of the plough and householder, whereunto the said plough is drawn, or wakes are kept.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 29.

Injunctions of this kind, as already shown, if they ever reached Wales, were powerless instruments of reform, for the people clung most tenaciously, in spite of prohibitions emanating even from the highest authorities, to the customs of their country.

EFENECHTYD GAMES.

These consisted of many rustic sports that required strength, suppleness, and coolness, on the part of the performers. Of British games there were twenty-four. They are enumerated in Dr. Davies's Dictionary, and also by Pennant. The three manly qualifications were, "Bywiowgrwydd, Nerth, a Synnwyr," i.e., activity or liveliness, strength, and skill. The twenty-four games were supposed to cultivate these threefold manly qualities. Such games as required no instrument whatever in their performance, and depended mainly on bodily strength, or on the man naked as he was born, were the most popular. There were many days in the year on which these games were practised, such as on the afternoon of Festivals, Easter-tide, Wakes, and Sunday afternoons, and old people say that although their forefathers had so many holidays, they lived quite as well as people do in these days,

There is a relic of these ancient games called *Y Maen Camp*, or feat stone, in the churchyard of Efenechtyd. It is a ponderous boulder stone, weighing 101 lbs. The *camp*, or feat, was to lift this stone and throw it over the head backwards, and he was the hero who could throw this huge stone the furthest. Many of these stones are still in existence in various parts of Wales. Trials of strength and dexterity with this stone at Efenechtyd took place on the north side of the churchyard, where there are to this day but few graves.

No account of former days can be a faithful record unless some allusion is made to the personal conflicts which too often took place even on Sunday in the church or churchyard, as well as on other days, and in other places, between men who hated not each other, but who strove for the palm of pre-eminence in muscular strength. The hero of the parish was the man who excelled all others in personal prowess, and when bravery was accompanied with nobleness of conduct, the expert pugilist was the admired of men and maidens; but he had to pay dearly for his renown. He was henceforth the parish champion, and on all fitting occasions upon him was placed the responsibility of vindicating the honour of the parish.

The excess to which this fighting propensity ran was prohibited by early law-makers. In the *Cyfreithiau Hywel Dda*, the Laws of Howel the Good, A.D. 928, fighting is forbidden in the churchyard or sanctuary under penalty of heavy fines:—

For fighting within the churchyard, fourteen pounds are to be paid; if out of the churchyard in the sanctuary, seven pounds are to be paid.—*Haddon and Stubbs, Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, vol. i., p. 243.

Passing over much evidence of fighting and disturbances, in the interval between A.D. 928 and Edward VI., we come to an Act passed in this king's reign, which is partly quoted in the *Ecclesiastical Courts Commission* (pp. 204-5). The Commissioners state that "there was a time when disturbances in the church and churchyard, from various trifling causes, were of frequent occurrence, and sometimes carried to great extremities, for the suppression of which the Legislature was induced to pass an Act in the reign of Edward VI. (5 & 6 Edw. VI., c. 4), which still remains unrepealed." In the Preamble to this Act it is said that—

Of late many outrageous and barbarous behaviours and acts have been used and committed by divers ungodly and irreligious persons by quarrelling, brawling, fraying, and fighting openly in churches and churchyards.

To prevent the continuance of this reprehensible conduct, the statute enacted that those who quarrel, chide, or brawl in church or churchyard shall be liable to suspension, if a layman, *ab ingressu ecclesiæ*; if a clerk, from the ministration of his office for so long a time as the Ordinary shall think fit.

By the third section of this statute, persons maliciously striking any other with any weapon, or drawing any weapon with intention of striking, upon conviction were to lose one ear, and if the offender had no ear he was to be branded on the cheek with a hot iron, having the letter F on it.

The spirit of this law was in full accord with the spirit of the times, and if it succeeded in driving quarrels and fights from consecrated places, it was not successful in its latent meaning that battles should cease, for these continued to flourish up to recent times.

A few stories which I have heard of these fights may be worth telling. Lewis Jones, Brynffynnon, informed me that a young man was killed in an open fight, and one who had witnessed the shocking occurrence went to inform the father of the deceased of his son's death. When told that his son had been killed, the father inquired whether he had shown the white feather. "Oh, no," said the man; "he died fighting." "Well," said the father, "what matters it, since he has died like a man!"

Thomas Jones, Perthi, in the upper part of this parish, told me that Dolly Jones, Pengeulan, Bettws-Gwerfil-Goch, was informed by her children, on coming home from school, that one of their brothers had fought, and had been beaten by a lad in the school. When this boy appeared, the mother said, "Go, and lick that boy that licked thee, or thou shalt never have a bit to eat nor a drop to drink in this house!" The boy went, and came back with the tidings that he had done his mother's bidding.

In conversation in Mr. Lloyd's house, Post Office, Llanfihangel-Glyn-Myfyr, one of the company told me that a woman in those parts was in the habit of acting as her husband's second in his battles. When remonstrated with because of her unwomanly conduct, she replied, "I would rather carry his bones home in my apron than that he should be beaten!"

A friend of mine told me of a fight that took place at Llanbedr, Carnarvonshire, between two champions, the one seconded by a strong lusty man, the other by his sister. The woman saw that her

brother was often thrown to the ground, and supposing or perceiving that his antagonist's second played him foul, she went up to him, struck him in the face, and laid him level with the ground; and then she challenged any spectator who thought her conduct blameworthy to step forward and take the place of her prostrate foe.

With one more tale I will end this chapter. A young brave of well-known mettle was challenged by another to a fight. He refused, but a little while afterwards, walking with his companion, he reminded him of this challenge, and told him that they would there and then have it out, at the same time giving his reasons for in the first instance refusing the combat. His companion was anxious to avoid the conflict, but he was told that this was impossible; so they proceeded to a field, and stripped for the onslaught. A long, fierce fight followed, but at last the man who had challenged the other lay on the ground unable to move. When requested to get up to resume the battle, he said he could not. "Then," said the other, "you give in." "Yes, I give in." "Then let's go home," and, suiting the action to the words, the conqueror put on his clothes, and started away. The man on the ground shouted out, "You won't leave me here all night;" upon which his antagonist returned, assisted the man to dress, and, as he was unable to walk, carried him on his back a long distance to his home.





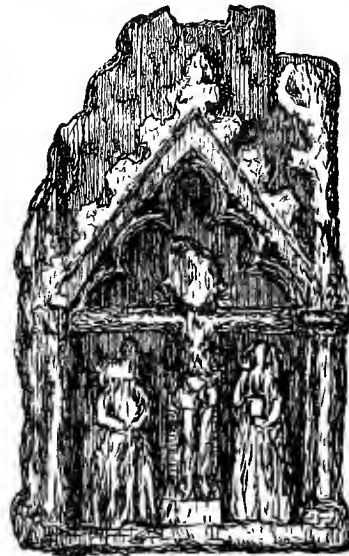
FLINT.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



IN a sketch of the old parish church of Flint, taken in 1800 by Mr. D. Parkes for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, where it appeared January, 1801, and now reproduced in Mr. Taylor's *History of Flint*, is to be seen on the south side of the church the towering shaft of the Churchyard Cross, but the capstone does not appear in this drawing. The pedestal seems to have been a massive square block, chamfered, and the shaft was a tapering octagonal, brought at the base apparently to a square.

When the present Church was being built by the Rev. T. B. Ll. Browne, now Rector of Bodfari, but then perpetual curate of Flint, a portion of the headstone of a Cross was discovered in taking down the old church wall. This relic, Mr. Browne informed me, passed into the possession of Mr. Roskell, a Catholic gentleman, and lately I was fortunate enough to find that it was still extant, and carefully preserved by Mrs. Roskell, widow of the gentleman above named. In company with the Rev. W. Ll. Nicholas, Rector of Flint, I went in search of the stone, and to our great delight we found it in a grotto at Stockyn, the beautifully situated residence of Mrs. Roskell; and, through the courtesy of this lady, I am able to produce a sketch of the Cross.



The stone measures 2 feet broad, and 3 feet 2 inches long. It is much worn and mutilated. Within a richly-decorated cinquefoil

niche is a carving of the Crucifixion. On each side of the cross are figures, St. John and the Virgin. The head of our Lord, and also the heads of the Virgin and the Apostle, have been knocked off. St. John carries a book in his left hand; the right hand is raised to support the head, which apparently was turned towards our Saviour. The Virgin is considerably mutilated; the hands are seen meeting across the breast. Over the figures is a rich ogee crocketed canopy, the crockets, as usual, being sculptured with foliage. The finial consists of three parts. One only of the shafts from which the arch rises is intact; the other has disappeared, and only one of the pinnacles remains. The Cross belongs probably to the latter end of the thirteenth or the early part of the fourteenth century.

The shaft, which probably was in existence up to the time of the building of the new Church in 1847-8, has disappeared, and very likely it has been broken up; but if it could be found, it would be in good taste to restore the Cross to its original position.

CROES ATI.

This Cross stood somewhere in the village of Pentre, about a mile from the town of Flint. The exact spot is unknown, but the late Rector of the parish, the Rev. E. Jenkins, told the writer that it stood somewhere near, if not on, the site of the new church, St. David's, which he erected. Be this as it may, the Cross, in part, existed in Pennant's time, for he states (*Tour in Wales*, Carnarvon edition, vol. i., p. 68):—"About a mile from the town, on the lower road to Chester, stood a cross, whose pedestal I remember, which was called *Atis-cross*, and the land around is still called *Croes-ati*. This probably was a place of note; for, at the Conquest, it gave a name to a very considerable Hundred, at that time considered as part of Cheshire."

The Hundred mentioned by Pennant still bears the name it had at the time the Domesday Book was compiled, viz., the Hundred of *Atiscross*. The fact that the Cross gave the name to the Hundred at a very remote period shows its early existence, and also the high repute in which it was held.

It is to be regretted that the pedestal seen by Pennant has disappeared; its preservation would have been a link between ages long past and our days.



GWYDDELWERN.

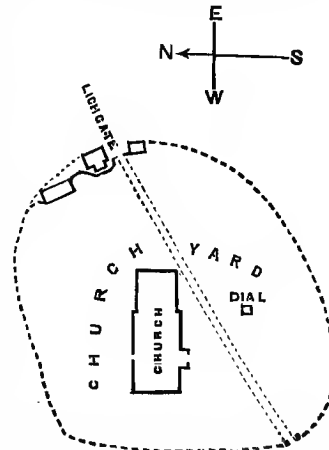


HERE is no cross in Gwyddelwern churchyard, but a sun-dial occupies the spot where probably at one time stood the churchyard cross. The dial stands opposite the Priest's Door, midway between it and the churchyard wall; thus it is in the same relative position as is the old cross in Cilcen churchyard. There is nothing ancient belonging to the dial. It stands on three steps, and on one of the stones are the following initials and figures—RP GT WR WAR 1760—thus marking the date of its erection, and the probable disappearance of what remained, up to that date, of the churchyard cross.

THE CHURCHYARD. ITS SHAPE.

The churchyard is, for a considerable part of its extent, oval or somewhat circular in form. On the east and south sides the wall is well built, and this part seems to be the oldest portion of the boundary. The north and west sides have been tampered with, and these deviate from the circular, and in parts are almost straight, but even here traces of a different course are discernible. There have been encroachments on the east side, and several buildings have been erected in the churchyard in that part, and the wall has there been altered so as to enable the tenant of an adjoining building to have access to the garden behind his house. But still, through all these accommodating alterations, the wall maintains its circular character.

The churchyard of Gwyddelwern is not singular in its peculiar shape. There are several churches in North Wales that are



surrounded by walls almost, if not altogether, circular. In Montgomeryshire, Llanfihangel, Llangadfan, Kerry, Berriew, and Llanfechain churchyards are more or less round. In the latter place the parish road follows the circular bend of the churchyard for about two-thirds of its entire circumference. Llandrinio churchyard was once circular, if its size and shape are indicated by the old yew trees that stand on the west and south sides of the church, but at present the churchyard extends beyond the trees. In Denbighshire there are many circular churchyards. In or about the Vale of Clwyd the following churches have this characteristic feature:—Derwen, Llanelidan, Efenechtyd, Llandyrnog, and Tremeirchion. Cilcen, Llanarmon, Cerrig-y-drudion, and Bettws-Gwerfil-Goch, also have churchyards which are more or less ovoidal in form. The peculiarity is worthy of notice, for so many burial grounds could hardly be accidentally of this shape. They must have been thus formed designedly, and it is difficult not to associate these round churchyards with the remains of prehistoric times of similar form. Thus we have dating from most ancient times circular camps, homesteads and huts; circular *carneddi*, or heaps of stones covering the dead, circumscribed by a circle of erect stones; and the *cist faen*, or stone coffin, with its surrounding stone circle. Then we have, along the hills of Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, and other countries, large circles of stones, some for funeral, some for unknown, and some for religious purposes. If an inference may be drawn from similarity of form, then these circular churchyards and the stone circles of the prehistoric age are in some way connected with one another. The circle as an emblem existed in very distant times, and the veneration in which it was held is shown by its reproduction in domestic, national, and religious buildings. Even if these ovoidal churchyards are not the identical spots on which the ancient inhabitants celebrated their pagan rites, they are, in form, a connecting link between the paganism of our forefathers and the Christian religion which supplanted it. They may have been spots of ground dedicated to religious purposes in pagan times, and appropriated by the early Christians, in consequence of their previous use, to the celebration of the Christian religion, and hence the peculiar shape of these churchyards. Mr. Brash in his *Ogam Inscribed Stones* (p. 109), speaking of Irish churches, says, “It is well known that many of our early churches were

erected on sites professedly pagan." This may have been the case in Wales, notwithstanding the many orders of the early councils to destroy pagan temples. These injunctions, indeed, imply the preservation of those temples, and their conversion into Christian churches, to the great disquietude and reprobation of the members of the council: hence the order for their destruction; but we know not to what extent those orders were obeyed. As injunctions in modern times were disregarded, so likewise, it is probable, were these ancient decrees.

A careful collection of facts connected with churches in circular churchyards wherever found, and an equally careful collation of such facts, will throw more light upon this subject than we now possess.

I shall, when treating of Llangernyw Crosses, revert to the subject now under consideration.

BURIAL OF SUICIDES.

Up to the year 1823 suicides were buried in cross-roads, at midnight, without religious service, and the body was subjected to indignities. After this date they were buried by night on the north side of the churchyard. Robert Hughes, Tyissa, Efenechtyd, aged 82, remembers a burial in the cross-road by Eglwys Wen (Whitchurch), Denbigh, but he does not recollect what the man had done to be buried there. A few years ago I made the acquaintance of an old man, a native of Gwyddelwern, who told me that he remembered a person who had hung himself being buried underneath the churchyard wall, at night, at Gwyddelwern. Amelia Pierce, the keeper of the churchyard keys, who is still alive, and 68 years old, told me that she remembered the burial of the servant girl of Wern-ddu, who took away her own life, and she was buried by night, without service, close by the north wall of the churchyard at Gwyddelwern. These sad occurrences made an indelible impression on the spectators. Mention is made of these cross-road burials in Samuel Carter Hall's *Retrospect of a Long Life* (vol. i., p. 45). Mr. Hall writes:—

Fifty years ago the bodies of suicides were subjected to shocking indignities. They were by law ordered to be buried at midnight, at cross-roads, and a hedgestake driven through the body. No religious rites were permitted, and a hole was dug where two roads crossed each other, often in a lonely, solitary spot, and at midnight, with or without torches, lanterns, or candles, the body was placed, usually coffinless, in the hole, a

stake driven right through the chest or bowels into the ground beneath, and the grave filled in. In 1823 the practice was by Act of Parliament abolished, and it was enacted that the bodies of suicides might in future be buried in any ordinary churchyard, between the hours of 9 and 12 at night, without any religious ceremony, the interment to be private, and to take place 24 hours from the finding of the inquisition by the coroner.

It is probable that the burial mentioned above as taking place underneath the churchyard wall, which was taken down for that purpose, was before the repeal of the statute, or custom, legalizing cross-road burials, and was a compromise by the people of Gwyddelwern between their humanity and regard for the law; and the burial mentioned by Amelia Pierce evidently took place in agreement with the Act 4, Geo. IV., c. 52, that directed which after 8th July, 1823, suicides were to be buried in churchyards 24 hours from the finding of the inquisition, between the hours of 9 and 12 at night, without any marks of ignominy, such as having a stake driven through their bodies; but no mention is made in the Act as to whether they were to be buried with or without the rites of Christian burial.

The Rev. David Roberts, Rector of Llanelidan, Ruthin, informed me that when the cross roads that meet by the churchyard were lowered, human bones were discovered, and he accounted for the presence of these bones by supposing that they belonged to some one, such as a suicide, who was considered unworthy of Christian burial in consecrated ground. Mr. Roberts stated that the bones were near the churchyard wall.

CHURCH WALL PAINTINGS.

Previously to the judicious restoration of Gwyddelwern Church in 1882 by the Hon. C. H. Wynn, of Rûg, the old church, while presenting a deserted and neglected appearance, contained, nevertheless, many objects of considerable antiquarian and ecclesiastical interest. The walls were decorated with Scripture texts, memorial tablets, and other monuments. It was one of the last churches restored in the diocese of St. Asaph, and as such was worthy of notice. It contained much that belonged to pre-Reformation times, but these had been mutilated or were unused. The old screen had been cut down; the Priest's Door, with its massive wooden bolt, which had a socket penetrating far into the wall, was closed, and guarded by spiders. The north-side door was built up, and the space occupied

by a cupboard. The font was whitewashed, and was dirty. Children, when baptized, were baptized with water in a basin placed within the font. There were in the church seats belonging to three, if not to four, distinct periods. The chancel and nave were covered with large slabs of stone, commemorative of the dead. The stained glass had been smashed, but pieces were preserved in the various windows. Many a churchwarden had "improved" the fabric, and complacently informed future generations that he had done so. Thus, there was a painted notice telling the spectator that the saddleback roof of the chancel had been hidden from view by plastering :—" This wood was plaster'd by Ellis Davies. Humphrey Pierce, Thomas Hughes, Churchwardens, 1730." And on the lower beam in the west-end gallery was inscribed the name of " Gabriel Hughes, 1634," followed by a verse from the Bible indicating that Hughes had either erected the gallery or improved it.

But my special purpose was to mention the Scripture texts painted upon the walls. The texts in this Church were not old. There were no black letter inscriptions on the walls: all dated from the last or the previous century. It appears from the following extract from the *Concilia* that the painting of verses from the Bible on church walls began in England during the reign of Edward VI., and was the outcome of the Reformation. In that age the whitewash brush was used extensively, and pictures drawn on the church walls in previous years were washed over, and in their place painted texts appeared. According to an injunction of Edward VI., pictures and paintings in churches were to be destroyed, and from the mandate of Bishop Bonner, 1554, A.D., it appears that texts had taken the place of these paintings. I will quote so much of the Bishop's mandate as refers to this matter :—

Because some children of iniquity, given up to carnal desires and novelties, have by many ways enterprized to banish the ancient manner and order of the church, and to bring in and establish sects and heresies; taking from thence the picture of Christ, and many things besides, instituted and observed in ancient times laudably in the same, placing in the room thereof such things as in such place it behoveth them not to do; and also have procured as a stay to their heresies (as they thought) certain Scriptures wrongly applyed, to be painted upon the church walls. . . . Wheresoever any such Scriptures or paintings have been attempted, that they abolish and extinguish such manner of Scriptures, so that by no means they be either read or seen,—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 108,

This extract accounts for the disappearance of ancient paintings from church walls, and the substitution of texts in their place. There is abundant proof that in Wales, pictures, possibly of Christ, were washed over, and instead, texts, or some other substitutes, were placed on the church walls. There is hardly an old church which has undergone restoration, that has not, on the removal of the wash, shown traces of successive ornamentation, the lowest being ancient frescoes, and over these texts or other inscriptions. Neither can there be much doubt as to the age of these latter designs or texts. They date from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. I will give a few instances of these discoveries.

The Rev. David Jones, Rector of Llanfechain, Montgomeryshire, lately restored his church, and in an interesting account which he kindly gave me of the successive decorations discovered on the walls, he says:—"The oldest decorations on the walls of our church were red lines branching and curved; later, were texts. There were also on the upper surfaces some bright red and blue lines, forming apparently the framing of some memorial inscription with a cherub's head at the top, much like what is often seen on tombstones. We could make out amongst the latter inscriptions some words of the Creed on the north wall."

At the restoration of Clocaenog Church, near Ruthin, fresco paintings were brought to view, one on each side of the large east window. The Rev. W. Jones, Rector of the parish, described these paintings as follows. One was the figure of a man, about two yards long, with shaven face, and what appeared to be a breastplate on his breast. There were letters, in character like Hebrew, connected with this figure, but so obliterated as to be unreadable. The other figure was also that of a man, full size, canonically robed, and holding a pastoral staff with its head turned inwards. The eyes were particularly bright, and the figure had a beard. There were indistinct letters about this figure; and also along the north wall were traces of paintings.

Meliden Church, which is being restored, upon the removal of plaster and whitewash, was ascertained to have had formerly a succession of wall paintings or inscriptions, the one taking the place of the other. On the east wall was found in black letter a portion of the Creed in Welsh, and over it traces of coloured lines, but the design could not be made out. On the south wall adjoining the east

side is an English inscription, and over it is a Welsh inscription. Both were in painted frames or borders, and they were alike covered over with whitewash. There are other traces of wall paintings in this church.

The same state of things existed in churches in South Wales. When the church at Bettws, Carmarthenshire, was being restored in 1873, the Rev. M. Hughes, the Vicar, discovered underneath the whitewash fresco paintings, the Creed and Commandments.

The fine fourteenth-century fresco, brought to light in the restoration of Ruabon Church in 1870, shows the kind of paintings destroyed by ignorant fanaticism, for there is certainly nothing objectionable in this fresco, which has been judiciously preserved, and which had for ages been hidden underneath successive layers of whitewash.

Many other instances might be given of wall paintings covered over. Sometimes the whitewash was laid on the walls wantonly; possibly, in some instances, it was used carelessly from a disregard for all such things; and doubtless, at other times, the figures and letters having in time become worn, to remedy all defects, the brush was resorted to.

I have said that the inscriptions in Gwyddelwern Church were not old. From an inscription within a painted frame on the south wall in the chancel it seems that they were executed in the last century. The inscription was as follows:—"Mr. Edward Wynne, Vicar, Thomas Humphreys, William Edwards, Thomas Hughes, Church Wardens, 1745. Thomas Davies, Painter."

BURYING IN CHURCH.

When any old church is restored, proof is forthcoming, in the abundance of human bones, that burials innumerable have taken place there. This practice, now no more, dates from olden days. Thus in the reign of Edgar, when S. Dunstan was Archbishop of Canterbury, such burials were common, and they are mentioned in the canons issued in 960 A.D., and their too common occurrence condemned. The canon states:—

XXIX. Docemus etiam, ut in ecclesia nemo sepeliatur, nisi sciatur quod in vita Deo bene placuerit, ut inde judicetur, quod sit sepultura dignus.—*Concilia*, vol. i., p. 227.

Here burial within the precincts of the church is made consequent upon the good living of the defunct, but it is for the purpose of

showing that these burials in church date from ancient days that this quotation is given.

The prevalence and antiquity of this practice are also evident from the following extracts taken by Wilkins from the *Liber Legum Ecclesiasticarum*. Its date is 994 A.D. :—

Antiquus erat mos in his regionibus, mortuos homines frequenter in ecclesiis sepelire, et loco, quæ ad Dei ministerium sanctificata, et consecrata erant ad offerendum, ipsi facere cœmeteria. Jam nolumus abhinc, ut aliquis in ecclesia sepeliatur, nisi fit vir sacerdotalis ordinis, aut etiam tam justus laicus, ut sciatur quod vivus propter meritum vitæ suæ talem locum corpus suum ibi reponendi promeruerit. Nolumus tamen ut corpora, quæ prius in ecclesia sepulta erant, ejiciantur, sed tumuli, ubi appareant, ut utrum horum (eligatur) vel profundius illa in terra sepeliantur, vel transitus super ea fiat et æqualiter ac convenienter cum ecclesiæ pavimento condantur, ut nullus tumulus ibi videatur. Si autem in aliquo loco tot tumuli sint, ut hoc difficile sit factu, tunc sinant loca illa cœmeteria esse, et auferatur altare inde, et in purum locum ponatur, et ibi ecclesiæ sint, ubi Deo reverenter et pure offerri possit.—*Concilia*, vol. i., pp. 267-8.

The words “antiquus erat mos” prove that even in the year 994 A.D. the custom referred to was an ancient one, and the quotation further shows that it had become necessary to place some restraint on such burials; that their frequency caused inequalities in the surface of the church, and turned God’s house into a cemetery. The custom was not confined to one part of the country, but prevailed in Wales as much as in England.

In the year 1556 A.D., Thomas Goldwell, Bishop of St. Asaph, thought it necessary to issue an injunction, in which, among other matters, interment within the precincts of the church is mentioned. From the Bishop’s words it appears that burials within the church were not only of common occurrence, but that the people without let or hindrance claimed the privilege of burying there, and his lordship endeavours to restrict this practice. The injunction states :—

That no man, of what degre or condycyon soever he be, be buried wythin the precynt of the chyrch, without the consent of the churchwardens, except he have a chappell of hys owne, or fryndes byldyng, and that no man be buried in the chancel without the consent of the parson or vycar.

Item, That he that ys buried in the chyrch, havng no chappell of hys owne, shall pay to the chyrchwardens toward the reparacyons of the chyrch VI.s. VIII.d. and he that ys buried in the chancell, shall paye to

hym, that hath the care of the reparacyons of the chancell, X.s. and the pryst that buryeth any man contrary to this injunction, shall pay the sayd mooney to the chyrch, or chancell hymself.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 145.

This brings the history of interments in churches to the middle of the sixteenth century, and we have only to go into unrestored churches to find that the custom knew but little, if any abatement, in the eighteenth century.

There is in Llanychan churchyard, which is about two miles from Ruthin, a flat stone with this inscription :—

Here, *under the first stone in this holy ground*, lyeth the body of Elizabeth vch Robert, who dyed 21 of Jan. 1672.

The Rev. D. R. Thomas thinks this refers to the introduction of tombstones into churchyards, but it might also point to a departure from the custom of burying in churches. But if it did so, the example was not generally followed in and about the Vale of Clwyd, for there is hardly an old church in the whole district that is not flagged with stones commemorative of the dead who departed this life during the last century. The inscriptions usually are short and simple, and generally consist of a few words, which give us scant information. On one flag in Gwyddelwern Church in the chancel were these words :—

Yma y claddwyd Evan Hughes or Hendre Chwefror 17 ei oed 84. Ag Alice Roberts ei wraig Mai 31 yn y flwyddyn 1796.

This stone informs us that—“ Here were buried Evan Hughes, of Hendre, February 17, aged 84, and Alice Roberts, his wife, May 31, in the year 1796.” It is worthy of notice that Hughes’s wife retained after marriage, in accordance with a Welsh custom, her maiden name.

The large majority of stones in Gwyddelwern Church have on them a few initials and dates, and members of the same family doubtless slept in the same grave. One instance of this will suffice. It is or was on a stone in the chancel :—

C W
S W
1724
I W
1753

Many a brass plate on the seats in churches tells us that “ underneath this seat ” was buried so and so ; therefore it was a custom for

persons to be buried under the spot which, when living, they occupied in church.

Not only was the body of the church used as a cemetery, but even underneath the church walls have people been buried. Quantities of human bones were discovered below the foundation stones at Llanbedr Church, near Conway, and on the restoration of Meliden Church, near Rhyl, the whole floor was found filled with bones, and the south wall had also been undermined to make room for graves, and it was a matter of surprise that the wall had not given way in the process of excavation.

The practice of burying in church has ceased in our days, except that sometimes a family vault, which has not been filled, continues to be used.

CHURCH SEATS.

Curious is the information supplied by the old seats in churches. Those in Gwyddelwern belonged to many periods. There were in the chancel ancient benches made of huge blocks of oak. (Fig. I.).

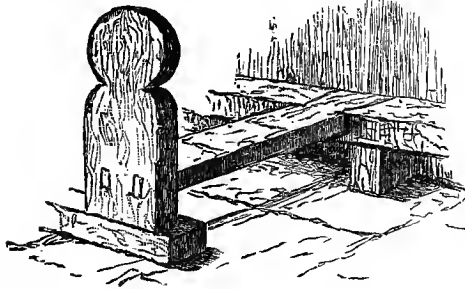


Fig. I.

In the nave were pews with panels of Jacobean carving. (Fig. IV.). Then came on the north side old open seats and benches, and on the west side, extending partly underneath the gallery, a sheep-pen like set of seats, bearing date 1707. There was no uniformity between these productions of various periods. A portion of the floor in the old church was also bare, having no kind of seats.

The markings and inscriptions on some of the benches show that seats were appropriated at an early period, and that contests for their possession took place. There is a curious instance of this in the inscriptions on one of the benches in the chancel, formerly adjoining the north wall. At both extremities of the bench are initials. One is D W, but partially hiding these letters is a brass plate (*a*, Fig. II.), with these words on it, "David Davies, Tymawr, Llan. . . 1816." Thus Davies claims D W's sitting. At the

other end of the bench cut into the seat are the letters G L ; these are left undisturbed, but nailed into the centre of the bench is another brass plate (2, Fig. II.) claiming the whole bench :—"This bench belonging to Hugh Hughes, Plasau Le Derm Moisdel' Anne, 181—." Thus H. Hughes ousts all comers, and claims the whole seat or bench for himself.

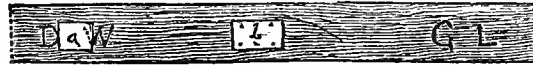


Fig. II.

On other benches in this part of the church are initials, or names of persons, or farms, cut into the wood with or without lines of demarcation between each sitting. (Fig. III.). R. Wynne, Meyarth, claims a whole seat, but to M: I: Esq^r on another bench only 19 inches are allotted. On another bench, "I + R + Clegir," gets 38in., while "I + R + Brindu" has 40in. to his share. The Dynant people get 39in., &c.

The seats in the chancel are old, probably the oldest in the church. (Fig. I.) No nails are used in their make. The seats are dove-tailed into a thick plank on the side next the wall, and at the other end they are mortised into an upright bench end. The structure is of massive oak. The bench is 4 inches thick.

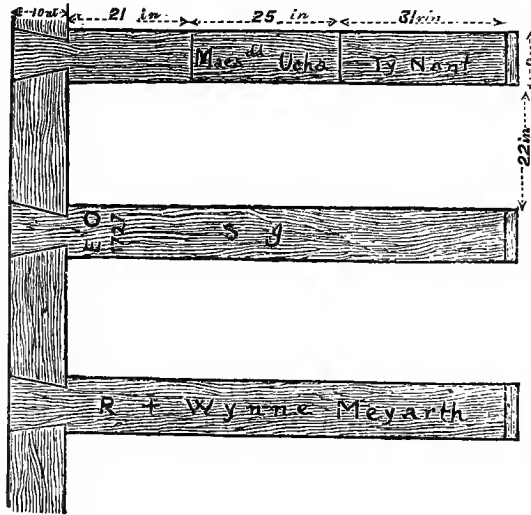


Fig. III.

There are no backs to the seats. There were two sets of these benches in the chancel; also a stall-like chair, and the churchwardens' seat.

The pews in front of and about the pulpit, which stands against the north wall, close to the site of the screen, are high-backed box

seats. The oldest are those about the pulpit. The panels contain excellent Jacobean carvings

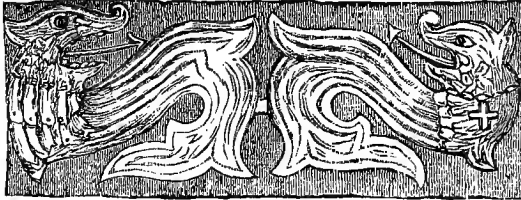


Fig. IV.

representing birds and dragons. On the breast of one of the dragons is engraved a cross (Fig. IV.). From the inscriptions on the box seats, opposite the pulpit, we gather that they were placed in the Church in the early part of the

eighteenth century. Thus, one panel has engraved upon it the initials "T : H 1743"; another, "H ^M_X M MDCCV." On the reading desk is carved, "Cronogr : Dirigatvr · oratio · nostra · qvasi · incēsvm · in · visv · patris · gratie sedes impens : R^o : Davies strvcta in vsvm parochie Gwyddelwern." The workmanship of the wood engraver is exquisite; the poise of some of the birds, admirable; and the grouping, artistic. These engravings belong to the seventeenth century, and they are a credit to it, even if the high seats themselves may not be so described. The height to which pews were built was the cause of offences which are mentioned in the following order, given by Bishop Wren, of Norwich, in 1636 :—

That the chancels and alleys in the church be not incroached upon by building seats; and if any be so built, the same to be removed and taken away, and that no pews be made over high so that they, which be in them, cannot be seen how they behave themselves, or the prospect of the church or chancel be hindered; and therefore that all pews, which within do much exceed a yard in height, be taken down near to that scantling, unless the bishop by his own inspection, or by the view of some special commissioners, shall otherwise allow.—*Concilia*, vol. iv. p. 527.

Appropriated seats in this, as well as in other churches, had locks to keep out intruders, and often churches were almost filled with such pews; and where this was the case, to avoid bickerings, the public were informed which were free by cutting into them the words, *Maingc y plwy*, parish seat. But, as already stated, benches even were claimed by parishioners, who, to show their claim, cut into them their initials. This practice was common throughout Wales, so that, even where there were no Jacobean pews, benches or seats, by constant occupation by the same party, ultimately

became private property. The churchwardens, therefore, as necessity arose, were obliged to provide parish seats. An instance of this occurs in Gwyddelwern Church. The open seats in the chancel had become the property of individuals, and consequently accommodation had to be provided for such parishioners as had no sittings. Ten benches, roughly constructed, with a rest for the back, answered this purpose, and they stood next to the high-backed seats, on the north wall. There is only one single initial on these benches, and the person whom they represent was a person of note, for he is styled Esquire. The letters are "R P Esq^r."

Whenever this set of benches was made, wood from the old screen was used in their construction. The blocks of wood upon which the benches rested belonged to the screen. The upper part of the old rood-screen was removed, no one knows when, but that portions of it were used up in these seats suggests the reason of its removal. The lower part of the screen, in 1880, was in its original position, and several of its carved panels remained undisturbed.





HALKYN, FLINTSHIRE.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



ALL that remains of Halkyn Churchyard Cross is a portion of the head-stone, which very properly has been built into one of the buttresses of the magnificent structure lately erected in the place of the old parish church, by the munificence of the Duke of Westminster. I am informed by the Rev. Walter Evans, Rector of the parish, that he observed the part of the Cross, which has been preserved, a sketch of which is here given, lying about in the belfry of the old church, and that it was used by the bell-ringer as a rest for his foot. Though the old church has been razed to the ground, the outlines of the building can be traced; but I failed to discover the site of the Churchyard Cross. It appears from *Domesday* that there was then a church at Halkyn, or, as it is there called, Alchene; so there must have been in olden times in the churchyard a cross; probably it disappeared when the Church was re-built in 1776, but by accident a part of it escaped destruction, and has come down to our day, and is cared for in the manner stated above.



The part of the Cross which has been preserved is mutilated, but the Crucifixion scene engraved upon it is sufficiently legible. The stone measures about 25 inches long by about 15 inches broad. The niche was originally cinque-foiled, but a part of the top has disappeared. In the figure of our Lord the head has been knocked off, and the legs and arms are all but worn away. There are two figures, one on each side of the Cross, with their faces turned upwards, as if contemplating the Saviour. These represent, most probably, the

Virgin and St. John. The Apostle supports his head with his right hand, and he holds a book in his left. The Virgin's hands clasp on her breast something which is not clearly traceable. The calvary is supported underneath by an angel with extended wings, and on its head is a small cross. A part of the left-hand corner has been broken off, and pieces of the left border have also been chipped away. The workmanship of the side figures, and angel underneath, is good, and possibly, when perfect, this remark might with justice be applied to the whole, but the hands of our Lord now appear to have been rudely executed. The Cross belongs probably to the fourteenth century.





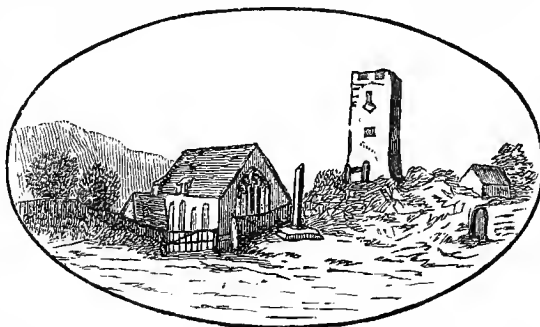
HENLLAN.

VILLAGE CROSS.



HERE is at present no Cross in Henllan village, but I am indebted to the courtesy of the late Mr. Townshend Mainwaring of Gallt-faenan for a copy of a small drawing of the Church and detached tower, in which the Village Cross forms a conspicuous feature. Mr. Mainwaring informed me that the sketch was a copy of an engraving in the Bodleian

Library, Oxford, but he could not tell the date of its execution. Upon reference to the drawing, which is here exactly reproduced, it will be seen that the Village Cross stood close to the churchyard gate, in a recess, between the tower and the entrance to the churchyard. The shaft, evidently a long



one, appears without the head-stone, so that it had already been tampered with. The socket, or pedestal of the Cross, is shown in the sketch, and apparently it was a huge flat stone. This is about all that can be said of this Cross. But the date of its removal is a question of some importance. The Church has undergone two "restorations" in this century, one in 1807-8, and the other in 1878-9, and between these two dates the *Village Churches of Denbighshire* was published by Messrs. Lloyd-Williams and Underwood, in which there is an accurate drawing of Henllan Church as it was after the alterations of 1807-8. In this drawing the Cross does not appear, nor the two dormer-windows and church porch, which are delineated in the vignette given above.

The alterations, therefore, of 1807-8 were extensive. It is stated in the *Village Churches* that the church walls were raised to an unnecessary height in 1807-8, and the remains of the older structure either used up in them, or scattered through the village. It is very likely that the Church was then raised to make room for the west-end gallery, which in 1878-9 was entirely removed. A supporting column of this gallery was, in Mr. Mainwaring's opinion, the shaft of the Village Cross. This most likely was the case; for, as a pillar for the gallery this octagonal stone was incongruous, but as a shaft of a cross it was, as to material, form, and size, an exact representation of many other crosses. It is not unlikely that, at the extensive alterations which the Church underwent in 1807-8, the Cross was removed from the entrance to the churchyard, and the shaft utilized as a pillar for the gallery. At the restoration in 1878-9, the pillar or shaft of the Cross was removed again, and placed opposite the church porch, where also it serves a purpose alien from that for which it was intended, for in winter it is used as a post for a lamp. Such have been the vicissitudes of Henllan Village Cross.

The shaft is an octagonal and tapering monolith, brought to a square at the base by concave chamfers. The height, as it now stands, is 7ft. 9in., and breadth, 1ft. 4in. The work belongs probably to the fifteenth century.





LLANARMON YN IAL.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.

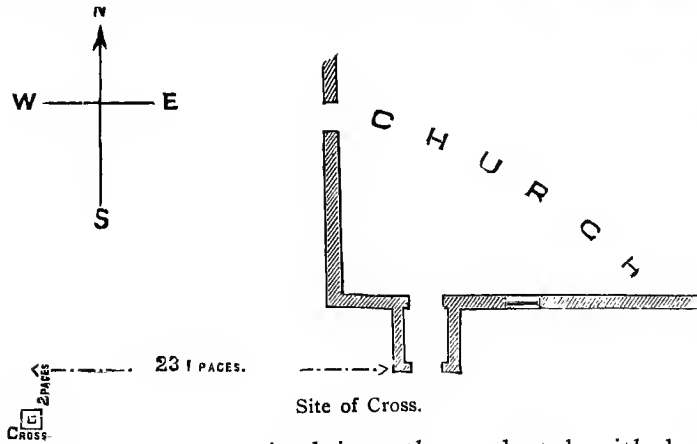
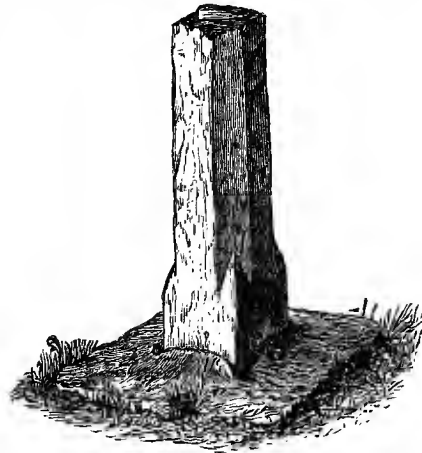


THIS Churchyard Cross has suffered the same fate as many others, and has been cut down and converted into a stand for a sun-dial. The dial itself is now unused and useless, the indicator is broken, and the brass plate markings are indistinct. After much trouble I succeeded in deciphering the nearly illegible inscription on the plate, "*Mal yr Awr yn dyfod*," "As the hour coming;" not an inappropriate motto for a sun-dial.

The Cross stands at present 18 paces from the west end of the church.

It is not in a line with the south side of the church, but it stands six paces more to the south. In its position it resembles the cross that was at Bryn Eglwys, and also the one now at Corwen.

The shaft is a somewhat tapering octagonal, 3 feet 5 inches high, squared by broaches at the base, and mortised into the pedestal with lead. It measures



one foot square at the base. The stone is a hard sandstone, but it is greatly weather-worn.

The pedestal is a monolith about a yard square, and 1ft. 2in. thick; the surface, particularly along the edges, is greatly worn, possibly by persons inspecting the dial. This is also free-stone. The Cross, probably, is late fourteenth or early fifteenth century work.

The Church is dedicated to St. Germanus, or Garmon, who is said to have gained the "Victoria Alleluiatica," over the Picts and Saxons, at a place called, to this day, Maes Garmon, near Mold. Placed erect in the south wall of the Church is the effigy of an ecclesiastic, robed in canonicals, evidently intended for a recumbent sepulchral monument. Locally, this figure is said to be that of the saint who gave to the church a name, but that it belongs to a later period can hardly be doubted, and some writers think it represents John Lloyd, Abbot of Valle Crucis, who flourished in the fifteenth century. However this may be, undoubtedly the Church is ancient, and it is believed to commemorate the spot where the Easter Festival was solemnized by St. Germanus in a church formed of interwoven branches of trees and flowers of the forest. (*Bede*, bk. i., ch. 20.) In those days a more secluded spot for a rendezvous could hardly have been selected. Situated in the recesses of the mountains, and surrounded by huge forests, it was almost inaccessible.

Pennant, quoting Leland's *Itinerary*, v. 35, says :—

In *Leland's* days there was a great resort of pilgrims and large offerings at this place; and, probably, to this imaginary resemblance of him—St. Germanus.—*Pennant's Tour*, vol. i., p. 380.

The church is much too large for the requirements of the parish, but, as pilgrimages were made there, its size is accounted for.

The *Gwylmabsant*, or Saint's Festival, was celebrated on August 1st, and up to the beginning of this century it was observed with much jollity. On the Saturday previously to the Wakes there was a fair called *Ffair y bol*, or Belly Fair, because at it was sold nothing but eatables. Great preparation was made for the Saint's Festival; the farmers killed sheep, &c., and kept open house for their friends. The Wakes lasted a whole week, and during this time there was a suspension of work, and every one endeavoured to drive dull care away from the parish for at least one week in the year. The Vicar of the parish, the Rev. E. Evans, told me that it was customary for the well-to-do farmers to make presents to the poorer parishioners, so

that even they had the means of entertaining their friends who visited them. But all this was the last flicker of the light of other days, and now the *Gwylmabsant* is no more.

The churchyard, which is large, is nearly circular, and is almost surrounded by roads. The road seems at one time to have gone right round the churchyard. There are three entrances to the ground now, but once there were more. The Church is in the centre of the village, and many of the houses round the churchyard have their frontage facing the building.





LLANASA.

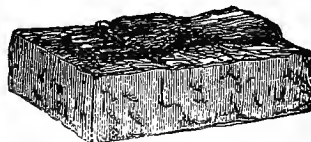
FRAGMENTS OF CROSSES.



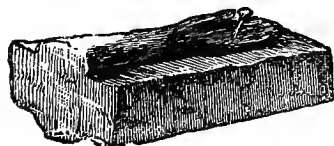
HERE is no Cross in Llanasa Churchyard, but a plain stone, with socket, lies against the churchyard wall, and this may have been the basement of the Cross that once stood in the churchyard.

The Vicar, the Rev. J. P. Morgan, called my attention to a fragment of a Cross that was discovered at the restoration of the Church. It consists of a single

piece of stone, 7 inches long, 4 inches broad, and $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches thick. On each side, in relief, is a portion of an arm, as here delineated, so that, when entire,



there would be a figure of our Lord on each side; and the whole structure, if drawn in proportion to the fragment now extant, would be about 2 feet 6 inches wide. This



fragment recalls to mind the mutilated crucifix at Cwm, the head and arms of which have been knocked off, and both Crosses evidently were identical in purpose. In Mr. Pooley's *Old Crosses of*

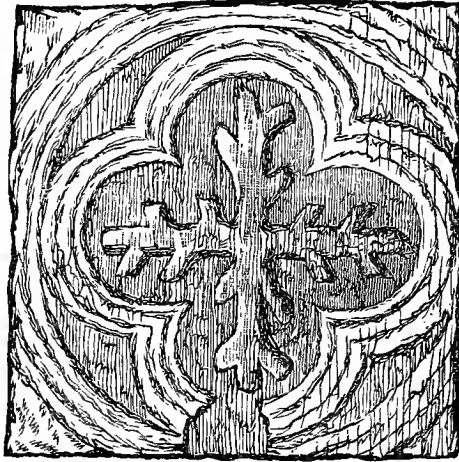
Gloucestershire (p. 67) is described and delineated a crucifix similar to this, having the figure of our Lord on both sides, which, Mr. Pooley thinks, belongs either to the eleventh or twelfth century.

CONSECRATION CROSS.

A most interesting Consecration Cross is preserved in the Church. The late Vicar of the parish, the Rev. T. J. Hughes,

now Rector of Llanbedr, near Ruthin, informs me that this Cross was, previously to the late restoration of the Church, built into the south wall. At the restoration it was removed, and at present it lies underneath the old communion table in the east end of the south aisle. It would have been well had this Cross been replaced in its original position, for there it would have been safer than where it is at present. It is a relic so seldom met with in churches in Wales, that it deserves to be well taken care of.

The stone measures 1 foot 3 inches by 1 foot 1 inch, and it is 2 inches thick. The Cross, which is in relief, appears as if formed by two branches of a tree placed transversely, with the boughs lopped off. The three upper limbs of the Cross have each upon them four lopped-off branches, and the lower has three. The Cross is surrounded by a quatrefoil, and around this is a circle, which is touched on its concave surface by the quatrefoil. The quatrefoil and the circle each consists of three concentric mouldings. The Cross belongs probably to the fourteenth century.

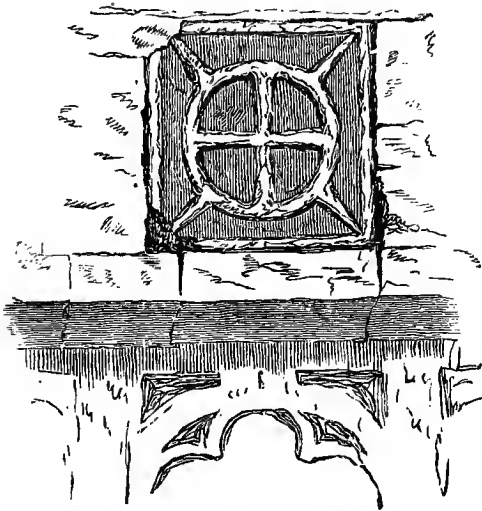


Consecration Crosses are extremely rare. I am not aware of the existence of more than four in the Diocese of St. Asaph, and one of these four may have been the head of a sepulchral slab, and not a Consecration Cross: I allude to that at Overton. In Llanwnda (Pembrokeshire) Church walls there are several incised crosses on stones outside the church, and these, most likely, are Consecration Crosses, for such crosses stood both within and without the sacred building.

Since this kind of cross is so extremely rare, not only in Wales but throughout the kingdom, I will enumerate those that have come under my notice in this diocese.

CHIRK CONSECRATION CROSS.

This Cross at present is built into the south wall, above one of the windows, but there it is out of place. The Cross is in relief; the stone measures apparently 1ft. 3in. square. The Cross is within a circle, which is connected with the angles of the stone by four spikes. (See accompanying engraving.) Probably it is of the twelfth century.



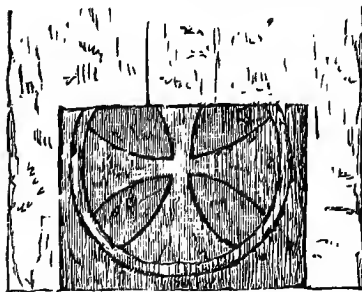
LLANGWYFAN CONSECRATION CROSS.

On the east jamb of the south door of this Church is a small Cross, with arms of about equal length, measuring each an inch

or a little more. The stone, into which the Cross is cut, is red sandstone, and the porch is a part of the ancient Church, which, by restoration, has all but disappeared. Underneath the Cross, on other stones, are grooves, as shown in the illustration. Llangwyfan is about six miles from Ruthin.



OVERTON. CROSS ON STONE.



Built into the western pillar of this Church is a portion of a Cross within a circle, as shown in the sketch; but, as part of the stone has been broken off, it is difficult to say whether this is a portion of a Consecration Cross, or only a fragment of an incised slab. The stone measures $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 17 inches. The Cross is Norman in character.

These are the only probable Consecration Crosses that I have observed in the diocese of St. Asaph. But it would appear that there are several in Malpas Church, and that parish adjoins the eastern portion of the diocese.

The Hon. W. T. Kenyon, Rector of Malpas, to whose courtesy I am indebted for the following remarks on these Crosses, states that they were brought to light in the year 1881, by scraping off the plaster and whitewash.

One of these Crosses is at the south porch, on the right-hand side entering the Church, just at the spring of the arch; the four limbs are of equal length, or almost so, each limb narrowing towards the centre of the Cross. The dimensions of this Cross are given as 3in. by 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. or 3in. The position and size of the Cross correspond with that at Llangwyfan.

The other Crosses at Malpas are on the capitals of the pillars, and they are four in number. They consist of two incisions crossing each other at right angles.

These Crosses seem to be coeval in age with those portions of the Church where they appear.

Mr. Beedham has supplied me with the following interesting notice of Consecration Crosses at the Franciscan Priory, Adare. The information appears in a beautiful quarto volume printed by Parker, Oxford, "for private circulation," entitled "Memorials of Adare Manor, by Caroline, Countess of Dunraven, with Historical Notices of Adare by her Son, the Earl of Dunraven." On p. 81 appear engravings of two Consecration Crosses that are in the Priory. They are within circles, and are simply "scratched in the plaster, and are about 1oin. in diameter, and about 5ft. from the ground."

The Malpas and Llangwyfan Crosses are not surrounded by a circle, though it appears from the order of consecrating churches that such Crosses were usually circumscribed with a circle.

In the *Liber Pontificalis* of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter, a MS. of the fifteenth century, edited by Ralph Barnes, Esq. (Exeter, 1847), are given the following directions to be carried out at the dedication of churches:—

DEDICATIO ECCLESJARUM.

Incipiat ordo ad dedicandum ecclesias in quarum dedicacione subscripta requiruntur Primo provideatur quod ecclesia poterit libere circui, et

quod xii cruces depingantur in circulis in parientibus infra ecclesiam, et xii deforis: et xiiii cereoli et totidem claves ferrei figendi in superiore parte circulorum in quibus dicti cereoli figantur.—*Liber Pontificalis*, p. 12.

From the opening remarks in the order of consecrating churches it appears that twelve crosses were to be depicted in circles on the walls within the church, and also twelve without. These the Bishop consecrated in the manner following, as appears in the *Consecratio Altaris* :—

Postea eat Episcopus infra ecclesiam, et faciat crucem cum pollice intincto crismate in xii circulis infra ecclesiam ita dicens—“ Sanctificetur hoc templum per istam sanctam unctionem et nostram benedictionem in honore. N. in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.”

The Bishop, having made with holy oil twelve crosses within circles inside the church, and having pronounced the words of consecration, proceeds outside, where the ceremony is thus continued:—

Tunc demum exeat Episcopus et cum crismate faciat xii cruces in circulis in parientibus ecclesiæ ab extra dicendo in quolibet circulo sicut dixit infra, scola canenti antiphonam.

Here we are informed that the Bishop makes with the holy oil twelve crosses in circles on the walls outside the church, using there the same words as he had used inside the church, the scholars singing antiphonally.

Lacy was Bishop of Exeter from 1420 to 1455 A.D.

Although the *Pontifical* speaks of Consecration Crosses as being depicted on the walls, it is clear that they were sometimes incised. In Arundel Church, Sussex, are to be seen, on the internal walls, several painted crosses, but these are very rare now. Few such crosses escaped the whitewashing process of late days, and when once hidden from view, their destruction followed. At the restoration of churches in our days, plaster, with whatever was on it, disappeared. This would not be the case with incised crosses, and hence a few of these have reached our time.

But few external Consecration Crosses are in existence in these days. At Salisbury Cathedral the external Consecration Crosses are inlaid in brass. I know of no such Cross in the Diocese of St. Asaph.

It is not difficult to account for the very small number of Consecration Crosses that are in existence now. The perishable nature of such crosses, for they were generally painted on the church walls,

will satisfactorily explain the disappearance of a large number, and where they were incised, as it appears they sometimes were, over the spot marked with the sacred symbol by the Bishop, they were subjected in after years to destruction and mutilation by the Puritans. I shall quote from the *Journal of William Dowsing*, in treating in the Appendix of the destruction of the Cross on and about churches, and I will here take a couple of extracts from the same book bearing upon Consecration Crosses. He says, while enumerating the crosses he had done away with, that he had destroyed at Damsden—"Three crosses in the chancel on the wall." These doubtless were Consecration Crosses; and again he records the destruction of many such crosses at Wetheringsett. His words are :—

Wetheringsett: Nineteen crosses, sixteen about the arches of the church, and three on the porch.

This entry reminds us of the crosses on the pillars in Malpas Church, and also of the cross at Llangwyfan, in the porch of the Church.

CUSTOMS.

Many Church customs in Llanasa parish lingered long, and only ceased in the memory of the living, or in the days of their parents or grand-parents. Lecta Roberts, once grave-digger, but now too aged to follow this occupation, told me of many of these now obsolete customs.

Eastertide was a season of much rejoicing. The custom of "heaving" on Monday and Tuesday in Easter week long survived. On Easter Monday the young men, accompanied by a fiddler, went from house to house to "heave" the young women, and it was considered somewhat of a disgrace not to be visited. On Tuesday the young women went in companies to return the compliment, and these days were given up mostly to merriment. This custom was formerly general in all these parts, and over the border, in Shropshire, and some other English counties. Between thirty and forty years ago it was not an uncommon thing to see chairs carried about the streets of Shrewsbury, for the purpose of "heaving" or "lifting."

Celebrations of the Holy Communion took place in this parish on Good Friday, Easter Eve, Easter-Day, and Easter Monday.

The first three continued to the end of the incumbency of the late Vicar, the Rev. T. J. Hughes, who showed me a record of the number communicating on those days. Possibly this custom still exists. The distribution over so many days was necessary in consequence of the number of communicants, but perhaps it had another object in view, viz., the distinction of classes of society, for Lecta informed me that the "great folk" communicated on Easter-Day, and the rest on any day that suited them best.

It was once usual, I am told, to deliver in Llanasa Church a sermon on Easter Eve. The only Church that I am aware of, which continues the custom in the Vale is Llanychan, where the practice is still popular.

I learn from the Rev. T. J. Hughes that it was a custom when he was Vicar of Llanasa, for the communicants to come up from the nave of the church to the chancel at the words, "Draw near with Faith" in the Prayer of Humble Access in the Communion Service, and those who could find room knelt then around the Communion Table. He also informed me that at private celebrations the parish clerk was present, and he always carried the clergyman's surplice. Mr. Hughes said there were, when he was Vicar of the parish, only three celebrations on successive days at Easter—on Good Friday, Easter Eve, and Easter-Day.

In Llanasa parish it was formerly a custom on All Saints' Day to distribute seed cakes amongst the poor, who on receiving them prayed God to bless the next crop of wheat. This was a day much thought of formerly throughout the whole of Wales. In Clocaenog parish, at the present day, children go from house to house on All Saints' Day, for, as they call it, *Bwyd Cenad y Meirw*, which may be translated "The food of the Messenger of the Dead." Their errand is well known, but when at the door they intimate the object of their visit by saying the foregoing words. They receive either food or money, usually the latter, from the good wife of the house, and then they proceed to the next residence. This custom, I hear, still prevails in many parishes in Denbighshire and Merionethshire.

Baptisms and marriages and funerals were times where the persons immediately concerned received presents from their neighbours. At baptisms as many as thirty couples of young people were present standing around the font. It was the custom for each young man

to give a shilling to the mother of the child, a shilling to the midwife, and a shilling shot to obtain beer. Lecta Roberts told me that her own mother received, when her daughter Ann was baptized, in 1799, the sum of £5 at the christening.

Marriages here, as in all other parts, were attended by many groomsmen and bridesmaids, and on such occasions there were presents for the young couple, and "shots" from those assembled to buy drink for all at the wedding.

The Rev. T. J. Hughes told me that it was customary on Palm Sunday to decorate the pulpit with willow branches.

The learned Dr. Rock, in his book *The Church of our Fathers*, mentions the custom of wreathing the Cross on Palm Sunday. His words are:—

Here (i.e., at the second station) was it that sometimes in parish churches especially the churchyard cross was the spot at which they stopped. Falling down on the ground they yielded their worship to Him who chose to die on the rough hard wood for the love He bore mankind. All about they strewed flowers and green boughs; and after the Passion had been recited at Mass, blessed Palms were brought and this cross was wreathed and decked with them to symbolize Christ's victory over death and sin. References to such a ritual practice are not wanting among our records; and our forefathers liked to think of it; thus, Henry Bunn, by his will, A.D. 1501, orders a cross to be set up in Hardley Churchyard "pro palmis in die ramis palmarum offerendis (Blomefield's Norfolk, x. 141)"—*Church of our Fathers*, vol. iii., pt. 2, p. 228.

William de Bleys, who was Bishop of Worcester from 1218 to 1236, issued constitutions in 229 A.D., and when treating of churchyards his Lordship says:—

Crux decens et honesta, vel in coemeterio erecta, et quam fiet processio ipso die Palmarum, nisi in alio loco consuevit fieri.—*Concilia*, vol. i., pp. 623-4.

This is an authority for the erection of Churchyard Crosses in the thirteenth century, and it also indicates that use of these Crosses which is mentioned by D. Rock.





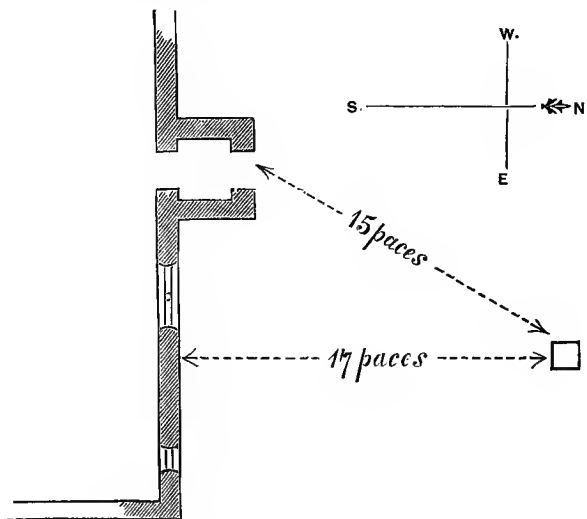
LLANELIDAN.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



THIS Cross stood on the pathway on the north side of the Church; its position was about mid-way between the Church porch and the lich gate (See plan). A few foundation stones mark the spot once occupied by the Cross; but these are on a level with the pathway which passes over them, and therefore not very noticeable. Fifteen paces taken from the Church porch brings one to the site of the Cross.

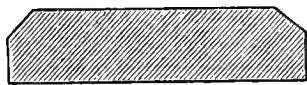
Before proceeding with a description of the Churchyard Cross, it may be remarked that, in consequence of the configuration of the ground on which the Church stands, the porch and chief entrance are on the north side, and not, as is usually the case, on the south. Corwen Church is another instance of this kind. The Cross at Llanelidan was erected therefore on that side which was traversed by the parishioners on their way to the Church.



The Cross was, I am informed by the present Rector, the Rev. David Roberts, removed by the orders of his predecessor, the Rev.

Robert Roberts. The stonemason, Griffith Griffiths, who was employed on the occasion, is still living (1883), an old man of over eighty years, but still strong and capable of work. He lately contracted for building the wall around the additional burial ground, and when so engaged he informed the Rector that he had removed the Cross, and he stated that the removal took place from fifty to sixty years ago.

Portions of the Cross have been built up into the schoolroom; and at the approach to the Church, on the south side, are several large blocks of sandstone, apparently the steps to the Cross, but used at present as steps to the entrance into the churchyard. On the top of the steps is a large stone, which formed the basement of the Cross. It measures 3ft. 2in. square, and is about 9 inches thick; the sides are chamfered, and to avoid the central socket, which would be inconvenient, as the stone is now used, it has been inverted, so that the chamfered sides are undermost. (See Fig. X.) Some portions of the old Cross are thus utilized, but others have disappeared. It is much to be regretted that a Churchyard Cross, having reached the nineteenth century, should, even if already mutilated, have been removed or destroyed.



<.....3ft. 2in.....>
Fig. X.

The parish clerk, Simon Goodman Jones, informed me that from this Cross parochial and other matters were published in days gone by, just as they were in the neighbouring parish of Derwen.

BALL-PLAYING ON CHURCH WALLS.

Ball-playing was in this, as in other parishes, a favourite game. Reference has already been made to it, but particulars not previously recorded are here given. Mention was made of the use of shutters to the church windows when speaking of Cilcen Church. From information supplied by the parish clerk of Llanelidan there is no doubt that they were, as previously stated, supplied to secure the glass from breakage when the game was being played.

Games of fives were played at Llanelidan on the west gable end of the south aisle. There is a window above a built-up door, with the shutter staples still remaining, but the shutters themselves have

disappeared, and the clerk said that these shutters were provided simply for the protection of the windows while games were going on. He also pointed out to me a contrivance by which the shutters of a window in an adjoining side wall were drawn to from the loft in the west end of the Church. The space between these two walls is now occupied by grave stones, and when the attention of the clerk was drawn to these obstructions to a game of fives, he stated that the altar tombs and head stones were erected after the game had ceased. He also pointed out to me several slabs broken at the surface of the ground, and he said these stones were driven into the ground by Mr. Davies, a curate of the parish, to make it impossible for the young men to play ball against the Church walls. But, said my informant, the parishioners would not submit to such treatment, and one, Robert Jones, Tyntwll, with a sledge hammer, broke the objectionable pillars to pieces, and the games were resumed. All this took place a little more than sixty years ago. The Rev. John Davies, the clergyman referred to, ceased to be curate of Llanelidan in the year 1819.

It would seem that these games were not always played for amusement only, but oftentimes for money. The Llanelidan parish clerk told me that his grandfather, Gabriel Lloyd, a freeholder in the parish, was passionately fond of the game, and three times over he gambled and lost his property in betting on unsuccessful competitors. When asked how he could have spent his freehold three times over, Lloyd said that his infatuated forefather took the deeds of the property and deposited them with a female cousin, as security for money advanced by her on the freehold; that after a while she forgave him the debt and restored the deeds; and this she did on three occasions. But her kindness was of no avail, and for the fourth time the deeds came into her possession, and now, wearied by these thrice repeated proofs of her relative's improvidence and gambling propensities, she no longer would relieve him of his monetary difficulties, and, though aged and blind, she found a husband, and Gabriel Lloyd lost his property for ever. Poverty even destroyed not his love for the game, and he staked his last shilling on his grandson, Gabriel Goodman's skill at fives, and lost it. Such are the family traditions of Gabriel Lloyd.

Corroborative evidence of play for money was given by old John Lewis, Graigfechan, who is mentioned in connection with

Llanfair Cross. This old man narrated with much vivacity a feat he had performed in a game played against Llanfair Church walls years ago, when he won a bet of a pound. Upon being asked whether he could play equally well with both hands, he said, capering about in front of the dumb wall, as if replaying the celebrated match—"Oh yes, I played with my left hand as well as with the right, or I could never have won that game." The old man is now minus an arm.

MARKING OF GAMES OF FIVES ON CHURCH WALLS.

A south doorway into Llanelidan Church contains many scorings of games played on the wall already mentioned. This entrance is through the side wall adjoining, and at right angles to, the west wall. The wall is very thick, and the marker stationed in the recess of the door could see the game without interfering with the players. Both sides of the doorway are plastered over with mortar, and many coats of whitewash have been laid on the wall. Upon the peeling off of the whitewash the scorings came in view. The wall was covered over with them. These marks are the only remaining instances of records of games that have reached our days. Nearly all the churches in the Vale have undergone restoration, and much that was old and interesting has consequently disappeared; and to the fact that Llanelidan Church has not been restored, we are indebted for the preservation of these marks.

The records of matches are variously written. Sometimes a single line, four inches or so long, is scratched into the mortar, and this line is intersected by other lines measuring about two inches in length. (See Figs. I. and II.) It appears that Fig. II. records a dead heat, while Fig. I. shews that a well contested game has been played, the victors winning by two points out of ten.

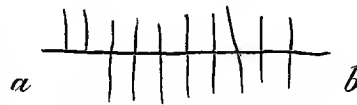


Fig. I. $a-b=4$ inches.

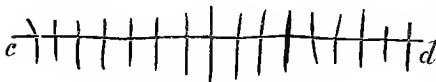
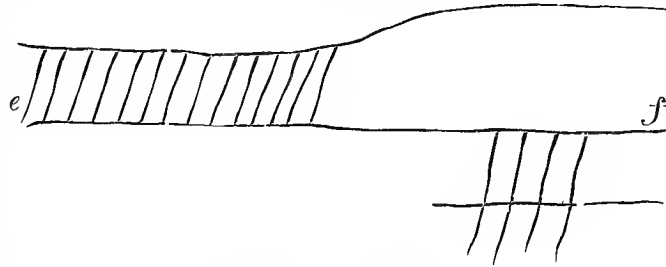
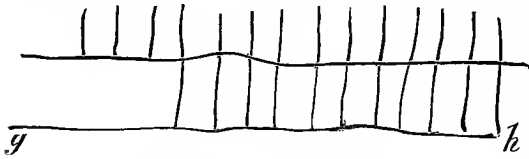


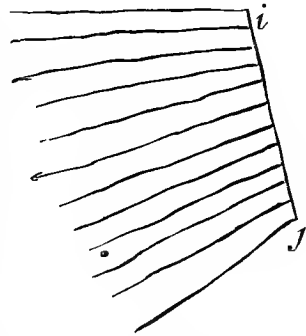
Fig. II. $c-d=6$ inches.

Another way of scoring was by drawing two parallel lines, and inserting within them a straight line for each point gained by one of the

competing sides, whilst the record of the other side was marked by straight lines drawn outside the parallel lines, as shewn in Fig. III. It would appear that the game registered in Fig. III. was very one-sided, the winners gaining fourteen out of eighteen points. Fig IV. seems to have been the same kind of

Fig. III. $e-f=9$ inches.Fig. IV. $g-h=9\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

scoring, somewhat modified, as in Fig. III. Fig. V. represents another kind, but what it means I know not. There are several single letters in the mortar close to the scorings, such as G and J, and there are also many other records of games along the walls, and these exhibit a certain amount of diversity from the delineations now given. The parish clerk informed me that the letters stood for the marker's name, and the G, he said, belonged to his enthusiastic grandfather, Gabriel. These records show that a game of fives was conducted according to well-known rules, which have now been lost in Wales. On the walls of Pompeii have been discovered a complete programme of a match of fives or hand ball, in which challengers, accepters, and markers are named. All this reminds one forcibly of the games played at Llanelidan, where the scorings and the markers figure so conspicuously, while it shews the antiquity of the exercise of the *pila*. The *pilicrepi* of Pompeii were an influential body, and on electioneering placards they are even asked to support a certain candidate—" *Pilicrepi Facite* " are the words there written. We can well understand the enthusiasm

Fig. V. $i-j=3$ inches.

invoked by a great match in Wales, and we can well believe, as old people tell us, that the important work of keeping the score was often undertaken by the clergyman.

ROOD-SCREEN AND LOFT.

There is a tradition that the screen belonging to this Church was removed to Ruthin Church. If so, it has disappeared from that Church also, where at present there is no screen. The remains of certain portions of a rood-loft are still in existence in Llanelidan Church. One part forms a seat in the vestry, and this is ornamented with rude engraving of animals; there are other portions of the rood-loft used as beams in the west-end gallery in the Church. Particularly noticeable is one with mortises. Judging from the remains of the rood-loft still preserved and appropriated in the Church, the tradition as to the removal of the screen and its appurtenances cannot be literally correct. A part may have been removed when the Church was undergoing repairs, but certainly not the whole.

EAST WINDOW GLASS.

The painted glass in the east window is fragmentary, and the window is filled in with old greenish glass. A pane has the date 1700 upon it.



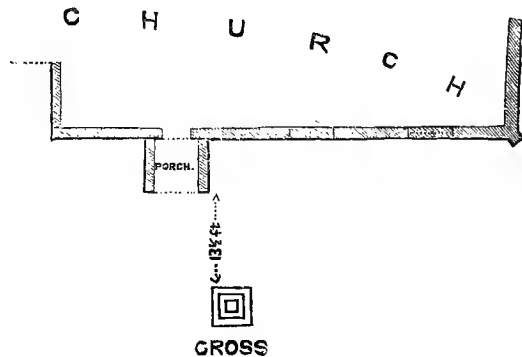


LLANFAIR DYFFRYN CLWYD.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



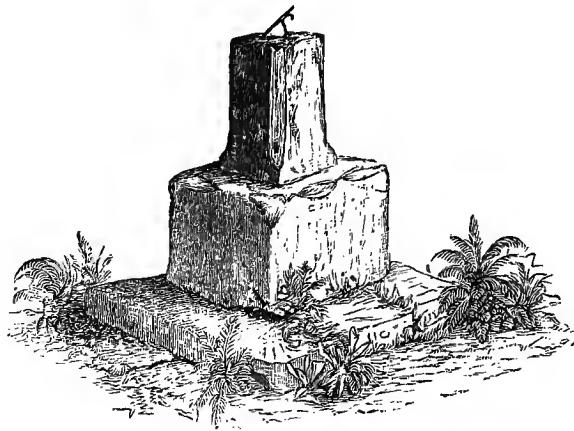
THIS is one of those Churchyard Crosses that have been converted into a sun-dial. From the figures 1800 cut into the shaft, we may suppose that that was the date when the change was effected. The sun-dial plate has an inscription, which states that "E. Tavo, Chester, Fec^t." The Cross stands on the south side of the Church, six paces from the porch, and it is in a straight line with the east wall of the porch. There are two steps leading up to the pedestal; the lowest is, in most parts, imbedded in the soil, but a sufficient portion is exposed to show that it is about 12in. broad, and 7ft. 2in. long. The next step consists apparently of three large stones, lying partly underneath the pedestal. This step is on two of its sides 12in. broad, and on the two opposite sides, 1ft. 3in. broad; in length, its opposite sides measure respectively 5ft. 4in. and 4ft. 11in.; a displacement of the stones forming the steps will account for this inequality. The interstices between the stones are filled with luxuriantly growing ferns, including the hart's tongue. The pedestal is a large block of free-stone, measuring, at the base, 2 ft. 10in. square; height, 2ft. 1in. Grooves



Plan showing position of Churchyard Cross.

have been made along its upper surface by sharpening thereon knives or other implements. The shaft is an octagonal, 2ft. 5in. in height, brought to a square by broaches, and mortised into the pedestal with lead. When perfect the Cross must have been a massive and imposing structure. The remains are simple in character. It is probably fifteenth-century work.

Old people in the parish remember many customs that have ceased in their days. One of these was—



RINGING A HAND-BELL AT FUNERALS.

The parish clerk formerly preceded funerals, walking a short distance in advance of the procession, tolling, as he went along, a small hand-bell. The modern reason given for this custom was the narrowness of the roads, which would not permit of vehicles passing each other. The bell, therefore, gave notice of the approach of the funeral, and should there be impediments on the road, they were removed before the funeral came up. This custom is extinct.

It appears that the custom of ringing hand-bells at funerals was known in other parts of Wales, and continued to the days of the living. In that interesting book on bells, by the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, called *Tintinnabula*, p. 315, speaking of a Carnarvonshire bell, the writer says :—

I was told that the bell had been formerly round, but was squeezed into its present form by the famous Llywd Fawr, a gigantic ancestor of Lloyd Edwards, Esq., of Nanhoran. Before a funeral the clerk used to go round the churchyard ringing the bell. There are persons still living who remember that in Carnarvon a bell used to be rung through all the streets to give notice of an approaching funeral.

Many proofs could be adduced of the prevalence of this custom in ancient times. In A.D. 1549 parsons, vicars, and curates were

bidden to receive corpses at the Churchyard without bell or cross (*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 32.) A more distinct reference to the use of hand-bells at funerals is made by Archbishop Grindal in 1571. In his injunctions to the clergy the Archbishop says :—

At burials, no ringing any hand bells; no month's minds, or yearly commemoration of the dead; nor any other superstitious ceremonies to be observed or used, which tended either to the maintenance of prayer for the dead or of the popish purgatory.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 269.

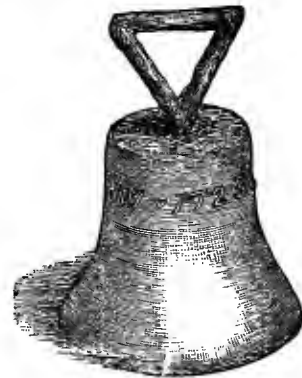
Thus wrote Archbishop Grindal, but we have seen that in Wales hand-bells were rung at funerals long after the issuing of this injunction.

The custom of ringing a hand-bell at funerals also prevailed in Ireland, as testified by the following quotation :—

On February 11th, 1839, Dr Aquila Smith exhibited to the members of the Royal Irish Academy an ancient Irish bell of a square form, found near Fintona, in the county of Tyrone. I have been informed by my friend, the Rev. Henry Tottenham, the present rector of Fintona, that the bell is still in existence, and is in the custody of a family by the name Mc'Enhill; that when any member of the family dies, *it is rung in front of the funeral procession*.—*Tintinnabula*, p.338.

Bells were also used when the parish boundaries were perambulated in Rogation Days, but their use was forbidden by Archbishop Grindal on such occasions. Neither banners nor hand-bells were to be carried in these perambulations, says his grace in his injunctions of 1571.

The Llanfair bell is not old, but, as suggested by the Rev. Basil M. Jones, the Vicar of the parish, it may have been cast out of an older one. Perhaps it is still more probable that a new bell took the place of an older one. Its dimensions are—9½ in. high; diameter at base, 6½ in.; the handle is triangular, and is one with the rest of the metal. The bell is in an excellent state of preservation. Around the outside in raised characters is the following inscription :—



♥ J J 2 3 ♥ H P ♥ E I ♥ E L ♥ 1 P ♥ C ♥ W ♥

There were and are four churchwardens belonging to this parish, and the initials of these officers in 1723 are here given. Between

the date and the letters, and also between each set of letters, are small figures of a heart. The bell is of the usual shape. The accompanying engraving renders any minute description unnecessary.

Cardinal Pole, in 1557, in Articles set forth in his ordinary visitation within his diocese of Canterbury touching the clergy, inquires :—

Whether the sacrament be carried devoutly to them that fall sick, with light, and with a little sacring bell.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 170.

The Cardinal describes the sacring bell as little. Llanfair bell is not a small one, but it might have been used for the purpose specified by the Cardinal. From inventories of church goods made in 1548, *bells* are named along with vestments, plate, &c. There would therefore be more than one kind of holy bell used in connection with the services of the church in those times. Several real sacring bells have reached our days. At Llanrhyddlad Church, Anglesey, there is one. It is of small dimensions, being only 4in. high, and 2½in. by 2in. at the bottom, and is of cast bronze. Such a bell would be used at the celebration of the Mass, and not probably a bell of the dimensions of that at Llanfair. Formerly, when parishes were perambulated in Rogation Days, commonly called Cross Week, certain ceremonies were performed, and hand-bells were used, and such bells as this at Llanfair, or that at Gwytherin, a parish about six miles from Llanrwst, would be the kind of bell used on such occasions. Dr. Thirlwall, the late Bishop of St. David's, found at Kerry, Montgomeryshire, an official whose duty it was to perambulate the Church during service with a bell to awaken sleepers. The Llanfair bell was used by the parish clerk when he had any announcement to make to the people on Sunday, which he did from the steps of the Cross after ringing the bell. In this way it would be used as the bell of a crier. When the members of the Cambrian Archæological Association visited Gwytherin in August, 1882, the small hand-bell kept in the church was exhibited. Some thought it a not very ancient Sacring Bell ; others, nothing of the sort ; whilst a native said it had formerly been used by the village crier. Very likely it had been used in the same manner as that at Llanfair. The inhabitants of Llanfair remember their bell being used for the purpose of calling the people together when the tithes were sold by auction.

I will only add that the Llanfair bell, in some way or other, came into the possession of Mr. Samuel Owen, the village inn-keeper, and

he, at the request of the Rev. Basil M. Jones, willingly gave it up to the charge of the Vicar, and at present it is kept in the Vicarage.

It is not improbable that even in these days bells, which formerly belonged to churches, may be found. The writer, when on an official visit to Caerwys school, observed a hand-bell under a bench, with a date and letters on it, and all the information he could get from Mr. Jones, the schoolmaster, was that he had found the bell in the school, and that he had removed a much-worn leather thong from the hole in the handle. The bell is now used for calling the children to school.

The inscription is cast, and is in rude raised characters as follows:—

1703 R F W T

In shape the bell resembles the Llanfair hand-bell, but it has a plain moulding just below the inscription. The handle is formed of a perforated projection, into which a leather thong was inserted for the hand. The height of the bell is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and its diameter 6 inches.

Upon referring to the parish account books, in company with the Rev. E. Jones, the Rector, under the year 1702 it was ascertained that Roger Ffoulkes and William Thomas were then churchwardens, and evidently the initials R F, W T, on the bell, stand for the names of these gentlemen; and further, in the account rendered for that year, appear these entries:—

for chainge the littel bell . . .	7 . 0
for chainge the flagon . . .	2 . 6

Both the flagon and the bell mentioned in these entries are still in existence. The flagon is of pewter, and has on it the inscription "R.F. WT. Wardens 1702."

The bell and the flagon coming together in the account may seem to suggest that this was a Sacring Bell. The flagon undoubtedly would be used in the administration of the holy communion, and so, possibly, at that time, would the bell be used as a sacring bell.

On the other hand the church flagon was used formerly for holding spiced beer, which was drunk at funerals; and the custom of ringing a hand-bell in the procession, and of drinking beer after the funeral was over, would by an association of ideas cause the churchwardens to enter these articles, the one immediately after the other, in their annual church accounts. The most formidable objection, however,

to this bell having been a sacring bell is its size, while, as a procession bell, either at funerals or perambulations, its size and depth of sound would be necessary qualities.

There was, and possibly still is, at Gwyddelwern, a sacring bell of a peculiar shape, which the Rev. John Williams (Glanmor) tells me he has often handled.

PENANCE.

Reconciliation consequent upon penance publicly performed in church during divine service came down to the end of the last century. Mr. John Roberts, Plas Einion, a respectable farmer, bred and born in Llanfair parish, whose long life began July 2, 1801, told me that it was a custom for offenders, men and women, guilty of certain offences, upon conviction, to stand in Church in a white sheet. When asked whether he had himself seen this, he told me that he had not, but that John Jones, the late parish clerk, told him that he had seen a man undergoing his penance in this form. Mr. Roberts also informed me that it was common for the justices of the peace, for petty offences, to command the guilty to distribute a quantity of white bread to the poor after morning prayer on Sunday, and this Mr. Roberts had himself witnessed. The last time he did so was about the year 1816, and his father's servant man received one of the loaves then distributed. When my friend, Mr. Beedham, and I, visited Llanfair churchyard in the year 1880, we met there John Lewis of Graigfechan, 86 years old, and he told us he had seen a man distribute loaves of white bread from one of the tombs on the south side of the church, and that he had had one of the loaves himself.

I have been informed of the infliction of both these punishments in other parts of North Wales. Lecta Roberts, already mentioned, at one time grave digger in Llanasa, told me that the last to do penance in that Church was Belly Humphreys, who died in 1817, and whose grave Lecta pointed out. The female grave-digger had but a confused recollection of the event, but she remembered having seen Belly walk up the aisle of the Church covered with a white sheet, and the clergyman standing in the chancel facing the penitent, presumedly to absolve her, and to take away the sheet, and give her permission to be admitted to the holy communion.

D'Israeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature* (Routledge's edition, p. 373), speaking of the domestic history of the great lawyer, Sir Edward

Coke, says that Lady Villiers, Cope's daughter, was condemned to stand in a white sheet. High and low, in those days, the early part of the seventeenth century, underwent the same punishment.

There are many allusions to penance in the *Concilia*, which has so often been quoted in these pages. Archbishop Grindal, in 1571, enjoins penance; and Archbishop Laud issued in 1635 a form of penance and absolution of a renegade or apostate, which throws much light upon this subject.

In this form the offender is directed as follows:—

He is to stand all the time of divine service and sermon in the forenoon, in the porch of the church (care being taken that boys and idle people flock not about him) if it have any, if none, yet without the church door, if extremity of weather hinder not, in a penitent fashion in a white sheet and with a white wand in his hand, his head uncovered, his countenance dejected, not taking particular notice of any one person that passeth him, and when the people come in, and go out of the Church, let him upon his knees humbly crave their prayers, and acknowledge his offence in this form—"Good Christians remember in your prayers a poor wretched apostate or renegado."—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 522.

The next Sunday, in his penitential habit, after the Te Deum, he is brought by one of the churchwardens into the church as far as the west side of the font, where he kneels till the second lesson is ended, and then he makes submission and asks mercy of God in a form given, after which in a humble and devout manner he kisses the bottom stone of the font, and strikes his breast, and then departs into the church porch. The third Sunday at the beginning of the service he is brought into the body of the church, near the minister's pew, habited as before, where he is to stand, and after the Creed he is addressed by the minister, and then makes his confession in the presence of the congregation, whom the minister next addresses, after which the penitent kneels down eastward, bowing to the pavement, and offers up a set prayer by himself, if he is able to read it, or else he repeats the same after the minister. Then the priest, laying his hand on his head, absolves him, and after saying certain prayers takes away his white sheet and wand, and, addressing him as "dear brother," openly promises "that upon any communion day following he shall be admitted to the Holy Sacrament."

In this way was the penitent to act, and some such proceedings were carried out in other cases, but the exact form is forgotten even by old people, who remember nothing but the white sheet.

For the convenience of penitents there were formerly in churchyards two large undressed stones, one on each side the church porch, called "*Cerrig dioddefaint*," or stones on which persons undergoing penance could seat themselves. The Rev. John Williams (Glanmor), Vicar of Llanallgo, Anglesey, to whom I am indebted for this information, tells me that he remembers two of these so-called stones lying one on each side the porch of Abergele Church, and when a child, very old people informed him that they had heard of persons undergoing penance seated on these stones, and wrapped in white sheets. This, they said, was done on a Sunday during divine service. Most of these stones have, I fear, disappeared during the restoration of the churches, but it may be, many of them have only to be looked for to be found. We can well understand that slight respect would be shewn to these relics, when their use, and even their distinctive name, were forgotten.

Mr. Williams also informs me that excommunicated persons, who were forbidden even to enter the churchyard, were in the habit of leaning on the churchyard walls that they might at least hear the "Sanctus Bell."

ELOR FEIRCH, OR HORSE BIER.

In times gone by, and up to the early part of the present century, the dead, if they had to be carried a long distance, were conveyed to the churchyard on a bier called *Elor feirch*, or horse bier, which was carried by horses. The bier in question had long arms behind and before, and within these arms, or shafts, horses were placed, one in each shaft, and secured by gear made specially for the bier. The coffin also was fastened to the bier, and of necessity stood between the horses. It is said that it was difficult to train the hinder horse to take his place, his head being right above the coffin. I have been told that a couple of celebrated horses for carrying the *Elor feirch* were kept by a farmer at Cynwyd, near Corwen, and that he hired them out. Biers of this kind were necessary because of the distances which had to be travelled, and also because of the badness of the roads, which were often mere bridle paths. One of these biers is preserved in Llangower Church, near Bala, and there are, in Llan-elidan Church, in the Vale of Clwyd, the remains of one, which has been converted into an ordinary bier by cutting off a part of the shafts; but at present it is unused and hangs up in the vestry. Mr. Roberts, Plas Einion, Llanfair, remembers two funerals in which the

horse bier was used. The last he saw was about the year 1808, when Robert Llwyd, Cerygoerion, was buried.

KEEPING CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO THE OLD STYLE.

After the adoption of the new or Gregorian style in 1752, when September 3rd was reckoned as September 14th, thus causing eleven days to be thrown out of that year, Christmas continued to be observed in Llanfair by the people for many years according to the old style. Christmas Day was kept in Church according to the new style, but Mr. Roberts, whom I have several times mentioned, informed me that his own father was in the habit of reading to his servants and others on old Christmas Day, in his own house, the services appointed by the Church for that day, and this he continued to do to the end of his life.

SPELL-BREAKING WITH EARTH FROM THE CHURCHYARD.

One of the favourite pastimes in the parish of Llanfair was cock-fighting, and many expedients were resorted to by bird-owners for securing success for their own birds. Amongst these devices was that of procuring spells against opponents' birds, but fortunately these spells could be broken. One way in which this could be done was mentioned to me by Mr. Roberts. He said that when a certain main had been arranged, a servant of his father suspected unfair play. Having reason to believe that his master's birds had been bewitched, he went to the churchyard, and carried away a quantity of earth, with which he sprinkled the cock pit, and thus the evil was averted, the spell became nugatory, and all the birds fought and won according to their merits.

Can it be that one reason why cocks were fought in churchyards was the belief that there spells lost their power, and is this the reason why men in former times fought in consecrated ground?

CURSING AN INCOMING TENANT.

Spells, or cursing, seem to have had a beneficial restraining influence in days gone by. They who feared little, feared being cursed; and the dread of the curse deserved made it undeserved. A singular instance of faith in spells was told the writer by Mr. Roberts, of Plas Einion. He said it was generally believed in the parish, that if a

tenant were supplanted, and lost his holding through the misrepresentations of an unscrupulous farmer desirous of obtaining the farm, then the outgoing tenant had his revenge by cursing the interloper. This was done as follows. The supplanted farmer, before he left the premises, wrote out, or got some one to write out for him, the 109th Psalm, and this he hid away in a crevice in the wall of the house, and carefully covered the spot where he had stowed it with mortar, so that the incoming tenant could not discover it, for if discovered the spell would be broken. As long as the paper remained in the wall, so long were dire calamities sure to follow the steps of the man who had ousted the innocent, and ultimately unavoidable ruin, it was believed, would overtake the interloper.

TITHE AUCTION.

An important day in the annals of the parish of Llanfair D.C. was *Gwyl Ifan*, St. John's Festival, when the tithes of the various townships were disposed of by public auction. In this and other parishes a special brew was provided, called *Cwrw Degwm*, tithe beer, for the sale. It is said that this ale was neither sparingly supplied, nor was it weak and undrinkable, for under its influence many a bid was made hastily, which was repented of at leisure.

The tithes, it seems, usually were bought by the farmers themselves, and the purchase by outsiders was resented; for occasionally the natives were outbidden. The value of the tithes depended on the selling price of grain, and when wheat was high the tithe, it is said, has been known to be even higher than the rent. Thus two persons told me that in the time of the French wars, in the early part of this century, the rent of a farm called Ffynnogion was £120, while one year the tithe reached that figure; and another, it went as high as £140. In those days a hōb of wheat, 168lbs., was sold for £3; now the same quantity is sold for twelve shillings. In these parts the tithe was willingly paid to the clergy, and as a rule, good feeling existed between the people and their pastor, at any rate on this point. This seems to have been the case in other parts of Wales. The following extract from the Tithe Accounts of Marchwiell parish, near Wrexham, for which I am indebted to the courtesy of the Rev. J. Sturkey, Rector of the parish, is interesting. A former Rector writes:—

The existence of Tythes, as arranged in this parish, was advantageous to all, since, when the Lord of the Harvest gave rich crops, the Tenant

was enabled to pay accordingly, and when the crops were light, or when the tenants anticipated any difficulty in paying at Christmas the amount of them, he had the option of refusing his Tythes, and such good understanding existed between the Tythe owner and Tenant that I have frequently known the Tenant offer to hale his Tythes to the Rectory gratuitously. Therefore it was to the regret of all parties that in the parish of Marchwiell Tithes ceased on the Feast of Circumcision, 1842.

J. H. Montagu Luxmoore,

F. of Epiphany, 1842.

Rector.

There is no doubt the Welsh in olden times looked upon tithes, not so much as the clergyman's property, as dues belonging to God, and when in days of oppression they were deprived of the ministrations of the clergy, and there was no one to receive the tithes, rather than appropriate them to their own use they offered them a burnt offering to Jehovah. This is alluded to in a letter by Thomas Price, Llanfyllin, written to the *Cambrian Register*, April 12th, 1701. Mr. Price says:—

From the severe laws made by Henry IV. against the Welsh after Owen Glyndyfrdwy's rising, whereby they were not only interdicted the civil, but also the ecclesiastical rights of their country; no priest being admitted to the rectorship of any parish; whereon the people having finished their harvest, and laid their tythes aside, and knowing none that could lay claim to them, set fire to them, as not thinking fit to make use of what had been so solemnly dedicated to the service of God Almighty.—
Cambrian Register, vol. i., p. 327.

Such an act as this speaks louder than words; and it shows how real and unselfish was the religion of our forefathers.

SEPARATING THE SEXES DURING DIVINE SERVICE.

A custom prevails in Jesus Chapel, in the parish of Llanfair D.C., which also at one time was common in Wales, and in some churches is being revived, of separating the men from the women in church during divine service. Jesus Chapel was built in 1623, and presumably, from that time, the custom has reached our days. A transept of Llangelynin Old Church, near Conway, is called *Capel Meibion*, the men's chapel.

THE ORDER OF LEAVING THE CHURCH.

In former days the clergyman was the first to leave the church, and when he had reached the porch, the gentlefolk left their seats,

and in the porch they exchanged courtesies with the parson. After a sufficient time had elapsed for these greetings to take place, other portions of the congregation departed; these again were succeeded by others, each portion taking precedence of others below them in the social scale, until all had left. They, one and all, were greeted heartily by the clergyman, who shook hands with each as he or she left the porch. This custom was common to all the churches in the Vale of Clwyd and other parts of Wales. It continued in Llanfair D.C. parish to the year 1848, when, on the death of the Rev. James Jones, it ceased. His successor, instead of continuing the custom, sat in the pulpit while the congregation left the church. The order of precedence in leaving the church was often a vexatious point, particularly where there were more squires than one in a parish of supposed equal rank. As the party who first left the sacred edifice was considered the leading family in the parish, gentlefolks who laid claims to pre-eminence contended for this honour. There is a tradition in Llanfor parish, near Bala, for which I am indebted to Mr. R. Pryce Jones, Pentrecelyn, a native of Bala, that two families of considerable influence and authority in Llanfor parish, the Rhiwaedog and Rhiwlas families, long contended for this coveted distinction, and after much unpleasantness and many bitter words the matter was referred to arbitrators, who decided in favour of the Rhiwaedog claimants. The Rhiwlas family was not satisfied with the result of the arbitration, and, unwilling to be second to any one, the squire of Rhiwlas built a chapel on the north side of the chancel, known, locally, as *Yr Eglwys Groes*, or the Cross Church, also called Rhiwlas Chapel. Thus, by having their own private chapel, with its door opening into the churchyard, the family escaped the humiliation of having to follow that of Rhiwaedog from the Church services. The Rhiwlas chapel was built in 1599.





LLANGERNYW.

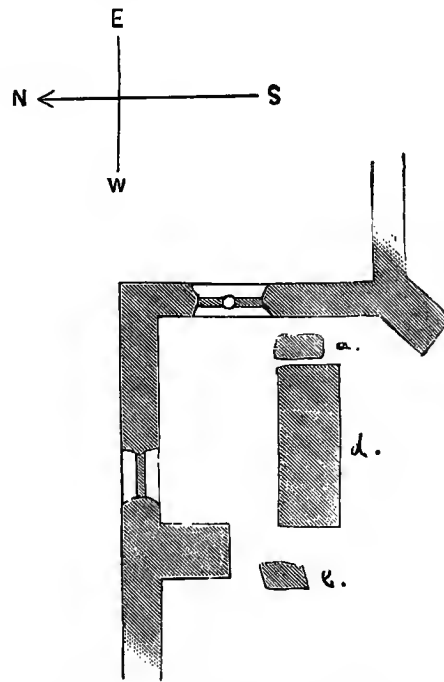


IN Llangernyw churchyard stand two rough, undressed stones with Crosses on them. From the accompanying ground plan it will be seen that these stones are in close proximity to each other, and also to the church walls.

The stone marked (a) in the plan measures 15in. by 21in. at the base; height, 52in.; and on the top, which is irregular in surface, it measures 16in. by 12in. It is 11in. from the church wall in one direction, and 63in. in the other.

The other stone, marked (b), varies in its dimensions. The sides at the base measure respectively 16, 15, 14, and 15 inches; the height is 51 inches. This stone stands 22 inches to the south of one of the church wall buttresses.

These stones are 9ft. 4in. apart. Between them lies a flat modern grave stone. The position of these upright stones with respect to each other suggests that they may have been originally the supporters of a cromlech. Taken in conjunction with another set of stones, 20 yards or so away, with an altar tomb between them, they point to a series of prehistoric remains, which once stood in Llangernyw churchyard.

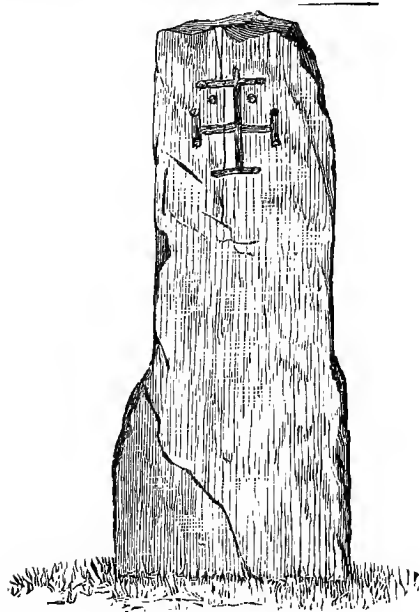


PLAN, shewing position of Pillar Stone

Scale $\frac{1}{2}$ 1 2 3 4 5 6 feet.

- (a) Pillar Stone with Cross on it.
- (b) Pillar Stone with Cross on it.
- (d) Flat Gravestone—modern.

The form of the Cross on the stone marked (a) is rather peculiar. Two lines intersecting each other at right angles form the Cross; at the extremity of each of these lines, and at right angles to it, are other shorter lines, but the central vertical line projects slightly beyond the upper line which cuts it. Between this line and the one immediately below it are two small artificial circular depressions, like cup markings, and the extremities of the various lines that form the Cross terminate with circular punctures. The central intersecting lines measure respectively 10in. and 7in.; the longer one being the stem of the Cross, and the shorter, the arms. The lines at the extremity of these are unequal in length; those at the extremity of the stem measure 5in. each; 3in. on one side, and 2in. on the other side the stem; the lines at the end of the arms measure 3in. each. The



Pillar stone, or maen hir, in churchyard. Fig. a.



Pillar stone, or maen hir, in churchyard. Fig. b.

surface of this stone is smooth, excepting a portion of the left-hand side, where a part has peeled off. There are a few incisions or arrow markings just below the Cross near the side of the stone. The Cross is at the top of the stone.

The Cross on the stone marked (b) in the ground plan is also at the

head of the stone, and it is formed by two sets of parallel grooves, about three inches apart, running from four cup-like depressions, and terminating, at the head and arms, with the edge of the stone. This Cross measures 21 in. by 13 in. ; but the lower stem is somewhat indistinct.

These are the only monoliths in churchyards in the Diocese of St. Asaph with incised crosses upon them. They are, therefore, highly interesting remains. It would seem that originally they were unmarked *meini hirion*, similar to many others still in existence in many parts of Wales, and probably in ancient times they were erected to indicate the last resting place of the illustrious dead. After an interval of centuries, perhaps, another famous person was buried near the stone and a rude cross cut upon it to show that a Christian also there found rest from his labours. The crosses on these stones would therefore date from early Christian days, probably from the time when the Romans held sway in Britain. It is very likely that the Church was erected near them designedly, and that they were carefully preserved when the Church was originally built, and afterwards when it was restored. It may be that the Church at Llangernyw is built on a spot dedicated to religious rites in pre-Christian days, and that the veneration for the place was perpetuated by building upon it a Christian Church.

That Christians appropriated sites and objects venerated by pagans is indisputable. In many countries this was the case. In a very interesting book, entitled *Antigüedades de Galicia*, by D. Ramon Barros Scielo, Corunna, 1875, are cuts which shew that crosses are found in Spain intermixed with stone remains of pre-historic times. Thus, on a monolith, known as the Serpent Stone (*Piedra da Serpenta*), from the figure of a mythological serpent rudely traced upon it, a plain cross has been erected. In the same book also, facing page 73, is a representation of a dolmen of the mountains of Obre in Noya, Corunna ; and on a stone near the base is a small cross, before which is the figure of a woman kneeling. From the posture of the woman it is evident that she is performing her devotions before the cross on the stone, and if in far distant times some kind of religious service was performed at this dolmen, which is very likely, we have a continuation of the veneration for the stone diverted to a different object.

In Ireland pillar stones are found with the cross engraved upon them, and the late Mr. Brash, in his book called *Ogam Inscribed*

Monuments of the Gaedhil in the British Islands, gives many engravings of rude pillar stones on which the cross is incised. Fourteen plates contain delineations of such stones in Ireland; two are given in Wales, and other plates shew similar stones found in Scotland. Mr. Brash had not heard of these stones in Llangernyw Church, or he would have mentioned them. One of the stones figured in plate xxviii., the pillar stone at Drumkeare, co. Kerry, has on it a cross much like that on one of the Llangernyw stones, and it still further resembles the Welsh relic in having the cross near the top, but the Irish stone has Ogham marks along one of its edges, which the Llangernyw stone has not.

Speaking of the Irish pillar stones, Mr. Brash remarks that :—

The religious character of the pillar-stone in Ireland is preserved in the term *ailithri*, which signifies a pilgrimage, or a ceremony performed in penance. . . . That the pagan Irish revered pillar-stones, we have evidence in the well-known incident in the life of St. Patrick, who is represented as overthrowing the symbols of Crom-Cruach and his twelve subordinate deities, which, in the form of pillar-stones, stood in the plain of Magh Sleacht, in the present county of Cavan. In other instances he appears to have allowed these monuments to remain, directing that they should be inscribed with the sacred name, as we have it recorded in the Tripartite Life (II., c. 52), that in his journey into Connaught he arrived at a plain near the present Lough Hacket, in the county of Galway, where he found three pagan pillar-stones, “*quae gentilitas ibi in memoriam aliquorum jacinorum vel gentilitum rituum posuit* ;” on these stones he caused to be inscribed the names of the Redeemer, Jesus, Salvator, Soter. That his example was extensively followed, we have ample evidence in the huge rough monoliths so often met with, upon which rude crosses are inscribed; monuments of that type never erected by Christian hands, but evidently sanctified at a remote period by imposition of the sacred symbol.—*Ogam Inscribed Monuments of the Gaedhil*, p. 95.

This quotation throws considerable light upon the origin of the crosses found on pillar-stones, or *meini hirion*, in all parts of Christendom. That such stones with an inscribed cross became memorials of Christian graves is an opinion held by Mr. Brash. He says :—

That stones inscribed with ogam characters should have been found on sites hallowed by Christianity is only reasonable to expect, and it is well known that many of our early churches were erected on sites professedly pagan; and that these inscribed memorials found on the spot should have been used as head stones to the graves of Christians sanctified by the addition of the cross is consistent with probability and the practice of primitive Christianity.—*Ogam Inscribed Monuments of the Gaedhil*, p. 109.

The paucity of *meini hirion* in churchyards is mentioned by Mr. Brash in these words (p. 109) :—

The number of these monuments found in Christian burial-grounds or Churches is few, and of these the number bearing the sacred emblem is fewer still; and from the manner and position in which it is placed on the majority of them, it is quite evident that the ogam pillar was changed from its original purpose, and turned into a Christian monument by the imposition of the cross.

I will venture to make only one more quotation from Mr. Brash's valuable work, though much more might be quoted directly connected with the matter under consideration. Mr. Brash, speaking of ogham inscribed stones in Wales, writes (p. 112) :—

The handy-work of the Christianizers has also been found on them in the form of crosses of an antique type, inscribed as usual on the bases of the monuments, when they were appropriated to Christian uses. The Church of Trallong, in Brecknockshire, contains a fine example of the ogam inscribed pillar. It bears a bilingual inscription, and has a plain cross in a circle inscribed on its original base.

Many years before Mr. Brash's work was published, Mr. Taliesin Williams, Iolo Morganwg's son, issued a small book of poetry, called *The Doom of Colyn Dolphyn*, with notes. I will take the liberty of quoting one of these notes: its appositeness shall be my justification. This gentleman writes (p. 107) :—

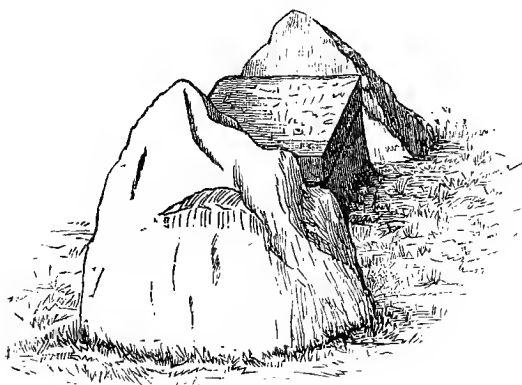
The Christian Churches in this kingdom were founded either on the sites of Druidic Temples (Llannau—and the ancient term Llan is prefixed to such) or contiguous to them. Llanilid and Llangewydd, in Glamorganshire, among many others, are corroborative instances. At Llanilid the old Druidic oratory (Gwyddfa) still remains, nearly perfect; reverently spared by Papist and Protestant. Not a vestige of the old Church at Llangewydd remains, except that the boundaries of the churchyard, appearing higher than the rest of the field (still called Cae'r Hen Eglwys), may be traced, and that bones are occasionally turned up; but two large stones, apparently the remains of a cromlech, prior to Christianity, yet stand there.

The existence of two large stones, “apparently the remains of a cromlech” in a deserted church burial ground is particularly interesting to us, since similar remains at present stand in Llangernyw churchyard.

In the foregoing quotations no mention is made of the *form* of these twice appropriated pieces of ground; but if they are found to be circular or ovoidal, then most probably, the round churchyards,

which are quite common in Wales, were sacred spots in the days of our Celtic forefathers, and the churches that stand on them are the most ancient in the Principality.

About twenty yards from these two upright stones in Llangernyw



Stones in churchyard. Fig. c.

Churchyard are two others, deeply imbedded in the ground, with an altar tomb, bearing date 1665 A.D., between them (Fig. c.). They are not pillar-stones, but boulders, and resemble the stones which form the boundaries of the circular enclosures of the *Cist feini* still found on the hills of Carnarvonshire, and other places, and marking the graves of the ancient dead.

Taking these boulder stones in connection with the pillar-stones in the churchyard, they seem to point to the former existence of a series of ancient stone remains there, a few only of the stones having reached our days, the two upright ones being preserved because they have on them the sacred symbol, and the others because they protect the tomb of a once well-known and highly respected family.

It remains to be remarked that the Church was founded in the fifth century by Digain, son of Cystenyn Gorneu: hence probably the name of the parish, Llangernyw.

FAIRS HELD IN CHURCHES AND CHURCHYARDS.

Mention has been made of fairs being held in consecrated ground, and Llangernyw was probably one of the last places in Wales where the practice was kept up. Fairs were prohibited in churches and churchyards towards the end of the thirteenth century. In a synod at Exeter in 1287, the custom is condemned and forbidden. The 13th article of the synod has reference solely to this custom. It is entitled, "Ne in ecclesiis vel cœmeteriis earum mercata vel placita secularia teneantur, vel ædificia secularia construantur," or, in other words, it states that—Neither fairs nor secular amusements are to be

held in churches or churchyards, nor are secular buildings to be erected thereon. The words forbid, in the most clear and forcible language, the continuance of fairs and games in those places:—

. . . Districte prohibendo statuimus, ne in quibuscunque ecclesiis nostræ dioecesis, atriis earum, vel cœmeteriis mercata seu placita secularia de cætero teneantur; nec ullas negotiationes quisquam exercere præsumat, nec ædificia secularia inibi construere, nisi pro communi utilitate (et) hostilitatis tempore necessitas id exposcat. Et si quæ hactenus constructa fuerint, ipsa præcipimus demoliri.—*Concilia*, vol. ii., p. 140.

This, freely rendered into English, is:—

We strictly forbid fairs or secular amusements to be held hereafter in any churches whatsoever in our diocese, their porches, or churchyards; also we forbid anyone to presume to carry on any business matters, or erect secular buildings therein, unless, for the common good in time of war, expediency may demand it. And if any such buildings have heretofore been erected, we command them to be destroyed.

It is almost certain that the effect of this prohibition was local; for we find the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1305, issuing a similar mandate respecting the church and churchyard of Newenham, in which fairs, bargains, and games were being carried on. His Grace alludes to the evil, and its consequences, and commands the same to be put an end to. (See *Concilia*, vol. ii., p. 282.)

That fairs continued long after 1305 in churches and churchyards may be inferred from the injunctions of King Edward VI., published in 1549:—

12. Item. That the churchwardens suffer no buying or selling, gaming or unfitting demeanour in church or churchyards, especially during the common prayer, the sermon, and reading of the homily.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 33.

It was not in England only that the evil so repeatedly condemned and prohibited existed, but Wales was also guilty of the same offence. The Rev. D. R. Thomas, in his *History of the Diocese of St. Asaph*, speaking of the parish of Llangernyw, says:—

The Rural Dean's Report for 1749 has a curious notice suggestive of the primitive ways of the place, and of the old connection between the fairs and the church. The Dean reports of Llangernyw—"Here is a custom, which I think, very odd and unbecoming, and which ought to be altered. There are five fairs yearly kept in this village, and at every one of them the churchyard porch is made use of by butchers to hang and sell their meat in. Earthen and wooden ware, wool, and several other things are exposed

for sale in the churchyard, and I saw some pedlars have their stalls there. In the church porch are kept, by the clerk, collars, bridles, pack saddles, ropes, and other gears. These, indeed, were formerly kept, as I am told, in the church; and they may, perhaps, be so again, unless they are in time ordered farther from it." (P. 389.)

All this, Mr. Thomas says, was in the following year remedied, though not without some difficulty and opposition.

Llangernyw was not singular in the custom condemned by the Dean. Other church porches and churchyards were similarly used. But from the action of the Dean, the use of church porches and churchyards for the purposes mentioned was in 1749 almost unknown, though at one time common, as will now be shown.

WARES SOLD IN CHURCH PORCHES.

Formerly, as I have said, pedlars exposed their wares for sale in church porches, and proof is not wanting that provision was made in the construction of the porches to enable vendors to exhibit their merchandise to the full view of the people. Thus, at Llangar old Church, near Corwen, is an old porch, which has on the east side two sets of stone seats, the one above the other, 22 inches apart. The lower seat is about a foot or so from the ground, and 19 inches broad; the upper is about a yard from the ground, and 10 inches broad. There is in the parish a tradition that these ledges, or seats, were made for the purpose of enabling sellers to display their wares. The sale would take place at such times as the parishioners congregated in church, and this was usually on Sundays and holy days. The custom approached our grandfathers' days. A beam above the door of Llangar Church bears date 1702, and whatever alterations the porch then underwent, the seats were left intact, and the tradition above mentioned is still green.

The prevalence of the use of church porches as stalls appears also from the following injunction issued in 1571:—

No pedlar or other to set his wares to sell in church porch or church yard, nor anywhere else on holidays or Sundays, while any part of divine service was in doing, or while any sermon was in preaching.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 269.

Such only were the limits to Sunday dealings in porches and churchyards in the sixteenth century.

WHY FAIRS WERE HELD IN CONSECRATED GROUND.

I have already said something as to the reason for holding fairs and markets in churchyards; but it can partly be accounted for by the fact that there people usually congregated, and the Rev. D. R. Thomas thinks the privilege of sanctuary possessed by churchyards was a reason why fairs were held there. The persons of those who frequented fairs held on consecrated ground were inviolable, and this was a very important consideration in troublous times.

The great regard which the Welsh had for consecrated ground is shown by the Archdeacon of St. Davids.

Giraldus Cambrensis, speaking of the Welsh in his days, 1146-1223, says:—

We observe that they show a greater respect than other nations to churches and ecclesiastical persons, to the relics of saints, bells, holy books, and the cross, which they devoutly revere; and hence their churches enjoy more than common tranquillity. For peace is not only preserved towards all animals feeding in churchyards, but at a great distance beyond them, where certain boundaries and ditches have been appointed by the bishops, in order to maintain the security of sanctuary. But the principal churches to which antiquity has annexed the greater reverence extend their protection to the herds as far as they can go, to feed in the morning and return at night.—*Giraldus Cambrensis*, Bohn's Edition, p. 507.

The veneration shown towards consecrated places and things by the ancient inhabitants of Wales goes far towards proving that during fairs held within the sanctuary hostilities would by mutual agreement cease, and it is very likely that advantage was taken of this feeling to do business within the precincts of consecrated grounds, and that in this way the Church was connected with fairs and markets.





LLANNEFYDD.

VILLAGE CROSS.



THIS Cross formerly stood in the centre of the village of Llannefydd, at the junction of the Llansannan with the Denbigh road. As it was thought to be an obstruction, and also somewhat of a nuisance, owing to persons' congregating about it, it was removed by the parishioners and the Vicar, the Rev. E. Jones, to the Vicarage grounds in 1871, and there it now stands.

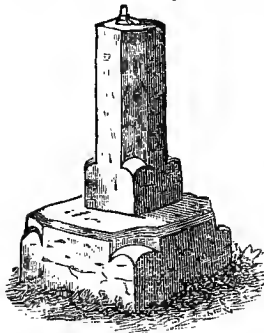
In the last century the Cross was converted into a sun-dial. There is an almost obliterated inscription cut into the stone, around the brass dial plate, which, as far as it could be deciphered, was as follows:—"The gift of S^r . . . | . . . BAR^{IT}. 1756." The gift here mentioned was the dial, and not its stand, which is very much older than 1756. The giver only appropriated the remains of the Village Cross, even if he did not cut it down, to place the dial upon it.

There is a tradition in the village that the sun-dial was a present from Sir Robert Cotton of Llewenny Hall to the parishioners. If so, the initials of Sir Robert Cotton, or rather Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, were probably on the stone originally, though at present they are obliterated. The tradition is corroborated in part by Pennant, who says, speaking of "Lleweni Hall"—

At present it is the seat of the honourable Thomas Fitzmaurice, brother to the Marquis of Landsdown, purchased about ten years ago by him from Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, baronet, of Combermere-Abby, in Cheshire. That gentleman possessed the place by the marriage of his ancestor, Sir Robert Cotton, with Hester, sister to Sir John Salusbury, the last baronet of his name, in the time of Charles II.—*Pennant's Tour in Wales (Carnarvon Edition)* vol. ii., pp. 139—140.

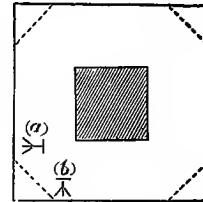
This quotation shows that in 1756 Sir Robert S. Cotton was in possession of Llewenny Hall, and there is nothing improbable in his being a benefactor to the Llanefydd people.

The Cross at present consists of a pedestal and a part of the shaft. The pedestal measures 3ft. 9in. square by 1ft. 5in. in height; it is octagonal, and has its upper edge slightly canted, and it is brought to a square in its lower bed by convex broaches. The shaft is a



tapering octagonal also brought to a square at the base by convex broaches; 3ft. in height, and 1ft. 3in. square at the base. The shaft is mortised with lead into the socket. The whole is weatherworn, and three of the sides of the pedestal have deep grooves made by sharpening knives. On the upper surface of the pedestal are two marks, known generally by the name of masons' marks. The Cross belongs to the fourteenth century.

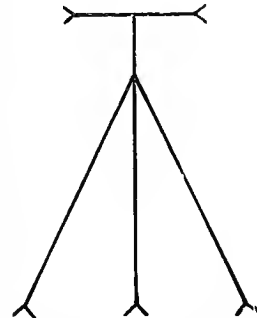
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Pedestal of Cross,
(a) & (b) show position
of Masons' Marks.

MASONS' MARKS ON LLANEFYDD CROSS.

There are two of these marks traceable on the upper surface of the pedestal. The accompanying figure, drawn full size, shows what kind of marks these are. Both of those cut into the pedestal are exactly alike in shape and size, and only one therefore is here represented. The marks consist of a vertical line with a shorter line drawn at right angles at the upper extremity, and on each side of the vertical line are two others meeting it at the same spot, and forming therewith on either side equal angles. The extremities of these lines are furcate.

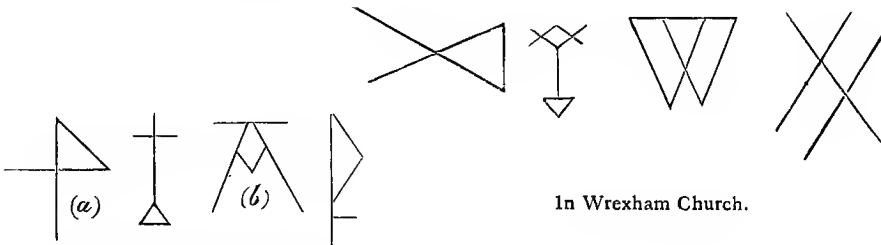


There is hardly a church in the whole of North Wales of a date anterior to the sixteenth century which has not masons' marks on the pillars, and sometimes even on stones built into the fabric. There is such a mark on the shaft of Newmarket Cross. For the sake of comparison a few of these marks are herein

depicted, and it will be seen that they are all of the same generic type. They are not confined to churches erected during the middle ages in England and Wales, but the churches on the continent exhibit the same feature. In a pamphlet by Chavalier da Silva, published in 1873 at Lisbon, a large number of these masons' marks, found in the principal Religious Edifices in Portugal, are delineated. Some of these are identical in form with those found in Bangor Cathedral, and others are similar to those found on Llanefydd Cross.

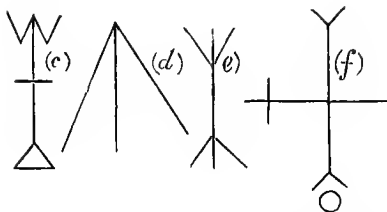
Although these marks abound on ecclesiastical buildings erected between the years 1100 and 1500, it does not appear that they have been heretofore noticed on crosses erected in the same period. This might arise from the fact that they have not been sought for on crosses. There are, however, undoubted cases of masons' marks on crosses in this district, and a more careful search might reveal a still larger number.

The meaning of these marks is obscure. At one time they were looked upon as symbolical, but that belief is now supposed to be without foundation. The Chavalier da Silva comes to the conclusion that the stone-cutters were accustomed to mark their pieces with a recognized sign as representing their signature, that members of the same family or relations adopted the same special sign, adding thereto a line to indicate their own particular selves. Thus according to the Chavalier's theory, the stone-cutter who worked on the Cross of Llanefydd would always make use of the same mark, and if a like mark can be found in any church, or on any other building, then it will show that the same workman, or one of his family, was engaged on that building, and dressed the stones bearing his or the family mark.



In Bangor Cathedral.
 (a) and (b) are of frequent occurrence
 in Portugal.

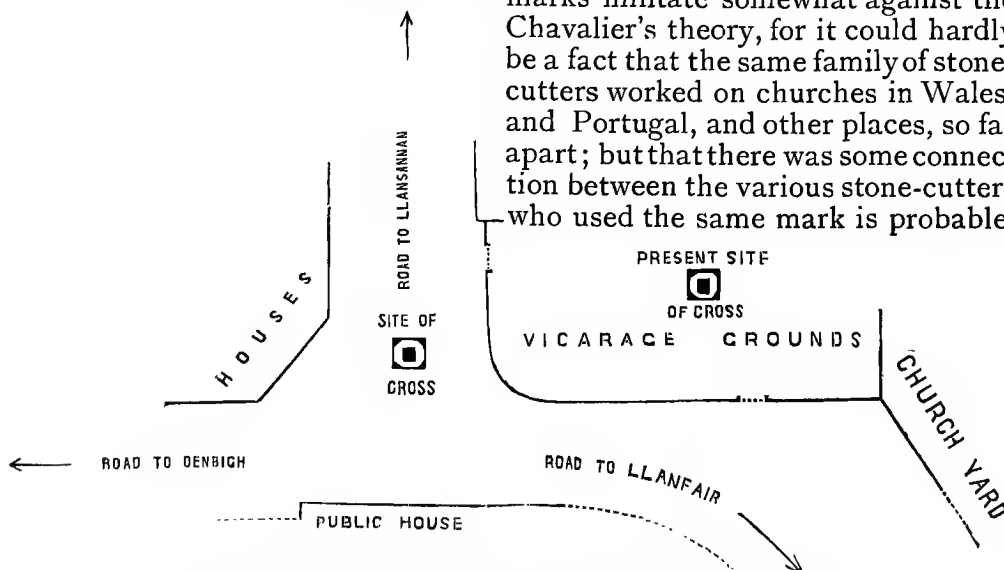
Old Stone Crosses.



(c) Interior of St. John, Thamar, Portugal, 1165. (d) and (e) In Monastery at Tinta, Portugal, 1214. (f) Interior of St. Francis, Santarem, 1242; also, identical in interior of Church of Grace in same place, 1380, Portugal. Compare this with Llanefydd Cross marks.

The delineations here given of masons' marks on churches in Wales and Portugal are only a few of a large number in the possession of the writer. It will be noticed that there is a strong family likeness between the three groups. One of the foregoing figures slightly modified is common to Bangor Cathedral, Wrexham Church, and St. John's, Thamar, Portugal. There are on the pillars in Llanrhaiadr Dyffryn Clwyd Church, Wrexham Church, Llanasa Church, and Bangor Cathedral, masons' marks identical in form and size with marks found in the interior of the Church of St. John, Thamar, Portugal, built 1165. The mark now referred to is not herein delineated; it is simply one line crossing another. The number and diffusion of these

marks militate somewhat against the Chavalier's theory, for it could hardly be a fact that the same family of stone-cutters worked on churches in Wales, and Portugal, and other places, so far apart; but that there was some connection between the various stone-cutters who used the same mark is probable.



Llanefydd, shewing site of Cross. Scale, 1-24th of an inch to a foot.



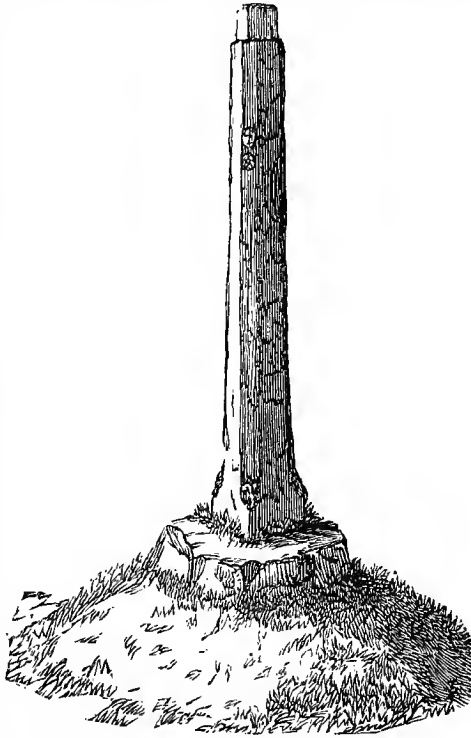
LLANRHUDD.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



THIS Cross stands about fifteen yards from the south wall of the Church and eleven yards from the porch. The socket stands on a mound 6ft. 6in. across, and about 2ft. high. Within this mound are to be found probably the steps to the Cross. That part of the socket which is exposed to view is octagonal, but it is probably brought to a square at the base; the sides are chamfered. The shaft is a tapering octagonal monolith, 9ft. high, brought to a square at its base by broaches which retain traces of sculptured ornamentation. On the top is a tenon for mortising into the head of the cross, which has disappeared. Lichen covers both the shaft and the pedestal.

On the east side of the shaft are the initials E I, and underneath these letters appears the date 1677 or 1672; the last figure is illegible. On this side at the base are six short scorings or arrow marks.

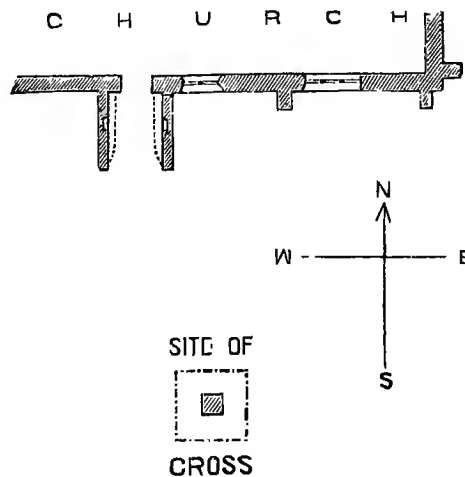


On the north side of the shaft, which is the side facing the Church, are several sets of initials, one only being old in character, an **X m.**

There are four heads in relief on the four smaller sides of the octagonal shaft, about three feet from the apex, and underneath these heads are four small flowers, similar in character to the four-leaved decorated flower. The Cross is a relic of the fourteenth century.

There are two doors to the Church, west and south, with porch. The congregation enters the Church at present through the west door, the south door being usually closed. On the occasion of a funeral, the people enter the Church, with the bier, through the west door, but leave through the south door, and when doing so the most striking object that meets their view is the Cross.

The south door, as I have said, is unused excepting at funerals. This custom of entering the Church by one door, and leaving it through another, on the occasion of a funeral, has come down from remote times.



Plan, shewing site of Churchyard Cross.

Scale 1-24th of an inch to the foot.



LLANYNYS.

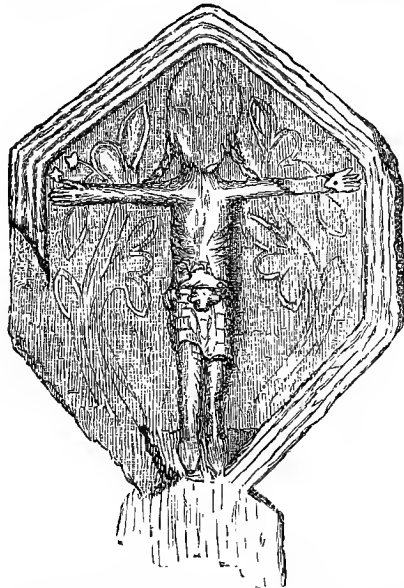
SEPULCHRAL HEAD STONE CROSS.



T Llanynys the Cross is built into the churchyard wall, where it has been placed for preservation, but when, and by whom, it was so placed, is unknown. The stone is hexagonal in form; the shaft extends for a considerable distance into the wall. In company with the Rev. J. Davies, the Vicar of the parish, I took down a part of the wall to ascertain the depth to which the stem penetrated it, but when we had gone some seventeen inches downward we desisted,



Section of Sepulchral Head Stone,
1in. to 1ft.



Sepulchral Head Stone Cross. 1in. to 1ft.

fear-
ing, if

we proceeded, we might overthrow or injure this curious relic. Our investigation was not useless, for it revealed the fact that the shaft was not intended to be exposed to view, for it is undressed and evidently originally was imbedded either in the ground or in masonry.

The total breadth of the hexagon, including the border rim, which measures $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. across, is 25in., the length is about 30in., and thickness, 6in.

On either side the stone are figures in low relief, and floriated ornamentation. The border likewise had sculpturings upon it which age has obliterated.

The figure on the side of the stone facing the Church is a representation of our Lord on the Cross,

It has been mutilated; the face has been knocked off, but there are traces of the hair descending in curls to the shoulders. One of the arms and a portion of one of the legs have also suffered, and there are other marks of ruthless destruction or designed defacement.

On the other side is the effigy of a bishop, rudely executed, clothed with mitre, chasuble, alb, stole, and maniple, with crozier in left hand, head turning outward. The right hand is raised in the act of blessing, and it seems to be covered with a glove. The feet, which are rather exposed, rest on an elongated rounded block, at the left hand extremity of which the bishop's staff terminates. A peculiar feature in the figure is the extreme length of the face. The work probably belongs to the thirteenth century.



Sepulchral Head Stone Cross. 1 in. to 1 ft.

The stone seems to have been a memorial or sepulchral stone, marking the burial place of a high dignitary of the Church, whose mortal remains were placed in the churchyard and not in the church. That ecclesiastics were occasionally buried, in the middle ages, in church cemeteries, is evident from ancient documents. Thus, John de Wodhous, the elder, sometime Rector of Sutton-upon-Derwent, in his Will, dated 1345, devises:—

In primis commendo animam meam deo et corpus meum ad sepeliendum in cœmeterio sancti Michaelis de Sutton predicta juxta crucem sancti cœmeterii.— *Testamenta Eboracensia*, p. 14.

The Rector of Sutton not only wished his body to be buried in the churchyard of St. Michael's, Sutton, but further, he states that he desires to be buried near the Churchyard Cross. A common desire, which has already been alluded to in the description of Cilcen Churchyard Cross.

The graves of such persons would not remain undistinguished, but would be marked by some permanent memorial.

We have still further proof that in most ancient times even bishops were occasionally buried outside the Church. I will give one quotation in proof of this taken from the *Monumenta Historica Britannica* :—

Anno DCC.XL corpus vero ejus ad orientalem plagam extra parientem ecclesiæ Haugustaldensis (Hexham,) quam xxiv annis pontificali rexit dignitate, sepultum est. Duæque cruces lapideæ, mirabili cœlatura decoratæ, positæ sunt, una ad caput, alia ad pedes ejus. In quarum una, quæ scilicet ad caput est, literis insculptum est, quod in eodem loco sepultus sit.—*Simeonis Dunelmensis Historia de Gestis Regum Anglorum, as printed in the Monumenta Historica Britannica, p. 659.*

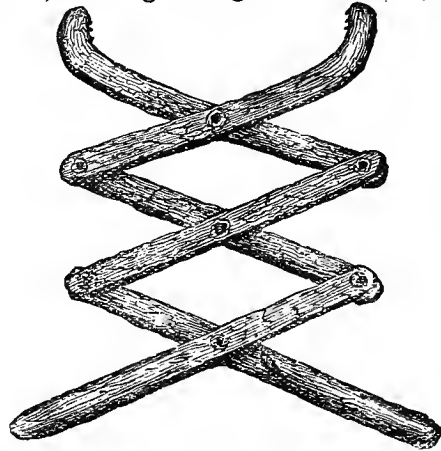
The dignitary here referred to was Bishop Acca. He died in 740, and his body was buried as above stated outside the walls of Hexham Church, and at his head and feet were placed two crosses, *mirabili cœlatura*, marvellously wrought, on one of which was an inscription.

The quotation given about Bishop Acca takes us back more than eleven hundred years. The two stone crosses, elaborately engraven and decorated, placed the one at the head and the other at the foot of the deceased, strongly remind us of the monument in Llanynys churchyard wall, which undoubtedly at one time marked the spot where a bishop was buried. The place of burial, outside the church walls, in the east part of the churchyard, is also worthy of notice, as intimating that, so early as the year 740 A.D., that part of the churchyard was, as it is now, a spot coveted as a resting-place for the dead.

It may be asked how came a bishop to be buried in Llanynys churchyard. From the name of a farm in the parish, *Plas yr Esgob*, the Bishop's Palace, it would seem that in days gone by a bishop, if not bishops, were connected with the parish. The granary of this once episcopal residence formerly contained these inscriptions—"Gloria Deo," "Gloria in excelsis Domino," "Laus Deo." The Rev. D. R. Thomas supposes that there is an intimate connection between the Bishop's Palace and the effigy of the bishop in Llanynys churchyard wall, and he also suggests that the granary of *Plas yr Esgob* farm "had most likely been at one time the domestic chapel of the bishop." Further corroborative evidence of the former importance of Llanynys Church exists in a recumbent effigy of a bishop, or other high dignitary, preserved in the Church, and other monumental slabs found in the Church and churchyard wall shew that the edifice was once more than the simple Parish Church which it now is.

GEFAIL GŴN, OR DOG TONGS.

A curious instrument, indicative of a practice no longer followed, is still preserved in Llanynys Church, a Dog Tongs. Formerly, farmers attending church were accompanied by their faithful dogs. Where large numbers of these animals met, although it was in church, their behaviour was not always strictly decorous, and often their snarling and growling culminated in an open fight. Such conduct in such a place was not to be tolerated, and so man's ingenuity invented an instrument for ejecting noisy, or quarrelsome and pugnacious dogs. This instrument necessarily combined two qualities ; strength of parts, to overcome the



Dog Tongs.

dog's muscular power, and safety to the official whose duty it was to interfere with the squabble. Both qualities were found in the old *Gefail gwn*, or Dog Tongs. The parish clerk, or other official, was able to use the tongs without risk to his own person, and the dog, when firmly grasped around the neck, or leg, could not wriggle out of the embraces of the wooden arms that clasped him, and therefore, out of the church he was obliged to go. A reference to the accompanying illustration will make a description of the instrument unnecessary ; but briefly, the tongs consist of a set of arms, moving freely on iron pivots, that shoot out as the handles are brought together. The Llanynys tongs consist of three sets of arms ; one of these forms the handle, another the centre piece, and the last the forceps of the instrument. The handle is longer than the other portions ; the forceps have inserted on either side three nails with blunted points, to make the grip secure, but at the same time not to hurt the dog overmuch. The dimensions of the arms are as follows—the two foremost are alike, 18in. long, while the handle is 20in. ; stretched out at their greatest length the tongs measure 52in. It can easily be imagined that the expulsion of a dog was neither noiselessly nor easily executed, and the numerous teeth-marks in

this instrument bear witness to many a struggle that took place when an offending dog was being ignominiously dragged out of church. Dog tongs were formerly a necessary appendage in every church. Several of these have reached our days, and others have been lately lost, or carelessly destroyed. In the *Archæologia Cambrensis* (4th Series, No. xxxi., p. 212), is a description and illustration of a Dog Tong by "D. R. T.," preserved in Clodock Church, Herefordshire. Reference is made in the same paper to those which are still intact in Gyffylliog Church, near Ruthin. These are much the same as those at Llanynys, and have in the forceps the blunted nails. But the dog tongs were once found in every church in the Vale of Clwyd. Mr. John Morris, parish clerk of Derwen, told me that he remembered the tongs belonging to that Church, and he stated that they were always kept hung up under the roof of the west-end gallery, but he had no recollection of having seen them used; still, every one knew what their object was. At the restoration of the Church in 1857 the west-end gallery was removed, and at that time the dog tongs disappeared, and they have not since been discovered. Morris also remembers the dog tongs of the neighbouring Church of Llanelidan, but he does not know whether they are still preserved. From Dean Ramsay's *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* we learn that the Scotchman, as well as the Welshman, was inseparable from his dog, and that in Scotland it was the practice, in the pastoral parts, for each shepherd to take his faithful collie with him to church. The Dean states that "in a district of Sutherland, where the population is very scanty, the congregations are made up one-half of dogs, each human member having his canine companion." Many a tale does the witty Dean tell in connection with this practice, and if we in Wales had had a witty Dean in the last century, we too should likewise have had many an amusing anecdote preserved of by-gone practices and times, that are now lost for ever.





MAEN CHWYFAN, OR MAEN Y CHWYFAN.



ABOUT a mile and a half from the village of Whitford, Flintshire, in the corner of a meadow close to the turnpike gate that bars the way to Llanasa, stands the most singular Cross in North Wales. I may state that the nearest railway station to the stone is Mostyn, and that the distance to the Cross through Mostyn Park is about three miles.

The place where the Cross stands was formerly wooded, and the country wild; at present it is for the most part cultivated, but the bare mountain is only a short distance away. The aspect of the country around has greatly changed since the time when the Cross was erected. Two hundred years ago the spot which it occupies was mountain land.

From the number of place-names in the district indicative of conflicts, and the number of tumuli formerly or now in existence, and the treasures of former days that have been there discovered, it has been inferred that the neighbourhood was in time of old the scene of many sanguinary battles.

The first description we have of *Maen y Chwyfan* is that which appears in Gibson's *Camden*. This edition was published in 1695, and Gibson, the editor, states that he was indebted to Mr. Edward Llwyd, Keeper of the Museum in Oxford, for the additions made to *Camden's* remarks on Wales. Llwyd is a recognized authority on antiquarian matters connected with the Principality. He was a learned Welsh scholar. What appears from his pen in *Camden* is therefore worthy of special notice. Llwyd was employed, as is stated in Williams's *Eminent Welshmen* (p. 289), in collecting materials relative to Wales for Gibson in 1693. His information is all the more trustworthy, as it was derived on the spot by one conversant with the language of the people. It is now nearly two hundred years since the Welsh

antiquary visited the *Maen*, but the information he gives belongs to a more remote period.

Llwyd calls the Cross *Maen y Chwyvan*, and under this heading he writes as follows:—

It remains now that we make some mention of that remarkable Monument, or carv'd Pillar on Mostyn Mountain. . . . It stands on the evenest part of the mountain, and is in height eleven foot and three inches above the Pedestal: two foot and four inches broad; and eleven inches thick. The Pedestal is five foot long, four and a half in breadth, and about fourteen inches thick: and the Monument being let thorow it, reaches about five inches below the bottom; so that the whole length of it is about thirteen foot. . . .

When this Monument was erected, or by what Nation, I must leave to farther enquiry; however, I thought it not amiss to publish these draughts of it, as supposing there may be more of the same kind in some parts of Britain or Ireland or else in other Countries; which being compar'd with this, it might perhaps appear what Nations used them and upon what occasions. Dr. Plot in his *History of Staffordshire* gives us the draughts of a Monument or two which agree very well with it in the chequer'd carving, and might therefore possibly belong to the same Nation. Those he concludes to have been erected by the Danes, for that there is another very like them at Beau-Castle in Cumberland, inscrib'd with Runick Characters, which is presum'd to have been a Funeral Monument. But the characters on the East side of ours, seem nothing like the Runic, or any other letters I have seen, but resemble rather the numeral figures 1221, tho' I confess I am so little satisfied with the meaning of them, that I know not whether they were ever intended to be significative. Within a furlong or less of this Monument, there is an artificial Mount or Barrow (whereof there are also about twenty more in this neighbourhood, call'd *y Gorsedheu*) where there have been formerly a great many carcasses and skulls discover'd, some of which were cut; and one or two particularly had round holes in them, as if pierced with an arrow: upon which account this pillar has been suspected for a Monument of some signal victory; and the rather for that upon digging five or six foot under it, no bones were discover'd, nor anything else that might give occasion to suspect it sepulchral.

This Monumental Pillar is called *Maen y Chwyvan*, a name no less obscure than the History of it; for tho' the former word signifies a *stone*, yet no man understands the meaning of *Chwyvan*. Were it *Gwyvan*, I should conclude it corrupted from *Gwydhvaen*, i.e., the *high pillar*: but seeing it is written *Maen y Chufan* in an old Deed bearing date 1388 (which scarce differs in pronunciation from *Chwyvan*.) I dare not acquiesce in that Etymology, tho' at present I can think of none more probable.—*Gibson's Camden*, p. 692.

Such is Llwyd's description of this remarkable stone. There are several important points which he touches upon, such as the discovery of bones and skulls, which had been fractured or pierced in battle probably, within a short distance of the monument; from the quantity of *carneddi* or funeral mounds near the Cross, he surmises that the stone is commemorative. Since his days, not very far from the site of the stone, at a place called Bryn Sion, a small farm between Caerwys and Newmarket, a gold torque has been found by a farmer when ploughing; it was bought by the late Marquis of Westminster for £400, and is kept at Eaton Hall. These discoveries point to the importance of the district in years gone by.

Llwyd's description in Camden's *Britannica* is accompanied by drawings that are curious, but inaccurate, and what he thought resembled the numerals 1221 are simply ornaments, as will be seen upon consulting the drawings of the *Maen* herein given. It will be observed by consulting the drawing in *Camden*, and that which accompanies this paper, that the stone has not suffered greatly during the last 200 years.

When I was sketching the Cross a native came up and told me that there was an inscription on the stone, and that "Dick Aberdaron," the Welsh linguist, who died December 18th, 1843, had translated it. I asked him where the inscription was, and he pointed to the ornamentation, and said "it was there somewhere, but it required a scholar to decipher it, which he was not." Perhaps Llwyd's numerals have lingered in a traditional form in the neighbourhood up to the present time.

It is worthy of notice that Llwyd calls the stone *Maen y Chwyvan*, and states that in an old deed, dated 1388 A.D., it is written *Maen y Chufan*, which, he says, scarcely differs in pronunciation from the name *Maen y Chwyvan*. This is important, as will be shewn by and by.

In the most ingenuous manner Llwyd confesses his inability to give the meaning of the word *chwyvan*; and further, the age of the stone, and by whom, or why erected, he acknowledges as beyond his knowledge. His dimensions are substantially correct. It is a wonder that when digging five or six feet underneath the stone he did not upset it. Perhaps the Cross then departed from the vertical, and assumed its present somewhat slanting position.

The next notice which I find of the stone is in Lewis Morris's *Celtic Remains*, printed in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1875

(p. 110). I do not know the exact date of the writing of the *Celtic Remains*, but Morris lived from 1702 to 1765; therefore he probably wrote the *Celtic Remains* about the middle of the last century. Under the head *Cwyfan*, the following notice of the saint is given:—

Cwyfan (sant) : hence Llangwyfan in Môn, and another in Denbighshire, Cwyfan yw sant y Ddiserth yn Nhegeingl, a'r Sul nesaf ar ol yr ail dydd o Fehefin y cadwant ei Gwyl Mabsant (E. Llwyd, *Itinerary*.) There is a stone in the parish of Whitford called *Maen y Chwyfan*, with curious knots of lines cut upon it, probably belonging to this *Cwyfan*. . . . In our genealogical tables we find Cwyfen ap Brwyneu Hen.

The Welsh in this extract informs us that *Cwyfan* is the patron saint of Dyserth in Tegengl, and that his festival is held on the next Sunday after the second day of June, and this is on the authority of E. Llwyd, the author of the account of *Maen y Chwyfan* which I have transcribed.

It is singular, if there is any connection between Saint Cwyfan and the Cross, as suggested by Lewis Morris, that Llwyd did not perceive it. He states that he is unable to give the meaning of the word *chwyfan*. This he would not have said had the solution been so near at hand. His silence on this head can, it is true, be accounted for by supposing that his knowledge of the existence of Saint Cwyfan was obtained after he had written the paragraph about *Maen Chwyfan* or *Chwyfan's Stone*. Again, it might be that he, wittingly, with a full knowledge of the matter, repudiated the connection between the Cross and the saint. There is, however, still another solution, which I confess is hardly a probable one, viz., that the similarity of names failed to suggest to him that association which it presented to Morris.

The name *Chwyfan* certainly is highly suggestive of a connection between the stone and St. Cwyfan. Dyserth, which is dedicated to Saint Cwyfan, is only a few miles off, and in the churchyard of Dyserth is an ancient Cross, smaller and altogether more insignificant than *Maen y Chwyfan*, but with ornamentation similar in many respects to that on this Cross. (Compare Dyserth Cross with *Maen y Chwyfan*: see page 47.) There is also a church (Llangwyfan) in Denbighshire, dedicated to this saint, and it is not far distant from *Maen y Chwyfan*.

It remains to be stated that Saint Cwyfan flourished in the seventh century.

I now come to what Pennant says of this Cross. He was a native

of the parish in which the stone stands, and was born 1726. His account appears in *The History of Whiteford Parish*, published in 1796, so that what he writes comes one hundred years after Gibson's *Camden*. He says :—

The curious cross called *Maen Achwynfan*, or the stone of lamentation, stands in a small field opposite to the gate which opens from the turnpike road into *Garreg*. It takes its name, in all probability, from the penances which were often finished before such sacred pillars; attended with weeping, and the usual marks of contrition: for an example, near *Stafford* stood one called the *weeping cross*, a name analogous to ours. This is of an elegant form and sculpture; is twelve feet high, two feet four inches broad at the bottom, and ten inches thick. The base is let into another stone. The top is round and includes, in raised work, the form of a *Greek* cross. Beneath, about the middle, is another, in the form of *St. Andrew's*: and under that, a naked figure, with a spear in his hand. Close to that, on the side of the column, is represented some animal. The rest is covered with very beautiful fret-work, like what may be seen on other pillars of ancient date in several parts of *Great Britain*. I do not presume (after the annotator on *Camden* has given up the point) to attempt a guess at the age; only must observe, that it must have been previous to the reign of gross superstition among the *Welsh*, otherwise the sculptor would have employed his chizel in striking out legendary stories, instead of the elegant knots and interlaced work that cover the stone.

Those, who suppose it to have been erected in memory of the dead slain in battle on the spot, draw their argument from the number of adjacent tumuli, containing human bones and skulls often marked with mortal wounds; but these earthly sepulchres are of more ancient times than the elegant sculpture of this pillar will admit. This likewise (from the crosses) is evidently a Christian Monument. The former were only in use in pagan days.

There is likewise near to it, an ancient chapel, now a farmhouse, called *Gelli*, or the *Hazel grove*, the name of an adjacent tract. This might have relation to the cross; as well as a place for performance of divine service to the Abbot of *Basingwerk*, who had a house at no great distance. This tract (mis-spelt by the *English*, *Geteley*), with the wood (at that time on it) was granted by *Edward I.*, to the abbot and convent, on the tenth of *November*, at *Westminster*, before the death of our last prince. He also gave him power to grub up the wood; which by the nakedness of the place appears to have been done most effectually.—*History of Whiteford*, pp. 113-14.

This is what Pennant says about the Cross. We are indebted to him for the additional information he has supplied, but certainly he has no authority for calling the Cross *Maen Achwynfan*, the Stone of

Lamentation. The old name he has altered to suit a fancied etymology.

Llwyd tells us that in 1388 A.D. the stone was called *Maen y Chufan*; he himself calls it *Maen y Chwyvan*, but acknowledges that the older form scarcely differs from *Chwyvan*. The local pronunciation is certainly opposed altogether to the fanciful name adopted or, which is more likely, originated by Pennant. The Welsh in the district call the stone *Maen Chwyfan*. The *y* between *Maen* and *Chwyfan*, as given by Llwyd, facilitates pronunciation, but it may be obtrusive, and I certainly could not distinctly catch the sound of the *y*, and purposely, when speaking to several of the inhabitants, I got them to give me repeatedly the name of the stone, to obtain from them the proper designation. In no instance was it called by the name given to it by Pennant, but without exception, the natives always called the stone by the name which it bore in Llwyd's times; therefore I have discarded Pennant's name in opposition to a goodly number of his followers, and have reverted to the older form, believing it to be the correct one—*Maen y Chwyfan*, or as locally pronounced, *Maen Chwyfan*.

It has been discussed, without arriving at a conclusion, whether or not this Cross was connected with a church, or other religious edifice. Professor Westwood says it is "far removed from any village or any remains, either of a religious or civil nature" (*Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1865, p. 365). The remark is correct, if it refers to the present, but inexact if it refers to the past, for only a hundred yards or so from the stone is a farm house called the *Gelli*, which, according to Pennant's testimony, corroborated by local tradition, was once an ancient chapel; and this chapel is only a few miles from Basingwerk Abbey. I heard also, on the spot, that there was near it a churchyard, *Hen Fynwent*, possibly so called from the discovery of bones, and probably corresponding in site with the *Gorsedheu* mentioned by Llwyd. If proximity to a religious building proves its connection therewith, then I think in the chapel said to have been at *Gelli* we have the necessary condition. But on the other hand, would so small a chapel have so elaborate an adjunct as this Cross? Or, if connected, would such a chapel have been allowed to become a ruin? There are many ancient chapels in Wales in complete ruins with no cross of any kind near them.

There is a cross in the park behind Penmon Church, Anglesey, with ornamentation much like that on *Maen y Chwyfan*, and this cross

stands alone, but it is by some considered as having been connected with Penmon Priory, which is a short distance off, and which is said to have been founded in the sixth century.

The age of *Maen y Chwyfan* has been a subject of consideration. Llwyd avoided offering an opinion on this question, and so did Pennant. Professor Westwood is diffident in making suggestions on the subject, but as this gentleman has made the old stone monuments of Wales his special study, everything he says about them is valuable. I therefore quote the author of *Lapidarium Walliæ* throughout this work as an authority worthy of every consideration. The Professor writes:—

The Maen Achwynfan, must, however, certainly be considered to be of a much more recent date than the events indicated by the names of these localities; although I can scarcely think it more recent than the tenth or eleventh century.—*Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1865, p. 366.

This gives to the *Maen* a respectable antiquity.

The prefix *Maen*, stone, instead of *Croes*, cross, points to the British origin of the monument, and the crosses engraved on it indicate that it was a Christian structure. We have in Wales many names of stones compounded with the word *Maen*, as *Maen hir*, *Maen llw*, &c., and we have ancient crosses of Latin origin combined with the word cross, as *Croes Tecla*, which stood somewhere by Llandegla, and *Croes Ati*, near Flint, both of which have disappeared, though extant in name. I know not when *Croes Tecla*, or *Tecla's Cross*, was erected, but *Croes Ati* or *Ati's Cross* was extant when *Domesday* was written, and Pennant remembered having seen the pedestal, and so here we have at least one cross in Wales, as early as the days of the first Norman king, called by a distinctive name of which *crux* is a root. The crosses as memorial stones succeeded the *Meini hirion*, and the *Meini gwyr*, and every other kind of *Maen*; therefore it will not be presumptuous to say that the *Maen y Chwyfan* is certainly older than *Croes Ati*. That, however, was of such importance that it gave the name to the Norman Hundred of *Atiscross* eight hundred years ago (*Taylor's History of Flint*, p. 1). *Croes Ati* might have been in existence long before William I.'s time; but a more respectable age belongs to those pillar stones that retain the Celtic appellation *Maen*, than to those stone crosses which are distinguished by the use of the adopted word *Croes*.

The great antiquity of *Maen y Chwyfan* is further seen from the

kind of ornamentation that decorates all its surfaces. These consist of interlaced work of various designs, and also of animals. The ribbon or interlaced pattern is considered to be very ancient, and it has been supposed to have been suggested by plaited twigs. My friend, Mr. Beedham, supplies me with an extract from a work, printed for presentation only, at Manchester, in 1858, by an archæologist, Mr. Gilbert J. Trench, entitled "The Origin and Meaning of the Early Interlaced Ornamentations found on the Ancient Sculptured Stones of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man." Mr. Trench's idea is that the first crosses erected by Christian missionaries in our islands were constructed of plaited osiers, and that the earliest existing stone crosses are reproductions of still earlier crosses of twigs. He had met, he says, with only one record of any actual cross of twigs or basket work, which is the following, taken from *Patricius His Purgatory*, quoted in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology* (vol. v., p. 71). In 1630, Lord Dillon, accompanied by a Government surveyor, visited a small island in Lough Derg, and they gave a detailed description of the island, which was published by the then Bishop of the Diocese. In this report it is stated that:—

At the east end of the Church there is a heap of stones, on which there is a cross made of interwoven twigs; this is known by the name of St. Patrick's Altar, on which there do lie three pieces of a bell, which they say St. Patrick used to carry in his hand.

Mr. Trench's theory is ingenious, and the information about St. Patrick's Altar, with osier cross, curious and interesting. Mention has been made of St. Patrick's overthrowing pillar stones in the plains of Magh Sleacht, Co. Cavan (see p. 121), and also of his having had other pillar stones inscribed with the sacred symbol. He might, therefore, from aversion to the use of stone, have had crosses made of interwoven twigs. But the pattern mentioned by Mr. Trench is found in Russia. I am indebted to Mr. Beedham for tracings of crosses which appeared in Part VIII. of the Russian *Archæological Bulletin*, and they are strangely like in design to the cross at Penmon, and to *Maen y Chwyfan*.

The Russian crosses are further like these ancient crosses in Wales, in having rude delineations of animals on them. They have indeed so many of the characteristics of the Welsh crosses mentioned above, that both seem to have had a common origin. The Greek cross, and the most ancient Welsh crosses, are almost identical in

form and execution; and this could hardly be accidental; it must be accounted for in some other way.

Reverting to the age of *Maen y Chwyfan*, I see nothing against supposing that it is eminently a Celtic memorial, dating from a remote period, probably previously to the eighth century. If there is any connection between it and Saint Cwyfan, as the name suggests, then this stone is commemorative of the Saint, who, it is said, lived in the seventh century. The ornamentation on the stone resembles in several particulars Bishop Acca's Cross, which has been alluded to in connection with Llanynys Cross, and which was erected about the year 740. Both crosses certainly are most ancient, and there is, at least, a probability, if not a certainty, that *Maen Chwyfan* or *Maen Chyfan* is commemorative of a person, and I am inclined to think with Lewis Morris that probably that person was Saint Cwyfan.

I will now proceed to describe this interesting relic.

Maen y Chwyfan is a monolith with circular head and tapering shaft. The total height is 11ft. 3in.; breadth, at the base, 2ft. 5in.; underneath the head, 1ft. 8in.; the stone is 11in. thick. The pedestal is irregular in shape, but approaching in form to an oblong with rounded corners. It measures 4ft. 11in. by 4ft. 4in.

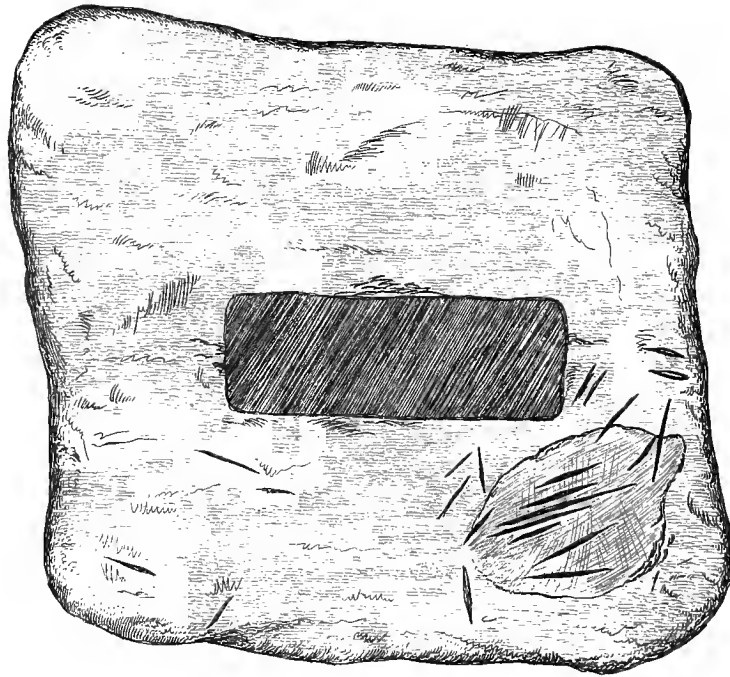
Along the east surface of the pedestal are many incisions, for the most part in a cavity, as shown in diagram, of lengths varying from a couple of inches to 1ft. 2in.; the depth of these grooves varies from three-quarters of an inch to a mere scratch. There can be but little doubt that these incisions were made by sharpening arrows on the stone, but more is said about these marks in the account of Ysceifiog Churchyard Cross.

The stem measures 8ft. 11in., and the diameter of the head is 2ft. 4in.

The east side is divided into four compartments, which measure respectively, beginning at the base, 18, 27, 21½, and 41 inches. The upper compartment has a rather rudely-executed interlaced osier-work ornamentation. Nearly the whole design is still clearly visible, but a part of the south edge has been chipped off. The next compartment consists of a well-worked St. Andrew's Cross, with lines geometrically drawn, filling in the interstices. In the centre of the next compartment is a rudely executed figure of a nude man. The legs are apart, and the arms raised. The right hand holds apparently a spear, which, although not clearly traceable, is in a certain



NORTH SIDE.

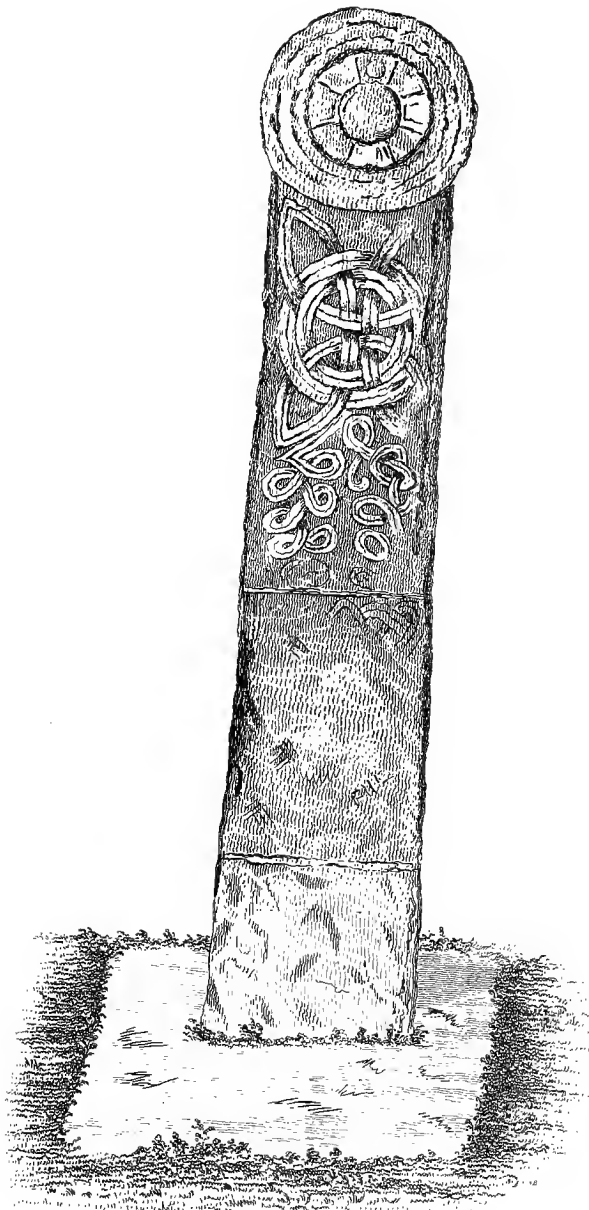


MAEN Y CHWYFAN.
PEDESTAL SHOWING ARROW MARKINGS.

Scale. $\frac{1}{2}$ of an Inch to the Foot



SOUTH SIDE.



WEST SIDE.



EAST SIDE.

MAEN Y CHWYFAN.

light seen to have a rounded head. The left hand also appears to grasp a club, which seems to proceed behind the man's back, and in the engraving is shewn as emerging underneath the right arm, and terminating on the ground near the butt end of the spear. From the left side hangs what might have been intended for a sword. Around the naked figure are well-executed circular whorls, and between these and the figure is work that resembles the coils of a snake. The lowest compartment is bare, but it has, along its angles, arrow-markings. The whole extent of the south edge has been injured; cattle have, as high as they could reach, rounded its corners by making a rubbing-stone of the Cross.

The west face is divided into three compartments, the lower one being plain; the upper compartment has in it two concentric circles interlaced with segments of four circles touching each other at the centre of the concentric circles, and meeting and forming angles outside the circles. Underneath this work are a couple of scrawls. The next compartment was filled with interlaced work. A characteristic of the designs on this side is, that the osiers are represented as double. The whole face of this side is weather-beaten and covered with greyish lichen, and in parts, the ornamentation is very indistinct.

The sides of the stone are ornamented. The south side is much defaced. Near the bottom is a long-bodied quadruped, with long-coiled tail, and the tongue is long, and twisted. Above this animal are lines resembling the coils of a snake, but they are much worn, and indistinct. Then there is a rude figure, apparently that of a woman, with her arms on her breast, surrounded by coils. Above this figure comes double osier interlaced work, which is succeeded by a series of six rings, hanging the one from the other.

The north edge is ornamented to within twenty inches of the bottom. Although the designs are somewhat indistinct, the patterns are fairly traceable. At the top is a pretty design, described by Professor Westwood as "a double series of T's set in opposition to each other." There are six of these T's in opposition. Below this pattern are two rings linked to each other, and immediately below these rings is a design, like that at the top of the west face of the stone, but consisting of a single instead of a double osier. Then there is a twisted design, and beneath it, a quadruped, with a long body, but with a longer coiled-up tail, and head looking backwards. Underneath the belly of this animal is a small figure, perhaps re-

presenting a child, reminding one, by its position, of the nursing mother of the founders of Rome. A very slight tracing of a St. Andrew's Cross next decorates the side of the stone, and then there is a space entirely bare.

The edge of the *Maen* decreases gradually in width, so that from eleven inches at the base it becomes only seven inches wide underneath the circular head.

In the centre of the circular head of the *Maen*, on the east side, is a slightly projecting boss, with incisions forming a cross; from the base line of the boss radiate the arms of a Maltese Cross; the three lower limbs are ornamented with the triquetra pattern, and the upper has on it a scrawl. The four inches between the extremity of the arms of the Maltese Cross and the edge of the head are occupied by two concentric circles; the one next the arms resembles a rope, the outer one is plain.

The west head is much worn, and the design is indistinct. It has a central boss, from which radiate the arms of a Maltese Cross, and between the cross and the rim of the head there seem to have been three concentric circles.

The rim of the head of this relic is ornamented with interlaced osier work.

I paid many visits to the *Maen*; more than once a promising day turned out wet; but patiently I stayed in its vicinity, and under various atmospheric conditions studied the stone, and the result is the accompanying drawings. I had, too, the great advantage of having with me the elaborate account and accurate drawings of the stone by Professor Westwood, which I compared with the designs on the stone, and which I found to be of the greatest assistance to me in deciphering the patterns. In a few details I have presumed to differ from this gentleman, but perhaps someone 37 years hence (the time that has intervened since, in 1848, Professor Westwood took his drawings of the stone) will make a like remark respecting the labours of the writer.

I think I cannot do better, in bringing to a conclusion this account of the most remarkable stone monument in North Wales, than reiterate the concluding remarks of Professor Westwood in his description of the stone, "that a low wall should be erected round this monument, so as to protect it from possible damage caused by cattle or the plough."



NEWMARKET.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



THIS is one of the few nearly perfect Churchyard Crosses that are still to be found in Wales. With the exception that it is weatherbeaten, and has lost its original erect position, and inclines somewhat towards the north, it is now pretty much what it was when first placed in the churchyard.

The Cross stands 42 ft. from the south wall of the Church. The steps on which the basement rests are overgrown with grass, except at one corner, where a portion of one of the stones is exposed, and on this stone are several incisions, made by sharpening implements. These steps, at present, have their opposite sides of different lengths; thus, one side measures 5ft. 10in., whilst the side opposite, measures 5ft. 4in.; the two other sides are longer than these now mentioned, the one nearest the Church being 6ft. 7in. The discrepancy is probably the result of time, not design.

The upper bed of the pedestal is an octagon, reduced by broaches to a square. It measures at the base 2ft. 1in. square; height 1ft. 8in.

The shaft is a tapering monolith, eight-sided, brought at the base to an oblong, by broaches of short outline. The opposite sides of the shaft at the base measure 8½in., and 14½in., whilst the opposite sides of the shaft, where it is octagonal in form, measure 7in., 4½in., 5in., and 4in. The height of the shaft is 6ft. 5in. It is a roughly-dressed stone. Near the base of the shaft, on the east side, is a mark like a St. Andrew's Cross, strongly resembling one of the masons' marks which have been mentioned in connection with Llanefydd Village Cross.

The capital, or head stone, is a massive block of freestone. The upper part is divided into four niches, two of which contain figures in relief. The stone measures 3ft. 6in. in length, and 1ft. 6in. in width.



SOUTH SIDE.



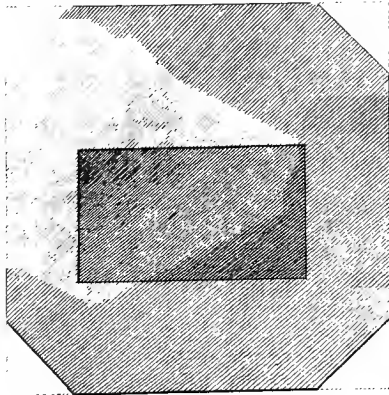
EAST SIDE.



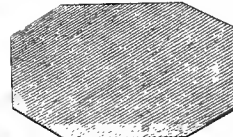
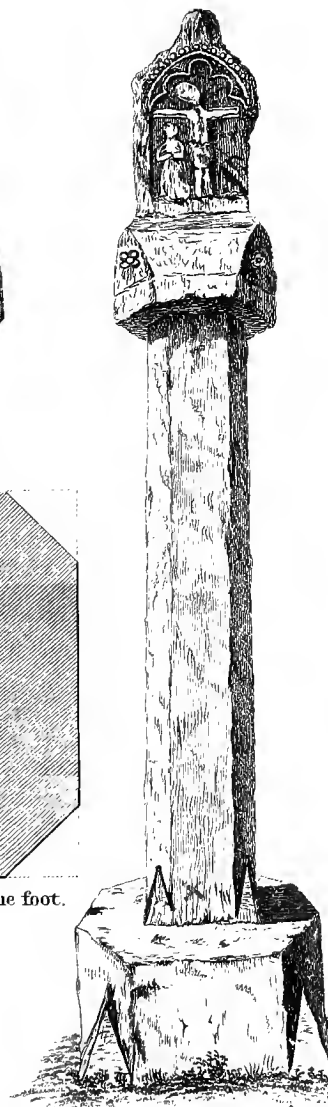
NORTH SIDE.



WEST SIDE.



Pedestal of Cross. Scale 1inch to the foot.



SECTION OF SHAFT.
Scale 1inch to the foot.

NEWMARKET CHURCHYARD CROSS.



RHUDDLAN.

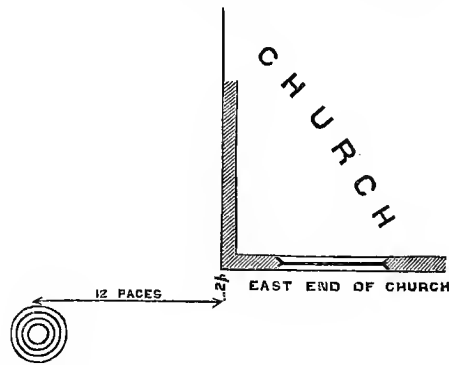
CHURCHYARD CROSS



LL that remains of this Cross are the stone steps and a part of the shaft, which lies at the foot of the steps, and which, after having been converted into a sun-dial, and doing service as such for many years, was lately removed. In the place of the old sun-dial shaft has been erected a beautiful cross "To the glory of God and in loving memory of William Shipley Conwy and Charlotte Rowley, 1873," so that a modern cross of elegant workmanship stands where the old Churchyard Cross once was. The steps present a well worn appearance. They differ from the steps of other crosses in the Vale of Clwyd, in being circular instead of rectangular.

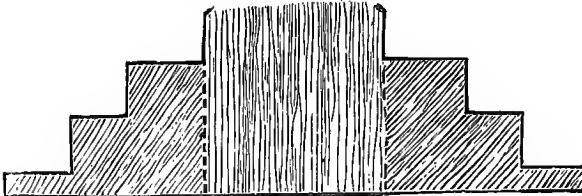
The crosses in churchyards are usually, though not invariably, on the south side of the church, but Rhuddlan Cross is not even opposite the south wall, but stands, as shown in the sketch, about two paces further east than the east wall, and twelve paces from it.

The three steps that lead up to the Cross are unequal in breadth. The lowest or first step lies at present almost level with the ground, and is from 12 to 14 inches broad. The next step is 12 inches high, and 15 inches broad; and the last step is 14 inches high and 21 inches

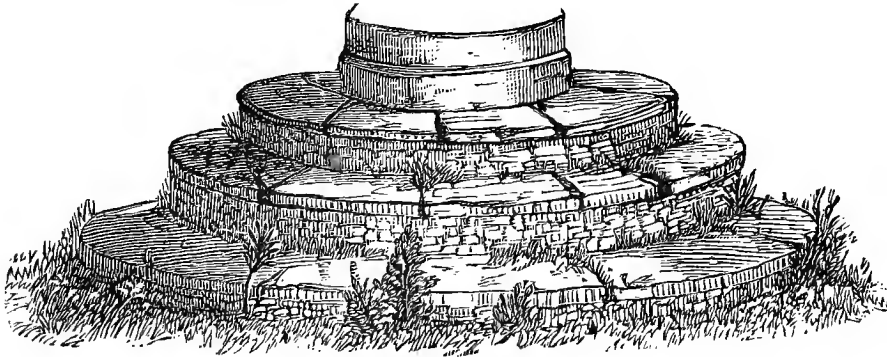


Site of Churchyard Cross.

from the shaft, which is circular, and 48 inches in diameter. The total diameter of these steps is 12ft. 2in., and their height, a little more than 2ft. 6in. The massiveness of the steps implies a superincumbent cross of more than ordinary size.



Section of steps of Churchyard Cross, $\frac{1}{4}$ in. to the foot.



Steps of Churchyard Cross.

RHUDDLAN CROSSES.

From tradition, and remains that have reached our days, it would seem that at one time there were several Crosses in the parish of Rhuddlan. In former days, the place was very different to what it is now. The ruined castle, priory, and hospitium, indicate a greatness that has departed. At present, Rhuddlan is merely a straggling village, but it contains a few dilapidated buildings with freestone window mullions, and other marks of grandeur, which prove that at one time the place was opulent. There was a multiplicity of religious edifices in the parish; such as the abbey, the hospital, the church, and, perhaps, a house of female religious, for Pennant, speaking of Rhuddlan, says:—"Near this place were certain lands, called *Nunneland*, and *St. Marieland*; but whether they had any reference to any house of female religious, I cannot say." Pennant refers,

when making this remark, to the Sebright MSS. Where there were so many sacred buildings a number of crosses would be erected. At present there are the remains of two crosses in the parish, but the living remember the steps of another that stood by the lane that leads to the Church. The Rev. D. R. Thomas alludes to a figure of our Lord that was in existence in the sixteenth century. He says :—

About the year 1500 there further appears to have been a noted image of our Lord, either here (Rhuddlan Church) or at the abbey, “Yr Iesu gwyn o Ruddlan,” in honour of which Gruffydd ab Ieuan ab Llywelyn Fychan, the bard and linguist of Llannerch, composed one of his awdlau. *History of the Diocese of St. Asaph*, p. 303.

The image referred to in this quotation was very likely a cross with an engraving of our Lord, possibly in white stone or marble.

When King Edward I. was at Rhuddlan, he received from Einion ab Ivor, David ab Gronwy, and others, the Regalia of Wales, and amongst them the *Croes Naid* (the Cross of Refuge), which was supposed to be a part of the cross on which our Lord suffered. The king granted to Einion and the others for finding the fragment of the true cross, belonging to Llewelyn and David, and sending it to the king, certain privileges, which are stated in the following extract. The document is dated A.D. 1283, June 25, Rhuddlan :—

Rex omnibus ad quos &c. salutem. Cum jam sedatis (benedictus altissimus) quibusdam turbationibus in Wallia habitis, nos summi Regis clementia taliter visitaverit at excelso quod nobis nuper, apud Aber Conewey existentibus Avianus filius Ynor Lewelinus David, Meylerus et Goronow filii sui, Goronow fil David Avyanus, David, Dayhoc et Tegnaret filii sui Walenses partem illam pretiosissimi ligni crucis quæ a Walensibus Crosseneyht vocatur, et quam Lewelinus filius Griffini, nuper princeps Walliæ et antecessores sui principes Walliæ, haberunt, per manum dilecti et fidelis nostri Reginaldi de Grey, Justiciarii de Cestr, reddiderunt; nos ob Ipsius reverentiam Qui pro redemptione generis humani in eodem ligno mortem subiit temporalem, et ob ejusdem sanctæ Crucis honorem, præfatis Aviano, Lewelino, David, Meylero, Goronow, Aviano, David, Dayhoc, et Tegnaret, gratiam facere volentes specialem, concedimus eis pro nobis et hæredibus nostris hanc libertatem; viz., quod ipsi seu hæredes sui imperpetuum, in aliquo exercitu seu expeditione nostra extra Quatuor Cantreda nos sequi minime tenentur, nisi hoc de eorum processerit voluntate; et tunc sumptibus nostris et non suis. In cujus &c.—*Haddon and Stubbs, Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, vol. i., 549.

Edward, as appears from the *Archæologia Cambrensis* (vol i., p. 43), conveyed with great solemnity the regalia and cross to Westminster

Abbey, and there placed them on the high altar, but it is not known what became of them.

RHUDDLAN VILLAGE CROSS.

This Cross no longer exists, nor are there any traces of it left, but old people can point out the place where it stood. In the early part of the present century vestiges of it remained. Mr. Wynne, of Llansilin Vicarage, who is now (1883) in his eighty-second year, recollects having seen, as a child, the steps of the Village Cross. It stood on the left hand side of the road or street called Church Street, which leads to the Church from the main road that proceeds through the village. Its site was very near the junction of these two roads. It appears that it stood in the corner of what in these days is the garden of one of the cottages abutting upon Church Street, but which was formerly unenclosed ground; the place is now called, having taken the name from the Cross, *Ty'nygroes*. Opposite the Cross, on the other side of the street, stood the village stocks. These also have disappeared during the present century.

It was around this Cross that labourers congregated in large numbers, in harvest time, from all the surrounding country, to be hired by the farmers. This custom has not entirely ceased in our days, but at present they assemble around the lock-up, or round house, about 4 o'clock on Monday morning, during harvest, to be hired by the farmers in those parts.

As the hiring at Rhuddlan Cross was on so extensive a scale, and regulated the price of labour over a large stretch of country, and as it is so often spoken of, I will describe the custom of hiring at the Cross. The subject has already been cursorily mentioned in connection with the Denbigh Cross, and it was there stated that the wage agreed upon at the Cross was called *Cyflog y Groes*, or the wage of the cross, and under this name it shall be described; but I will first show how sacred and binding agreements entered into at crosses were considered in Wales.

AGREEMENTS MADE AT CROSSES.

The only kind of contract made in modern days at crosses was a labour contract, but formerly other kinds of contracts were there entered into, and just as in rather modern days the breaking of the cross-labour agreement was greatly reprobated, and extremely seldom,

if ever, occurred, so in ancient times agreements made at crosses were considered doubly binding, and could not be denied excepting in the most solemn manner. It is within the range of possibility that a bad man would aver untruly that a bargain had been contracted at a cross when such was not the case ; then, it became necessary for the accused party to prove, if he could, a non-contract, which in the absence of witnesses, it would be impossible for him to do ; resort, therefore, was to be had to an oath on a relic. This proceeding was carried out as follows :—

Val hyn ydyleir gyrv kroes ay gwadv kymryt krayr [yn y law] a thygv yr krayr hyny deirgwaith arnaw torry y groes a gwadet y llall yr krayr a gwedy hyny roet y llw ar y drydyd o'r gwyr nessaf ev gwerth wythnos or Sul nessaf yn yr eglwys ybo y vara efferen ay dwfyr swyn.—*Haddon and Stubbs, Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, vol. ii., p. 254.

This has been translated in the same book as follows :—

In this manner is a cross to be sued, and to be denied : a relic is to be taken by the party in his hand, and to swear on that relic thrice, to the breaking of the cross ; and let the other deny upon the relic ; and after that, let him give his oath, with the oath of two men nearest to himself in worth, a week from the next Sunday, in the church wherein shall be his Sacramental bread and his holy water.—*Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, vol. ii., p. 255.

The Welsh extract is from a fifteenth century MS. The translation is by Aneurin Owen. The suing of a cross refers to the contract said to have been made at the cross, and the breaking of the cross, to the breaking of the contract made at the cross. The expression *torry y groes*, or breaking the cross, is an expression which might be heard in the mouths of aged people when speaking of the non-fulfilment of bargains made at the cross during harvest time. The party who does not adhere to the bargain is said to break the cross, i.e., break the bargain made at the cross. The expression has outlived the cross itself, which once stood on the spot where contracts were entered into.

The Churchyard Cross at Welshpool was often mentioned in mortgages as the place where moneys advanced on mortgage security were to be re-paid. In a valuable paper on the History of Welshpool by M. C. J. in the *Montgomeryshire Collections*, reference is made to this custom as follows :—

There formerly stood in the churchyard (at Welshpool) an ancient stone Cross, all traces of which have disappeared. Formerly, it was the custom,

in mortgage deeds, to make the money payable "at or upon the stone Cross, within the Church yeard of the parish Church at Pool, between the hours of seaven and eleaven of the clock in the afternoon." A mortgage deed, dated in 1600, has the appointment for re-payment in these terms, and the cross must have been extant at that period. Possibly, during the time of the civil war the cross was destroyed.—*Montgomeryshire Collections*, vol. xv., p. 274.

It is not unlikely that what is here mentioned as a custom in Montgomeryshire was also observed in other parts of Wales, for customs have generally in Wales a wider range than a single county.

CYFLOG Y GROES.—THE WAGE OF THE CROSS.

During harvest time it was a custom in Wales for labourers to assemble about their village crosses early in the morning, with sickles and scythes, to be engaged by those farmers who required their services.

Rhuddlan, as I have said, was a famed labour-market, and owing to certain privileges attending contracts made there, it was greatly frequented by men from all parts of Flintshire and Denbighshire. The time of hiring was on Sundays. Advantage was taken of the large concourse of people met together to hold then a fair, and thus on every Sunday, as long as the harvest lasted, there was buying and selling, drinking and rioting, at Rhuddlan. This had continued from time immemorial, and lasted down to the beginning of the present century.

What made Rhuddlan a favourite place of resort for farmers and labourers was the fact that those who were hired there were hired for a week, from Monday morning to Saturday night. Rhuddlan Cross was the only one in all the district where such an engagement was made. In other places labourers were hired by the day, and not by the week. Such was the case at Ruthin, Denbigh, Mochdre, and other crosses. The advantage of the Rhuddlan custom was so great to all parties concerned, that it is not to be wondered at that the place was crowded every Sunday during harvest, and the wage there agreed upon became the standard wage for the country round. Farmers would often agree, if not able to go to the Cross, to give their men the wage of Rhuddlan Cross, and then the men, instead of going there to be re-engaged, resumed their work for the next week.

The wage of the Cross was published each Sunday in Rhuddlan,

so there could be no room for dispute by persons not present at the hiring. In Ruthin, which had only a day engagement, a man daily published the wage agreed upon, and so every one knew what the day's wage was to be.

According to the Rhuddlan custom men might be worked from earliest morn to latest night, whilst other crosses only gave twelve hours' labour. A day's toil began in districts not within the Rhuddlan limits at six o'clock, and ended at six, but a liberal interpretation of the engagement was in these cases made both by men and masters.

A bargain once struck was binding on both parties, and no allowance was made for unpropitious weather ; thus the Rhuddlan custom was that the engagement held good to the following Saturday, but if the weather was unfit for harvest work, the farmer could put the men to any other work he thought proper. The continuance of bad weather was a dead loss to the farmer.

The labourer was paid weekly, if engaged according to the Rhuddlan custom, but daily, if engaged elsewhere.

Such were the chief rules that regulated the labour-market in days gone by.

John Williams, a shoemaker of Penybont, Rhuddlan, told me that no one was allowed to take less money than the sum agreed upon at the Cross ; that if he did so, there would be "a great row." But the farmer was not obliged to hire anyone ; he made his own selection, and picked those men whom he thought worth the cross wage. Men who failed to get employment on Sunday at Rhuddlan had a chance at other places on the Monday, where daily "crosses" were held, and from Rhuddlan the unsuccessful labour-seeker went to Abergele, Denbigh, or to some other labour-market.

Evan Jones, of Perthi, Efenechtyd Parish, an old man, told me that when young he hired himself out as a labourer at Rhuddlan, but not on a Sunday. He got there, he said, early on Monday morning, and he must have started shortly after, if not before, 12 o'clock on Sunday night to have arrived so early. The harvest was not quite ready for the sickle when he arrived ; so Evan Jones worked for that week with Edward Hughes, butcher, Pont-y-gwtter, at the rate of six shillings a week, and his food, which was only one shilling a day. The next week he worked at Plas Llwyd, and got there sixteen shillings a week, and stayed on another week at seventeen shillings. The week after he worked for Davydd Story, according

to the wage of Denbigh Cross, and received five shillings a day for Monday and Tuesday, and four shillings a day for the rest of the week. The week afterwards, Thomas Jones worked at Bryngoleu, about four miles from Denbigh, and this week he earned nine shillings, according to the wage at Denbigh Cross. This occurred forty-six years ago. Thus did the wage vary in days gone by.

A farmer in the parish of Efenechtyd informed me that a certain farmer whom he named had a spite against a neighbouring farmer, and having heard that the object of his aversion kept on his men from day to day, giving them the highest wage of Ruthin Cross without going there to ascertain what it was, determined to do him an injury through advancing the cross wage. He went therefore to Ruthin Square one morning, and engaged a couple of men for five shillings a day, when the wage was in reality much lower than this figure, and thus he obliged the farmer to pay his labourers a much higher sum than he otherwise would have done.

It was not an unusual thing for a man and wife to hire themselves out during harvest time, and I have been told that the woman followed her husband through the heat of the day with unabated vigour. Many a woman prided herself on her strength, and gloried in being able to follow the men in the harvest field. There is a hale old woman, in the parish of Efenechtyd, the wife of David Humphreys, of Tyisa', now between eighty and ninety years old, who, when she was seventy, worked in the harvest at Pool Park, and thought that even then she could keep up with the other binders, but her strength was not equal to her intentions, and the workers near her kindly bound now and again a sheaf for her, and in this way she accomplished her day's labour.

I have been informed by Robert Davies, Ty'ntwll, that in the height of the harvest season it was a common thing, some forty or fifty years ago, for a man and his wife to earn each five shillings a day and their food. It would seem that this was considered the highest wage given. There is in Welsh an old distich, which states that the cross wage is:—

Coron a bwyd,
Cyflog y Groes.
A crown and food,
The wage of the cross.

Robert Davies, above mentioned, told the writer that when he was

a young man (he is now, apparently, above seventy years old) he was a farm servant in Llanbedr parish, and his master sent him to Ruthin to hire men at the cross, as it was called, and he received orders to agree quickly with the men, and give them good wages. Davies got to the hiring place, and found that a well-to-do farmer was endeavouring to cheapen the price of labour, and that the market was at a stand-still, because no one liked to offend this prominent but niggardly person. Davies, having received commands not to cheapen labour, went up to this farmer, and intimated that if he was not quick, he (Davies) would have to lead the cross. The farmer, however, continued bartering with the men, and Davies, without further parley, to the great annoyance of the other man, engaged labourers, giving them good wages, and his example was followed by others present. Thus Davies told me he set the wage that morning. This transaction throws light upon the manner in which men were hired at the Cross.

Thomas Rowlands, of Tyddyn Siambers, told me that his father, who, if he were alive, would be now about ninety years old, often engaged men on Sunday, during harvest time, just before going to church for morning service at Northop. He said that once his father offered wages that were refused, but before he had reached his house after the service, the men came up to him, and agreed to work at the price he had named.

STOPPING THE SUNDAY FAIR.

The Sundays at Rhuddlan, during a part of August and September, yearly, were regular gala days. Buying and selling, harping, fiddling, and dancing, and hiring, were the order of the day. Amid such a concourse of people, it is not to be wondered at that irregularities occurred, and many sober-minded people were scandalized at such bacchanalian proceedings, but no efficient steps were taken to suppress the fair. All this, however, was accomplished by one extraordinary sermon preached by John Elias. The account given by the Rev. E. Morgan, M.A., Vicar of Syston, Leicestershire, in his memoir of Elias, of the sermon and its effect, are so graphically recorded, that I cannot do better than give extracts from this memoir.

Having mentioned that fairs were held on Sundays in harvest time from time immemorial, and that scythes, and hooks, and other

implements, were then disposed of, he proceeds to state that when Elias arrived at Rhuddlan there was the sound of harps and fiddles; the players were in liquor: there was the noise of the fair and of bargain-making, and in the place was a great concourse of people, some of whom had come in to hear Elias preach. Mr. Morgan shall now speak:—

Elias stood on the steps of the New Inn, belonging then to Mrs. Hughes. He manifested amazing boldness and intrepidity; his spirit being moved within him: he appeared also very thoughtful, grave and compassionate. He gave out a stanza of the 24th Psalm to be sung. "I never," says an eye-witness, "heard more serious and impressive singing." He adds, "the sobriety and awe of Elias's voice and manner were very impressive. Such effect was produced on the people, that not a hook nor a scythe was to be seen! Nothing but opposition and persecution were expected; but scarcely anything of the kind was experienced; for they all put their different implements of husbandry out of sight very soon. Elias read a chapter in the most solemn and impressive manner; then engaged in a very earnest prayer. He was most importunate with the Lord in prayer and supplication. . . . His heart was in a very melting frame, from which his words flowed, and the tears ran profusely down his grave and serious countenance. The people by this time were seized with awe and great sobriety. He repeatedly thanked the Lord that he did not suffer the earth to open and swallow them up alive into hell. He most earnestly entreated the Almighty several times to incline the hearts of the respectable and influential men in the neighbourhood, to regard the Sabbath, and to prevent the evil practices that desecrated it so awfully; he prayed and entreated the Lord, with the greatest feeling of compassion, for the farmers, labourers, servants, publicans, and all the men of evil practices. Amazing effects followed his words in prayer."

Elias took for his text, Exodus xxxiv., 21, "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest." His spirit was soon stirred up within him, and the words of the Lord came with amazing force out of his lips, carrying light and conviction home to the consciences and hearts of the wicked. He made some very pertinent and homely observations in a powerful manner, suitable to his audience. "Should we," it was asked, "rest on the Sabbath Day if it were a fine day, the harvest being very wet and bad, and the corn much injured?" "Yes," he answered in a most powerful tone of voice, "yea, you should obey the word of God at *all* times. It is said—'in earing and in harvest thou shalt rest.' The Lord had rather send a legion of angels to manage thy harvest, than that thou shouldst disregard his holy day." He exclaimed repeatedly to the people with all his might the following words, with his arm lifted up, and tears flowing down his face—"Oh, robbers! Oh, robbers! Oh, thieves! Alas! stealing the day of the Lord!

What! robbing my Lord of his day! Oh, robbers, the most abominable! "It might be asked again," he said, "What if one should suffer and be unable to pay his way, having not made all exertions even on the Sabbath, when it is a wet harvest?" He observed in answer to this, "Thousands that keep the Sabbath at all times have been enabled to live far better than thou, and certainly die infinitely better than thou art likely to do." Then he made strong allusions to London and other cities that were set on fire, which he represented as a punishment from the Lord for the disrespect to his Holy Day. He particularly observed the threatening in the Word of God for abusing the Sabbath, and enlarged on what is said in Jeremiah xvii., 27, as a threat to set Jerusalem on fire for disregarding the Lord's Day. He also dwelt on the promises made in the Bible to those that keep the day Holy.—*Elias's Memoirs*, pp. 109—111.

The people seemed panic-struck by this sermon, and a complete stop was put to the practice of holding fairs on Sunday at Rhuddlan. This took place in the summer of 1802. Elias in his autobiography thus alludes to the event.

The Lord supported and strengthened me to preach at Rhuddland, during a fair on a Sunday in the harvest season. There was much opposition and contention at the commencement, but the Lord over-ruled it and blessed the word. The victory was gained, and the evil practice was given up.—*Elias's Memoirs*, p. 112.

When speaking to my old friend, Mr. Wynne, a native of Rhuddlan, now of Llansilin Vicarage, about the wonderful change accomplished by John Elias's sermon, he informed me that open hiring and the fair ceased there and then, but that hiring on Sundays in public houses continued, and that the then curate of the parish did much towards eradicating the practice altogether. Mr. Wynne also told me that a magistrate who lived in those parts, perceiving what a change had been brought about by Elias's sermon, said,—“That man by one sermon has done more than I have been able to do all my lifetime,” alluding, possibly, to his own futile endeavours to put down the excesses of the Rhuddlan Sunday fairs.

CROES-Y-BERLLAN.

There is a field a little to the east of Rhuddlan Vicarage called by the name *Croes-y-Berllan*, or the Cross of the Orchard. At present, there is not a vestige of this Cross; all that remains to show its former existence is the name which has come down to our days.

CRUGYN CROSS.

Mention has been made of three crosses in the Parish of Rhuddlan, viz., the Churchyard Cross, the Village Cross, and the Orchard Cross, but there is another cross in the immediate neighbourhood, still extant, though mutilated. The object of this latter cross is open to doubt. Whether it was a memorial, a station, or a boundary cross, is uncertain.

Crugyn Cross, called locally Criccin, or the Cross on the Mound, *Crugyn* being the Welsh for Mound, stands on the right hand side of the road that leads to St. Asaph, on the Rhuddlan side of the river Clwyd, about a mile distant from the village, and close to a farm called Criccin. The Cross stands on an eminence, discernible from all points, for a considerable distance. In the present denuded state of the country, the stump of the shaft can easily be seen from the train between St. Asaph and Denbigh, but when the country was wooded, it could scarcely be visible from afar, unless, indeed the shaft was very long.

The field in which the Cross stands is called *Maes-y-groes*, or the Field of the Cross. The view of the Vale and Clwydian Hills, from the hillock occupied by the Cross, is one of considerable beauty. In the more distant west rise the rugged summits of the Carnarvonshire heights, and northwards, the expanse of sea completes the back ground of a charming picture. Near at hand are the ivy-covered ruins of Rhuddlan Castle, and a little further away to the north-east is a conical hill crowned by the scanty remains of the castle of Dyserth.

The Cross is about three quarters of a mile from the old abbey, now converted into farm buildings, and about half a mile from the ancient hospitium, at present a gentleman's abode, called, locally, Spittal, a corruption of its former name.

It is difficult to say positively that the Cross stands on an artificial mound. Viewed from one direction the mound seems to be a natural formation, while from another stand-point it presents an artificial appearance. The mound is perhaps simply a sandbank, formed ages ago when the sea flowed into the Vale of Clwyd. There is an undoubted artificial mound near Rhuddlan Castle, and it certainly does not resemble that on which the Cross stands.

In Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*, under the head Rhuddlan, this Cross is mentioned, and it is there described as St. Eurgain's

Cross. What Lewis says has been copied into later books, without comment. But there is reason to doubt, in this case, his accuracy. He states that "in the hamlet of Criccin there is a large tumulus, heaped over the remains of St. Eurgain, or Cain, daughter of Maelgwyn, and niece of St. Asaph, founder of the see of that name. On the tumulus is a shaft of a cross, the head of which is now in a post on the farm adjoining." Criccin, I may remark, is a farm, and not a hamlet, but this misnomer is of no great consequence.

Upon referring to Professor Westwood's *Lapidarium Walliæ*, I find all the information given by Lewis, but there the head of the Cross is said to be in a pool on the farm adjoining.

A writer in the pages of the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1859 (p. 76) calls the Cross *Croes Eurgain*.

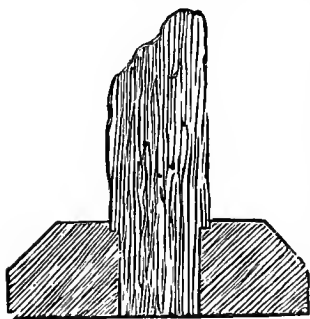
I know not upon what authority Lewis calls the Cross *St. Eurgain's* Cross. It is not known by that name in the neighbourhood, and I shall not be wrong when I say that names of places are long-lived in Wales. The cross near Whitford retains its ancient name; then why not this? Mr. Wynne, of Llansilin Vicarage, who occupied Criccin farm years ago, told me he had not heard the Cross so called; again, St. Eurgain was a Christian, and she is said to have lived in the sixth century, and it seems somewhat of an anachronism to bury her, as the ancient Celts buried their illustrious dead, under a heap of earth and stones. Presuming that Lewis is the originator of the name, the confusion might have been one of place-names. Eurgain, Northop, is not near Rhuddlan, but Lewis might have heard of such a place, for instance, as Bryn Eurgain, and hence the misnomer.

From what has already been said about a missing part of the Cross, it will be seen that this ancient remain has, like most others of a like nature, been mutilated. Lewis says that the head was in a post; Professor Westwood, in a pool; the Rev. D. R. Thomas, that a portion of the Cross was at one time in a pig-sty wall at the adjoining farm house.

A careful inspection of gate posts and pig-sties did not lead to the discovery of the lost parts of the Cross. Mr. Wynne, of Llansilin, told me that the pool was cleared out in his days, and nothing was found in it. It is, however, very probable that the lacking parts of the Cross are utilized in one way or another on Criccin farm.

In the spring of 1881, I took a sketch of the Cross as it then was. On another visit to the place, February 9th, 1882, I observed that a missing portion of the pedestal had been placed alongside the other remains of the Cross. Mr. Welsby, the tenant of Criccin, was walking along *Maes-y-groes* when the Rev. T. Rowlands, Vicar of Rhuddlan, and I were inspecting the Cross, and he informed us that the part which had lately been placed on the mound was found by him when certain drains were being re-opened. The drain in which a part of the Cross was discovered went underneath a gateway, and Mr. Welsby, when the drain was being cleared out, observed that a stone which covered the drain was dressed, and when it was taken up, he found that it resembled the part of the pedestal of the Cross, and therefore he had it removed to the mound, where it now lies, and undoubtedly it is a part of the stone basement of the Cross. This gentleman also stated that he believed another missing portion of the Cross was used for a similar purpose in a drain which passes underneath another gateway on the farm. He stated that he certainly detected a beveled stone as a covering to a drain, and he intends ascertaining whether his surmises are correct, and if so, he will replace the fragments on the mound.

The Cross, as it now is, consists of a part of the shaft and basement. Both have been greatly mutilated.



Crugyn Cross.
Section. Scale, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to the foot.

The shaft is secured to the basement by lead; its height is 28 inches; its form octagonal, brought to an oblong by broaches. The top has been broken off, and one



Crugyn Cross.

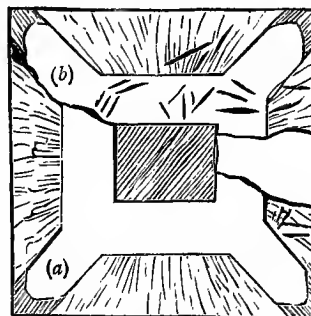
of the sides chipped away, and large flakes have from another side either been knocked away, or fallen off in course of time through the action of the elements.

The pedestal is about 3ft. 4in. square. The socket into which the shaft enters measures 12in. by 9in. (See plan). The surface for 7in. round the shaft is a square with splays projecting from the angles. The basement between the splays is deeply beveled, and so also are the extremities of the splays. The height of the basement is 1ft.

Along the surface of the pedestal are numbers of scorings, as shewn on the plan. They vary in length from 1in. to 6in.

The part marked (a) remains in its original position; the part marked (b) was the missing part found and replaced by Mr. Welsby.

The Cross, apparently, is late Norman.



Crugyn Cross.
Socket. Scale, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to the foot.

AGRICULTURAL LABOUR WAS ON ST. MARK'S DAY SUSPENDED BECAUSE
SUPPOSED TO BE IN VAIN.

Allusion has been made in the course of this work to the many holidays observed by the people in former days, and it has been said workmen claimed these days, in part, at least, for their rustic enjoyment and merriment. St. Mark's Day, April 25th, was within the memory of the older inhabitants observed as a general holiday in Rhuddlan Parish, as well as in other parts of the Vale of Clwyd and elsewhere in North Wales. It was an ancient popular belief that some ecclesiastical authority had laid all agricultural labour on that day under an interdict, and hence the cessation from labour on that day. It was thought that to plough or harrow the ground would simply be to turn the land barren for that year; and it was further believed that everything planted or sown on St. Mark's Day would wither and die, or be turned into rank weeds and thistles. With these notions prevailing, it is not strange that people refrained from work, and after attendance at church gave the day up to sports and merry-making.

There was, however, about eighty years ago, a well-to-do widow lady, as I am informed by the Rev. John Williams (*Glanmor*), whose faith in the common belief, that seeds sown on this day would

not be productive of good, was not strong, and this lady rented a farm, near the now fashionable town of Rhyl, which in those days was waste land, and she determined to get her people, whatever others did, to work on St. Mark's Day. The outdoor affairs of the farm, it may be stated, were attended to by her son, who had no objection to a multiplicity of holidays, and it is not unlikely that it was because her son was more addicted to sports than to labour, that his mother determined that a certain quillet should be sown on St. Mark's Day; but the son, on the other hand, was as determined that it should not be sown! He was ordered to sow oats in the plot of ground on the saint's day, but he persisted that it would be just as much labour in vain, for nothing, said he, would grow, if sown on that day. He argued with his mother to no purpose, the good old lady ridiculed what she called the superstition of the people, and he was commanded to sow oats forthwith in that plot, even on the saint's day. This he proceeded to do, and with the servants went forth to do his mother's bidding; but instead of sowing the seed in the field, he had a deep hole dug in the corner of the quillet, and there the oats were thrown, and, of course, they never sprang up. It need hardly be said that, through the loss of a year's crop, the old lady ever afterwards carefully observed *Dy' Gwyl Farc*, St. Mark's Day, and her son continued enjoying his holiday, and the people's faith in the ancient belief lasted for some time longer.





RÛG CHAPEL, CORWEN.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



ABOUT twenty yards from the west end of Rûg Chapel stands a Churchyard Cross. The Rev. D. R. Thomas, in his *History of St. Asaph*, speaking of the repairs executed in 1855 on the chapel, says that the screen was inserted, "and the Churchyard Cross brought down from its position on the gable, and placed in its present position." This remark must apply to the head of the Churchyard Cross, which, when the Church was restored in 1855, was removed from the apex of the gable, and placed upon the shaft of the ancient Cross that already stood in the churchyard. Upon referring to the sketch it will be seen that the small cross that caps the shaft does not belong to it, but evidently it was at one time a gable end cross, and it is of this portion of the Cross that Mr. Thomas speaks in the quotation above given.

The chapel itself is said to have been erected in 1637, but parts of the woodwork in the sacred edifice are much more ancient than the seventeenth century. The materials which are older than this date must therefore have been brought there from some dismantled church.

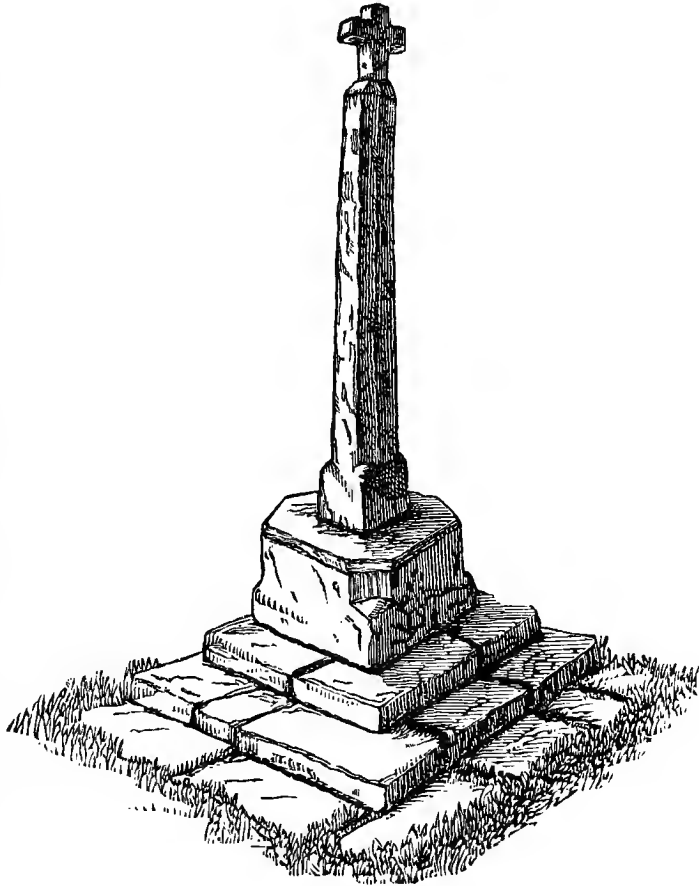
The founder of Rûg Chapel was Colonel William Salesbury, governor of Denbigh Castle, and he could easily have quarried materials for the erection of his chapel at Rûg from Denbigh Abbey. There was, however, in those days no lack of ruined church buildings which he might have despoiled. There is a tradition that the materials for the chapel were brought from an old church in the parish of Derwen; if there is any truth in the tradition, the difficulty created by the presence of old materials in a modern building is solved, but in the absence of documentary evidence it is impossible to say where the old work in Rûg Chapel came from.

The Cross in the churchyard is much more ancient than 1637; probably it belongs to the early part of the fourteenth century. It would be well if Mrs. Blackwell would give up the capstone of the

Abbey Cross, Denbigh, which is in her possession; and, as it belongs to the same period as this shaft, it would well take the place of the small cross now upon it. Possibly the Hon. C. H. Wynn, who takes great interest in Church matters, would be glad to procure this capstone for the Rûg Cross, and it may even be that originally the one was made for the other. I am sure the lady just named would gladly relinquish for so good a purpose the relic in her possession,

and I should be glad on some future visit to Rûg Chapel to see the Churchyard Cross perfected by the addition of its coeval capstone.

The Cross is approached by three steps consisting of large stones. The lowest step, which is level with the ground, is 1ft. 5in. broad; the next step is 7in. high and 1ft. 4in. broad; the highest step is 7in. high and 1ft. 2in. broad. The lowest step, owing to the displace-



ment of some of its stones, is of unequal length and breadth ; it is, however, within a few inches of ten feet square ; the next is 8ft. square ; the highest forms a platform 5ft. square. The pedestal rests in a socket in the centre of the highest step.

The pedestal is a massive block of freestone, 2ft. 8in. square at the base, and 1ft. 7in. high. The upper bed is octagonal and chamfered, and is brought to a square by convex broaches.

The shaft is a tapering octagon, 5ft. 5in. in height, squared at the base by convex broaches, and mortised with lead into the pedestal. The structure is in a fair state of preservation.





RUTHIN.



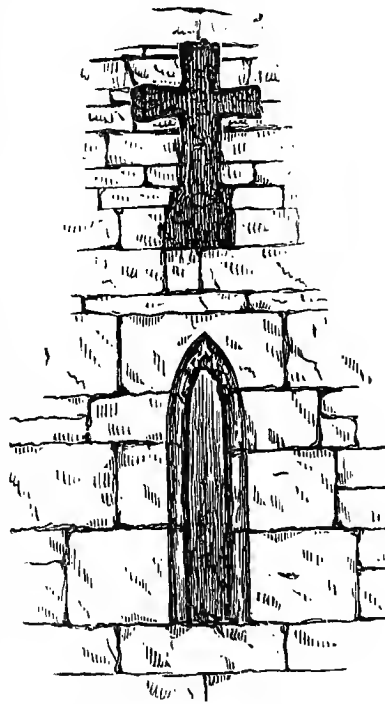
HERE are traditions of the existence in times gone by of a market cross that stood in Ruthin Square, but not a vestige remains to mark its site. The Rev. John Pughe Evans, formerly Rector of the parish of Efenechtyd, told the writer that he found a tradition in Efenechtyd parish that a beam in the church was once a part of the Cross at Ruthin. That there was a Cross at Ruthin there can be no doubt, for in the language of the people the term *Croes Rhuthyn*, Ruthin Cross, still exists. But this seems to be all that can be said with certainty about it.

CROSS IN GABLE END OF TOWN MILL.

Close to the bridge that spans the river Clwyd is an ancient mill, called the Town Mill, which in consequence of certain architectural features has long been an object of interest and speculation. It has been affirmed by some writers that at one time it was a church or chapel, whilst others say that it has always been a mill. The Rev. R. Newcome supports the first view, whilst the latter is maintained by the Rev. E. L. Barnwell.

Mr. Newcome, afterwards Arch-deacon Newcome, thus speaks of the Mill:—

The topography of the town must not be quitted without noticing the



Cross in gable end of Town Mill.

Mill, which is very ancient, and in one respect curious. In the middle of its eastern gable appears a red stone cross, standing on the point of the old gable, which leads us to conjecture that this was formerly a religious edifice, perhaps the garrison chapel before that within the castle court was erected; unless indeed, this emblem was introduced to give a sanctity, and secure the necessary appendage of a Mill from a besieging enemy. Leland speaks of White Friars having, in remote times, been established here, and their chapel might have been converted into a mill when John Grey built the collegiate and parochial church. Nor must we omit to notice the mansion of an ancient family, now extinct, of Moyle or Mule, in the precincts of the Mill, and adjoining Porth-y-Dwr. The patriarch of this family may have been one of De Grey's Anglo-Norman settlers, and derived his name, not from the British word, moel, bald, but, de Mola, as being once the miller of the garrison and Town.—*Newcome's Castle and Town of Ruthin*, pp. 25, 26.

Thus wrote the Venerable Archdeacon Newcome, but much that he says he acknowledges to be conjecture. From a reference to the sketch of the Cross it will be seen that it does not stand "at the point of the old gable," like gable end crosses on churches, but that it is built into the wall, and the position it now occupies was that which it filled in Mr. Newcome's time; for by inquiries on the spot I find that no changes have been made in the east wall in the memory of the living.

But it is from the presence of the Cross that the Venerable Archdeacon infers, either that the building was formerly a church, or that the sacred emblem was placed there to secure the mill from the ravages of a besieging enemy. I will first of all remark that the presence of a cross built *into* a wall does not necessarily imply that that building was once a church, unless, indeed, it can be proved that it was customary to build crosses into the gable ends of all religious edifices. There are, it is true, a few churches in North Wales with crucifixes built into their gable ends, but there are no churches, that I am aware of, with crosses in their gable ends identical with the one under consideration, nor, indeed, do I know of a single church in North Wales with a simple cross in the gable end. As to the second conjecture, that the red cross might have been intended to secure safety for the mill from an enemy, I can only say that men who could burn down churches, and desecrate cathedrals, and rob religious houses, would not be deterred from destroying or robbing a mill merely because it had on its gable end a cross.

But, again, what must be said to the supposition that this mill was

“ the garrison chapel before that within the castle court was erected.” This conjecture, also, I think, falls to the ground, for the Norman castles in Wales had within their walls a chapel, which formed always a part of the original plan, and there is not a single castle, if fairly preserved, that does not show the existence of a chapel.

The Rev. E. L. Barnwell, in an article on this ancient mill which appeared in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*, says :—

The sole origin of this invention (that the mill was a church) seems to have been the cross, but it is difficult to imagine how any one, who has ever seen the building, could have converted it into a church or chapel.—
Archæologia Cambrensis for 1856, p. 284.

Mr. Barnwell comes to the conclusion that the mill “ has always been an appurtenance of the castle.”

The members of the Cambrian Archæological Association visited Ruthin in 1854, and in the Report given of their peregrinations it is stated that —

The members began their perambulations of the town with the Mill, which stands near the bridge over the Clwyd. This is an oblong building, standing north and south, and containing on its north front two doorways with pointed arches, plain chamfered, together with one or two square windows, now blocked. At the east end the original gable has been built upon, and the cross which originally surmounted it has been worked into the wall. Beneath this is a window of a single light, cinquefoiled. The building is of the first half of the fourteenth century, and has evidently always served its present purpose. The designation of a chapel, which is commonly applied to it, is the result of conjecture and not of a tradition.

It does not seem to me, as I have already stated, that the Cross ever surmounted the gable end of the east wall ; evidently the wall there has not been tampered with. That the building now is what it always was, can, after a careful inspection of the premises, be hardly doubted. The placing of a cross in the fabric was an act emanating from a feeling of piety, and is indicative of devotion on the part of the owner, and nothing more.

The Cross is of red sand-stone, which is plentiful in the district, and of this stone the first castle was built, and hence the name, *Castell Coch*, or Red Castle. The arms and head of the Cross are apparently about a foot long, and they become rather narrower as they approach the stem. The total length is about 4ft. Underneath the Cross is a blocked-up cinquefoil lancet window.

The Cross and building belong to the fourteenth century.

The building has been raised a few feet in height in modern times, but the old work was left intact.

On a beam in an adjoining building is the date 1586.

I will now mention a few customs which are not confined to the parish of Ruthin, for I have heard of the same in other places.

BAPTIZING PERSONS, AND WASHING THE CHURCH WITH WATER
FROM ST. PETER'S WELL.

It is generally believed that previously to the introduction of Christianity certain wells were by our Celtic forefathers highly esteemed and greatly venerated, and it is thought that in consequence of this feeling many churches were erected in close proximity to these wells. There is a tradition, common to many places where there is a holy well, that formerly it was customary to obtain from it water for the rite of baptism. This was the case at Ruthin. St. Peter's well, which was about a quarter of a mile from the town, was once in high repute, and many old inhabitants have told me that the water for baptisms was always procured from this well, and even that the water for washing the church was always obtained from St. Peter's well. All this, however, has come to an end, the well has been drained, and a stranger would find a difficulty in discovering this once famous spot.

BAPTIZING SICKLY CHILDREN TO MAKE THEM THRIVE.

It was once strongly believed that there was some peculiar efficacy in the waters of baptism to give to weak children strength of body, and to make them thrive. This belief has not altogether ceased to exist. A few years ago I baptized a child in Nerquis Church, near Mold, and both the mother and the child appeared to be very weak and sickly, so much so as to call my attention to their condition. I happened to make a remark to the mother about the state of the child's health, and expressed a hope that it would soon improve. The mother in response said "I think it will now get on, sir, after it has been baptized, and I think that I, too, shall now be better." Further inquiries revealed the prevalence of this faith, and in many parts of Wales I have heard it said that sickly children gain strength after baptism. It would also seem that the mother, after her child's

baptism, or, it may be, after having been herself churched, if weak, expected to regain her strength.

CONSULTING THE FUTURE ON HEN NOS GALANGAUAF, OR, OLD
ALL-HALLOW-EVE.

It was formerly customary in most parts of Wales for persons anxious to ascertain whether they or their friends were to live another year to go to, not into, the church at midnight, on Old All-Hallow-Eve, and there it was thought they would hear announced from the altar by the *Angel-ystor*, or recording angel, the names of all the parishioners who were to die during the next year. In some places it was a voice within the church that read out the list of the dead, and those who had sufficient courage listened at the door or sat in the porch for the dreaded announcement. In Llangernyw parish the names were uttered by the *Angel-ystor* from the altar. I am indebted to the Rev. John Williams (*Glanmor*) for the following story. There was in that village a notable tailor called Shon Rhobert, who passed for a great wit, and this man affected disbelief of many things, and certainly of the announcements made in the church on *Nos glan gaua'*, and, wantonly, he said he would go there to listen to the names uttered. He went and stood outside the large east window, and there he heard his own name—Shon ap Rhobert—uttered. “Hold! hold!” said the tailor, “I am not quite ready.” But, ready or not ready, it made no difference, for that year he died.

Mr. Breeze, lately master of the Union Workhouse at Caersws, told me that he had heard of a singular instance of a death announced by a voice from Aberhafesp Church on *Nos glan gaua'*. There, as in other places, the idea prevailed that a voice from within the church uttered the names of the persons who were to die during the coming year. It was customary for the inquisitive to seat themselves in the church porch, and there to await the voice of death. A couple of men, one of whom, I believe, Mr. Breeze said was a relative, went to the porch of Aberhafesp Church, and sat there anxiously awaiting the dreaded voice. They sat there a long time without hearing any sound in the church; but, as the midnight hour approached, one of them heard distinctly the name of his companion uttered by some one or something within the church. He was greatly terrified when he heard his friend's name announced, and was surprised that his companion made

no remark, but he found, upon addressing him, that he had fallen asleep, and that, therefore, fortunately he had not heard the voice. Awaking his friend, he said—"Let us go away, it is no use waiting here any longer," and so both went home, and the secret was divulged to no one. According to the story, however, the announcement became true. The death of the man occurred in this way. A person who had died of an infectious fever in the neighbouring parish of Penstrowed was to be buried in Aberhafesp churchyard, and, instead of going around through Caersws and over the bridge which there crosses the river, it was proposed that the funeral procession should cross the Severn opposite Aberhafesp Church, and thus save a journey of six or more miles. The person who had been named as the first who was to die in Aberhafesp parish volunteered to carry the coffin over the river, and it was placed before him on his horse. To save the coffin from falling he grasped it with his arms, and caught the fever, and died, and thus he was the first parishioner to die, as had been stated by the voice on All-Hallow-Eve night.

It was in this way that the hardy endeavoured to raise the veil of the future, but it may be suggested that that veil was raised by a companion cognizant of the fact that his friend was about to visit the church, and that for fun's sake he preceded him there, and at the midnight hour pronounced that friend's name, and that then fear working on an overwrought imagination produced the prognosticated event.

I have heard that formerly the young in a certain parish in Anglesey were in the habit of ascertaining whether they were to live or die during the year by going into the church each with a lighted candle in hand, and it was believed that he or she whose candle went out first was to die within the year. This was a fearful test, and it required great nerve to undergo such a trial; but numbers give security, and consequently it was generally resorted to. Well, indeed, was it, when no candle went out, for then the young folk returned home rejoicing, for they were all to live another year; but should a candle accidentally be put out, they returned home sorrowful and filled with grief, for one of their friends was to die in the year. It is said that once on a time a young woman, missing her step at the entrance into the church—there was a step from the porch into the church—fell, and her candle went out, and she died. This sad event, I heard, put a stop to the custom.

Within doors on All-Hallow-Eve games were carried on, dipping for apples in water being one of them. But so general was the belief that ghosts visited the earth on this night, that only the bold would venture out of doors after dark. When the apple-dipping was at an end, tale-telling, and nestling in fear about the fire, was the order of the evening. It was believed that the evil spirits' favourite spot, when they visited the earth on this night, was the stile; there they sat until cock-crowing, to the great terror of all those who, from dire necessity, were obliged to go abroad. These travellers, on this night, left the usual pathway as they neared the stile, and went through the hedge, rather than come in contact with the evil spirit. This fear was fostered by such lines as these :—

Nos glan gaua'
Bwgan ar bob camdda.

Thirty or forty years ago these words were in everybody's mouth. They intimate that :—

On All-Hallow-Eve
A bwgan you'll find
On every stile.

Such a rhyme had the desired effect, and for one night in the year distracted mothers found their spirited children spiritless, and all at home.

It is curious to notice that it is said the evil spirit took the form of a sow, and spent the night spinning and carding, and that she was so industrious that it seemed she was anxious to accomplish her task before the cock crew. I have heard the following rhyme repeated in the Vale of Clwyd :—

Hwch ddu gwтта,
Ar ben pob camdda,
Yn nyddu ac yn gardio,
Pob glan gaua'.

These words may be rendered :—

A short-tailed black sow,
On every stile,
Spinning and carding,
Each All-Hallow-Eve.

A practice akin to that mentioned as taking place on All-Hallow-Eve was resorted to in some of the churches in these parts. It was

called *Yn rhamanta*, or romancing. The Rev. John Williams, to whom I am indebted for information on this matter, tells me that formerly young persons endeavoured by divination, or incantation, to ascertain the names of their partners in life. This information was sought for at midnight, and the lover who would be joined in wedlock proceeded to the church porch, and there it was believed that supernatural apparitions and voices were conjured up within the church and churchyard, and that from these the love-sick swain obtained the desired information. Mr. Williams states—"I have heard it related, with solemn seriousness, that long deceased clergymen had been seen, robed in their surplices, perambulating Gwyddelwern churchyard occasionally, at midnight hours, by persons seeking divination."

By these remarks of Mr. Williams, I am reminded of a singular superstition that formerly prevailed in Wales, which was, that clergymen could break spells and do other wonderful things. I will give a few instances of this belief.

SPELL-BREAKING BY CLERGYMEN.

Instances may be adduced from many parts of Wales to show the prevalence of the popular belief that clergymen could break spells.

My friend, the Rev. R. Jones, Rector of Rhydycroesau, told me that when he was curate of Llanyblodwel, some eighteen years ago, a parishioner sent a messenger to his house to ask the "parson" to come and see her, for she was unwell. Mr. Jones went, but when he entered the house he could not think why the woman had sent for him, for there she stood before him, a picture of perfect health; so he said, "I suppose I have missed the house, I understood a sick person wished to see me." The woman gave the following answer:—"You are quite right, sir, I sent for you, I am not well, I am troubled." In the conversation that followed, Mr. Jones ascertained that the woman had sent for him to counteract the evil machinations of a neighbour, who, she said, had witched her. "I am witched," she said, "and a parson can break the spell." Mr. Jones argued in vain with the woman, for she continued to affirm that she was witched and that a parson could break the spell. Finding the woman obdurate, Mr. Jones read a chapter from the Bible, and offered up a prayer,

and wishing her good-day, departed. On a future visit he received a most cordial greeting from this woman, and she informed him that she was quite recovered, that the spell was broken, and that she had not been troubled since his former visit.

A story, somewhat similar to this, was told me by an inhabitant of Manafon, Montgomeryshire, and the tale is still current in that parish. It is there said that a man deserted his wife and children, and that the woman went to the then Rector of the parish, the Rev. Walter Davies, to ask his advice as to what she should do. The Rector, to comfort the woman, said, "Ah, you need not take any steps to recover your husband, for he will come home again." This turned out to be the case, but, said my informant, the truant returned with clothes, hands, and face torn; and he affirmed that he felt constrained to rush home along the most direct way, and that he came through hedges and brambles, and that by them he was torn in the way they saw. There are other tales afloat about Mr. Davies. He was once consulted as to the person who had stolen certain property. His answer was, "Last night someone stole my potatoes, and I don't know who it was, and how should I know who stole your property?"

With one more tale I will bring my remarks on this subject to a close. I was speaking to a couple of clerical friends of superstitions in which the clergy are made to figure, when one of them said that not many years back the clergy were supposed to possess almost magical power, and he illustrated his remark with the following story. A clergyman, not well acquainted with the road over the hill to Dolgelley, inquired of a man, who was engaged in thatching a rick, the way to the town. He was answered rudely, and without a single remark the clergyman proceeded on his way, and reached the town safely. When engaged in going from place to place marketing he perceived a man following him, carrying a ladder, and he noticed that it was the man who had answered him rudely; he accosted the man, and asked him why he followed him from place to place, and the man said he felt he was obliged to do so. The clergyman said, "Go home, man, and do not answer people rudely again when they ask you a simple question." The man gladly departed. It was said that the ladder he carried was the one he stood on when the clergyman asked him the way to Dolgelley, and that he was under a spell, and that was the reason why he followed the clergyman from place to place.

FIT-CURING BY WEARING A RING MADE WITH MONEY OFFERED IN
CHURCH.

Within the last half century there were those who believed that a ring made out of a silver coin taken out of the offertory on Communion Sunday was a cure for fits. Lately a respectable farmer's wife in the parish of Efenechtyd called upon my wife, and stated that she had heard that a person afflicted with fits had been cured by wearing a silver ring made out of sixpence which had been offered on the altar on Communion Sunday in a neighbouring parish, and she was wishful, she said, to have such a ring, as she was a great sufferer from fits. The ring, she stated, was to be given her without any request on her part. But there were, in short, several impossible conditions imposed, which, if they could be carried out in the secret manner she said was necessary ere she could derive any benefit from the ring, would be as extraordinary as the cure itself. I spoke to the Rev. J. D. Edwards, Vicar of Rhosymedre, who is in his eightieth year, but still with mental powers unimpaired, about this ring-cure, and he told me that so late as from twenty to thirty years ago his parishioners were in the habit of asking Mrs. Edwards to procure for them a shilling out of the offertory, which was then once a month, and with this shilling, which must have been presented on the communion table, they made a ring, and this ring was thought to be a perfect cure for fits. Mr. Edwards stated that one condition of the efficacy of the ring was, that the shilling was to be given unsolicited, by the clergyman, to the person who suffered from fits, and the recipient was not to thank the clergyman for the money. These conditions were carried out in this way:—The sufferer went to Mrs. Edwards sometime in the week before sacrament Sunday, and asked her to request Mr. Edwards to give him or her a shilling out of the offering, and on the following Monday the afflicted person would come to the Vicarage, and, without a request, he or she received a shilling from the Vicar, and departed without a word of thanks. Miss Edwards stated that she had seen many people wearing these rings.

CHURCH BELL RINGING WITHOUT A SERVICE.

In many parishes a bell is tolled at eight and nine o'clock in the morning on Sundays when there is no service in church. This was until lately the case in Ruthin Church. The eight o'clock bell ceased

in the days of Archdeacon Newcome: at least, so I am informed by Mr. Thomas Price Humphreys, the parish clerk; but the nine o'clock chime is still customary. It would seem that the bell at these hours announced, in years gone by, a service which has been discontinued, but the bell is still rung, and people, not knowing the reason for the Sunday tolling when not followed by prayers, say it has always been rung on Sundays to let them know the hour of the day. On Shrove Tuesday a bell was rung at eleven o'clock, and this in most places was called "pancake bell." In several places, Ruthin being one of them, this bell is still tolled. A few years ago the writer was at Worthenbury on Shrove Tuesday, and hearing the church bell toll, he enquired whether there were morning prayers in church, but a child said, "No, it is pancake bell," and a further question elicited the information that the bell was rung to tell the mothers that it was time to begin to make the pancakes. Here, again, we have an instance of the tolling of a bell to call the people to church for an object which is implied in the name *Shrove* Tuesday.

MAY DANCERS.

A relic of the ancient May-games still exists in Ruthin and other places in the Vale of Clwyd. On the 1st of May, about 9 o'clock in the morning, a company of men, about a dozen in number, more or less disguised, with ribbons of various colours tied to their arms and other parts of their bodies, dance through the town to a monotonous tune played by one of the troupe on a tin whistle. One of the party is dressed as a woman, and carries a besom in his hand, and it is this person that taps at the doors, or, if open, runs into the houses to solicit money for the Mayers. The whole party proceed from street to street, tripping along merrily, and throwing their arms about, and, with the ribbons streaming in all directions, they present a grotesque appearance. When they have visited every place in Ruthin where contributions are likely to be given, they proceed to other places and towns in the Vale. The proceedings are not confined to one day. The writer has seen the fantastically dressed May-dancers in Rhyl later than the first day of May.



TREMEIRCHION.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.



IN the *Archæologia Cambrensis* for 1863 (p. 336) is the following notice of what was at one time the headstone of the Churchyard Cross of Tremeirchion :—
“The head of the cross in the churchyard of this place—a work of the fifteenth century, with four canopies covering figures—used to lumber the ground, according to the opinions of the parties interested in its property and preservation. The parochial authorities, instead of re-erecting it with a new shaft, have not long since sold this old cross-head. The fortunate purchaser is a Roman Catholic gentleman, who has removed it to a place of safety.”

The Cross at present is at St. Beuno's College, to which place it was removed when purchased. As I was anxious to ascertain from the sellers of the relic the full particulars of the transaction, I spoke to the venerable Vicar of the parish, the Rev. W. Hicks Owen, who was appointed to the living in 1829, about the matter. I asked this gentleman whether it was true, as I had been informed, that the cross-head had been disposed of for £5. His answer was—“I did not sell it, I did not sell it, it was the churchwardens, and with the money they bought lamps for the Church.” With these words the Vicar turned from me, and walked rapidly away. There can be no doubt that the parish authorities thought more of a few pounds than they did of this ancient relic.

Pennant, speaking of this Cross, says :—

In this church stood a cross, celebrated for its miracles, which are celebrated in an *owdwl* or poem, about the year 1500, by *Griffydd ap Ifan ap Llen. Vychan*. The Cross is now demolished, but the carved capital is still to be seen in a building adjoining the churchyard.—*Pennant*, vol. II., p. 24, edition 1784.

I find allusions to the Cross in Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* ;—

The Church anciently contained a Cross (long since demolished) once in great fame for the miracles reputed to have been performed at it, which are described in a poem published about the year 1500, by Gruffydd ab Ivan ab Llewelyn Vychan.—*Tremeirchion, in Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of Wales.*

If Lewis visited the place, he must have ascertained that the head of the Cross had not been demolished, for it was in the churchyard when Professor Westwood was there. I find it stated in the *Lapidarium Walliæ* that it "is still preserved in the churchyard."

Llwyd, in his *Topographical Notices* (p. 213) says:—"In a building adjoining the churchyard may be seen the carved capital of an old cross, noted in the days of Popery for its miracles, and celebrated in a Welsh poem by a bard of the name of Gruffydd ap Ieuan ap Llewelyn Vychan, who flourished about 1500."

The quotations given from Pennant, the *Topographical Dictionary*, and the *Notices*, seem to have had a common source. They all allude to the Welsh poem of Gruffydd, who lived in the reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. This poem, through the kindness of Mr. Howel W. Lloyd, who transcribed it for me, is printed here. The earliest allusion to the Cross of Tremeirchion, that I am aware of, is given in this ode by the bard Gruffydd. The poem abounds in alliteration, but, as it is printed at the end of this account, the reader can judge for himself of the merits of the piece.

It would seem from what has been stated above that the cross-head was looked upon as useless lumber by the Church authorities at Tremeirchion. At one time it was in a building, and then it was in the churchyard, lying, as I was told on the spot, underneath the yew tree. At the College it is better looked after and more highly valued than it was by the persons who formerly had charge of it. It stands close to the College buildings, on the south side, at the top of the steps leading to the garden behind the College. It is placed in an erect position, but rests on the ground.

A careful inspection of Tremeirchion Churchyard revealed no shaft or pedestal, nor even could a mound be discerned on which the Cross at one time must have stood.

The cross-head measures 3ft. 3in. in height, 2ft. 1in. in width, and 1oin. in depth. It is ornamented with four richly decorated niches with canopies terminating in finials, and the niches contain figures sculptured in relief. The two larger niches are cinquefoiled, the

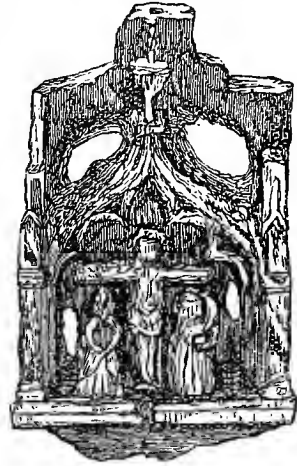
arches, which spring from shafts, were crocketed, and have ornamented finials. On either side is a pinnacle. The smaller niches have trefoiled arches with side pinnacles and ornamented finials.

One of the larger niches contains a complete Rood, with the Virgin and St. John on either side. The Virgin's hands meet on her breast. St. John holds a book in his left hand, and therefrom a scroll proceeds upwards above the head. In the figure of our Lord a crown of thorns encircles the brow, and the hair hangs on the shoulders.

The opposite niche is filled with a seated figure of the Virgin and Child. The right hand of the Virgin is raised in the act of benediction.

The two remaining niches are filled with figures of ecclesiastics, canonically robed, each holding a crozier in the left hand, with head turned inwards, and right hand raised in the act of blessing.

The stone is perforated with four holes, two of which are in the larger niches, and two penetrate the stone above the canopy. On the top of the stone is a



small oblong incision, and on either side are two smaller holes, as if intended for the insertion of some addition to the Cross.

As might be expected, the cross-head is greatly worn; time and careless keeping have made ravages along its surface; but it does not seem to have been wantonly mutilated.

Although the writer in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* supposes that the Cross belongs to the fifteenth century, it certainly is more ancient, and cannot be later than the fourteenth, though it may be much earlier.

Reference has been made to the miracles performed at the Cross, and to the great repute in which it was held. The Cross may therefore have been, and probably was, a "Rood of Grace." The high veneration in which the Cross was held distinguishes it from ordinary Churchyard Crosses, and it is therefore additionally well worthy of careful preservation.

The following Ode, with notes by the Rev. John Williams (*Glanmor*), is the poem mentioned by *Pennant* and succeeding writers. Mr. Williams's corrections are in italics.

Y GROG O RHIW DYMEIRCHION.

(On the Crucifix formerly in the Churchyard at Tremeirchion, and now at St. Beuno's College.)

Owdl-Weddi ar Dduw'r Grog, lle i (*y*) dangosir yn eglur ac yspysol fuchedd Crist Iesu a'i ddiodefaint yn ol yr Euangel.

Gruffydd ap Ieuan ap Llywelyn Fychan, gwrbonheddig, a'i cânt, a'r Ysbryd Glân yn i (*ei*) fynwes. Yn amser Henri 7fed a Henri 8fed yr oedd efe yn y byd.

Y Grog waredog o Rhiw—Dymeirchion

Wedi'r mawr-chwys¹ gwaedfriw

Credir gwaith Creawdwr gwiw ;

Gair Duw hawdd i gred heddiw.

Heddiw dros Ebriw drws² Ebron—a Groeg,

Y Grog o Dymeirchion !

Henwau'r saint heno yw'r sôn*

Henw Iesu henwasson'.

Iesu i'n pryndu, Mab Rhad—anfoned

O fynwes yn (*ein*) Duw-Dad ;

Ag (*ac*) o annerch y gennad³

Y gwr gynt o'r Gair a ga'd.

* Invocation of Saints at this Cross in those times.

Ef a gad, tyfiad diofer—o Fair
Oedd Forwyn bob amser.*
Arwydd pwy oedd o wraidd pêr
Ar y pwysi a'r piser ?⁴

Irder o'r piser a'r pwysi—ga'r ddau
Ag frddail y lili :
Arwydd hardd, fal yr oedd hi—
Ar faich hygar feichiogi.

Yn feichiawg, rowiawg ir (*yr*) aeth—i breseb
Yr Assen, a'i Mabmaeth :
Y Forwyn gynt o fwrn gaeth
A'n dug â'i enedigaeth.

(Yma i (*y*) dechreu'r Owdl, a'i mesur yw Gwawdodyn-hir ; Gosteg i gelwir hi hyd hyn). Here commences the Ode proper :—

Crist a aned, er croesi dynion,
Carwr o adail côr yr eidion
Coel anwyl-saint cwlen⁵ a welson'
Codiad seren Ceidwad oes eron⁶
Coelio, rhoi iddo'i rhoddion—Tri Blaenor,
Cwlen, a rhagor—cael anrhegion.

Aml fu ebwg am lu o feibion—
A lûs, o gûs hael Iesu gysson,
A'i gof ydoedd am i (*ei*) gyfoedion
A ddug i (*ei*) raddau, y gweryddon ;⁷
Ar ddrud barch, symud braich Simeon,—ir (*yr*) aeth
A'r dig wrolaeth—Herod greulon.

Ag ar ddieithr, rhag yr Iuddewon
Yna'r âi Joses (ni rusasson')
A Mair i darrio y 'mro dirion,
I fagu oeswr a fegasson'
Y daethant—moliant i'm Iôn !—uchelfraint
I'r tir Aiff' *anaint*,⁸ a'r Tair Ffynon.⁹

Cael Duw yno, coel y dewinion,
Crist yn agwedd Cristynogion,
Cwrs Mair anwyl, cares morwynion,
Cadw Duw'n i (*ei*) faeth, Ceidwad nef, weithion
Cynyddodd, gwiwfodd gofion—tragywydd
Cain fu i gynnydd, er cenfigennion.

* The doctrine of Perpetual Virginity.

Bu wr fwyfwy, fal y brif afon,
 Bu'n torri clefyd, bu'n troi cleifion,
 Bu iach y mach¹⁰ byw o'i achosion
 Bu wyrthfawr iddynt, borth efryddion,
 Bu'n gloywi delli deillion—i weled,
 Bu fwy i wared, byw o feirwon.

Och i *Sesar* (Cæsar) frochus,¹¹ a'i weision,
 Am yr eiddigedd mawr ddygasson'
 Wrthod oherwydd i (*ei*) wrthiau tirion
 A rhad,—taledig i rai tlodion,
 Am hynny felly cyfeillion—diglod¹²
 Am i ddal issod meddyliasson'.

Arian i Suddas a'r ansoddion
 Er i Dduw Iesu a roddasson'
 Ag o anghariad i gynghorion,
 O amgylch IESU ymgylchasson'
 Ar ddewr ddrud symud wnaeth Simon—Petrus
 Malchus chwyrn, fradus, â chern friwdon.

Ymroi o IESU, heb ymryson,
 I deulu issel a'i daliasson'
 Ef, oherwydd Efa a'i hwyrion.¹³
 Ar gur dygn, er i garedigion,
 At ustus beius y buon'—i'w gyrchu
 I gâs a'i gwybu, ag esgobion.¹⁴

Eres draw ennyd i'r estronion
 I fwrw'n y gofid, heb farn gyfion,
 A ffalsed ustus â'i ffeils dystion,
 I farnu IESU a furniasson'
 I ddillad, Vab Rhad, pe rhon',—a'i (*a'u*) meddu
 O Dduw ag IESU a ddugasson'.

I droi a'i noethi draw a wnaethon'
 Etto'r IESU a watworasson',
 Ar gernodiau rhagor newidion,
 Arno pryssur yno poerasson',
 I grippio gwyro geirwon—ewinedd
 A rhai a'i (*a'u*) byssedd a'i rhwbbiasson'.

I waed yn yssig a dynnasson'
 O Saith gwelïau'r essayth gloywon
 Yn draeth y gwelw-gnawd drud wrth golon
 A scyrsiai¹⁵ issod i scwrsiasson';
 Yspyddad guriad goron—blethedig
 I boeni'r yssig ben a roeson'.

Ar groes eilwaith, ragorus hoelion
 O amerth alaf* â mwrthwylion
 A'i ddwyllaw irwaed o ddolurion
 A'i draed oll leisiad (*loesiad*) rydyllasson'
 Y vinegr a'r bustl anfwynion—bethau
 I bêr wefusau a brofasson.'

Dall Iuddew ffals a dyllodd a ffon,
 Drwy asen deg a dorres yn don,
 Dros Efa i friw pan dorres i (*ei*) fron
 Drylliodd, dirgrynodd daear gron—Wener
 Duodd ar hanner-dydd yr hinon.

Ni meidr addysg neb na'i 'maddockion
 Nis gwyr y Beibl, yn oes gwŷr Babilon,
 Nes ymddal coel nas meddwl calon
 Na'i frad IĒSU, na'i friwiau dwysion,
 Na degwm y swm, na sôn—am eilfydd
 A roed o gerydd ar waed gwirion.

I (*ei*) waed briwglær wedi 'beryglon
 Allwy¹⁶ a'n rhoddes oll yn rhyddion
 O uffern dywyll ffyrnau duon,
 Arglwydd oesol a wir gladdasson.'
 Y trydydd, gloywddydd rhyglyddon—gobaith
 Y bu fyw eilwaith, heb ofalon.

A rega'i ar air erg† yr awr'on
 Er i (*ei*) wir gariad a'i ragorion,
 Ag er i wyddiad o geryddon,
 Er i ddwys gabl, er i ddisgyblion,
 Er lliwiau cleisiau clowson'—yn prynu,
 Er i wych allu a'i archollion ?

Er Mair a thorfau y Merthyrfon,
 Er lleng eilwaith, yr holl angylion,
 Er byw oes teulu'r Abostolion,
 Er llwyr weddi yr holl weryddon,
 Er i lun i hun a henwon'—y Grôg,
 Er Duw, a marchog Rhiw Dymeirchion.

* Amerth alaf, exhaustless dexterity.

† Root of ergyd, a shot; sudden burst of temper here.

Here the Ode may have originally ended. The two remaining verses are—

Adolwc heno lle dël cwynion,
Yn (*ein*) cadw fanwyl¹⁷ a'n cydofynnion,
A'n llestr a gudd yn llestri gweddwon,
I unlle astrus, yn llaw estron,
A'n tynu'n deulu un dôn—ar ddeau,
A'n bwrw ar rannau'n bererinion.

Pererin, meithrin im' oes—byth ydwy'
Beth wedi'r gwr a'n rhoes;
Bid goglud, rhag bod gwagloes,
Pawb ar y Grog, pybyr Groes.

NOTES.

I have endeavoured to render the sense clear where ignorant copyists had evidently been mistaken in deciphering the MS. The poem is at least sufficiently curious to justify its preservation, apart from its devout tone and orthodoxy. To translate it literally, into English or any other tongue, would be impossible. As it is, it must be pronounced a masterpiece of old Bardism; the assonance and concatenation marvellous; every line, except of the first verse, commencing with a vowel, or the same consonant beginning every line of the verse, whereas every line of the *Ode proper* ends in the same rhyme (*on*), except the concluding verse. But some explanation is needful:—

¹ Reference to the "agony and bloody sweat."

² Perhaps "dras" (not drws) i.e., the race of Hebron.

³ The Archangel Gabriel.

⁴ Alluding to Aurora and her pitcher, the Virgin's womb, and Christ as the rose and lily.

⁵ Cowl or hood: allusion to pilgrims.

⁶ This line is not strictly correct in assonance according to modern criticism. *Oes* stands for *einioes*.

⁷ The Infants or Innocents of Bethlehem.

⁸ The Muses. Egypt of the Muses.

⁹ Ezek, Situah, and Rehoboth, Wells of Isaac.

¹⁰ Machniydd, surety, Christ our Surety.

¹¹ Pilate, as personating Cæsar.

¹² Herod and Pontius Pilate.

¹³ Wyrion, formerly used for descendants of any remote degree.

¹⁴ The Chief Priests, bishops of the Jewish Church.

¹⁵ Scourges. Yspyddad, hawthorn.

¹⁶ Allwy, to pour; "gwaed allwy," blood shed or poured out.

¹⁷ "Manwyl" for manwl, strict, minute.

CUSTOMS IN TREMEIRCHION PARISH AND OTHER PARTS
OF WALES.

The custom of ringing a little bell before the corpse at funerals from the house of the deceased to the churchyard was once common in the Parish of Tremeirchion. It has been shown (see pp. 107-111) that this custom prevailed in other parts of Wales. The Tremeirchion bell is mentioned in the *Parish Terrier* of 1774, and it is at present kept in the schoolroom. In the Parish of Gwaenysgor, which is only a few miles distant from Tremeirchion, is also still preserved the hand-bell formerly rung at funerals, but at present it is used for calling the children to school. Such relics as these ought not to be subjected to the risks of destruction which they are liable to when rung and knocked about by children. It would be well to keep them in the church chests as curiosities. The custom of ringing a bell at funerals was most probably common to all parts of Wales. In an inventory made by the outgoing churchwardens of Gyffylliog, a parish about four miles from Ruthin, in 1696, I find mentioned among other movable church articles:—

A little bell.

This, most likely, would be a bell used in funeral processions, but it might have been a Sacring Bell.

YD Y GLOCH, OR BELL CORN.

The parish clerk was formerly remunerated for the performance of his parochial duties partly by a dole of wheat, barley, or oats, which went by the name of *Ysgub y gloch*, bell sheaf, or *Yd y gloch*, bell corn. These words would imply that the corn was given for ringing the bell—the church bell, and, possibly, the funeral hand-bell. In Tremeirchion old *Terrier* it is stated that “the clerk’s wage is what we commonly call the bell sheaf, which he gathers in harvest, &c.” The corn was collected by the parish clerk from all the farmers; but after the passing of the Commutation Act, the custom ceased. In many parishes the clerk’s dole, at the passing of the Act, was, by the parishioners in vestry assembled, acknowledged as a claim, and arrangements were made by which he was to receive an annual sum, equivalent in value to the corn received as *Yd y gloch*. Mr. Morris, Derwen, told the writer that he was in the habit of accompanying his father when collecting the corn.

The vehicle used for this purpose was a sledge, carts being then unused, or even, in consequence of the badness of the roads, unusable. Sometimes a single farmer would give the clerk a sledge load of corn, and every farmer, Mr. Morris said, gave willingly and liberally. At present, the tithes of a certain farm form, in Derwen Parish, the perquisite of the parish clerk.

I find in many old *Terriers* that the bell sheaf is mentioned as a perquisite of the parish clerk. Thus, in the *Terrier* of Cwm parish there is this entry:—

Item—There is also due to the parish clerk a stated rate of corn, viz., wheat or barley yearly from every occupier of lands in the said parish, proportionably to what every inhabitant occupies, &c.

STREWING THE CHURCHES WITH RUSHES.

It was formerly customary to cover the floors of churches with rushes. The object was two-fold; one being warmth, and the other to fill up the inequalities made by interments. It would appear from entries in churchwardens' accounts that at certain seasons of the year, Easter being one of them, the churches were cleared out, and fresh rushes replaced the old ones. The custom continued far into the present century. I will give a few extracts from parish accounts bearing upon this matter. In Gyffylliog churchwardens' accounts under the year 1681 is the following entry:—

It. to the sexton for washing and gathering rishes ... 5 · 6

This was a very large sum of money in those days, but the sexton received the money for twelve months' work. In other parishes the gatherer of rushes was not so lavishly paid. I have extracted the following entries from the book kept by the churchwardens of Gwaenysgor:—

1801	Rushes for two years	...	...	...	7 · 0
1803	Rushes for two years	...	...	...	7 · 0
1804	Rushes ... ..	...	...	...	2 · 0
1808	Rushes to Church	...	...	...	3 · 0
1809	Rushes to Church for two years	...	...	...	6 · 0
1812	Rushes to Church	...	...	...	3 · 0
1830	Rushes for Easter	...	...	...	3 · 0
1834-5	Rushes three times to Church	...	...	...	9 · 0
1837	Rushes ... ..	...	...	...	3 · 0
1839	Rushes to Church	...	...	...	3 · 0

From these entries it would seem that it cost three shillings to renew the rushes in church, and, from the entry in 1830, it appears that this was done at Easter. There is no mention made of rushes after 1839, and possibly the custom then ceased. I may add that I have selected only a few, out of many entries, in which rushes are mentioned, and they are chosen to show how variously the word rushes was formerly spelt by churchwardens.

SHROVE TUESDAY CUSTOMS.

A cruel sport, called *Dyrnu'r Iar*, thrashing the hen, was practised in most places on Shrove Tuesday. The game was variously played in different places. Mr. R. Roberts, Clocaenog, a native of Merionethshire, told me that in the neighbourhood of Bala, in his younger days, a hen was placed in a large crock, and the person who broke the vessel with a stone, thrown from a certain distance, received the hen. In other parts, such as Denbighshire, the Rev. John Williams informs me that the bird was confined in a hole in the ground, covered over with sods, with its head presumedly exposed, for otherwise it would have been suffocated, and the feat was to hit with a flail the head of the poor hen, and she became his property who succeeded in depriving the poor thing of life. In Carnarvonshire, the sport was carried on under a different name, and in a somewhat different manner: the hen there was buried in the ground, as in Denbighshire, with its head exposed, but those who struck at the hen were blind-folded, and thus it had a better chance of escaping with its life, for often, the blind-folded person made a trial far wide of the mark, to the great amusement of the many spectators. This game ceased in the early part of the present century.

Most people turned out to beg, or *Hel Ynyd*, on Shrove Tuesday. They received from the farmers fine flour, milk, lard, &c. Eggs were clapped for—boys went about with two stones as clappers, and when opposite a farm house they clapped away with all their might and received for their pains a gift of eggs. The fuel for baking the pancakes consisted of dry branches, thorns, and briers, and these were specially gathered for the occasion. Turning the first pancake was an important undertaking. Should the pancake-maker fail in dexterity, and instead of tossing the cake over into the pan throw it into the fire, she was greeted with derisive laughter, and in some places it was a custom to rush upon her and carry her out of

the house, and with shouts throw her upon a dung hill. In Carnarvonshire and elsewhere in Wales children still go about begging pancakes on Shrove Tuesday afternoon, and clapping for eggs is kept up by the young in Anglesey and many other places.

The custom of dressing graves with flowers for Palm Sunday continues in some parts of Wales. The Sunday is called in Welsh *Sul y Blodau*, or Flower Sunday; formerly flowering willows, after having been carried into the church, were fixed upon the graves the day before Palm Sunday.

EASTER CAROLS AND OTHER CUSTOMS.

Easter Carols were formerly sung in church, and from house to house, just as Christmas carols are now sung. Proof of this may be found in many parish accounts. Thus, under the year 1808, in Gwaenysgor Churchwardens' Accounts, I find the following entries:—

Cristmas Ale for the Singers	...	...	...	5 · 0
To for Ester Carol	...	...	...	1 · 0

But Easter Carols have not come down to our days. Easter dues, or, as they are called in some old *Terriers*, Easter duties, so many pence from each family, and *Wyan Pasc*, or Easter eggs, were formerly collected for the parochial clergy. The custom of presenting baskets of *Wyan Pasc* to the Vicar of Abergele and other parsons was common, the Rev. John Williams (*Glanmor*) informs me, in his grandfather's days.

A singular custom once prevailed on Easter Sunday in Wales. Our ancestors, rising very early, ascended some eminence to see the sun rise, and they gave three somersaults just as the bringer of light emerged above the horizon. The Rev. John Williams remembers the inhabitants of Llangollen going up to Castell Dinas Bran annually for this purpose.

MAY EVE AND MAY DAY CUSTOMS.

May Eve was, within the memory of the living, a busy night, for during the small hours after midnight young men were actively employed in letting the fair sex know the extent of their affection for them. If a young lady had jilted or discountenanced a suitor, then he had his revenge by fixing *Penglogau*, or skull bones, or dead sheep, to the house door of the lady who had rejected his advances; on the

other hand the accepted happy swain dressed his sweetheart's door with flowers. Very anxiously did the fair await the dawn of morning, and happy were they if on opening the door they were greeted by a lover's nosegay, but very dejected and irate were they if dangling bones or a man of straw met their eye. This custom was common in most parts of North Wales.

Young men engaged in the uncongenial work of hanging skull bones at young ladies' doors were occasionally punished for their ungallant action by qualms of conscience, and their over-wrought imaginations conjured up phantoms which greatly disturbed their minds, and terribly frightened them. It is by such a supposition as the preceding that the following tale, told me by the Rev. John Williams, is to be accounted for. Mr. Williams states that he knew a respectable yeoman who told him that he and a companion were once going down the road from Derwen to Melin-y-Llwyn, having been out on May Eve fixing *Penglogau* at Derwen, when the yeoman observed a man descending the hill before them, carrying on his shoulder a large tree in full foliage, which he threw over the bridge with a great splash into the river Clwyd. His companion did not see the apparition, which immediately vanished, but he heard the splash. But this was not to be wondered at, for it is said that only those born under certain planets can see spirits, whilst noises which they make are audible to ordinary mortals.

Reference has been made to the festivities of May Day, but as the subject is in itself interesting, I will add to what I have already said, a few further particulars about the day. Aged people, born in the last century, often spoke with pleasure of the manner in which May Day was observed in their youth. In Abergele, it was a custom on May Eve for young men to go to Plas-uchaf wood, and bring thence a birch tree, which they planted on the Cross, a place so called in Abergele, where, probably, a cross once stood; this tree they decorated, and on May Day all the town danced around the birch May tree. It would seem that the ancient Welsh associated birch with love, and lovers formerly wore a birch hat, or *Het fedw*.

The Abergele May Dancers carried with them a *Cangen Haf*, or summer branch, dressed with valuable articles, and they were always accompanied by a *Cadi*, a man dressed in women's clothes, representing a busybody, who interfered with household affairs, and one of their number was a clown, grotesquely dressed in a fringed petti-

coat or kilt, who played all manner of antics. The May Dancers' music was not always to be despised. Not many years ago the youth of Flintshire and Denbighshire danced from new to old May Day.

On *Nos Wyl Ifan yn yr Haf*, St. John's the Baptist's Eve, our ancestors dressed their houses, and washed or bathed their feet with *Llysiau Ifan*, St. John's wort.





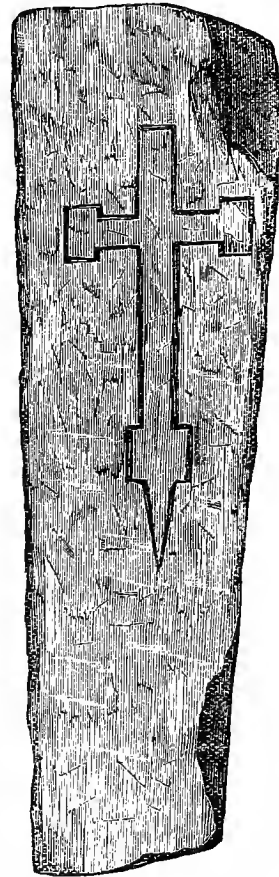
WHITFORD.



THIS Cross was discovered, a few years ago, when a grave was being dug, buried six feet in the ground, in the north part of Whitford churchyard. The spot where it was found was about twenty yards from the church wall. The part of the stone with the Cross on it was uppermost, and lying on it was a silver coin, which, I was informed, belonged to the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

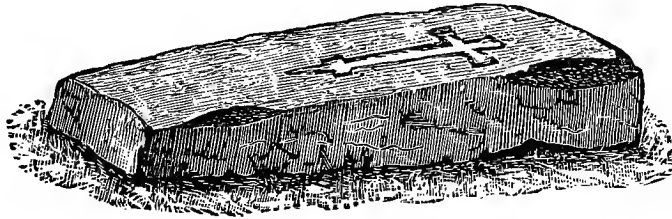
The dimensions of the stone are as follows : length, 6ft. 3in. ; breadth, at the top, 1ft. 5in., at the foot, 1ft. 1in. ; depth, 15in. at the top, 16in. in the middle, and 9in. at the foot. It is a massive stone. From the sketch it will be seen that it tapers throughout its entire length.

The cross is cut into the stone ; the incision, filled up with accumulated dust, is not very distinct. The entire length of the cross is 3ft. ; breadth, from arm to arm, 1ft. 4in. ; the stem is 2½in. broad. There is a length of 2ft. 3in. from the extremity of the cross to the bottom of the stone ; possibly at one time the stone was longer, for it seems to have had a part of the extremity knocked off. There are 11in. between the top of the cross and the top of the stone. Perhaps the placing of the cross in the upper part of the stone shows that formerly the stone occupied an erect, and not a recumbent position.



Cross found buried in Churchyard.

There is no churchyard cross at present in Whitford, and the buried Cross was certainly not one of this description ; it was most likely a sepulchral or memorial Cross, and marked the spot occupied by the dead. The stone is roughly dressed, and resembles the rude monoliths at Llangernyw with crosses thereon. It is difficult to account for its being buried ; it could hardly have been hidden away for preservation, and if it covered a grave on the north side of the church another difficulty arises, namely, the aversion of people to be there buried. Very little can positively be said of this stone, but the probability is that it belongs to that class of monoliths which are commemorative of the dead.



Cross found buried in Churchyard.

ANTIPATHY TO BURIALS ON NORTH SIDE OF CHURCHES.

Pennant wrote the *History of Whiteford Parish*, and in it he says, speaking of the churchyard :—

I step into the churchyard, and sigh over the number of departed which fill the inevitable retreat. In no distant time, the north side, like those of all other *Welsh* churches, was, through some superstition, to be occupied only by persons executed, or by suicides. It is now nearly as much crowded as the other parts.—*History of Whiteford Parish*, p. 102.

Here we see the aversion to burials on the north side of the church affirmed by an accurate and observant recorder of Welsh customs. Pennant states that the feeling was wearing away in his parish, but this was no doubt chiefly because the ground on the other sides of the church was crowded, and possibly claimed by being covered over with grave stones. In other parts of Wales, where the churchyards are not filled with grave stones, the east, south, and west sides only

are devoted to burials. Still the feeling is not what it used to be, for people occasionally, in our days, are buried on the north side of the church. In most parts of Wales the innovation has taken place within the last century.

A farmer of Gwyddelwern told me that, on his father's death, his mother bade him go to the churchyard to select a site for the grave, but, said she, "Mind you don't go to the north side of the church." The farmer did not share his mother's feeling, but selected an eligible spot on the north side, and there his father was buried, and he was the first person buried in that part of the churchyard. The farmer, if alive now, would be about 75 years old.

The Rev. R. H. M. Hughes, Vicar of Llansantffraid-yn-Mechain, who was appointed to the living in 1846, informed me that his predecessor, the Rev. John Jones, was the first person whose body was placed to rest in the north part of the churchyard, but that the example set was at once followed, and that side is now (1880) being rapidly filled. Mr. Hughes has buried nearly all those whose graves are on that side of the church.

Formerly unbaptized infants were buried on the north side, and there is current a tradition that excommunicated persons were also buried there. I have heard old people say that the north side of churchyards was not consecrated. This must be a popular fallacy. In the order of consecration of cemeteries, found in the *Liber Pontificalis* of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter, we are informed that four wooden crosses were placed in the four angles of the churchyard :— "ponantur quatuor cruces lignee in quatuor angulis cemeterii." This would not have been done if only a part of the churchyard was consecrated. After the ceremony, the Bishop made a short speech to the people on the liberty and security of the cemetery now consecrated :—"et tunc faciat episcopus brevem collacionem populo de libertate et securitate cemeterii." . . . The privilege of sanctuary extended to the whole of the churchyard, by right of consecration, and not to a part only.

In Gyffylliog Churchyard, which is in the recess of the mountains, about four miles from Ruthin, is to be seen, on the north side, near the wall of the churchyard, a single altar tomb, and it is reported by the inhabitants that it contains the body of an excommunicated clergyman, the rector of an adjoining parish. I have not verified the statement, but there seems to be some foundation for the report.

From the inscription nothing of the kind can be inferred. The words on the tomb stone are:—

Here Lyeth y^e Body of y^e
Reverend William Lloyd, Clark,
Rector of Llanvwrog, who dy'd
May y^e 30th and Inter'd June
y^e 1st 1743, Aged 46.

On referring to the *History of the Diocese of St. Asaph*, I find that in 1740 there were three Rectors of Llanfwrog, Edward Ffoukes, who died the same year, William Lloyd, and Evan Jones. There can be no doubt that the second Rector is the one buried at Gyffylliog; and that for some reason he was succeeded by Evan Jones in the year of his induction to the living, though he is styled Rector in 1743.

The Rev. T. Rees Williams, who became incumbent of Gyffylliog in 1874, told me that all who are interred, with the exception named above, on the north side of the church, were buried by him.

The lack of graves on the north side is still very observable in many country churchyards in Wales. It was usually given over to the people's sports. Cockpits are occasionally found there, as is the case at Llanfechain, Montgomeryshire, and it certainly was not considered as equally holy with the other parts of God's acre. The people of Cornwall, who are one in race with the Welsh, show the same dislike to the use of the north side. The feeling must therefore be an old one, and probably common to the Celtic race, if to no other people.

The following letter on this subject, from the pen of the late R. S. Hawker, Morwenstow, Cornwall, appears in *Notes and Queries*. Mr. Hawker remarks:—

The doctrine of regions was co-eval with the death of our Lord. The east was the realm of the oracles, the special throne of God. The west was the domain of the people; the Galilee of all nations was there. The south, the land of the mid-day, was sacred to things heavenly and divine. The north was the devoted region of Satan and his hosts, the lair of Demons and their haunt. In some of our ancient churches, over against the font, and in the northern walls, there was a devil's door. It was thrown open at every baptism for the escape of the fiend, and at all other seasons carefully closed. Hence came the old dislike to sepulture on the north.—
Notes and Queries, 1. ser., vol. ii., p. 254.

| There is a blocked up north door opposite the font or west door |
| in most old churches in Wales. In these parts we have Meliden, |x

Rhuddlan, Clocaenog, Llanefydd, Gwaenysgor, Llanfair-Dyffryn-Clwyd, Bettws-Gwerfil-Goch, Gwyddelwern, &c., with closed north doors.

The singular statement of Mr. Hawker, respecting the opening of the north door at baptisms for the escape of the evil one, is strangely corroborated, so far as the opening of the door goes, by what was formerly done in Kerry Church, Montgomeryshire. Mr. Milnes, the master of the Boys' Endowed School, Kerry, informed me that the north door in Kerry Church was called the Devil's Door, and he said that formerly it was the custom to open this door just as the clergyman entered the church, and it was believed that Satan escaped through the north door as the clergyman entered through the south.

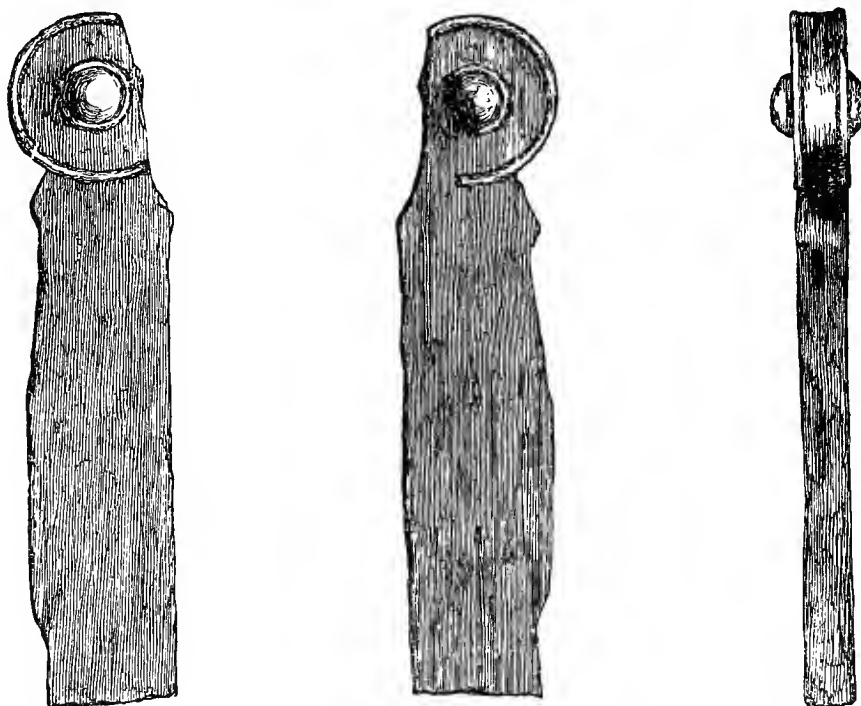
The absence of windows in the north wall of ancient Welsh churches also points to a deep-rooted dislike to that quarter of the compass. Many churches, in various parts of Wales, even after their restoration, retain this feature, and many more have had their north walls penetrated for the insertion of a window within recent years. The only part of the north wall in many old churches in which there is a small window is the chancel; it appears to be the rule to insert there a window. The present incumbent of Clocaenog told me that there was a tradition in his parish that a late rector, instead of inserting a window in the north wall to obtain light, had the stained glass of the fine east window broken. There was formerly only a small north window in the chancel of that church, so the building must have been dark, particularly in winter. This defect has lately been remedied by the insertion of windows in the north wall, at the sacrifice of a peculiar feature of old Welsh churches.

WHITFORD—PILLAR STONE FOUND IN CHURCH WALL.

A monumental pillar, which forms, with its central bosses, a Cross, was discovered imbedded in the east wall of the Church, when it was restored in 1845. Many portions of a previous ecclesiastical edifice were also discovered at the same time, and care was taken by the Rev. Dr. Briscoe, then Vicar of the parish, that these should be preserved, and at present, they are stowed away in the belfry. Among other things found was a curiously ornamented piscina, and portions of sepulchral slabs.

The stone, or Cross as I shall call it, which is here delineated, is 5ft. long. The circular head measures 1ft. 2in. in diameter. The

central bosses are $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. The stem, which has been tamped with, varies in breadth from 10 to 12 inches; its width is $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches. A part of the head has been broken off, and so has a part of one of the bosses. The stem is roughly dressed. The only part at all ornamented is the circular head, which has, at the base of the boss, and along the rim, a raised circular band.



Cross found in Churchyard.

I can say nothing further of this Cross than that it appears to have been a sepulchral monument, marking the grave of a deceased person of note, nor can I say why it was built up in the Church wall, unless it was simply because it was a serviceable stone, close at hand, for the mason's use. Had there been anything on or in the stone itself supposed likely to foster superstition, it can be understood why it was removed from sight; but, as far as can be seen, there is nothing

objectionable in the design, and therefore were it not for its value to the mason, it might have been left in its original position.

Some persons have supposed that relics of this kind were built into church walls for preservation. This might occasionally have been the case, but, judging from the fragmentary state of most stones brought to light by taking down church walls, it certainly was not invariably so. Many instances of perfectly whole slabs and other ornamented stones, found in church walls, could be given. For instance, a fine memorial stone to a lady was discovered in Bangor Cathedral; a well preserved memorial stone, with cross on it, came to light when Llanrhaidr-yn-Mochnant Church was being restored; x) an elaborately ornamented font was found buried in the north doorway of Meliden Church; some perfect sepulchral ornamented slabs were discovered in Nerquis Church. On the other hand, a mutilated figure of a head was found at Llandyrnog; in Efenechtyd, a part of a stone with interlaced work had been built into the Church wall; at Llanrhaidr-Dyffryn-Clwyd, imperfect slabs with ornamentation were discovered. It would, therefore, with the conflicting evidence adduced by the stones themselves, be contrary to facts to affirm that the stones found in the walls were deposited there from feelings of veneration.

A singular instance of iconoclastic proclivities is shown in the following quotation:—

In taking down the old tower (of Mold) in 1768, a curious image was discovered near the foundation, in all probability a relic of the Catholic superstition of the former inhabitants; but the Vicar, Mr. Lewis, from an excess of piety, or from some other unexplained motive, gave orders for its immediate demolition; and the marble saint was accordingly doomed to a second martyrdom.—*Cambro-Briton*, vol. i., p. 142.

It is well that this spirit is no more; otherwise, the remains of past times would soon cease to exist.

THE LICH-GATE, OR CORPSE-GATE.

The Whitford Lich-gate is peculiar in having a room built above it, used at present for parochial purposes. There is only one other lich-gate similar to this in the Diocese of St. Asaph, namely, that at Derwen, where the room above the entrance was formerly utilized as a schoolroom, and afterwards, when the school increased in numbers, the lich-gate was blocked up and formed into a class-room, the upper

storey, as well as the lower, being used as a school, and the lich-seats formed benches for the little ones.

There are no complete lich-gates at present in the Diocese of St. Asaph, but there are a large number, more or less perfect. A lich-gate, when perfect, comprised a lich-path, lich-seats, a lich-cross, and a lich-stone, on which to rest the coffin (*Handbook of English Ecclesiology*, p. 192). Lich-paths are still to be met with, used, it may be, but oftentimes unused, as is the case at Llanasa and other places. Lich-seats, stone seats, one on each side the lich-gate, are quite common in Wales. Lich-stones have disappeared, and so have lich-crosses; but underneath the roof of Caerwys lich-gate are still to be seen the beam and socket where once stood the wooden lich-cross, and on the ground are traceable the foundation stones of the two lich-seats, and of the lich-stones in the centre of the porch. This rest for the coffin was a low wall, not a stone, as its name would imply, about the length of a coffin.

Care seems to have been taken to preserve lich-gates in the last and previous century, but some of their distinctive features were even then destroyed. Probably the stone ball which surmounts the lich-gate at Clocaenog, bearing the following inscription—S.T. R.P. 1691—took the place of a small cross. The beam that stretched from wall to wall, into which a wooden cross was inserted, has in nearly every instance been sawn away. It is still a custom in some parishes to place the coffin and the bier, at funerals, underneath the lich-gate, until taken thence to the church.

YN RHAMANTA, OR OBTAINING BY INCANTATION A KNOWLEDGE OF
FUTURE EVENTS.

Yn Rhamanta, which has been mentioned on page 177, was, as is there stated, a kind of divination resorted to by young persons, by which they obtained a sight of their husbands or wives, or in certain cases heard their names mentioned. This endeavour to dive into the future was once very common in Flintshire and Denbighshire, and other parts of Wales, and many persons of both sexes, of sixty years old and above, have told me the manner of working out the incantation. These were various. I will relate a few. Mr. John Roberts, Plas Einion, Llanfair D.C., whom I have often mentioned in the course of this work, told me that, when a young man he formed one of a party, consisting of his sister, the servant man, and himself,

who endeavoured to divine the future. The process was the following :—A pullet's first egg was procured, it was emptied and then filled with flour, which was mixed up with the egg by the three parties alternately ; then the egg shell was filled with salt, and this again was mixed up as before with the flour and egg ; the dough thus formed was made into three cakes, one for each party. The cakes were then divided into two parts, one of which was eaten, and the other was placed in the stocking worn by the several parties, and then placed under the bed bolster. They went upstairs and into the bed walking backwards, and during the whole of the proceedings absolute silence was to be observed, or the spell would not act. It was believed, if everything were carried out properly, that in their dream they would see their partners offering them a drink of water. In the case of Mr. Roberts the spirits were not auspicious, for he dreamt, not of his future wife, but of a load of coals, which, in his sleep, gave him much trouble.

Jane Jones, Pwllglas, Efenechtyd, told me that her mistress, Elizabeth Hughes, a widow, tenant of Pentre Farm, Efenechtyd, a mother of adult children, obtained a sight of her second husband by divination. The steps she took were the following :—She went with her maid servant to the *pistyll*, or natural water spout, to wash a garment, taking with her a kind of mallet, with which she struck the garment, and, repeating a doggerel stanza, invoked the presence of him who was to be her husband. A man came there and took the mallet out of her hand and began striking the garment. Mrs. Hughes, greatly frightened, left the *pistyll*, and went home. The person whose spirit came at her summons was an acquaintance, and it need hardly be added that he ultimately became Mrs. Hughes's second husband, notwithstanding the opposition of her children.

Kitty Jones, Plas Nant, Gyffylliog, who is still alive, saw her husband by *rhamanta*, and so did her fellow-servant. I am indebted to Mr. Jones, Woodland Farm, to whom Kitty related it, for the story I am about to give. When young women, Kitty and her fellow-servant, in accordance with the practice of the country, determined to obtain a sight of the men whom they were to marry. Their mistress was let into the secret that that night one of the two was going to raise the veil of the future, and the other, the following night. As the clock began striking twelve, Kitty's fellow-servant began striking the floor with a strap, repeating the doggerel lines

already referred to, and almost immediately she saw her master come down the stairs. The girl innocently the next day asked her mistress why she had sent her master down stairs to frighten her. The answer of her mistress was : " Take care of my children." This girl ultimately married her master. The next night it was Kitty's turn, and she saw a dark man, whom she had never seen before ; but, in the course of a week or so, a stranger came into the farmyard, and Kitty at once perceived that it was the person whom she had seen when divining. Upon inquiry, she ascertained that he was a married man, but in time his wife died, and Kitty became Mrs. Jones.

By plucking the leaves of sage in blossom, at twelve o'clock at night, and calling upon their future husbands to appear, young women, it is said, were able to conjure to their presence their intended husbands, who plucked with them the leaves of the sage. The first leaf was plucked as the clock struck one, and as the striking proceeded, leaf after leaf was gathered, and when the striking ceased, the ceremony ended ; but, if the young woman had obtained her desire, then the incantation came to an end before the midnight hour had struck.

But many were the forms of *rhamanta*. Mrs. Rowlands, late of Tyddyn Chambers, a farm in Efenechtyd Parish, but a native of Flintshire, told the writer that her aunt, Ann Jones, successfully resorted to enchantment, or, as Mrs. Rowlands called it, *lamanta*. When the aunt saw in person the man who had appeared to her in her dream, she fainted away, but, happily, she returned to consciousness in good time, and ere long married the man.

But it was not always that young men appeared to venturesome damsels. I have been told in all seriousness that ere now a coffin has appeared to the fair, and this implied death, not marriage.

Many other ways there were of proceeding to obtain the desired information, but enough, if not too much, has been said on this matter. I will only add that I have heard the process called *palmana*, *lamanta*, and *rhamanta*.



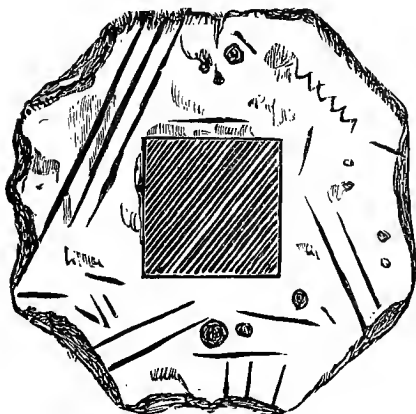


YSCEIFIOG.

CHURCHYARD CROSS.

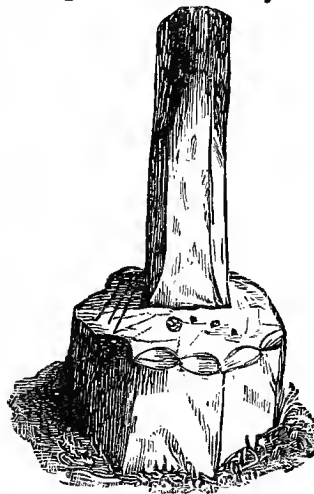


THIS greatly dilapidated Cross stands twenty-three paces from the Church, on the south side. The churchyard in the neighbourhood of the Cross is crowded with grave stones. There is a modern sundial, with limestone shaft, standing in the churchyard a short distance from the west end of the Church, so that, although the old Cross has been cut down to a convenient height for a sun-dial stand, since there is a sun-dial close at hand, the Cross cannot have been mutilated to convert it into a sun-dial, unless, which is not improbable, when cut down, it was found to be unfit for that purpose.



Pedestal of Churchyard Cross ; Scale,
 $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch to the foot.

9in.; its breadth is 2ft. 10in.



Churchyard Cross.

The shaft, a tapering octagonal, is brought to a square at the base by chamfers; its height is 3ft. 2in. The sides facing the Church, though weather-worn, are entire, but the upper part of the other sides has been broken off. The shaft has departed from the perpendicular.

The basement is a massive piece of freestone. It measures in height, from the surface of the ground, 1ft. The socket, into which the shaft is

mortised, is 1ft. square. The upper surface of the socket is covered with incisions, several of which are deep and broad. There are upon it also a few cup-like markings, similar to those on the pedestal of Corwen Cross, and a series of zigzag incisions (see drawing.) The long incisions measure about 2ft. long, and about 1in. in depth. It will be seen from the sketch that the grooves differ in length and breadth and they also vary in depth. The Cross belongs, probably, to the fifteenth century.

YSCEIFIOG CUSTOMS.

It was once a custom here for the affluent, at the funeral of a member of the family, to distribute little rolls of bread to the poor, who flocked in great numbers to the house of the deceased. The dole took place just before the corpse was brought out of the house. Pence and half pence were latterly substituted for the small loaves of bread.

In this parish, as in other Welsh parishes, it was the custom for a funeral procession, at every crossway, to stop awhile, and rehearse the Lord's Prayer, and when the funeral came to the churchyard entrance, before any of the verses appointed to be said by the officiating minister were read, the Lord's Prayer was repeated by the people.

The Lord's Prayer was the prayer of the people. Often was it repeated by them; when any undertaking of danger was about to be engaged in, it was preceded by this prayer. Fishermen starting on a voyage said their *Pader*. The author of *Beaumaris Bay* says:—"Happening, once, to be walking upon Penmaen Rhos, I saw four boats leaving the shore to lay down their nets—in an instant every oar was still for a few minutes. On inquiry, I was told that the Lord's Prayer was repeated in that interval." On every occasion of importance our forefathers resorted for strength and comfort to this all-comprehensive prayer. In it they found their wants expressed, and by it they found their wants supplied. Rough, though they were, as we account roughness, still they placed implicit faith in God's providence, and firmly did they believe in the efficacy of prayer.

INCISIONS ON CROSSES AND OTHER STONES: WHY MADE.

Several times in the course of this work reference has been made to the grooves found in the basement of crosses, and on other stones in churchyards, and it has been stated that these were made by the

process of sharpening arrows and other weapons. Grooved stones are found along the mountains of Wales in secluded, unfrequented parts, and tradition says that the incisions in these stones were made years ago, when archery was common, by people pointing on them their arrows. A stone of this kind, above the village of Llanllechid, Carnarvonshire, on the wild mountain, is called to this day *Careg Saethau*, or Arrow Stone, and along its surface are groups of incisions exactly like those on the pedestal of Ysceifiog Cross, Maen y Chwyfan, Newmarket, and other crosses. Three of these arrow stones are still to be seen on the Aber hill, Carnarvonshire, with deep grooves along their surfaces, and the inhabitants state that they were arrow-whetstones. The stones along the sides of an old unused well on the wilds of Denbighshire, between three and four miles from Talycafn, have this kind of incision along their surfaces. Near the well passes the Roman Road to Conovium. The well, which is in a *ffridd*, was called *Ffynon y Rhyfeloedd*, the Well of the Battles; so an old man, between eighty and ninety years old, told the Rev. T. S. Jones, Rector of Trofarth. But many more instances of extant stones of this kind could be named. After the mountain summits had been deserted, and the lowlands drained and cultivated, and inhabited, we find the people continued using their arrows, and wherever a suitable stone was found, it was used by them as a whetstone. Thus jambs of doors, mullions of windows, shafts and pedestals of crosses, pillars in churches, fonts, &c., are marked with grooves. There is hardly an old church without such marks in some part of the edifice. Mochdre (Montgomeryshire), Llandinam, and Llanerfyl fonts are thus marked. St. Hilary's Church, Denbigh, Llangwyfan, Llanfor, Guilsfield, Llanfechain, &c., have the door jambs incised. Llansantffraid, by Corwen, has its mutilated cross-shaft scored; but it is unnecessary to enumerate other instances. Sufficient have been named to show how common such marked stones are. Occasionally I have noticed these marks on old freestone altar tombs.

Three kinds of grooves are, I think, observable; first, the long and deep incisions: these would be made by giving a point to pikes; then there are the short, fine grooves, such as would be made by arrows; and lastly, we have marks made by giving an edge to a flat weapon, as a sword. All these kinds of markings are found on the base of the Cross at Ysceifiog, and in other places also.

In the days of the Plantagenets, the people were bound by royal mandates to practise archery on Sundays and holidays, after divine service. In fact, all other sports, as quoits, cockfighting, football, fives, &c., were forbidden as long as archery was being practised. The place where the people exercised their skill was often the churchyard. It was necessary that the arrows should be well pointed, and there was always near, either in the church walls or in the crosses, free-stone that could be thus used, and the people did not scruple to sharpen the weapons wherever they found a good stone that suited their purpose. This will account for the marks found on stones in churches.

The people procured the bows from the yew tree growing in the churchyard, and just as the stones bear testimony to the use of arrows, now superseded by more formidable weapons, so likewise do the aged yew trees that for centuries have stood in our churchyards in England and Wales show that years ago their branches were lopped off, and out of the boughs were made those bows that carried terror into the ranks of England's foes, and helped to advance her to a foremost place among the nations of the world.



APPENDIX.

I.—*Who Mutilated or Destroyed the Stone Crosses?*

There are few crosses in North Wales intact, but we have a good many more or less mutilated. Judging from the names of places in which the word *croes*, cross, appears, there must have been formerly a large number of road-side and other crosses in Wales; and it is a question of some interest to ascertain who destroyed, or mutilated, or disfigured them.

A most important period in the history of crosses is that which is coincident with the Reformation. Much bearing on this subject appears in the Judgment of the Privy Council delivered 21st March, 1857, in the case of *Westerton v. Liddell*. From this document we gather that popular disturbances, consequent upon the change in religion, "outran the acts of the Government":—

Crosses would share the fate of images; so that between the fanaticism of the populace, and the cupidity of the courtiers, the ornaments of the Churches, in every sense of that word, would be subject to spoliation and destruction. We find, indeed, by the Injunction of the Council of the 5th April, 1548, . . . that even at this early period such proceedings were going on, for that letter expressly forbids the sale or alienation of the chalices, silver crosses, bells, or other ornaments. . . . Under these circumstances it cannot be matter of surprise if comparatively few crosses remained either standing in the Churches or preserved in the repositories of its ornaments (p. 123).

These words refer to valuable and movable crosses; but not to the churchyard crosses. These were left undisturbed for another century, as will shortly be shown. Still it was at this period that a shock was given to the veneration for crosses, for it was but a step from the interior to the exterior of the church, and since the crosses within were gone, the cross without was allowed to stand on sufferance only.

During the reign of Queen Mary the *status quo ante* with regard to crosses prevailed, but in the reign of Elizabeth great difference of opinion existed upon this subject. The Queen was favourable to

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the use of both crosses and crucifixes, and retained them in her own chapel, and although they were removed for a time, they were afterwards restored.

The people of Wales, a remote part of the kingdom, with a sparse population, and churches separated from each other by mountains, forests, or morasses, adhered for a longer time than the English to old forms and customs. Bishop Davies, immediately after his appointment to the See of St. Asaph, set about the work of reformation. In a "Concilium Diocesanum Assaphense celebratum in Eccl. Cath. Assaphensi a Thoma (Davies) Epis. As. die Mercurii 12 Novembris A.D. 1561," the following orders were agreed upon:—

That every of them [i.e., parson and vycar] shall forthwith avoyd, remove and put away, or cawse to be put away, all and every moniment, syne, and token of all and every fayned relygues and other superstycyons had withyn ther severall churches and abolyse ther auters yn the same, or cawse the churchwardens to do the same within eight days next after thes injunctyons gevyn; and if any refuse so to do, that I may be certyfyed thereof withyn other eight days, then next and immedyatly folowyng.
—*Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 228.

There is no mention made in this injunction of crosses, but it might be construed so as to include movable crosses found within the church. The words of the Bishop would imply that the form of worship used in churches in the Diocese of St. Asaph belonged to ante-Reformation rather than to Reformation times, and his command that this state of things should cease forthwith is both clear and peremptory.

In an injunction of the Bishop of St. David's, issued in 1585, crosses are mentioned. Under the head "Buriall" he says:—

First that there be no crosses of wood made and erected in sundrie places, where thei vse to rest with the corpes: and especially that no wodden crosses be set upon the crosse in the churchyarde, or upon, or about his grave.—*Appendix to Second Report of Royal Commission on Ritual*, p. 427.

Compare this with the crosses that were erected at every resting place of the body of Queen Eleanor from Harby or Hardeby, in Nottinghamshire, to Westminster, a distance by the old roads of one hundred and fifty-nine miles; in all fifteen elaborate, costly structures. The Queen died November 28th, 1291.

The latter part of the Bishop's injunction refers to a custom of placing wooden crosses on the churchyard cross for the dead, and

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from the Bishop's special aversion to the practice, it may be inferred that the act was considered superstitious, rather than commemorative. Hence also, probably, his Lordship's objection to the placing of a cross upon or about the grave of the departed. The Bishop recognized the existence, without disapprobation of "the crosse in the churchyarde."

In "a Breviat of all the Presentments against the clergie of the Dioces of Bangor, in the Visitation of the Reverend Ffather in God Lewis Lord Bp. of Bangor, held in Julie 1623" reference is made to a custom in Trawsfynydd parish, Merionethshire, as follows:—

Trausvynyth.—They seldom used to go in per ambul' in Ro'n week; and it is usual there to lay down dead coarses at cross ways, and to say a prayer or two. Sir Robert Lloyd Parson there.—*Archæologia Cambrensis*, ix., 3rd series, p. 285.

The first part of this entry would imply an offence by omission; and the latter, by commission, but the whole passage shows the strong hold that the cross had upon the people; other customs were passing away, but the love for the sacred symbol was as strong as ever.

The quotations which I have given show the attitude assumed towards crosses on the part of the Welsh Bishops, but it is from Acts issued legally by the authorities in England that we are to arrive at a fair knowledge of the case in its national bearing. Injunctions issued by the King would be of general application, and would affect Wales as well as England. I will, therefore, now refer to the various Acts passed by the Tudor Sovereigns on the subject.

In 1547, the first year of the reign of Edward VI., the following injunctions were issued:—

That such images as they know in any of their cures to be or to have been abused with pilgrimage or offering of anything made thereunto, or shall be hereafter censured unto, they (and none other private persons) shall for the avoiding of that most detestable offence of idolatry, forthwith take down, or cause to be taken down and destroy the same.

And again

Also, That they shall take away, utterly extinct and destroy all shrines, covering of shrines, all tables, candlesticks, trindles or rolls of wax, pictures, paintings, and all other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry and superstition: so that there remain no memory of the same in walls, glass-windows, or elsewhere within their Churches or houses.—*Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 4, 5.

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It would appear from Archbishop Cranmer's "Mandatum ad amovendas et delendas imagines" that in some places the commands as above given, were literally carried out, whilst in others, there was much strife and contention respecting them, some men retaining all such images, and others replacing the images "which by the saide injunctions were taken downe," . . . "contending whether this or that image hath been offered unto, kyssed, censed, or otherwise abused." The Archbishop to set at rest all disputes gives orders:—"That all the images remayning in any church or chapel within your diocese be removed and taken away."—(*Concilia*, vol. iv., p.22.)

Articles of inquiry as to the carrying out of these injunctions followed. From these quotations it is clearly seen that images, &c., were to be destroyed, but it does not seem that these injunctions of necessity included churchyard and other crosses. I am inclined to think that they did not include crosses, for, incidentally, crosses are mentioned in "certain articles to be followed and observed according to the king's majesty's injunctions and proceedings" in 1549, wherein it is stated that henceforth, no man is to be imprisoned or punished amongst other things, for "not creeping to the cross" (*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 33); and further, no man is to maintain, among other things "creeping to the cross." There must have been a cross ere anyone could creep to it; the offence was the creeping, and not the cross itself.

The following interesting extracts from parish accounts, for which I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Wadley, indicate the existence of crosses in the year 1552 and later.

1552. Itm recevyd of Roger mawnder for the staffe and hed of owr crosse in the churchyarde (edge of leaf cut off).

The extract is from the parish accounts of South Littleton, Worcestershire. It would be expected that in Queen Mary's time crosses would be mended, and thus we read in the parish register at Badsey, Worcestershire,

It payyd for y^e crosse y' y^e churche yarde vij^s . . . 1557.

In Mary's reign the cross was restored to the place of honour which it had occupied in her father's reign.

When we come to the reign of Queen Elizabeth we find the injunctions of 1547 re-issued, with the following addition:—"Preserving nevertheless, or repairing, both the walls and glass windows; and

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they shall exhort all their parishioners to do the like within their several houses." (*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 185.) This was in 1559.

In the same year the queen received "An address made by some bishops and divines against the use of images." The churchyard cross is not mentioned in this address.

The following year, that is, in 1560, "the queen's proclamation against defacers of monuments in churches" came forth. It informs us that certain ancient monuments erected in churches and other public places in memory of the dead had been spoiled, broken and ruined "to the slander of such as either gave, or had charge, in times past, only to deface monuments of idolatry and false fained images in the churches and abbeys." Henceforth no monument or inscription to the memory of any person deceased is to be defaced, nor is any one "to break down and deface any image in glass windows in any churches, without consent of the ordinary," upon pain of imprisonment and fine, "besides the restitution or re-edification of the things broken." (*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 221.)

That great disorder prevailed in the troublous days of the sixteenth century is evident from a perusal of the Acts passed in that period. There were not wanting those who wittingly misconstrued injunctions, and exceeded their authority in carrying on their work of destruction. Thus, from the Injunctions of Queen Elizabeth in 1560 we have seen how monuments had been broken and spoiled, and in the same injunction these words occur:—

And whereas the covetousness of certain persons is such, that as patrons of churches, or owners of the parsonages impropriated, or by some other colour or pretence, they do persuade with the parson and parishioners to take or throw down the bells of the churches and chapels, and the lead of the same, converting the same to their private gain and to the spoils of the said places, and make such like alterations, as thereby they seek a slanderous desolation of the places of prayer.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., pp. 221-2.

The injunction goes on to forbid such spoliation, and further—

Her majesty chargeth all bishops and ordinaries, to enquire of all such contempts done from the beginning of her majesty's reign, and to enjoin the persons offending to repair the same within a convenient time.

Covetousness and fanaticism have ever had a powerful influence on human actions, and both were at work in the period under consideration. Although there is much uncertainty as to whether the Queen's injunctions were intended to include the destruction of

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crosses in general, still the terms of the injunctions of 1559, and their bearing or spirit, might have caused those already that way inclined to overthrow and deface even churchyard and other crosses. That the words in themselves do not give this authority is sufficiently clear, for crosses are not even named in the injunction. It is explicit enough as to images, &c., within the churches, whether on the walls, or windows, or elsewhere, but it does not refer to crosses outside the church. That the injunction was construed as referring to the images within the church appears from the letters of Bishop Jewel and Bishop Sandys to Peter Martyn. The first is dated February 4, 1560, and in it are these words:—

This controversy about the crucifix is now at its height. You would scarcely believe to what a degree of insanity some persons, who once had some show of common sense, have been carried upon so foolish a subject. . . . A disputation upon this subject will take place to-morrow. The moderators will be persons selected by the council. The disputants on the one side are the archbishop of Canterbury and Cox; and on the other, Grindal the bishop of London and myself. The decision rests with the judges. I smile, however, when I think with what grave and solid reasons they will defend their little cross. Whatever be the result, I will write to you more at length when the disputation is over; for the controversy is as yet undecided; yet, as far as I can conjecture, I shall not write to you as bishop. For matters are come to that pass, that either the crosses of silver and tin, which we have every where broken in pieces, must be restored, or our bishopricks relinquished.—*Zurich Letters*, pp. 67-8, *Parker Society*.

The subject of this letter is the crucifix, the crosses of silver and tin, and not the stone crosses outside the church, but those within. Bishop Sandys' letter is dated April 1, 1560, and contains an account of the controversy mentioned as about to take place in Bishop Jewel's letter. In it the Bishop writes:—

We had not long since a controversy respecting images. The queen's majesty considered it not contrary to the word of God, nay, rather for the advantage of the church, that the image of Christ crucified, together with (those of the virgin) Mary and (Saint) John, should be placed, as heretofore, in some conspicuous part of the church, where they might more readily be seen by all the people. Some of us (bishops) thought far otherwise, and more especially as all images of every kind were at our last visitation not only taken down, but also burnt, and that too by public authority (*omnes omnis generis imagines in proxima nostra visitatione, idque publica auctoritate, non solum sublatae, verum etiam combustae erant*).—*Zurich Letters*, pp. 74, and 42 Appendix.

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All this refers to images in the church, in "some conspicuous part of the church," and the "public authority" was the Queen's injunction of 1559, which clearly gave the bishops power to remove such things from the church, and destroy them; but it could not refer to stone crosses, for these, though they might have been taken down, could not be burnt. The Bishop had made a bonfire of the wooden images found within the church, but probably the simple churchyard and other crosses were left alone.

From the series of letters quoted above, it appears that the Queen retained the crucifix in her chapel. At one time it was removed, but afterwards replaced. That the Queen did not desire the destruction of crosses would further appear from the fact that the London crosses and innumerable others in various parts of the country survived Her Majesty's reign. She might even be said to have taken crosses under her protection; and a proof of the Queen's solicitude for their preservation is supplied in a letter written by the Lord Mayor of London, which appears in the *Remembrancia of the City of London*, privately printed for the Corporation in 1878. (See pp. 65, 66, of Index to the *Remembrancia*.) The Queen had signified her pleasure to the Court of Aldermen for the reparation of the cross in Cheapside, upon information which seemed to have been given of some notorious defacement in a superstitious manner without order of the authorities. Such defacement as had happened was, in fact, very small, and had been done by light persons who pilfered lead. The Lord Mayor thereupon wrote to the Lords of the Council, asking Her Majesty's further directions, and he was particularly anxious touching the repairing and garnishing of the images of the cross. This letter is without date, but it must have been written between 1579 and 1595.

If the foregoing quotations do not amount to actual proof, they go very far towards proving that stone crosses, inside and outside churches, were permitted by authority to stand in the sixteenth century. Persons authorized to carry out the early injunctions of King Edward and Queen Elizabeth may have exceeded their commission, and in their zeal battered down or defaced crosses in churches and churchyards, as Weever mentions in his *Funeral Monuments* (pp. 50, 51), but in doing so they acted illegally.

Passing over divers orders, issued by Parliament, interfering with church ceremonial, in the reign of Charles I., we come to an Act, or ordinance, for such it is rather than an Act, since it does not profess

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to have the authority of the king, passed 28th August, 1643, entitled—
“Monuments of Superstition or Idolatry to be demolished.” This ordinance provides :—

That before 1st November, 1643, all crosses in, or upon all and every the said churches, or chappels, or other places of publique Prayer, Churchyards, or other places to any of the said churches . . . belonging, or in any other open place, shall before the said first day of November be taken away and defaced, and none of the like hereafter permitted in any such church . . . or other places aforesaid.

Here, then, we have the order for taking away and defacing *all crosses in or upon churches*, or in any other open places, and this would include churchyard, roadside, and market crosses, and, in fact, every description of cross for whatever purpose erected. Such is the order, and now let us see how it was carried out.

Local committees were formed in the various counties for the purpose of executing the orders of Parliament. The most famous of these were those acting under the Earl of Manchester, to whom Parliament intrusted, for purgation, seven counties in the east of England, one of these being Suffolk. The Earl appointed William Dowsing, Parliamentary Visitor, for demolishing the superstitious ornaments of churches in the county of Suffolk, in the year 1643 and 1644. The Journal of William Dowsing was printed by Parker, Oxford, 1840, and from this edition the following quotations are given, showing how thoroughly Dowsing carried out the orders of his superior. The extracts are not consecutively given.

Orford. we gave order for . . . taking of two crosses off the steeple of the church and one of the chancel in all four . . . Washbrook :— I gave order to take down a stoneing cross. Copdock :—I . . . did deface a cross on the font, and gave order to take down a stoneing cross on the chancell. Ipswich, Stoke Mary's, Two crosses in wood . . . St. Mary's at the Tower : I gave order to take down five iron crosses, and one of wood on the steeple Capell, we . . . gave order . . . to take down a stoneing cross on the outside of the church . . . Comearth Magna : I gave order to take down a cross on the steeple . . . John Pain, Churchwarden, for not paying, and doing his duty enjoined by the ordinance, I charged Henry Turner, the constable, to carry him before the Earl of Manchester . . . Ottery. A deputy broke down a cross on the chancel . . . Beddingfield. I . . . gave order to take down three stoneing crosses on porch, church and chancel . . . Cochil and a cross in the chancel all which . . . we could not reach, neither would they help us to raise the ladders. Frostenden. . . two crosses on the

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steeple, and one on the chancel. And Mr. Ellis, an high constable of the town, told me he saw an Irishman, within two months, bow to the cross on the steeple, and put off his hat to it. (The following entry is characteristic) . . . We rent a-piece there the hood and surplice. Ofton :—There was . . . some crosses on the outside of the church and chancel, and we gave orders to deface them. We gave orders to have them all defaced . . . and two stone crosses on the top of the steeple.

Dowsing and his deputies visited 149 churches, and if his orders were in every instance carried out, he must have denuded Suffolk of its crosses.

Dowsing proceeded in his work of destruction armed with authority, but in certain places an excited populace took the law into their own hands, and overthrew crosses. Evelyn in his *Diary* (May 2, 1643), states that the cross in Cheapside was thrown down by a mad rabble. His words are :—“I went to London, where I saw the furious and zealous people demolish that stately Crosse in Cheapside.” Local feeling was not, in all places, in full agreement with the proceedings of the iconoclasts, for, occasionally, we find the people in arms against the despoilers. An instance of this occurs in the life of Richard Baxter. Very ingenuously he records the following episode in his eventful life, evidently quite oblivious of the fact that in religious matters one man may lightly esteem what another greatly values. He says that when he was at Kidderminster—

About that time the Parliament sent down an order for the demolishing of all statues and Images of any of the three Persons in the blessed Trinity, or of the Virgin Mary, which should be found in Churches, or on the crosses in Churchyards. My Judgment was for the obeying the order, thinking it came from just Authority, but I meddled not in it, but left the Churchwarden to do what he thought good. The Churchwarden (an honest, sober, quiet Man) seeing a crucifix upon the cross in the Church-ward, sat up a Ladder to have reacht it, but it proved too short ; whilst he was gone to seek another, a crew of the Drunken riotous Party of the Town (poor journeymen and servants) took the alarm, and run together with weapons to defend the crucifix, and the Church Images (of which there were divers left since the time of Popery). A Report was among them, that I was the Actor, and it was me they sought, but I was walking almost a mile out of Town, or else, I suppose, I had there ended my days. —*Reliquiæ Baxterianæ*, p. 40.

It will be seen from the ordinance of August, 1643, and the manner in which the orders of Parliament were carried out by Dowsing, that

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the wholesale destruction of crosses was accomplished in this, rather than in any previous period in English history.

I will now briefly refer to the doings of the Parliamentary forces in the Vale of Clwyd.

From the Diary of Piers Roberts, called *Y Cwitta Cyfarwydd*, lately edited by the Rev. D. R. Thomas, we learn how the Parliamentary army harassed St. Asaph. The journalist writes:—

1645. St. Asaph Rebellyon.—Libera nos, D'ne a malo, Amen, and defiled the churches there, etc. Mem. The 24, 25 & 26 daies of Aprill 1645, the Rebels vizt S'r W'm. Brerton and S'r Tho: Myddleton p'ts etc. w'th their army have blyndered St. Asaph's p'ish, except Wickwer, and made great spoyles, etc.—*Y Cwitta Cyfarwydd*, p. 216.

St. Asaph being in the hands of the victorious army, it is not surprising to find that they showed scant respect for the cathedral and the palace. These edifices were soon converted to a use never contemplated by their builders. The Rev. D. R. Thomas, in his *History of the Diocese* (p. 100), says:—

At St. Asaph one Mills, a postmaster, who lived in the Bishop's palace, and sold wine and liquors there, stalled his horses and oxen in the cathedral, fed his calves in the throne, and removed the font to his yard, where it was used as a horse-trough. The parish churches fared but little better in the general confusion; some of them being occupied as fortresses, and few escaping some damage or disfigurement.

Browne Willis says much the same thing, but he adds that Bishop Owen saw the Church lands sold, and died Oct. 16, 1650.

The last sentence of the extract from Mr. Thomas's book is amply verified by the present condition of the few unrestored churches in the Vale and neighbouring parishes. Many of these churches have large and beautiful perpendicular east windows, but they have been denuded of the stained glass which once filled them, a few pieces only being preserved, glazed into the window without any plan, so that they were probably picked up from the ground after the window had been smashed. There are, however, two churches in the Vale with fine fifteenth century Jesse windows that have escaped destruction, Llanrhaiadr and Dyserth. The Llanrhaiadr window owes its preservation to having been hidden away in the church oak chest, and buried in the neighbouring plantation. Browne Willis tells us that it "was put up again in 1661, at the parish's expense of £60." How Dyserth window escaped the general doom I know not, unless

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it, too, was taken down and concealed. From the hiding away of Llanrhaiadr window we may, perhaps, infer that others had been destroyed, and that the custodians of Llanrhaiadr Church were thus led to conceal the glass.

Gable end crosses, in the Vale of Clwyd, have been knocked down or mutilated. Cwm is an instance of this, and so also are Caerwys and Llanasa. There is not a single rood-loft cross, that I am aware of, left in all the Vale. Stoups, too, have disappeared from churches.

The Parliamentary forces occupied the Vale for some time. We have seen that they took St. Asaph, April 24th, 1645; Ruthin Castle was delivered up to General Mytton on Monday, April 12th, 1646; Denbigh Castle, in which the clergy of the Vale had taken refuge, held out until the 26th of October in that year. A clause in the Articles of Capitulation is inserted in favour of the clergy, and the necessity for terms shows how very uncertain they and their friends considered their fate to be. Clause 6 in the Articles of Agreement upon the Capitulation of Denbigh Castle is as follows:—

6. That the clergymen now in the garrison, who shall not, upon composition, or otherwise, be restored to the Church livinges, shall have liberty and passes to goe to London, to obtayne some fitting allowance for the livelyhood of themselves and families.—*Pennant*, vol. ii., p. 461.

The Puritans, I firmly believe, in all they did, thought they were doing God service, and they considered it part of their mission to eradicate superstition out of the land, with which view they destroyed crosses, paintings, stained windows, and all other things which they thought conducive to superstition. They never imagined that actions emanating from zeal could be accused likewise of partaking of the nature of superstition, but that such a retort was made appears from the following extract, taken from a book entitled "Of Idolatry; a Discourse . . . by Tho. Tenison, B.D., Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty and late Fellow of Corpus Christi Colledg in Cambridge" (London, 1678, 4to):—

And it was high superstition in those who in our late unhappy Revolutions, defaced such Pictures and brake down such Crosses as Authority had suffered to remain entire, whilst it forbad the worship of them; and was in that particular so well obeyed that none of them (it may be) ever knew one man of the communion of the Church of England to have been prostrate before a cross, and in that posture to have spoken to it (p. 279).

It must be lamented that crosses, which were memorials of by-gone days, have been so extensively destroyed. They embodied the

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religious fervour of our forefathers, and gave expression to the then popular faith, and on this ground alone they deserved better treatment than fell to their lot. Old hymns, which formerly resounded in our places of worship, are no longer popular. Tunes and words that represent the aspirations of one age do not necessarily suit other times. But who would in consequence seek them out, and burn them in the market place? Should we not rather preserve them as interesting monuments in the mental history of our nation; and why should crosses, it may be asked, receive less respect at our hands? This is one aspect of the question, but there are others, which are so well expressed in a paper by Mr. John Norton, published in the *Report of the Bristol and West of England Architectural Society* for 1849, that I will quote this gentleman's words:—

I must be content to remark, that all of these old crosses, independent of their high and important value as religious memorials, exhibit to the modern eye valuable memorials of the architecture and sculpture of their several eras, and are more especially interesting to the antiquary and architect as relics of past ages, and memorials indicating the customs, manners, and conditions of the arts among our ancestors (pp. 30, 31).

I will only add, by way of endorsing Mr. Norton's pertinent remarks, that as historical and architectural landmarks, crosses merited preservation, and from reverence for the memory of our forefathers, who acted in accordance with their convictions, they ought to have been left intact and undisturbed.

II.—*Writings and Injunctions against Games in Churchyards, &c.*

The first attempts to deprive the people of their Sunday games do not seem to have been very effectual. This can easily be understood, but the fact that authorities issued injunctions against the desecration of the Sabbath and profanation of churches and churchyards proves that the wild proceedings of the people had not the sanction of their rulers.

As early as the tenth century, the desecration of the church became the subject of the Archbishop of Canterbury's disapprobation. His grace, writing in the year 994 A.D., says:—

Non est æquum, ut ob aliquam aliam rem ad ecclesiam adeamus, nisi ad orandum, et ex Dei amore; prohibemus etenim tam tumultus, quam

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lulus et vaniloquia, imo quæcunque inutilia in sacris locis fieri.—*Concilia*, vol. i. p. 264.

Thus early the people were told that it was not right to go to church for any other purpose than for prayer, and from love of God; consequently, the Archbishop prohibits such confusions as games and vain babblings, yea, all kinds of frivolous things he forbids to be carried on in sacred buildings.

In Wales, thirty-six years after the Archbishop of Canterbury had made known his will about proper behaviour in church, appeared a prohibitory missive from the Bishop of Teilaw, of a nature akin to that of the Archbishop's mandate. Both exhibit a state of things then existing highly reprehensible, and objectionable to the Church authorities in England and Wales.

The Welsh bishop's words appear under the year A.D. 1030, in *Brut y Tywysogion*, the Chronicle of the Princes, a Gwentian Chronicle:—

Oed Crist 1030, y gwelwyd goleuni rhyfeddawl yn yr wybren hyd nos onid oedd golau fal dydd. Y flwyddyn honno y peris Ioseb escob Teilaw na wnelid na gwaith na gorchwyl ar y Suliau a'r gwyliau, ag a wnaeth i'r offeiriaid ddysgu darllain yr Ysgrythyr lân heb dâl heb ged, ac na wnelynt ac ymrysonau.—*Arch. Camb.*, 3rd series, vol. x., p. 46 in Appendix.

This is translated by Aneurin Owen as follows :

A.D. 1030.—A wonderful light was seen in the sky during the night, which rendered it as light as day. That year, Joseph, Bishop of Teilaw, ordered that no work or occupation should take place on the Sundays and holidays, and obliged the priests to learn to read the Holy Scripture without payment or gift, and to abandon controversies.—*Arch. Camb.*, 3rd series, vol. x., p. 47 Ap.

Haddon and Stubbs in *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* (vol. i. p. 291) quote this, but give a different rendering to the words "ag a wnaeth i'r offeiriaid ddysgu darllain yr Ysgrythyr lân heb dâl heb ged," which they rightly construe—"and obliged the priests to teach to read the Holy Scripture without payment or gift." It may be added that *gorchwyl* has a larger signification than occupation, and includes anything that is being done, or that is going on.

It is impossible to say whether the wonderful light had anything to do with the prohibitory measures of the Bishop, but there certainly seems to be a connection between the cessation of work on Sundays and holy days, and the obligation laid upon the priests to

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teach reading free of charge to those who desired such knowledge ; and may it not have been intended that the school should take the place of play or work on Sundays and holy days ? If so, then Sunday Schools are much older than we suppose them to be. Be this as it may, certainly, at so early a period as A.D. 1030, if the information is trustworthy, objection was taken to an unseemly observance, or non-observance of certain holy days. This shows that worship and work of a certain kind on holy days, previous to 1030, were not thought incompatible by our Welsh forefathers, and what then existed had, it is not unreasonable to suppose, been transmitted from more ancient times, so that working on Sundays and Sunday sports date from time immemorial. But on the other hand, the Bishop's injunction shows that a change was taking place in the national mind, and that a cessation of work and other undertakings on Sundays and holy days might, in his opinion, possibly be accomplished. That he was premature in his attempt will become evident from the quotations which will be given in the course of what I have to say upon this subject.

The Welsh in Cornwall, as well as their brethren in Wales, were given to enjoying themselves in consecrated grounds, and there, as in other parts, the bishops endeavoured to restrict the license of the people.

The following extract, from an account of what was being done in West Wales to bring about a better state of things, is interesting, for it shows how the question was developed in various parts of the country.

In a Synod held at Exeter in the year 1287, A.D., games held in churchyards were prohibited. Chapter xiii. refers, amongst other things, to amusements in consecrated grounds, which are condemned in the following words :—

. . . Sacerdotibus parochialibus districte præcipimus, ut in ecclesiis suis denunciènt publice, ne quisquam luctas, choreas, vel alios ludos inhonestos in cœmeteriis exercere præsumat.—*Concilia*, vol. ii., p. 140.

But these games are forbidden “ præcipue in vigiliis et festis sanctorum,” especially during vigils and saints' days. “The foregoing quotation may be translated as follows :—

We strictly command parish priests to give notice publicly in their churches that no one presume to indulge in wrestlings, dances, nor other unseemly games in churchyards.

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How far out of Exeter diocese the injunction was observed I cannot say, but most likely it was limited to that part of the country, for I find that the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1305, A.D., forbids the holding of markets, transacting of business matters, and games, in the churchyard of Newenham. His Grace, having referred to the fairs held there, proceeds :—

Molestum itaque gerimus, quod in ecclesia et cœmeterio de “Newenham” hujuscemodi prohibita exerceri dicuntur, nec preasumptores talium a te per censuram ecclesiasticam aliquatenus compescuntur.—
Concilia, vol. ii., 283.

Which, rendered into English, is :—

Accordingly we take it as an offence that in the church and cemetery of Newenham prohibited offences of this kind (fairs, games, &c.), are said to be carried on, nor are the presumptuous doers of such things in any way checked by you through your ecclesiastical censure.

These words depict the state of society in those primitive times ; and it would even seem, from other words of the Archbishop, that excessive riotings, resulting in mutilation, and even homicide, took place in churchyards at these revelries.

Coming down to the fifteenth century, we find Sunday games still practised in churchyards. Thus in *Myric's Instructions for Parish Priests*, printed by the Early English Text Society in 1868, from a MS. in the British Museum, written about 1450 A.D., these lines occur, warning the people that games are not to be played in churchyards :—

Castyng of axtre and eke of ston
Sofere hem there to vse non ;
Bal and bares and suche play,
Out of chyrcheyarde put a-way.

—Page 11, line 334.

And in another MS. (Donce, 103 f, 126 b), in the Bodleian, is this note, in a hand a few years later than the text :—

Danseyng, cotteyng, bollyng, tenessyng, hand ball, fott ball, stol ball,
and all manner of other games out cherchyard.

The games above mentioned are those which continued popular in Wales to the beginning of the present century ; but it would appear from Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes* that Sunday was occasionally, if not invariably, respected in the reign of Henry VII. ; at least, it was so in a grand May-game at Greenwich, which lasted from May

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14th to a fortnight in June. The programme of sports for each day, Sundays excepted, is given, and the inference drawn from this exception is, that on the Sundays no sports took place. (See Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, pp. 355, 356.) But we must not, from this example, draw too general a conclusion, for, notwithstanding official opposition to games in consecrated grounds, they continued to be carried on to the days of our fathers.

INJUNCTIONS RESPECTING SUNDAY OBSERVANCE.

Injunctions issued in the sixteenth century seem to show that the authorities did not object to Sunday sports, provided they were not held during the hours of divine service. The following quotations from the *Concilia* point, however, to a fluctuating feeling respecting the observance of Sundays and holy days. In the Articles to be inquired of in the diocese of Canterbury, 1547, are these words:—

Item. Whether they have taught and declared to their parishioners, that they may with a safe and quiet conscience in the time of harvest, labour upon the holy and festival days, and if superstitiously they abstain from working upon those days, that then they do grievously offend and displease God.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 24.

And again, in the Articles set forth by Cardinal Pole (1557), we find the following:—

XXVIII. Item. Whether any do violate or break the Sundays and holy days, doing their daily labours and exercises upon the same? . . .

XXIX. Item. Whether the taverns or alehouses, upon the Sundays and holy days, in the time of mass, matins, and evensong, do keep open their doors, and do receive people into their houses to drink and eat, and thereby neglect their duties in coming to Church.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 170.

Again in the Visitation Articles in the first year of Queen Elizabeth (1559) is this question:—

Whether any inholders or alehouse keepers do use commonly to sell meat and drink in the time of common prayer, preaching, reading of the homilies, or scripture.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 190.

These quotations, with the exception of the first, indicate, perhaps, a tendency to change the observance of Sunday to something better than it then was, but it was a fitful change at best, for Queen Elizabeth granted a licence for several recreations on Sundays in 1569. Thus the Queen gave licence to one John Seconton Powlter, a poor man with four small children, and fallen into decay, to have and use plays

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and games on "nyne severall Sondaies for his better relief, comferte and sustentacion within the countie of Middlesex;" but he was not to remain in one place above three several Sundays. Her Majesty mentions the games, that is to saye :—

The shotinge with the standerd, the shotinge with the brode arrowe, the shotinge at the twelve skore prick, the shotinge at the Turke, the leppinge for men, the runninge for men, the wrastlinge, the throwinge of the sledge, and the pytchinge of the barre, with all such other games as have at any time heretofore or now be lycensed, used or played. Yeoven the 26th daie of April in the eleventh yere of the quenes majiestie's raigne. —*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 255.

And again, when the Queen visited Kenilworth, the seat of the Earl of Leicester, July 9th, 1575, and was entertained by her great subject to the 20th of the same month, upon referring to Strutt, I find it recorded :—

On Sunday evening, she was entertained with a grand display of fire-works, as well in the air as upon the water.

This was the first Sunday that her Majesty spent at Kenilworth Castle, but Strutt, speaking of the following Sunday, says :—"On the Sunday there was no public spectacle." So we have the evening of one Sunday given to diverting the Queen and others; whilst, on the following Sunday, there is no public show. It may, therefore, be said that the Queen conformed to her subjects' wishes, even in the matter of sports; one day, she sanctioned by her presence Sunday amusements, but on the next she refrained from doing so. Both parties, probably, were thus satisfied with the conduct of their politic Queen.

But that there was a growing dislike to Sunday games in the sixteenth century, it would not be difficult to prove. Writers of those days mention with disapprobation the desecration of the Sabbath. Among these is Philip Stubbs, who lived at the close of that century. After describing the dress of the "Lord of Misrule," and his followers, he proceeds :—

Thus all things set in order, then have they their hobby horses, their dragons, and their antiques, together with their baudie pipers, and thundring drummers, to strike up the devil's dance with all. Then march this heathen company towards the Church, their pypers pyping, their drummers thundring, their stumpes dauncing, their belles jynghing, their handkerchiefes fluttering aboute their heads like madde men, their hobbie horses and other monsters skirmishing amongst the throng: and in this sort they

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go to the Church, though the minister be at prayer or preaching, dauncing and singing like devils incarnate, with such a confused noise that no man can heare his owne voyce. Then the foolish people, they looke, they stare, they laugh, they fleere, and mount upon the forms and pews to see these goodly pageants solemnized. Then after this, about the Church they go againe and againe, and so fourthe into the church yard, where they have commonly their sommer-halls, their bowers, arbours, and banquetting-houses set up, wherein they feast, banquet, and daunce all that day, and peradventure, all that night too; and thus these terrestrial furies spend the Sabbath day.—Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, pp. 341-2.

This vivid description reveals the state of things in Queen Elizabeth's days, and apparently the Lord of Misrule governed with a high hand: Sunday services and churchyards being subjected to his misrule, and the people enjoyed the sight. Stubbs, and other like-minded men, reprobated these unseemly proceedings, and their objections would have some force, though it might not be very perceptible in those days.

SUNDAY GAMES ENCOURAGED.

In King James's conduct, with reference to Sunday sports, we do not observe the wisdom of his predecessor. There was a strong and important party in this king's reign who considered all Sunday games as contrary to the command of Scripture, but their feelings were utterly disregarded by the king and his advisers, and coercive measures, of a stringent kind, were resorted to for the purpose of checking the growth of Sabbatarian ideas. In the *Student's English Church History* (p. 393), it is stated that:—

Mr. Trask, a Puritan minister, for a book written in defense of strict Sabbatarian notions, was actually set in the pillory at Westminster, and from thence whipped to the Fleet, there to remain prisoner during his Majesty's pleasure.

The king believed that persecution would compel the people to forego their principles, and conform to his own lax views of Sunday observance, but he was quite incapable of gauging the public sentiment, and instead of embodying the general feeling of the people in an act that would be in accord with their conscientious scruples, he must needs insult a large and increasing number of his subjects by publishing, in 1617, a *Book of Sports*, enjoining dancing, archery, leaping, and such-like games, on the afternoon of Sundays, and this book, by the king's command, was to be read in churches. But his

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mandate was only partially obeyed ; many of the clergy refused to read the king's letter to their congregations, the example being set by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who would not allow the *Book of Sports* to be read in his Church at Croydon. It need hardly be said that the Puritans were horror-struck at the king's command. Such, however, continued to be the state of things to the end of James's reign.

King Charles I. followed in the footsteps of his father, and because the judges had agreed to the request of certain persons in Dorsetshire and Somersetshire, to forbid " church ales " being held on Sundays in those counties, and because Chief-Justice Richardson forbade the wakes or village feasts to be celebrated on Sunday, for which he was severely reprovved by Archbishop Laud at the Council; as a reply to these proceedings, it was determined to republish the *Book of Sports* with this addition by the King :—

Our express will and pleasure is, that these feasts, with others, shall be observed, and that our justices of the peace shall see them conducted orderly, and that neighbourhood and freedom, with manlike and lawful exercises, be used. And the justices of assize are to see that no man shall be molested in these lawful recreations, and the bishops are to give order for the publication of this command in all the churches.

Persecution followed the neglect of this order, and many ministers were suspended from or even deprived of their livings for disobedience. Thus the friends of Sunday recreations were in the ascendancy in Charles's reign.

Neither James nor Charles originated these sports. They had long ago come into existence, and from ancient times had been exercised on Sundays ; some of them even were legalized by royal command. It does not appear that they were in those days considered to be against the word of God, but in the seventeenth century a party had arisen who appealed to the Bible in support of their belief, that Sunday was to be strictly observed as a day of rest. Kingly authority, however, sided with the opponents of a strict observance of the Sabbath ; nevertheless, from what has been said, it will be seen that the reigning power was being withstood by the punished and persecuted Sabbatarians.

The games practised on Sunday often exceeded the liberty given by the King, and this was not small. Sir Nathaniel Brent, the Vicar General, was commissioned by Archbishop Laud to furnish a report

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of the visitation he had made throughout the dioceses of Norwich, Peterborough, Lichfield, Worcester, &c., and among other pieces of information given, we read of cockfighting taking place before a crowd in church. This went beyond the bounds granted by the King, as the following extract from the *Book of Sports* will prove:—

And as for our good peoples lawfull Recreation, our pleasure likewise is, that after the end of Divine Service, our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawfull recreation; such as dancing, either men or women, Archerie for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmlesse Recreation, nor from having of May-games, Whitson Ales, and Morris dances, and the setting up of May-poles, and other sports therewith vsed, so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of divine service. And that women shall have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decoring of it, according to their old custome. But withall we doe here accompt still as prohibited all vnlawfull games to bee vsed vpon Sundays onely, as Beare and Bull-baitings, Interludes, and at all times in the meaner sort of People by Law prohibited, Bowling.—*Smeeton's Tracts*, vol. i., p. 89, and *Concilia*, vol. iv., pp. 483-4.

But His Majesty's declaration did not extend to those

As will abstain from coming to Church or Divine Service, being therefore unworthy of any lawfull recreation after the said service, and will not first come to the church to serve God."

I may here remark that the excluding of absentees from morning service from participating in the afternoon games came down to our days. The Rev. Lewis Jones, Vicar of Cadoxton, near Neath, speaking of his native town, Dolgelley, informs me that—"It was the custom there to play ball on the Church, and the Rector used to watch them, and would not allow any absentees from Church during Morning Prayer to play."

The feeling against Sunday sports continued to be shown after King Charles had republished the *Book of Sports*. There is a curious petition in the Appendix to the sixth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1877, page 424), on this subject, from a Welsh parish near Mold. It is:—

The humble petition of the parishioners and inhabitaunts of the seurrall parishes of Nerquis and Treythin. To the reuerend father in God John by God's Providence Bushopp of Sainte Assaphen.
. Most of the youthes and yonger sorte of people in either parishe doe commonly haunt the hare with greyhoundes and houndes vpon

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the Sundayes in the morninge or doe vse to play at the foot boole, and boole, and tenins and bowles within the severall churchyards of both parish churches.

The petition is undated, but from a letter from "John Wynne, of Nerquis, Esq., to the Rt. Worshipfull Lieut. Col. Davies," dated 5th December 1640, it seems to have been sent to the Bishop of St. Asaph about the year 1632. Squire Wynne and the parishioners of his own and the neighbouring parish lament the state of things described in their petition, but it does not appear that they succeeded in obtaining their wishes. Both parishes are only a few miles from the Vale of Clwyd, and adjoin each other.

I have brought down the history of Sunday sports to the end of King Charles's reign. I will pass over the years of the Commonwealth with but few remarks.

The penal laws of the Stuart kings were changed. The persecutors in the time of Charles became the persecuted in the time of Cromwell. Men in those days knew more about retaliation than toleration. Festivals and festivities were alike prohibited by Cromwell, but the observance of the Sabbath was rigidly enforced. Christmas Day was now an object of special dislike, and an ordinance forbade the observance of the "superstitious time of the Nativity." Again and again in *Evelyn's Diary* allusion is made to its prohibition:—

Christmas Day, no sermon anywhere, no church being permitted to be open, so observed it at home.—*Bray's Edition*, p. 225.

Christmas Day. No public offices in churches, but penalties on observers, so I was constrained to observe it at home.

At the Restoration old customs revived, old games were re-played, and the country returned with a bound to its previous sports and pastimes. Little restraint was now placed upon them. Sunday games were resumed, and once again was heard the mild remonstrance of Bishops against Sabbath-breaking.

Have any quarrelled or stricken another in church or churchyard, or abused and prophaned them with any unlawful games, as bowles, tennis, football, hand-ball, dancing, and such like?—

is the inquiry of George Griffiths, Bishop of St. Asaph, in his Visitation Articles in the year 1662. Undoubtedly, in many instances, it would be answered in the affirmative.

It is worthy of notice that the games enumerated by his Lordship are nearly identical with those of the fifteenth century. They are

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still popular games, but they are no longer played on consecrated ground, which the Bishop objects to, neither are they, at least in Wales, played on Sunday.

There is still another order "treated and agreed upon by the right reverend Father in God, William (Lloyd), Lord Bishop of St. Asaph, and the whole clergy of this diocese, at a Synod begun at St. Asaph the 4th day of July, anno domini 1683," which throws light upon the subject under consideration :—

V.—Concerning the observation of the Lord's Day.

The ministers are to take all possible care that the Lord's Day be better observed than generally it is, and frequently to mind the wardens of their duty, both in hindering all profanations of the Lord's Day as much as in them lies, and also in presenting all offenders in this particular; and they shall present the wardens themselves, in case they shall, nevertheless, be found negligent in their duty.—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 609.

From the various extracts given it will be seen how prone the people were to Sunday profanation, and how indifferent they were to admonitions when these interfered with their pleasures; but the extracts also show that their proceedings met with episcopal disapprobation. This, as we have seen, was not effective in accomplishing more than a very slow change. It should be kept in mind, when tracing the causes that led to the modern observance of Sunday in Wales, but there were concurrent influences at work, and I will now proceed to mention some of them.

CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE CESSATION OF SUNDAY GAMES IN WALES.

At the time when King James I. issued the *Book of Sports* in 1617, Sunday games were general throughout Wales, and it needed no proclamation to make them fashionable. There was, however, as I have said, even in those days, a growing aversion to Sunday sports, and Dr. Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, refused to allow the *Book of Sports* to be read in his church. Many clergymen followed his grace's example, and the King was so influenced by the opposition of the Archbishop and others, that he did not think it politic to enforce the reading of the book in all the churches. It is uncertain whether the whole of the Welsh clergy complied with the King's commands; most probably they acted somewhat similarly to their English brethren, some reading it and some refusing to do so. However, there was in
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South Wales, in those days, a vicar of pronounced Sabbatarian views. I allude to the Rev. Rhys Prichard, Vicar of Llandingad, or, as he is usually called, Vicar of Llanymddyfri, which is a town in the parish of Llandingad. This clergyman has become a household name in Wales, chiefly because he was the author of a metrical book, called, "*Y Seren Foreu, neu Ganwyll y Cymry*," i.e., "*The Morning Star, or the Welshman's Candle*." This work treats of religion and morality, and as the verses are smooth, and in the every-day language of the people, it became highly popular, and circulated throughout the whole of Wales. In it are many powerful appeals imploring the people to strictly observe the Sabbath. It is said that Vicar Prichard was led to compose his hymns to counteract the desecration of the Sabbath. He was appointed to his living August 6, 1602, in his twenty-third year, and observing that not only was the Sabbath broken, but that the young men played outside the church during the hours of divine service (¹), he endeavoured to make the church services more attractive to these young men than their games, and for this purpose he composed hymns, which he taught his people to sing in church. By these means he induced the parishioners, young and old, to attend service, and by his impressive sermons and hymns he succeeded in making them strict observers of the Sunday, and in other ways he influenced them for good. Charles I. re-issued the *Book of Sports* in 1633, with the approval of Archbishop Laud, who also wrote a letter to the Bishops, enjoining them to see that it was published to the people in the parishes within their respective dioceses. At that time Bishop Field presided over the Diocese of St. David's, and it is probable he did not enforce the reading of the book; if so, then Prichard escaped the shame of having to withdraw his words respecting the observance of the Sabbath. It is not likely that he would have read the *Book of Sports* to his people on Sunday.

The Vicar's Book, or *Canwyll y Cymry*, was not composed and published all at once, but appeared in parts, and possibly, in the first instance, they were in MS. The Vicar died in 1644. His stray

¹ That the hours of divine service were not universally observed in England would appear from the injunctions of Edm. Grindal, Archbishop of York, published 1571 : — "No innkeeper, victualler, or tipler should admit in his house or back side any to eat, drink, or play at cards, tables, or bowls in time of common prayer, preaching, or reading of homilies, on the Sundays and holidays."—*Concilia*, vol. iv., p. 269.

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sermons in verse were first collected in 1646, and published in two parts, in London, by Stephen Hughes; this was followed by a third part in 1670, and a fourth was added in 1672. About fifteen editions of this book have been published. The Welsh people are fond of music and poetry. Vicar Prichard knew this, and taught them through his poems what, otherwise, they would not receive. The ignorant and unlettered got off by heart hundreds of these stanzas, and they delighted in repeating them, to force, it may be, an argument, or to embellish a sentiment. The writer has heard in various parts of Wales the monoglot Welshman repeat portions of the Vicar's Book in the most appropriate manner. The influence which it had upon the morals and behaviour of the people was great. I will give a few extracts, out of a large number, from the *Canwyll*, on Sunday observance. The quotations are from the edition of 1858:—

AM Y SABBATH.

- V. 19. O'r holl ddyddiau nid oes undydd
Ym ni'n dreulio mor ddi-grefydd,
Mor anneddfol, mor ysgymmun
A'r dydd Sabbath tra fo'r flwyddyn.
- V. 20. Dydd i feddwi, dydd i fowlian,
Dydd i ddawnsio, dydd i loetran,
Dydd i hwrn a gwylhersu
Yw'r dydd Sabbath gan y Cymry.
- V. 21. Dydd i eistedd a dyfalu,
Dydd i ymlâd ac ymd'aeru,
Dydd i weithio gwaith y cythraul
Yw dydd Duw mewn llawer cornel.
- V. 24. Cofia gadw'r Sabbath sanctaidd,
Duw fynn gadw hynn yn berffaidd;
Yr hwn a dreulio'r Sul yn ofer,
Ni wna bris o ddim orch'myner.

—*Canwyll y Cymry*, p. 244.

The first verse quoted above, or verse nineteenth in the *Canwyll*, informs us that, of all days in the year, the Sabbath is spent in the most irreligious and unprofitable manner.

The next two stanzas describe the way in which the Sabbath is kept in Wales—it is a day devoted to drunkenness, to bowl playing, to dancing, to loitering, and to other things even of a worse kind than those enumerated.

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The last verse is an earnest appeal to the people to observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.

There are, as I have said, a large number of verses in the Vicar's Book similar to those now given. I will quote one—his advice to young men :—

Treulia'r Sabboth oll yn llwyr,
Mewn sancteiddrwydd fore a hwyr,
Ac na ddyro ran na chyfran,
O ddydd Duw i blesio Satan.

Spend every hour of the Sabbath
In holiness both morn and eve,
And give not a part or parcel
Of God's day the devil to please.

It was with such words as these that the zealous Vicar partially counteracted the effect of the *Book of Sports*, and his poems were, probably, more powerful even than the words of a king. It may safely be said that, particularly in South Wales, by his poems, he brought about a better observance of the Sabbath. But all changes are gradual, particularly those that are accomplished by moral suasion, and it was long after Vicar Prichard had left the scene of his labours that the seed sown bore fruit.

Another eminent man, who carried on the work begun by the author of *Canwyll y Cymry*, was the Rev. Griffith Jones, Llanddowror. He was born in 1683, and in 1730, when he was Vicar of Llanddowror, he founded a system of Circulating Schools in Wales. He, too, was an able and impressive preacher, and devoted himself to the spiritual improvement of his countrymen. He was the author of several works in Welsh and English. One of these was an Explanation of the Catechism of the Church of England, *Esponiad ar Gatecism Eglwys Loegr*. It is a well-known book in Wales. One question will suffice to show the tendency of "Griffith Jones's" teaching. I quote from the edition published by the Bangor Diocesan Tract Society in 1879. In page 135 is the following :—

1. Pa bechodau a waherddir yn y pedwerydd gorchymyn ?
2. Dilyn diotta, a chwareuon, neu ryw ddifyrwch ofer, a chwedleua ein geiriau llygredig ein hunain ar y Sabbath.—Esay lviii. 13, 14.

That is :—

1. What sins are forbidden in the fourth commandment ?

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2. Tippling, and sports, or any vain amusement, and speaking our own corrupt words on the Sabbath.—Is. lviii. 13, 14.

It is reasonable to suppose from this quotation that what is therein named then existed, and sports are mentioned. The author of this Catechism died April 8, 1761. Sunday games died not with him. But there arose in the southern part of the Principality another pre-eminent and zealous clergyman, the Rev. Daniel Rowlands of Llangeitho, who carried on the crusade against Sabbath-breaking. He was a contemporary of Griffith Jones, and his life received its bias from a sermon preached by Jones. Rowlands was born in 1713, and died October 16, 1790, so that he outlived his spiritual father about 30 years. Remarkable success attended his ministry, and such was his fame that numbers from the remotest parts of Wales resorted to Llangeitho to hear him. At the time we are now speaking of, there were other like-minded ministers, who raised their voices against Sunday sports. They need not all be mentioned, but in North Wales there was one preacher of transcendent power, John Elias, who successfully attacked Sabbath-breaking. I have already shown how he went to the Sunday harvest fair at Rhuddlan in the year 1802, and preached there with such power, that the practice of holding fairs on Sundays was there and then given up. Before the death of John Elias, which took place June 8, 1841, Sunday games had disappeared in Wales. For years they had been on the wane, and by 1840 they had ceased.

When people's minds had become unsettled as to their way of spending Sunday, it was not difficult to convince them that the sudden death of one of the Sunday players was an undoubted proof of God's disapprobation of Sabbath-breaking. Many instances of such deaths have been recorded. The Ven. Archdeacon Ffoulkes, who was at one time Rector of Llandyssil, a rural parish in Montgomeryshire, writes to me as follows:—"During my 22 years at Llandyssil, I knew an old woman who remembered the football games played every Sunday afternoon; gentry, farmers, and labourers joining. They came to an end in consequence of a man falling down dead in the field while playing."

In a curious pamphlet, an extract from which is given by Mr. Earwaker, Pensarn, Abergele, in *The Cheshire Sheaf* reprint, vol. iii., p. 52, is a collection of God's judgments upon those guilty of the non-observance of the Sabbath. The pamphlet is entitled:—"A

Appendix.

Divine Tragedie lately acted, or, A Collection of Sundrie memorable examples of God's judgments upon Sabbath-breakers, and other like Libertines in their unlawful sports, happening within the Realme of England, in the compass onely of two years last past, since the Book (*i.e.* the *Book of Sports*) was published by that worthy Divine, Mr. Henry Burton," 1641. The following quotation, which is given by Mr. Earwaker in *The Cheshire Sheaf*, will show the nature of these judgments :—

1634. At Thornton, near West-chester, the people there, upon the first publishing of the book, prepared for a solemn "Summer ale." The bringing in of their *Lady Flora* should have been guarded with a marshall troop : the lustiest wench and the stoutest young man in the town were chosen to be the purveyors for cakes and for ribbons for favours. The solemnity was to be on the Monday, but the preparation on the Lord's Day. This lusty, tall maid, on the Saturday before, went to the mill to fetch home the meal for cakes on her head, she being strong and able for the purpose ; but in the way, passing by a hedge, she was suddenly struck by a divine stroke, and fell into the ditch, where she was found dead. She was suffered to lie abroad in that pickle all the Lord's Day till Monday morning, when, the Coroner been sent for, she was thence carried to her grave immediately ; where all her solemnity was buried with her, and all her vain thoughts, in that verie day wherein the great solemnity should have been. And see what a good effect this wrought in the whole town ! First, all their mirth was turned in to mourning, no summer ale kept, and besides that, they being moved by the dreadful stroke of God took their May-pole down, which they had before set up ; and never after would presume to set it up again, or to have any more summer-ales or May-poles. God grant they continue in their sober mindes, and that all other would learn to be wise by their example.

This quotation shall bring to a close my lengthy remarks on the causes that led to the disappearance of Sunday games.





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