

VIII.

ON SOME POINTS OF RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE ART OF THE
EARLY SCULPTURED STONES OF SCOTLAND AND OF IRELAND.
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It has been assumed by some antiquaries that the peculiar style of art we are accustomed to call Celtic, for want of a more precisely descriptive term, had its origin in Ireland, and spread thence to other parts of Great Britain, and even to the continent of Europe. No doubt it is true that Celtic art attained its highwater-mark of excellence in the Irish MSS. of the best period, such as the Books of Kells, Armagh, and Durrow, but it may be worth while inquiring to what extent the scribes who illuminated these beautiful codices were indebted to foreign sources for the ideas they elaborated with such unrivalled ingenuity; and also whether the similarities which exist between the Christian monuments dating from the 8th to the 11th centuries in various parts of Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales, may not be accounted for by development along parallel lines, rather than by copying one from the other.

To the Fellows of this Society the most interesting part of the investigation will be the tracing of any points of resemblance it may be possible to detect between the early sculptured stones of Scotland and those of Ireland.

My attention has been recently directed to this subject by several very good rubbings, which have been sent to me, taken by my friend Mr D. Griffith Davies of Bangor, of some hitherto unpublished cross-shafts and fragments at Clonmacnoise, King's County, Ireland.

Photographs of these are here reproduced (fig. 1); and I think it will at once strike anyone who is familiar with the early sculptured stones of Scotland, that the designs upon the large shaft at Clonmacnoise, more especially the figure subjects, are in many particulars very like what one would expect to see on an upright cross-slab in Perthshire or Forfarshire.

The shaft is sculptured in relief on four faces as follows :—



Fig. 1. Four faces of Cross-shaft at Clonmacnoise, 4 feet 8½ inches high.
From a rubbing by D. Griffith Davies.

Front.—Divided into three panels, containing—

- (1) A beast with floriated tail, and below it an ecclesiastic on horse-back, carrying a crozier over his shoulder.
- (2) A stag with its tongue protruding, and its right fore-leg fixed in a rectangular frame or hobble.
- (3) Figures of four men placed swastica-fashion, with their limbs interlaced, and grasping each other's beards with one hand, and a long lock of the next man's hair with the other.

Back.—Divided into three panels, containing—

- (1) Interlaced work, composed of three vertical rows of spiral knots.
- (2) A beast with crest forming interlaced work, eating or strangling a serpent.
- (3) A pair of men placed symmetrically opposite to each other, with their fore-locks interlaced, so as to make a figure of eight knots, and grasping each other's wrists.

Right Side.—Divided into four panels, containing—

- (1) The tail of a serpent interlaced.
- (2) A spiral design, consisting of six large triple spirals arranged in a double row, with smaller spirals filling in the spandrils.
- (3) Interlaced work, composed of knot No. 265, arranged in two vertical rows, each knot facing alternately upwards and downwards (being the same as pattern No. 633, only with knots in a double instead of a single row).
- (4) Zoömorphic interlaced work.

Left Side.—Divided into three panels, containing—

- (1) A pair of serpentine creatures, whose bodies form interlaced work, derived from a twelve-cord plait, each biting the tail of the other.
- (2) A spiral design, consisting of eight large triple spirals, arranged in two vertical rows of four each, with smaller spirals filling in the spandrils.
- (3) A pair of serpentine creatures, whose bodies form interlaced work of the same type as pattern No. 402 B¹ and portion of an interlaced pattern composed of knot No. 265, arranged in a

¹ This is somewhat different from any interlaced pattern yet recorded in Scotland. It may be derived from pattern No. 610 by adding extra cords at each side, and

single vertical row, facing alternately upwards and downwards (being

the same as pattern No. 633, but with an extra cord on each side).



Fig. 2. Fragment of Cross-Shaft (?) at Clonmacnoise. Photographed from a rubbing by D. Griffith Davies.

The ecclesiastic on horseback on the Clonmacnoise slab at once calls to mind the three hooded horsemen on the stone at St Madoes, Perthshire, and the single hooded horseman on the stone at Eilean Mòr, Argyllshire. The stag below and the beast above with the floriated tail (perhaps intended for a lion, like those on the stones from Papil and Bressay in Shetland, now in the National Museum, which are also associated with cowled monks) apparently have some symbolical significance when combined with the horseman, though it is not easy to say what meaning was intended.

Photographs are exhibited for comparison of a rubbing of a fragment at Clonmacnoise (fig. 2) with a horseman and two beasts having floriated tails, one biting the fore-leg of the other; and a portion of a

making them twist or cross over between each pair of knots, as in pattern No. 705, from the Book of Durrow. The same pattern, but with the knots arranged in a double instead of a single row, occurs on another cross-shaft at Clonmacnoise (O'Neil, pl. 24 S).

cross-shaft at Killeany, Aran Mòr, Galway, with a horseman upon it (figs. 3 and 3A). The latter was sent to me by Prof. A. C. Haddon. An early Irish drawing of a priest on horseback, his cowl thrown back and his head tonsured, but not in the Celtic way, is to be found in the

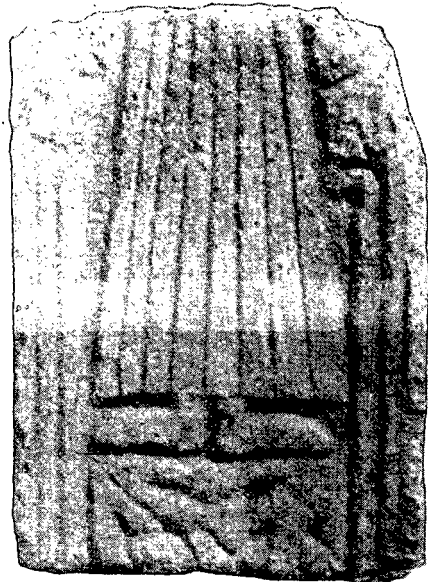


Fig. 3. Fragment of Cross-Shaft (?) at Killeany, Aran Mòr. Front.

Fig. 3A. Fragment of Cross-Shaft at Killeany, Aran Mòr. Back.

From photographs by Prof. A. C. Haddon.

margin of a page in the *Book of Kells*, St Luke xvii. 2-7. (*Celtic Ornaments of the Book of Kells*, pl. 43.)

As far as I am aware, the only instance of the curious hand-grasping men placed swastica-fashion which occurs in Scotland is on the side of a recumbent monument at Meigle;¹ although four serpents similarly

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xii. pl. 25.

arranged are to be seen on a stone at Eilean Mòr,¹ Argyllshire, and the hand-grasping idea is perhaps to be detected in the figure of a mermaid (?) on another stone at Meigle.² Groups of men placed swastica-fashion are used in the decoration of the *Book of Kells*;³ the Lismore Crozier;⁴ the north cross at Kilklispeen,⁵ Co. Kilkenny; the cross of SS. Patrick and Columba in Kells churchyard;⁶ the cross in the market place at Kells;⁷ the cross of Muredach at Monasterboice;⁸ and the north cross at Clonmacnoise.⁹ Hand-grasping figures not placed swastica-fashion may be noticed in other pages of the *Book of Kells*,¹⁰ in the St Gall Book of Fragments, No. 1395,¹¹ and another St Gall MS.¹² The swastica arrangement and the hand-grasping idea may possibly be due to a Scandinavian source, though the treatment is otherwise peculiarly Celtic.

The spiral knot, with the awkward reverse curve of the band to join it on to the next knot, on the top panel of the back of the Clonmacnoise shaft, may be observed on the monument known as 'Sueno's Stone' at Forres, on one of the narrow faces of which are also a pair of mermen,¹³ with their tails forming knot-work like those on the bottom panel of the Clonmacnoise shaft.

Mr Griffith Davies has made a series of rubbings of a large number of the inscribed cross-slabs at Clonmacnoise, which he hopes to be able to complete this year. Mr R. A. S. Macalister has these rubbings in his care, and intends to publish them eventually. A comparison of the rubbings with the illustrations given in Petrie's *Christian Inscriptions in the Irish Language* has shown what an urgent need there is to have

¹ Capt. White, *Archæological Sketches*, Kynntyre and Knapdale, pl. 29.

² Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, vol. i, pl. 132, No. 18.

³ *Palæog. Soc. Publ.*, pl. 89, first page of St Mark's gospel.

⁴ O'Neill's *Fine Arts of Ancient Ireland*.

⁵ O'Neill's *Sculptured Crosses of Ancient Ireland*, pl. 7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pl. 28.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pl. 34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pl. 15.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pl. 24.

¹⁰ *Celtic Ornaments from the Book of Kells*, pls. 6, 27, 30, 37.

¹¹ C. Purton Cooper's "Appendix A to Report on Rymer's Fædera," pl. 21.

¹² *Ulster Jour. of Archæology*, vol. viii.

¹³ These are not properly shown in Stuart's *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*.

accurate representations of all the Clonmacnoise slabs. These are the most important historical monuments of the Early Christian period existing in Ireland; yet the Board of Works are such careless guardians of them that they are allowed to be piled up periodically one on the top of the other, to form a temporary altar for the celebration of the festival of St Ciaran. The result is, that the slabs are being greatly damaged, and many of them have disappeared altogether since Dr Petrie made his sketches. As Dr Petrie's identifications of the persons whose names are mentioned on the slabs are not always founded on correct readings, their value is therefore considerably impaired.

The question of the geographical distribution of the Irish crosses is one to which sufficient attention has not been paid. The following is a list of the localities where the best known crosses are to be found:—

ULSTER.

<i>Co. Donegal.</i>	<i>Co. Cavan.</i>
Cardonagh.	None recorded.
Clonca.	
Fahan.	<i>Co. Monaghan.</i>
Glencolumkill.	Clones.
Tory Island.	
<i>Co. Londonderry.</i>	<i>Co. Armagh.</i>
None recorded.	Armagh.
<i>Co. Antrim.</i>	Tynan.
None recorded.	
<i>Co. Fermanagh.</i>	<i>Co. Down.</i>
Boho.	Camus.
Drungay Craanog.	Dromore.
<i>Co. Tyrone.</i>	Drumgoolan.
Arboe.	Kilbroney.
Donaghmore.	Newtownards (?).

LEINSTER.

<i>Co. Longford.</i>	<i>Co. Louth.</i>
None recorded.	Drumeskin.
<i>Co. Westmeath.</i>	Monasterboice.
None recorded.	Termonfechin.
<i>Co. Meath.</i>	
Duleek.	<i>Co. Dublin.</i>
Kells.	Clondalkin.
St Kierans.	Finglas.
Lisnock (?).	Tallaght (?).

LEINSTER—*continued.**King's County.*

Clonmacnoise.
 Durrow.
 Banagher.
 Tihilly.

Queen's County.

None recorded.

Co. Kildare.

Castle Dermot.
 Kilcullen.
 Moone Abbey.

Co. Wicklow.

Fassaroe.
 Glendalough.

Co. Wicklow—continued.

Blessington (?).
 Delgany (?).
 King's Court (?).

Co. Kilkenny.

Graiguenamanagh.
 Kilkispeen.
 Killamery.
 Kilree.
 Ullard.
 Dunnamagan.

Co. Carlow.

None recorded.

Co. Wexford.

Ferns.

CONNAUGHT.

Co. Mayo.

None recorded.

Co. Sligo.

Drumcliff.
 Inismurray.

Co. Leitrim.

None recorded.

Co. Galway.

Aran I., St Breacan's.
 Aran I., Kileany.
 Ardoilean.
 Cong.
 Macdara's I.
 Tuam.

Co. Roscommon.

None recorded.

MUNSTER.

Co. Clare.

Dysart, near Ennis.
 Kilfenora.

Co. Limerick.

None recorded.

Co. Tipperary.

Mona Incha.
 Roscrea.
 Cashel.

Co. Kerry.

Reask.

Co. Cork.

Tullylease.

Co. Waterford.

None recorded.

SUMMARY SHOWING GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH CROSSES.

N. ULSTER.		E. LEINSTER.	
Co. Donegal,	5	Co. Longford, . . . .	...
Co. Londonderry,	1	Co. Westmeath, . . . .	...
Co. Antrim, . . . .	...	Co. Meath,	4
Co. Fermanagh,	2	Co. Louth,	3
Co. Tyrone,	2	Co. Dublin,	3
Co. Cavan, . . . .	...	King's County,	4
Co. Monaghan,	1	Queen's County, . . . .	...
Co. Armagh,	2	Co. Kildare,	3
Co. Down,	5	Co. Wicklow,	2
		Co. Kilkenny,	6
		Co. Carlow, . . . .	...
		Co. Wexford,	1
	18		26
W. CONNAUGHT.		S. MUNSTER.	
Co. Mayo, . . . .	...	Co. Clare,	2
Co. Sligo,	2	Co. Limerick, . . . .	...
Co. Leitrim, . . . .	...	Co. Tipperary,	3
Co. Galway,	6	Co. Kerry,	1
Co. Roscommon, . . . .	...	Co. Cork,	1
		Co. Waterford, . . . .	...
	8		7

Looking at this summary of the geographical distribution of the Irish crosses, several remarkable facts are disclosed; namely, (1) the total number of recorded localities where such monuments exist in Ireland only amounts to about 60 in all, and is therefore extremely small as compared with the 300 localities in Scotland, 250 in England, 15 in the Isle of Man, and 40 in Wales; (2) the greater proportion of the Irish crosses occur in Leinster and Ulster, the finest examples being in the counties of Tyrone, Meath, Louth, Kildare, Kilkenny, and in King's County; (3) the almost entire absence of crosses in Connaught and Munster,—this being especially remarkable in the

counties of Kerry, Cork, and Waterford, which contain nearly the whole of the ogam-inscribed pillar-stones of the earliest Christian period.

After making every allowance for the imperfect record we at present possess of the localities where the Irish crosses exist, and giving due weight to such considerations as the greater facility with which freestone suitable for sculpture can be obtained in particular districts, and also the relative positions of the rich agricultural land, and the wild tracts of mountain, bog, and barren moorland, the significance of the deductions to be made from the geographical distribution of the Irish crosses is in no way lessened.

All the facts stated appear to me to indicate (1) that the pre-Norman crosses and other ornamented monuments in Ireland are, as a general rule, of later date than those of Scotland, England, or Wales; (2) that early Christian sculpture in Great Britain had its origin in Northumbria, and spread thence to Scotland before it spread to Ireland; and (3) that the efflorescence, as Prof. A. C. Haddon has called it, of Celtic art is largely due to the stimulating effect of the continual intercourse between the Celts, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Norsemen, which took place after the English became Christians, and Ireland, Scotland, and Wales ceased to be isolated, and communication with the Continent became more frequent.¹

In connection with this subject, it will be instructive to compare the geographical distribution of the Irish crosses with the maps given in Miss Stokes' and Lord Dunraven's works on ancient Irish architecture, and to observe how nearly the areas in which the crosses and the round towers are most common correspond with the districts ravaged by the Northmen.

The scrolls of foliage on the crosses at Kells, Monasterboice, and Clonmacnoise are clear indications of Northumbrian influence, as also

¹ Dr H. Colley March holds the same views on 'Ancient Irish Art.' He says, "The conclusion to be drawn is irresistible. The features of early Christian art introduced from without Wherever these Byzantine and Scandinavian art-currents met and mingled, the result has been reinforcement and enrichment beyond the strength and beauty that either possessed alone." *Trans. Lanc. and Cheshire Ant. Soc.*, vol. xi.

are the bird-motive and leaf-motive patterns in the *Book of Kells*. The portrait of St John and its ornamented frame¹ in the same MS. bear a striking resemblance in the style to the decorations of the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Durham Cassiodorus. I have not been able to detect anything clearly Scandinavian in the designs upon the Irish crosses, but the artificers in metal who made the shrine of the bell of St Patrick's will (A.D. 1091), and the crozier of Clonmacnoise, in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, have embodied two very characteristic Scandinavian features in their decorative work, namely, the pear-shaped eye, with the pointed end in front, and the two-toed beast. These are almost universal on the Scandinavian rune-inscribed monuments of the 11th century.

As regards the points of resemblance between the shapes of the early Christian monuments of Scotland and of Ireland, it is only in the West of Scotland that high crosses of the Irish type are to be found, the best known examples being at Kildalton in Islay (figs. 4 and 4A) and at Iona. Upright cross-slabs of the true Scottish type are conspicuous by their absence in Ireland, in which country the monuments may be divided into four classes:—

- (1) Rude pillar-stones, with plain incised crosses of the very early period, and contemporary with some at least of the ogam inscriptions.
- (2) Erect slabs, left in their natural state, and not having their edges trimmed square, with ornamental crosses carved on one or both of the broad faces, but with no decorative background to the cross or frame round the whole slab, as in Scotland. These are often erected on a rude sort of altar built of dry rubble, and are now used for praying-stations, as on Inismurray and on MacDara's Island, off the north-west coast of Ireland.
- (3) Recumbent sepulchral slabs, also left with their edges rough, having an ornamental cross, and generally accompanied by an inscription in minuscules. The largest group of these monuments is at Clonmacnoise.

¹ *Celtic Ornaments from the Book of Kells*, pl. 34.



Fig. 4. Cross at Kildalton, Islay. Front.



Fig. 4A. Cross at Kildalton, Islay. Back.

- (4) The high crosses, like those at Monasterboice, Clonmacnoise, and Kells.

It is only upon the last class of monument that Celtic ornament is largely made use of, as in the Irish MSS. In the case of the others, ornament is but sparingly used, chiefly in the form of decorative bosses in the centre of the crosses, and of interlaced or spiral terminations to the arms of the crosses. Even on the high crosses the ornamental patterns are made quite subordinate to the figure subjects, just the reverse of what we find to be the case in the MSS. The smaller crosses and cross-slabs, with nothing but purely geometrical ornament upon them, which are so common in Scotland, England, and Wales, seem hardly to exist at all in Ireland.

The few upright cross-slabs, even approaching distantly the Scottish type that occur outside Scotland, are to be found in the Isle of Man¹ and Wales,² but not in England or Ireland;³ and, as far as I am aware, there is only one cross of the Irish type in England.⁴

All this indicates that Celtic art was not applied to sculptured stone work in Ireland until quite a late period, and probably subsequently to its full development in other parts of Great Britain.

The last point to be considered in endeavouring to trace any resemblances which may be found to exist between the early sculptured stones of Scotland and of Ireland is the nature of the figure-subjects upon the monuments in each country.

The following tables show at a glance the most common scriptural subjects on the early sculptured stones of Ireland and Scotland, with the localities where they occur:—

¹ At Kirk Maughold.

² Llandeuaelog, Brecknockshire.

³ The only example of the erect cross-slab recorded in Ireland is that at Lower Drumhallagh, Co. Donegal. It is an unshaped slab bearing on the obverse a cross ornamented with interlaced work, and four figures bearing staves, or crosiers, and on the reverse a plain cross. The rude character of the sculpture, and the style of the figures indicates a comparatively late date. It has been figured from a rubbing in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, vol ix., Fourth Series (1889), p. 279.

⁴ At Wiuwick, Lancashire.

Scriptural Subjects on Sculptured Stones of Scotland.

OLD TESTAMENT.

<i>Adam and Eve</i> —Farnell ; Iona,	2
<i>Noah in the Ark</i> —Cossins (?),	1
<i>Sacrifice of Isaac</i> —Kildalton,	1
<i>Three Children in Furnace</i>, . . . . .	...
<i>David and Harp</i> —Nigg ; Aldbar,	2
<i>David and Lion</i> —Nigg ; Aldbar,	2
<i>David and Goliath</i> . No examples recorded, . . . . .	...
<i>Daniel in Lions' Den</i> —St Vigean ; Meigle ; Dunkeld ; Iona (2) ; Kildalton ; Keills ; Inchinnan ; Newtonwoods,	8
<i>Ascent of Elijah</i> —Meigle,	1
<i>Jonah and the Whale</i> —Dunfallandy ; Woodwray ; Gask,	3

NEW TESTAMENT.

<i>Virgin and Child</i> —Brechin ; Iona (2) ; Kildalton ; Crail,	4
<i>Adoration of Magi</i> —Canna,	1
<i>Annunciation</i> —Ruthwell,	1
<i>Salutation</i> —Ruthwell,	1
<i>Flight into Egypt</i> —Ruthwell,	1
<i>Baptism of Christ</i> . No examples recorded, . . . . .	...
<i>Miracle of Loaves and Fishes</i> —Dunkeld,	1
<i>Miracle of Healing Blind</i> —Ruthwell,	1
<i>Christ and Mary Magdalene</i> —Ruthwell,	1
<i>Raising of Lazarus</i> —St Andrews,	1
<i>Crucifixion</i> —Kingoldrum ; Monifieth ; Camuston ; Strathmartine ; Aber- nethy ; Kirkholm ; Lasswade ; Ruthwell,	7
<i>Resurrection</i> . No examples recorded, . . . . .	...
<i>Christ in Glory</i> —Camuston ; Knockhill,	2
<i>Last Judgment</i> . No examples recorded, . . . . .	...
<i>Agnus Dei</i> —Knockhill ; Ruthwell,	2
<i>Dextera Dei</i> . No examples recorded, . . . . .	...
<i>Symbols of Four Evangelists</i> —Elgin ; Inchbrayock ; Brechin ; Kirriemuir,	4
<i>Angels</i> —Eassie ; Glamis, &c.,	22

It appears, then, that the scriptural subjects of most frequent occurrence in Ireland are the Crucifixion, Adam and Eve, the Sacrifice of Isaac, Daniel in the Lions' Den, and the scenes from the life of David ;

and in Scotland, the Crucifixion, Daniel in the Lions' Den, the Virgin and Child, and the symbols of the four Evangelists.

The subjects common to both Ireland and Scotland are Adam and Eve, Noah (?), Sacrifice of Isaac, Daniel in the Lions' Den, David and the Harp, David and the Lion, Adoration of the Magi, Flight into Egypt, Miracle of Loaves and Fishes, Crucifixion, Christ in Glory, Agnus Dei, Angels.

The subjects which occur in Ireland, but not in Scotland, are the Three Children in the Furnace, David and Goliath, Baptism of Christ, Resurrection, Last Judgment, Dextera Dei, Twelve Apostles. And those which occur in Scotland, but not in Ireland, are Ascent of Elijah, Raising of Lazarus, Jonah and the Whale, Annunciation, Salutation, Miracle of Healing the Blind, Christ and Mary Magdalene, Lazarus.

Of the subjects on the early sculptured stones of Ireland and Scotland the following belong to the cycle of subjects found on the paintings in the Catacombs and the Sculptured Sarcophagi (A.D. 50 to 450).

Adam and Eve.	Daniel in the Lions' Den.
Noah.	Jonah and the Whale.
Sacrifice of Isaac.	Adoration of Magi.
Three Children in the Furnace.	Miracle of Loaves and Fishes.
Ascent of Elijah.	Miracle of Healing the Blind.

The following subjects belong to the Lombardo-Byzantine period (A.D. 700-1100).

David.	Christ in Glory.
Baptism of Christ.	Last Judgment.
Crucifixion.	Agnus Dei.
Resurrection.	Dextera Dei.
Flight into Egypt.	Twelve Apostles.
Virgin and Child (apart from Magi).	Symbols of the Four Evangelists.
Christ and Mary Magdalene.	Angels.

Thus the early Sculptured Stones and the Hiberno-Saxon MSS. of Great Britain, and the Carolingian Ivories afford a connecting link between the older symbolism of the primitive Christianity of the Catacomb period and the more strictly ecclesiastical art of mediæval times.

Quite apart from the fact that King David was a type of Christ, and

that his pictures formed the illustrations of the Psalter, it is not surprising that he should have been an object of popular worship amongst the warlike and musical Celts, to one side of whose character his heroic deeds in rending the jaws of the lion and slaying the giant Goliath, would appeal as strongly as his talent as a harper would to the other.

A small MS. Irish Psalter in the British Museum (Vit. F. i.)¹ contains two very curious miniatures, one of David Playing the Harp and the other of David and Goliath.² The former is interesting, because I think it helps to explain the meaning of a figure sitting on the back of a beast and playing a harp,³ sculptured on one of the panels of the cross at Clonmacnoise. As I hold, this is intended for David; and my reason for supposing this is, because the throne on which David is seated in the miniature in the Psalter is conventionally treated as a beast.

I am not quite sure whether the boat with men in it, on the stone at Cossins, is intended for Noah's Ark or not, but a boat of just the same kind is represented on a carved wooden pillar at Olaf's church,⁴ Nesland, where it is associated with other scriptural subjects, amongst others the creation of Eve, Samson and Delilah, and David and Goliath. In this case there can be little doubt but that the boat is intended for Noah's Ark, so that probably the boat at Cossins has the same meaning.

The angels or cherubim, with four wings, and spirals where the wings join on to the body, which are to be seen on the stones at Eassie, Glamis, and elsewhere in Scotland, do not occur on any of the sculptured crosses in Ireland, but there are instances of angels or the symbols of the four evangelists treated in the same fashion in the St Gall Gospels, Codex No. 51,⁵ and on the Book Shrine of St Molaise's Gospels,⁶ in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin, and also on a bronze

¹ Westwood's *Miniatures*, pl. 5.

² In the miniature of David and Goliath in the Psalter, David holds a sling in one hand and a beast-headed club in the other. The resemblance between this club and the beast's-head symbol, which occurs on the Norrie's Law silver ornaments, and on several of the early incised slabs in Scotland, may be only accidental, but it is worth noting as a possible clue to the scriptural interpretation of the symbol.

³ O'Neil, pl. 24A.

⁴ L. H. S. Dietrichsen, *De Norske Stavkirker*, p. 362.

⁵ C. Purton Cooper's "Appendix A to Report on Rymer's Fædera," pl. 5.

⁶ *Archæologia*, vol. xliii, p. 131.

plaque¹ of the Crucifixion, in the same collection. I have recently discovered a very curious instance of an angel of this kind, with three wings, on a cross-slab, with interlaced work, in St David's Cathedral, given in Westwood's *Lapidarium Walliæ* (pl. 63, fig. 4), but the wings and spirals only shown, and the head of the angel omitted.

The pair of ecclesiastics, sometimes standing, sometimes enthroned, sometimes kneeling, with a bird holding a circular disc in its mouth between them, is a subject common to the early sculptured stones of both Scotland² and Ireland,³ but the exact meaning of it has yet to be ascertained if we are not to take the instance on the Ruthwell cross as an authoritative explanation of the whole.

As I have already pointed out in my Rhind Lectures on *Christian Symbolism*, there is a nearer affinity between the subjects chosen to decorate the bases of the Irish crosses and the representations of hunting scenes, horsemen, chariots, etc., on the upright cross-slabs of the North-East of Scotland, than the more strictly Scriptural scenes on the shafts of the Irish crosses. The best examples illustrating this are to be seen on the bases of the crosses at Kells (figs. 5 and 6), Monasterboice, Clonmacnoise, Castle Dermot (fig. 7), and Kilkispeen.

The chariot on the Meigle slab, now lost, may be compared with the chariots to be seen on the shaft of the cross at Killamery, and on the bases of the crosses at Monasterboice, Kilkispeen, and in Kells churchyard; on the base of the cross in the street at Kells we have the eagle and fish, as on the 'Drosten' stone at St Vigeans and as in the *Book of Armagh*; and on the base of this same cross, and of the cross of Muredach at Monasterboice, centaurs occur, in some respects like those on the slabs at Aberlemno, Meigle, and Glamis.

On the base of the Kilkispeen cross are portrayed a procession of ecclesiastics taking part in a most remarkable ceremony. On the south side of the base is to be seen a priest carrying a processional cross, and followed by a man leading a horse, on the back of which is laid the

¹ Westwood's *Miniatures*, pl. 51.

² As at Nigg and St Vigeans. Dr J. Anderson regards the Nigg example as being intended for St Paul and St Anthony.

³ As at Kells, Moone Abbey, Clonca.



Fig. 5. Cross in street of Kells, Co. Meath. From a photograph by W. Lawrence of Dublin.

headless trunk of a man, with two birds of prey, or carrion crows, perched on the top.



Fig. 6. Cross of SS. Patrick and Columba in Kells Churchyard. From a photograph by W. Lawrence of Dublin.

On the north side of the base are two ecclesiastics on horseback, followed by two more in a chariot drawn by a pair of horses,



Fig. 7. Great Cross at Castle Dermot. From a photograph by W. Lawrence of Dublin.

On the east side are several beasts, birds, and a man.

On the west side is a central figure, perhaps a bishop, with three ecclesiastics holding croziers on each side of him.

These scenes can hardly be Scriptural; and if they are not taken from the life of some saint, it is difficult to see what explanation remains to be suggested, except that an event of local importance is here commemorated. The bases of the pillar-cross at Llandough and of the great wheel-cross at Margam, both in Glamorganshire, are the only ones with figures of horsemen upon them in Wales.

The symbolism of the shafts of the Irish crosses is so strictly Biblical that secular subjects may have been placed on the bases by way of contrast, to indicate the actual world or earth on which the cross stood representing the spiritual world. The eagle and fish may personify the ocean, and the centaur the desert, for which we have the authority of the bestiaries and the legendary life of St Anthony.

The points of similarity between the ornamental patterns on the stones of Ireland and Scotland raise questions of too much intricacy to be dealt with here; but it may be remarked that figure-sculpture forms the chief feature of the Irish crosses,—geometrical, zoömorphie, and foliaceous designs being only as a rule applied to the decoration of the smaller panels on the sides of the shafts and to the rings connecting the arms. The upright cross-slabs of Scotland, more particularly those in Ross-shire, approach much more nearly in style—and therefore probably in age—to the illuminated pages of the Hiberno-Saxon MSS. of the best period, than do any of the Irish crosses.

In conclusion, I consider the so-called Celtic style to be a local variety of the Lombardo-Byzantine style, from which the figure-subjects, the interlaced work, the scrolls of foliage, and many of the strange real and fabulous creatures were apparently borrowed. The Lombardo-Byzantine style was introduced into this country after the Saxons became Christians; and being grafted upon the pagan art of the 'Late-Celtic' period, was developed in different ways in different parts of Great Britain. However, it in no way detracts from the artistic capacity of the Celt that he should have adapted certain decorative motives belonging to a foreign style instead of evolving them out of his own inner consciousness,

Although his materials may not all have been of native origin, they were so skilfully made use of in combination with native designs and developed with such exquisite taste, that the result was to produce an entirely original style, the like of which the world had never seen before.