



Guide to the Celtic antiquities of the Christian period preserved in the National Museum, Dublin

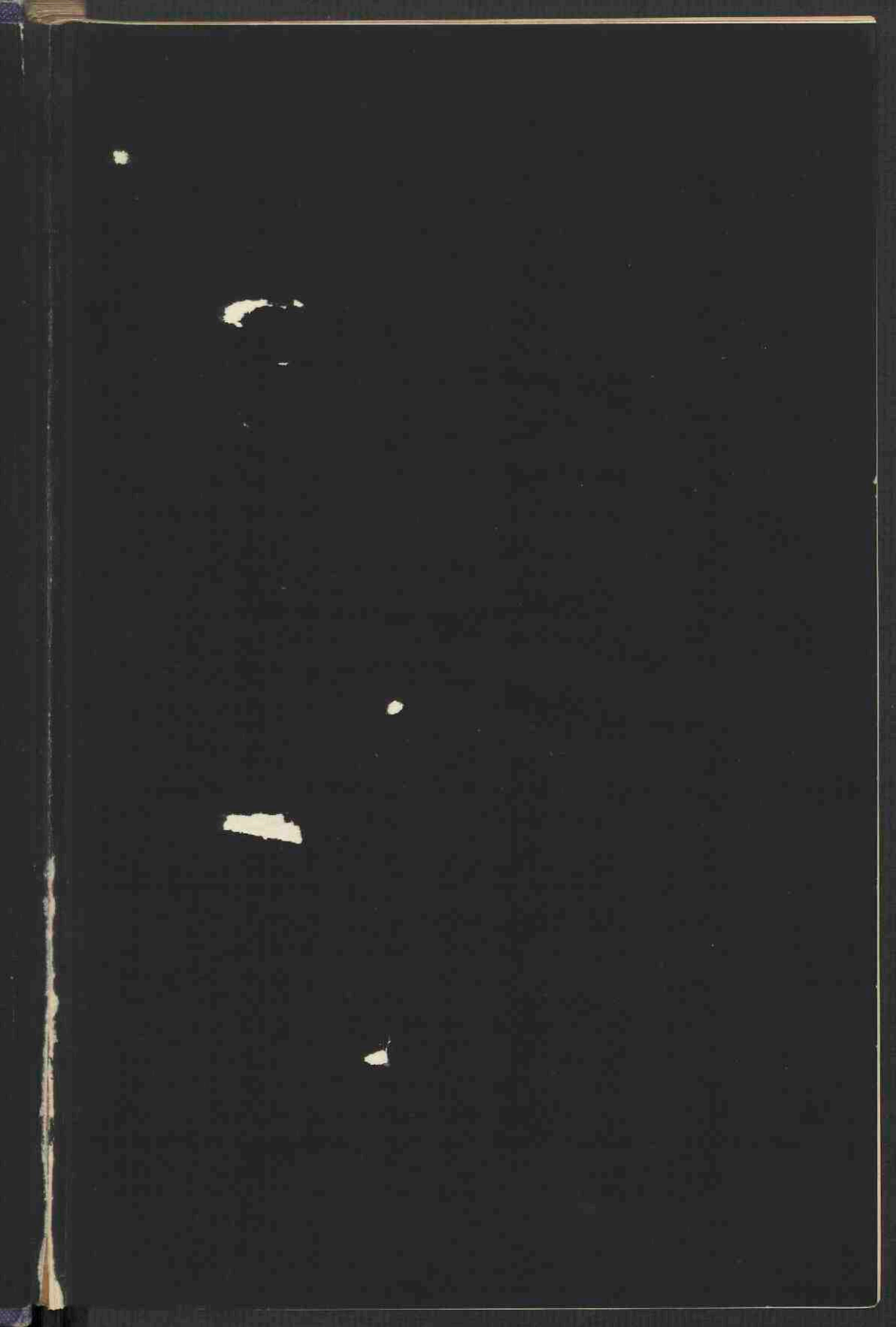
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LA TÈNE STONE AT TUROE, CO. GALWAY.

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GUIDE

TO THE

CELTIC ANTIQUITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD

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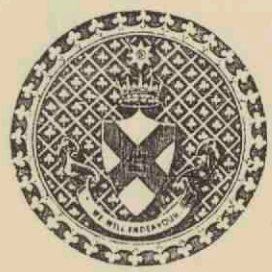
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, DUBLIN

BY

GEORGE COFFEY, M.R.I.A.,

KEEPER OF IRISH ANTIQUITIES IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, AND CURATOR OF THE
ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY COLLECTION

With 18 Plates and 94 Illustrations



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PREFACE

The famous Collection of the Royal Irish Academy was begun about the year 1840. The Council, in their Annual Report for 1841, state that "the Council are of opinion that the formation of a National Museum of Antiquities is an object which the Academy should continue steadily to pursue." The collection was shortly afterwards definitely organized as a Museum of Irish Antiquities.

Sir William Wilde's well-known Catalogue, the first part of which was published in 1857, mentions but few of the objects described in this Guide, many of which were acquired subsequently to its publication. On the death of that distinguished antiquary, Dr. Petrie, in 1866, his private collection, which embraced some of the most important antiquities of the Christian period described in the following pages, was acquired by private subscription. Dean Dawson's valuable collection had been obtained in the first years of the Museum in a similar manner.

When the present Museum was built in Kildare Street in 1890, the collection was transferred to the new buildings (now the National Museum of Science and Art, under the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction); but the Academy continues to add to their collection; many important objects were given or purchased by the Academy in recent years.

This Guide is not merely intended to point out the principal objects to casual visitors, but is written for those who take an interest in the study of Irish Antiquities, and to give some information as to the history of the Irish interlaced style.

It should, perhaps, be mentioned that the illustrations for the first chapter were prepared some time before the British Museum brought out its very excellent Guide to the Iron Age, which contains a full description of the archæology of the La Tène period: the pointing out the importance of the connexion between the classical Palmette and the La Tène ornament of the Celts is due chiefly to the writings of Dr. Arthur Evans.

The inscriptions on the shrines have been re-examined by Mr. R. I. Best, of the School of Irish Learning, to whom many thanks are due for the care he has taken in the matter. Thanks are also due to the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, who have kindly allowed several blocks to be used.

The photographs for plates, probably the best that have yet been taken of the objects, are the work of Mr. A. M'Googan, and have been supplied by the Museum.

Special thanks are due to Mr. E. C. R. Armstrong, Assistant for Irish Antiquities in the National Museum, for much assistance in preparing the work.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE,	iii, iv
LIST OF PLATES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,	vii-ix
CHAPTER I.—CELTIC ORNAMENT,	1-19
CHAPTER II.—PENANNULAR BROOCHES; PINS,	20
Early Penannular Brooches,	20-23
Closed Brooches,	24, 25
Tara Brooch,	25
Pin Brooches,	32
Pins,	33-36
CHAPTER III.—ARDAGH CHALICE AND BROOCHES,	37-41
CHAPTER IV.—SHRINES,	42-57
Lough Erne Shrine,	42-44
Soiscél Molaise,	44, 45
Domnach Airgid,	45, 46
Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell,	47-49
Shrine of St. Moedoc,	50-53
Shrine of St. Lachtin's Arm,	53, 54
The Corp Naomh,	54, 55
The Cross of Cong,	55-57
CHAPTER V.—CROSIERS,	58-64
Crosier of St. Columba,	59
St. Blathmac,	60
St. Berach,	60, 61
St. Dympna,	61
St. Tola of Dysert O'Dea,	61
St. Murus of Fahan,	61, 62
Abbots of Clonmacnois,	62, 63
Tau Crosier,	63
Crosier of Cormac MacCarthy,	64
CHAPTER VI.—BELLS,	65-67
Bell of Clogher,	66
Armagh,	67
Lough Lene Castle,	67
Bangor,	67
Cashel,	67

	PAGE
CHAPTER VII.—MISCELLANEOUS,	68-77
Miscellaneous,	68
High Crosses,	74
Stone Lamps and Cups,	75
Celtic Design,	76
CHAPTER VIII.—END OF INTERLACED STYLE,	78-84
Outer Case of Domnach Airgid,	78, 79
Fiacail Phadrúig,	79, 80
Medieval Crucifixes,	80, 81
Tablet Case and Waxed Tablets,	82-84
CHAPTER IX.—OGAM-INSCRIBED STONES,	85-90

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

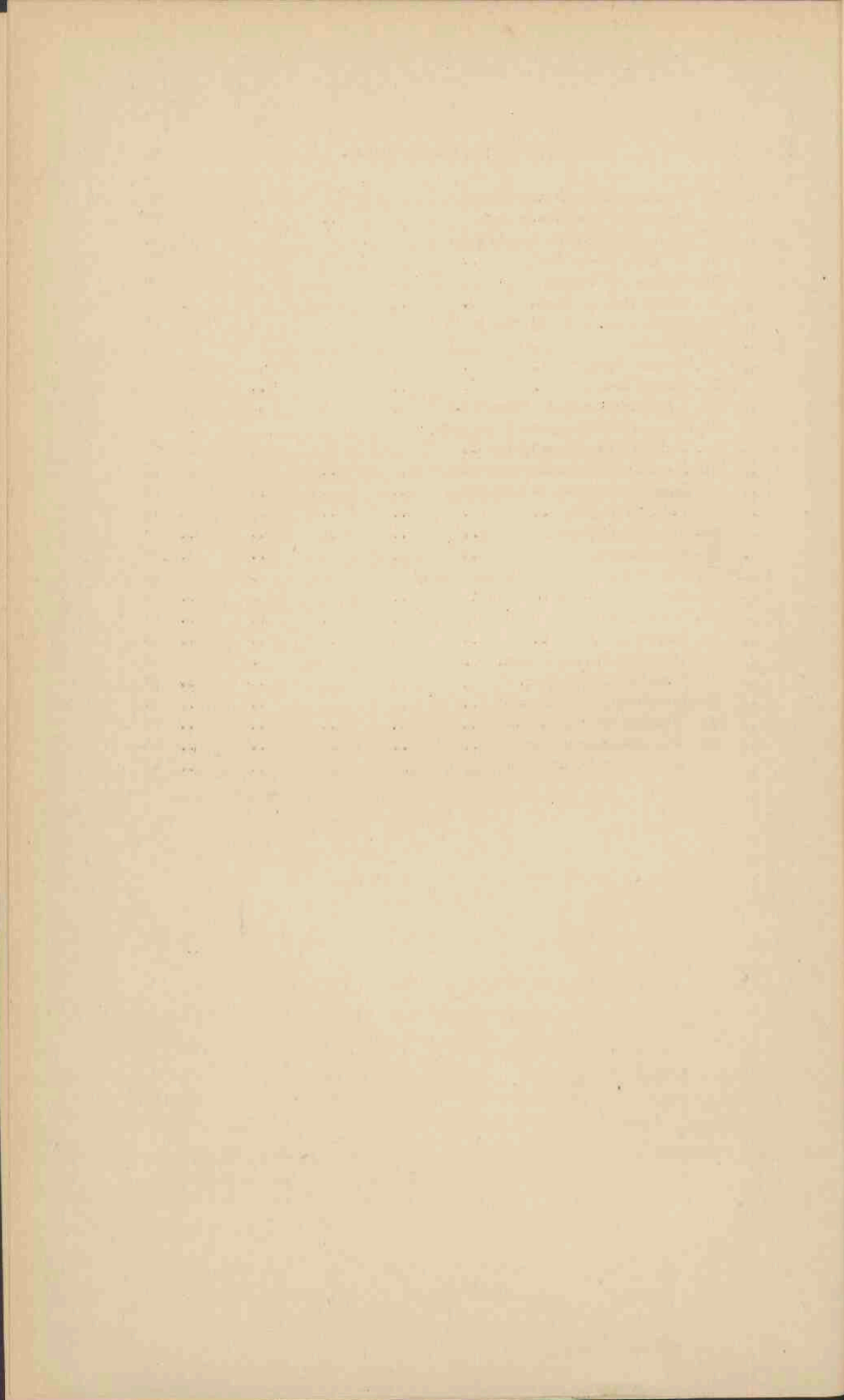
	PAGE
FRONTISPICE—La Tène Stone at Turoe, Co. Galway.	
FIG. 1. Detail of Helmet, Berru, Marne,	2
.. 2. Part of Find, Waldalgesheim,	3
.. 3. Ornaments from South-west Germany,	3
.. 4. Spiral and S- turn,	4
.. 5. Repoussé ornaments, Aylesford, and La Tène,	5
.. 6. Bronze Disk,	5
.. 7. Detail from Bronze Ornament,	6
.. 8. Head of Bronze Pin,	7
.. 9. Bronze Disk, enamelled,	7
.. 10. Letter from Book of Durrow,	8
.. 11. Romano-British mosaic pavements ; Roman Ring, Essex, }	9
.. 12. Plait-work, Rome and Ravenna,	10
.. 13. Italian knot-work	11
.. 14. Bronze 'latchet-fastener,'	14
.. 15. Bronze Brooch, Ardakillen,	15
.. 16. Tomb of Abbot Tuathgal, Clonmacnois,	18
.. 17. Details, Clonmacnois,	18
.. 18. Frets, Clonmacnois, etc.,	18
.. 19. Small Ring Brooch,	20
.. 20. Brooch with slightly expanded terminals,	21
.. 21. Brooch with 'wormed' ring and spiral ornament,	21
.. 22. Brooch with pin head, showing La Tène survivals,	21
.. 23. Brooch,	22
.. 24. Brooch,	22
.. 25. Brooch,	22
.. 26. Brooch,	22
.. 27. Brooch with enamel pattern,	22
.. 28. Brooch,	22
.. 29. Bronze Ring,	23
.. 30. Dunshaughlin Brooch,	25
.. 31. Enlarged diagram of beading on Tara Brooch,	26
PLATE I.—The Tara Brooch, front,	<i>Facing</i> 25
.. II.—The Tara Brooch, back,	<i>Facing</i> 26
FIG. 32. Kilmainham Brooch,	28
PLATE III.—Cavan and Killamery Brooches,	<i>Facing</i> 28

	PAGE
FIG. 33. Ogams, back of Ballyspellan Brooch,	29
,, 34. Thistle Brooch,	30
PLATE IV.—Virginia and Ballyspellan Brooches,	<i>Facing</i> 30
FIG. 35. Pin-head of Brooch, Kilkenny,	31
,, 36. Silver Pin-brooch, Co. Kilkenny,	32
,, 37. Pin with Millefiori settings,	33
,, 38. Hand-type pin,	33
,, 39. Hand-type pin with Millefiori work,	33
,, 40. Bronze Pin,	34
,, 41. Bronze Pin,	34
,, 42. Bronze Pin,	34
,, 43. Ring Pins,	35
,, 44. Bronze Pins,	35
,, 45. Ornamented Silver Pin,	36
,, 46. Bronze Pin, inlaid with silver and niello,	36
,, 47. Silver Ring-pin,	36
PLATE V.—Ardagh Chalice,	<i>Facing</i> 37
,, VI.—Details of Ardagh Chalice,	<i>Facing</i> 38
FIG. 48. Bronze Vessel found with Ardagh Chalice,	39
,, 49. Smaller Brooches found with Ardagh Chalice,	40
PLATE VII.—Large Ardagh Brooch, front and back,	<i>Facing</i> 40
FIG. 50. Lough Erne Shrine,	43
PLATE VIII.—Soiscél Molaise	<i>Facing</i> 44
FIG. 51. St. Patrick's Bell,	47
PLATE IX.—Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell, front and right side,	<i>Facing</i> 48
,, X.—Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell, back and left side	<i>Facing</i> 49
FIG. 52. Figure at end of Shrine of St. Moedoc,	50
PLATE XI.—Shrine of St. Moedoc, front and base,	<i>Facing</i> 50
FIG. 53. Leather Satchel of Shrine of St. Moedoc,	52
PLATE XII.—Shrine of St. Lachtin's Arm,	<i>Facing</i> 54
FIG. 54. Upper part of Corp Naomh,	55
PLATE XIII.—Cross of Cong, front,	<i>Facing</i> 55
,, XIV.—Cross of Cong, back,	<i>Facing</i> 57
FIG. 55. From base of North Cross, Ahenny,	58
,, 56. Crosier of St. Columba,	59
,, 57. Head of Crosier of St. Blathmac,	60
,, 58. Crosier of St. Berach,	61
,, 59. Crosier of St. Tola, of Dysert O'Dea,	62
,, 60. Crosier head, locality unknown,	62
PLATE XV.—Crosier of Clonmacnois,	<i>Facing</i> 62
FIG. 61. Tau Crosier,	63
,, 62. Crosier of Cormac MacCarthy,	64
,, 63. Panel from Cross at Old Kilcullen,	65
,, 64. Bell of Clogher,	66
,, 65. Bell of Armagh,	66
,, 66. Bell of Lough Lene Castle,	67
,, 67. Enamel fragment, St. Columba's College Collection,	68
PLATE XVI.—Plaque of Crucifixion, Athlone,	<i>Facing</i> 68

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

ix

	PAGE
FIG. 68. Ornament from Navan find,	69
.. 69. Ornament from Navan find,	69
.. 70. Chariot Plate from Navan find,	70
.. 71. Bit from Navan find,	70
.. 72. Enamelled Button,	70
.. 73. Inlaid Bronze Hook,	70
.. 74. Leather shoes, Craigywarren Crannog,	71
.. 75. Crucible,	72
.. 76. Carved Bone,	72
.. 77. Carved Bone,	72
.. 78. Interlaced Ornament from bone,	72
.. 79. Zoomorphic Ornament from bone,	72
.. 80. Animal Form from bone,	73
.. 81. Zoomorphic Interlacement from bone,	73
.. 82. Interlaced Ornament from bone,	73
.. 83. Pail, Kinnegad,	73
.. 84. Diagram of Cross,	75
.. 85. Stone Lamp,	76
PLATE XVII.—Domnach Airgid, top and front,	<i>Facing</i> 78
FIG. 86. Crucifix found at Woodford,	80
.. 87. Processional Cross, Ballylongford,	81
.. 88. Tablet Case,	83
.. 89. Inscribed Waxed Tablet,	83
.. 90. Two-handled Mether,	84
.. 91. Four-handled Mether,	84
.. 92. Monataggart Ogam Stone,	88
.. 93. Killerglin Ogam Stone,	88
.. 94. Ballinvoher Ogam Stone,	90



CELTIC ANTIQUITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD.

I.—CELTIC ORNAMENT.

At the beginning of the fourth century before the Christian Era the Celts, known to history as Galates or Gauls, burst through the barriers of the Alps, and poured into Italy. In 390 B.C., having defeated the Romans at the long-remembered battle of Allia, they sacked and burned Rome.

During the next century the Celtic terror was a very real thing. In confederation with the Etruscans, their former enemies, and the Samnites, the Celts joined in resisting the growing power of Rome, till finally overcome in the third Samnite war, at the battle of Sentinum, in 295 B.C. Prior to the invasion of Brennus we hear of the Celts in friendly relations with the Greeks of Massillia (Marseilles), and later generally in friendly relations with the Greeks of Greece proper, until they outraged the Greek mind by the folly of their destruction of Delphi.

There is even a tradition of an earlier invasion of Northern Italy, and, no doubt, objects from the Greek and Italian lands passed up into the inner parts of the Celtic countries before the fourth century. It is, however, rather to the closer contact from 400 B.C. that it is usual to date the influence of the classical anthemion and meander patterns, modified by the Celtic love of spiral and scroll patterns.

The Celtic style is generally called *La Tène* on the Continent,

from the name of a Celtic stronghold at the head of Lake Neuchâtel, where objects of that class attracted attention. It was adapted with great ingenuity and artistic feeling by the Celts of Britain, where it is known as the Late Celtic style. In Ireland this ornament, especially the derived patterns in the early illuminated mss., has been generally called divergent spiral or trumpet pattern. The name Late Celtic would not have any definite meaning in Ireland, where the Celtic culture remained in many parts almost unimpaired down to the end of the sixteenth century.

Perhaps the most instructive example of the influence of the palmette and meander patterns in forming the Celtic style is shown in the ornament on a helmet from Berru in the Department of Marne,

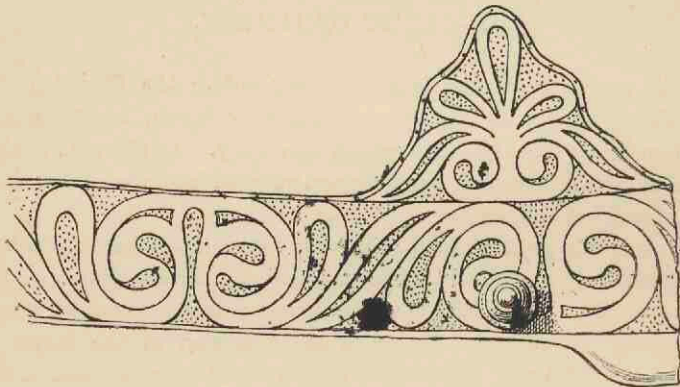


FIG. 1.—Detail of Helmet, Berru, Marne.

ascribed to the fourth century B.C. The long swelling curves and S-turns of the style are well marked (fig. 1). Other examples are from a grave-find at Waldalgesheim in the Rhine Province of Germany (Lindenschmit, *Alt. u. h. Vorz.*, Band III., Heft. i., Taf. i.). The palmette on a bronze vessel in this find (fig. 2) already displays some debasement from the refined Greek type, and the ornament on a gold torc (fig. 2) in the same find shows considerable advance towards the trumpet pattern. The form is explained by the accompanying diagrams; the large fan-shaped swelling at the end of the curves bossed up in repoussé work, becomes emphasized as the

characteristic trumpet form. When two of these, that is to say two trumpet mouths, are brought together, we get the pointed oval of

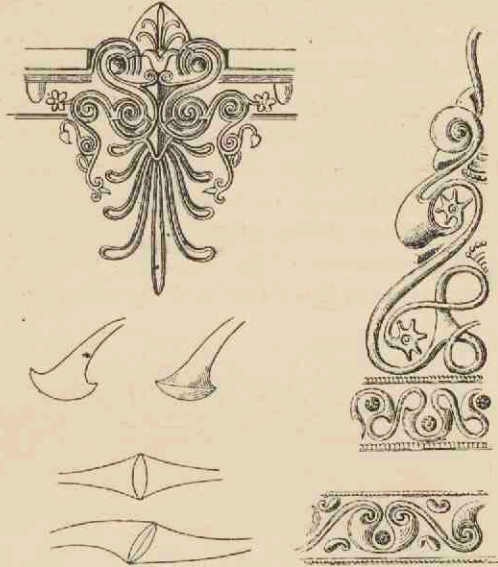


FIG. 2.—Part of find, Waldalgesheim.

the trumpet pattern—one oval often doing duty for two or more trumpet forms, sometimes marked in relief work by a dividing line

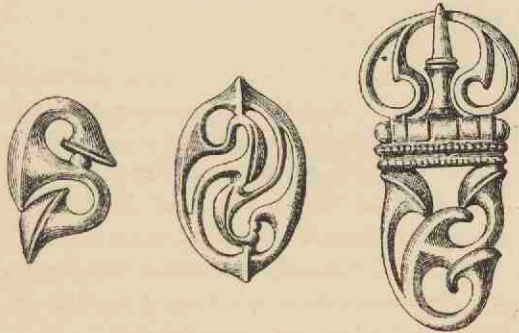


FIG. 3.—South-west Germany.

or edge indicating the change of the curved surface from left to right.

The trumpet form is well seen on ornaments in bronze and silver, of which numbers have been found in South-west Germany (fig. 3).

It is not to be supposed that a series of progressive forms always corresponds to a series of dates. The whole series of changes often appears to have been run through with great rapidity. After the final form has been reached, earlier stages may re-appear; the whole series forming a stock of ornament from which the artist could draw. All that can be claimed is, that, if the series be viewed as a whole, a certain tendency for some forms to disappear and others to supersede them can be detected in the progression of the series.

In the final development of the ornament, the form (called for convenience trumpet end) is set free, and figures as an independent

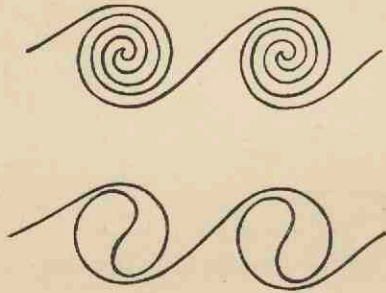


FIG. 4.—Spiral and S-turn.

boss whose origin could hardly be detected without the previous examples.

The spiral S-turn, which is a characteristic feature of the style, was probably first derived from the more eastern Celts. The simplified spiral with large S-turn seems first to have appeared on the bronze sword-hilts of Hungary (Naue, "Vorrömischen Schwerter," Tafel xxiv., No. 8), dated to the middle of the Bronze Age. The comma-like spaces into which the circle of the spiral is thus divided yield, when bossed up in repoussé work, forms which are well seen in repoussé bronze ornaments on a pail from Aylesford in Kent, and on a bronze sword-sheath from La Tène (fig. 5).

The La Tène style in use by the Celts in Ireland, in the centuries before the Christian period, is well shown on the stone at Turoe, County

Galway, a cast of which is in the Museum (Room III.). The derivation of the La Tène motive from the anthemion and meander patterns

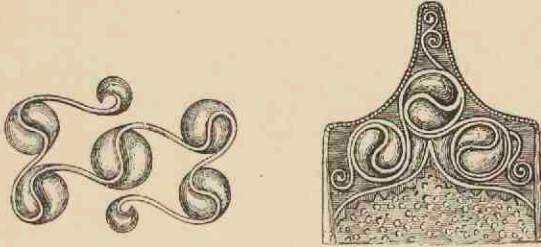


FIG. 5.—Aylesford, and La Tène.

can be clearly traced with the help of the preceding examples. The marking of the trumpet ends, which are not yet developed, and which

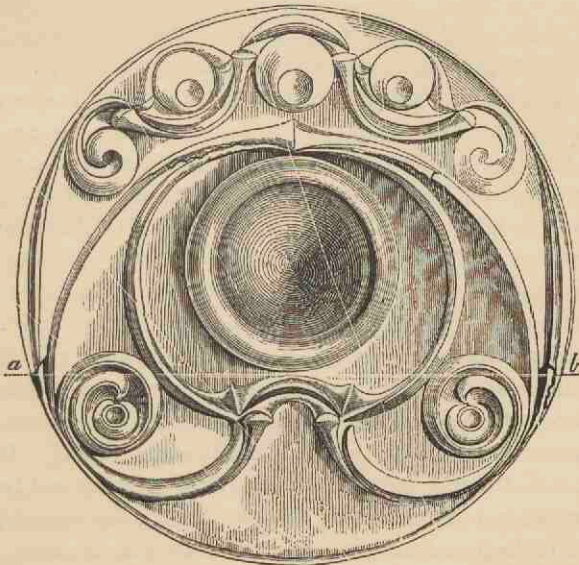


FIG. 6.—Bronze disk (restored). (W. 1 and 5.)

do not appear to be an accentuated feature of the early stage, is well shown in the large bronze disks from County Kildare (fig. 6).]

Fig. 7, a detail of an ornament from the Petrie Collection, perhaps the finest example of workmanship of the period, and equal to the best Japanese casting in bronze, exhibits the use of the

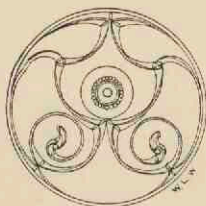


FIG. 7.—Detail from bronze ornament.

long curves and trumpet pattern in the highest degree, and a sureness of line and sweetness of curve that are the forerunners of the later work.

The Celts of the west were famous workers in enamel, an art unknown to the Romans prior to their contact with them.

In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. the Celts frequently used red coral, which they employed to decorate their bronze objects, such as fibulæ, shields, harness trappings, &c., in incrustations, large settings, and studs attached by small rivets. The coral, much valued for its many superstitious virtues, was no doubt traded by the merchants of Marseilles up the Rhone Valley. It was brought probably from the Mediterranean shores near Marseilles, famous for their coral, or possibly from the western coast of Italy. Pliny, in his *Natural History*, speaks of the coral fisheries of the Stoechades (Iles d'Hyères). In the third century its use practically ceases, owing it is supposed to scarcity, caused through the diversion of the trade by new demands, and it is replaced by red enamel. It is often difficult to distinguish between the early red enamels and true coral, the lumps of red enamel being used at first in the same way, as in the case of some curved pins from Lisnacrogher crannog, County Antrim, decorated with lumps of red enamel. (The subject is fully discussed by M. Salomon Reinach in "*Revue Celtique*," 1899, p. 13.)

The Celts of Britain, during some two centuries before the Roman occupation, brought the art of enamelling to great perfection, filling

the fields of raised bronze designs with opaque enamel. The colour chiefly used was a bright sealing-wax red, but yellow and sometimes blue are known. In the Christian period translucent blue was much used, and cloisons of a fret-like character were employed.

A passage from the "Icones" of Philostratus, "They say that the barbarians who live in the ocean pour these colours on heated brass, and that they adhere, become hard as stone, and preserve the designs that are made upon them," has been thought to refer to the Britons, but no doubt also embraced the Celts of Ireland, who likewise practised the art with great skill; nor should we omit the Gauls, for although enamels on such an extensive scale as in Britain have not been found in France, yet workshops with the crude enamel in preparation have been discovered at Bibracte (Mt. Beuvray), and it is probable that the

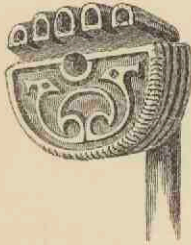


FIG. 8.—Head of bronze pin.
(W. 195.)



FIG. 9.—Bronze disk, enamelled.
(P. 1147.)

art was more extensively used than appears. In Ireland, to judge from the objects that have been found, the Celts seem to have exercised a restrained taste in their use of enamel; still from the large number of objects from which the enamel has perished, but in which the blind sinkings prove the original enamelling, it is probable that its use was more general than would have been thought at first.

In a late period of the style are placed certain bronze pins with curious heads, sometimes called "hand type" from a fancied resemblance of form to a partly closed hand. A good series of these is shown in the collection (fig. 8). The field of the La Tène ornament on the head is generally filled with enamel. They have been found also in Scotland, but rarely in England. To this period also belongs the bronze

disk (fig. 9), the central spiral of which tends rather to the spiral forms of the manuscripts; the central part, also the outer border of spirals, were originally filled with red enamel, a few fragments of which may still be detected. The disk perhaps has some analogy to the bronze enamelled hook-handle disks affixed to bronze bowls found in Britain, which show so close a resemblance to the circular panels of trumpet pattern of the early illuminated mss. as to suggest that the latter have been taken from them. They are dated between the middle of the fifth and the end of the seventh century, and form a connecting link between the metal work and the manuscripts.

In the seventh and during the eighth century, a new style of ornament was introduced:—INTERLACED PATTERNS. At first it shares with the older style in the decoration of the time, but gradually displaces the La Tène survivals, till about the eleventh century it completely supersedes and excludes them, after which time it is quite exceptional to find any trace of La Tène elements in Celtic, or, as we may now call it, Irish ornament.

Fig. 10, from the "Book of Durrow," shows a good example of interlaced patterns in company with derivations of the La Tène style common in the illuminated mss. of the first period of the new style.

The style was probably first fully developed with all its wonderful invention under the more elastic technique of the penmanship and brushwork of the illuminated mss., though the wondrous work of the Tara Brooch may perhaps give us reason to pause in this conjecture. A greater desire for close spiral forms was also manifested as distinguished from the looser style of the earlier work. However, the close spiral of many turns is found occasionally in the La Tène period,

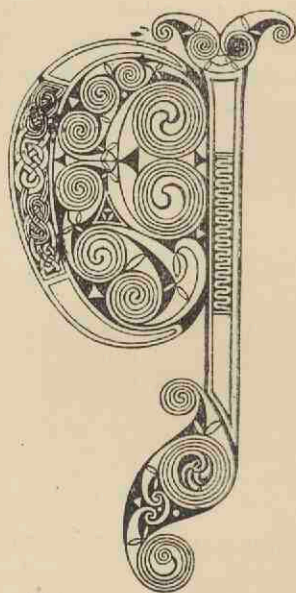


FIG. 10.—Book of Durrow.

and was not unknown in the sixth and seventh centuries of Byzantine decoration. The older writers regarded these spirals as locally developed in Ireland from the spirals at Newgrange, which they looked on as the beginning of the Celtic spiral ornament. (See casts in Room III.) The spirals at Newgrange have, however, no direct connexion with the later spiral motives. The Newgrange spirals are recognized as an extension of the great Ægean spiral motive,

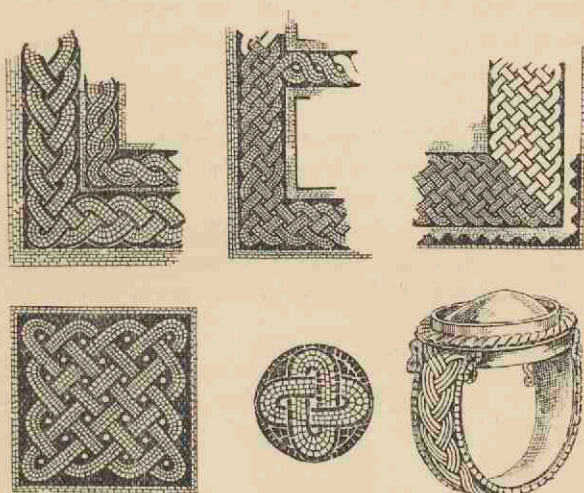


FIG. 11.—Romano-British mosaic pavements:
Roman ring, Essex (Arch. Journ., vol. iii.).

which spread through so great a part of Europe in early Bronze Age times. It was introduced into Ireland as early as 1000 or 1500 B.C., where it appears to have rapidly come to an end without any development. There is thus a long gap between the Newgrange spiral and the spiral motives introduced in the La Tène period and developed in early Christian times. Any connexion between the latter and the original Ægean parent stem, of which it was a younger and independent branch, must be sought towards the eastern part of the Continent.

The new style, with all its intricacy, was brought to a marvellous perfection in the Irish monastic schools. It is not an exaggeration to

say that the Irish mss. (with which are included the Hiberno-Saxon mss. in the production of which Irish scribes took so large a part) admittedly stand in quite the first place among early mss. for the excellence of their penmanship and illuminations.

The genesis of these interlaced patterns is not clear in all its details. Plait-work is extremely rare in the early period of ancient art; it is occasionally found in the best period of Greek art, and the guilloche pattern is common. In the mosaic pavements of Roman times, both in Italy and the provinces—many such are known in Britain—plaits are very common for borders and panels (fig. 11). Some full-sized drawings of these patterns from Verona are shown in the Museum.

Plaits of wire-work may be also noticed, such as the ring, fig. 11.

In Italy, in the sixth century, notwithstanding the protracted wars of Justinian, which ended in the complete overthrow of the Gothic kingdom and the destruction of the power consolidated by the great Ostrogoth, Theodoric, we find some good examples of classical guilloche ornament and panels of plait-work, still to be seen in

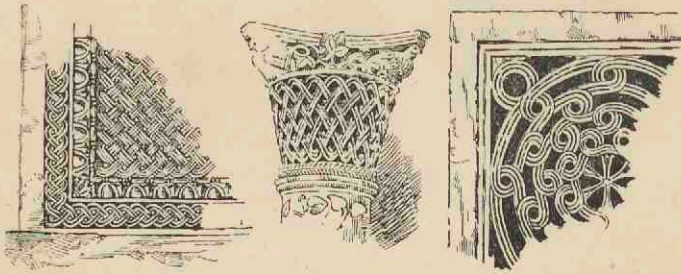


FIG. 12.—Rome and Ravenna, sixth century.

fragments remaining from the early churches (Basilicæ), especially at Rome and Ravenna (fig. 12); also some basket-work capitals, and open-work parapets of concentric circular interlinked bands, which betray Byzantine or Greek influence. Then soon after the death of Justinian in 565, in the wide-spread disasters brought by the Lombard invasions, and in the frequent succession of plagues, famines, and inundations, which well-nigh depopulated the country, architectural

enterprise necessarily ceased; and a period set in, as Cattaneo says, in which art declined from abyss to abyss.

When at last, from the eighth century to the eleventh, architectural decoration begins to awake again, in what is called the Italian Byzantine style, the most conspicuous feature of the new decoration is the knot-work, or interlacing bands, so common in churches of northern Italy. (See Cattaneo, "Architecture in Italy.")

Fig. 13 sufficiently illustrates these Italian interlaced ornaments,

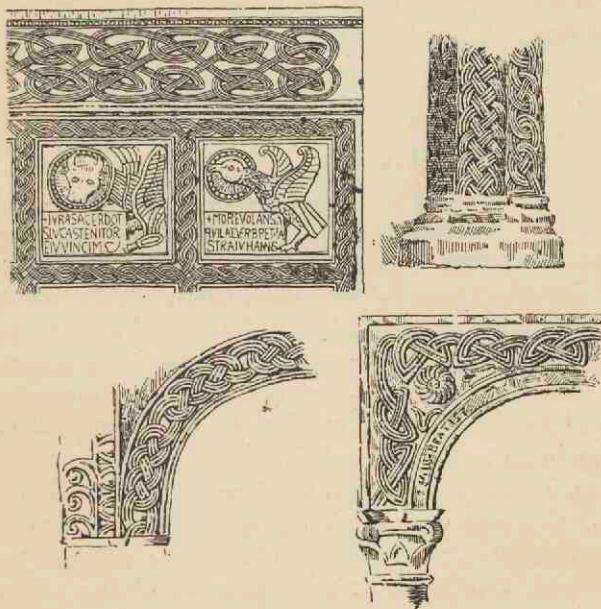


FIG. 13.—Italian knot-work, eighth century.

but many more might be given, and several casts of interlaced details are shown in the Museum (on the Gallery). But the style was not further developed in Italy than we see, and not at all in a manner to compare with that wealth of invention, which exhausts the possibilities of the style, as developed by the Irish workers of the same period. This fact has sometimes led to the hasty thought that the interlaced style in Italy was due to the Irish missionary activity of these early centuries. A little consideration will, however, furnish

sufficient objections to this suggestion. Interlaced work does not appear in Italy on the tombs of Irishmen before the eighth century. Patterns, such as the trumpet pattern, in full vigour in Ireland at the time of the first interlacements, did not travel to Italy; and the distinctive stepped, triangle, and skew frets are absolutely wanting in Italian work. It has been sought to fill up the gap between the remains of the sixth century and the knot-work and interlaced ornament of the eighth, by reference to the Byzantine ornament and knot-work in the churches in Greece and in the many ruined churches in central Syria of the sixth and seventh centuries, well dated as not later, through their destruction by the Saracen invasion of the latter century. The scanty publication of the remains of these centuries in the Greek provinces of the Empire precludes us from expressing a final opinion. But, without seeking a distinct line of descent, we may embrace the whole subject provisionally in another view. The style of knots and interlacements arose between the sixth and eighth centuries as part of the repertory of ornament and symbolism general in the Christian Church at that time, and was in fact a part of the style of the epoch. It spread with the general spread of Christian art throughout Europe and the Byzantine Empire, aided not a little by the dispersion of Greek artists caused by the iconoclastic persecutions of the eighth century, and developed into more distinct schools of design in Ireland than elsewhere.

There is one point, however, which may be mentioned in this connexion. Guilloche ornament is channelled along the centre of the bands which intertwine the ends of rods, the edges of the bands being raised, thus giving it the appearance of two ridges. This is a persistent tradition from classical times in stone-carving. In the Italian knot or interlaced work, however, the bands are divided into three ridges, no doubt derived from the usual form of the basket-plait (see figs. 12 and 13). So marked is this distinction of bands in two, from those divided in three in Italy, that out of some fifty examples illustrated by Cattaneo, a band divided into two only has to be searched for with some diligence, and is rarely found in a characteristic interlacement. Examples figured by Miss Stokes in "Six Months in the Apennines," such as on the tombs at Bobbio, appear as if the band was only divided into two; but these drawings are from

rubbings (in the Museum), and are really negatives, the rubbings taking only the raised parts—the line drawn as dividing the band being raised, and with the outer lines giving a band of three. A division of two should show as two dark lines divided by a white line.

But outside Italy the case is quite different. (Those in Dalmatia may be included with the Italian, and among the Teutonic races north of Italy, as we might expect, interlaced bands of three divisions are often found as far as Scandinavia.) In Byzantine art round the eastern end of the Mediterranean, though the examples at present available are hardly sufficient for a general survey, it is interesting to note that in Syria, although the knot patterns scarcely extend beyond simple twists and kinks, the bands when not plain are divided into two only, not into three; some exception has possibly to be made in regard to circular knot panels of the type (fig. 12) at Constantinople or elsewhere. The Coptic art of Egypt should also be studied in this connexion. The double band is there dominant, and elaborate plait-work was known. (See Strzygowski, "Cat. Cairo Museum, Koptische Kunst." Vienna, 1904.) It may be mentioned that "Byzantine" is not used in any local or restricted sense: the word is derived from Byzantium, the original Greek name of Constantinople. In art it is employed to denote the style in general use in the Eastern Empire from the early centuries of the Christian Period. Local distinctions of style need not be considered.

Now again in Ireland the interlaced bands are either plain or divided into two only—whether in illuminated mss., metal-work, or stone-carving. Some crosses in Donegal are erroneously drawn as having bands of three divisions (Proc. R.I.A., vol. ii., 3rd Ser., p. 100). On examination of the photographs of these crosses the bands are seen to be plain with marginal lines, a known form and not to be mistaken for the threefold band. The same is true for the Celtic interlacements in England and of course Scotland; some exceptions, as at Sherbourne, Oxfordshire, and Eastleach, Gloucestershire, also on some late fonts in Norfolk, do not affect the general question. This seems to indicate that the Celtic interlaced patterns did not come through Italy. On the whole, it seems that single and double bands pertain rather to the Byzantine tradition surviving from the early

centuries as contrasted with the threefold band of the Italian tradition. In the countries beyond the influence of Italian ornament, the single and double band are more usual. Although probably at the commencement prompted by the simple intertwined band patterns of Byzantine art, they developed with great rapidity as an independent style. The interlacements, as we know them, begin fully equipped, implying the existence of a school of artists still working in the older style; and we must not forget, as J. R. Green says of the early part of the seventh century, "The science and Biblical knowledge which fled from the Continent took refuge in famous schools which made Durrow and Armagh Universities of the West." ("The Making of England," p. 288.)

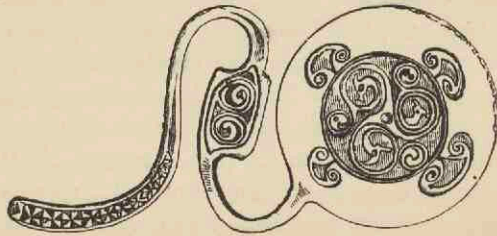


FIG. 14. (W. 492.)

Bronze 'latchet-fastener,' prepared for enamel, probably transitional.

In the La Tène or Late Celtic period of Britain and Ireland animal forms were very rarely used, though they are more frequent on the Continent, especially towards Italy and among the Eastern Celts on the Danube. But in Byzantine art, which spread everywhere within the bounds of early Christianity, the use of animals as symbols and types became universal. The well-known symbols of the four Evangelists are a good instance. Animal forms were admirably adapted by the Celtic artists of the mss. and rapidly stylised, under the influence of interlaced designs, including even the human figure. The necks of birds (generally with eagle beaks), tails and limbs of beasts, &c., were fantastically turned on themselves and interlaced, the serpent, which needs little modification, being a most frequent device.

A few words on the animal motives and interlacements of Germany and Scandinavia may be expected, but the subject is too difficult and complicated to be adequately discussed here.

Shortly after the destruction of the Western Empire, though the great tradition of the Roman style, however disturbed and debased, still lingered on in the ornamentation of objects, yet from the fifth century it was freely modified by a more fantastic and barbarous style

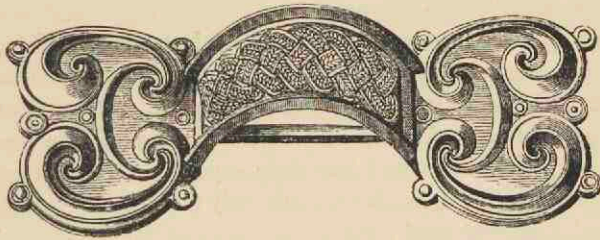


FIG. 15.—Bronze brooch, Ardakillen. (W. 476.) La Tène C-curves and plait-work.

—if the word ‘style’ can be used in such a sense. Figures of animals, birds, reptiles, and sometimes of men were employed—a change taking place in which the classical chapter may be said to be closed, while a grotesque element, which we usually think of as associated with medieval art, makes its appearance. Though broken up in the barbarous art of the new times, we often detect in many of the old German, Frankish, and Burgundian objects elements which can be traced back to the Roman style, and, especially across Hungary, Byzantine and Eastern motives. (See in respect to the latter, Hampel’s “Ungarische Alterthümer.”)

Roman plait-work had long been familiar in the lands which had been embraced by the Empire; and we may often notice in figure-of-eight plaits, and guilloche-suggested twists, or forms such as the plait in the circular panel (fig. 11), many debased survivals from the Roman style. These may be remarked in the patterns of the belt-buckles, and scabbard parts (chiefly of iron inlaid with silver) figured by Lindenschmit under the general names of Old German, Frankish, and Burgundian grave-finds (sixth to eighth centuries).

The fibula was much modified, and the great long cruciform Teutonic brooch, with grotesque animal head at the base, comes more and more into evidence as time advances. The ornament on many of the objects looks at first sight like interlaced patterns; and it has

been sometimes assumed that the origin of the Celtic interlaced style is to be referred to the German lands. It may be doubted, however, if any true, logical, and organized interlacements can be attributed to a time much preceding the eighth century. (Those who desire to study the subject may refer to Dr. Salin's work, "Die altgermanische Tierornamentik.")

The imperfect interlacements on the objects mentioned present a broken or stencil-like appearance, and show no sign of a developing art, but, on the contrary, many signs of degeneration from older forms—of descent rather than ascent—and the stimulus of a new style seems hardly to have entered into them as yet. As we have indicated and should expect, the bands are constantly marked longitudinally by three, and a twofold band is rare.

It may be mentioned that the stone fragments at Coire (eighth century) on the east of Switzerland, which are perhaps sometimes given an Irish reference on account of the proximity of the Irish foundation of St. Gall (early seventh century), are from their architecture clearly an extension of the neighbouring Italian influence, and the bands are marked in three.

Whether the imperfect interlacements and degenerate plaits, in conjunction with the grotesque animals of Germany and Scandinavia, independently developed into a true logical interlaced style without Irish contact, or to what extent the Irish style may have reached the Baltic before the Viking period, as is now generally believed by the northern antiquaries, are questions of too controversial a nature for discussion. But it may be mentioned that the theory of German origin hardly explains certain of the facts. Widespread as may have been the northern animal motives, and although earlier and more directly derived from Roman forms, yet in Ireland animal motives admittedly display from the first a higher degree of excellence in artistic stylization than elsewhere ("Book of Durrow"). The artistic refinement of the Irish interlacements, compared with the more barbaric appearance of the northern ornaments, is also noticeable; and the exclusive use (with a very few doubtful exceptions) of the twofold band as distinguished from the three-marked band of the Continent, is very distinct. These facts, especially the two last, rather point away from Germany as the originating source, and turn our thoughts in

other directions. Moreover, as soon as the Irish style obtains a recognized position in Scandinavia, the division of bands into two is numerous, plain or twofold bands (not three) being the Celtic tradition.

Irish objects were raided in great numbers and carried to Scandinavia, affecting the local crafts there; and after the Norse and Danes had made good their settlement in Ireland in the ninth century, the Irish interlaced patterns were influenced by a Scandinavian return element, especially in the prevalence of serpent or worm-dragon types. A more flamboyant, or it may be called barbaric, flavour may also be detected as compared with the earlier more restrained style of the Irish school.

One of the earliest examples of the illuminated mss. of Ireland is the famous "Book of Durrow," in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. It is, from the style of the illuminations, attributed to the later half of the seventh century; and the survivals it contains of the previous La Tène ornament are very beautiful and striking. It is interesting to note that the pointed oval of the trumpet ends may be seen constantly in white on black, or black on white, set free as an independent ornament resembling a leaf.

The Hiberno-Saxon "Book of Lindisfarne" is another famous example of the Celtic Church. Lindisfarne, founded by St. Aidan, was the centre of Irish missionary effort in the north of England. As J. R. Green again says, speaking of the conversion of Saxon England in the seventh century—the real life and energy of the new Christianity was concentrated in the north, and the north looked for its religious centre to Ireland: "To cross the Irish Channel, whether for piety or for learning, became a fashion in the north, while fresh missionaries streamed over in turn to wander into the wildest spots where English heathendom found a hold." ("The Making of England," p. 312.) The Book of Lindisfarne is stated to have been written by Eadfrith, Archbishop of Lindisfarne, from 698 to 721 A.D.

The "Book of Kells," the most elaborate of all the illuminated mss., is usually attributed to about the same period; but from the occurrence in it of foliage, it possibly belongs to the eighth or even ninth century (Bruun).

It may be noted that the panel and architectural treatment of the ornament in these books is strongly reminiscent of the mosaic

pavements and wall decorations general in Roman times, and points to a widespread tradition in the decorative arts.

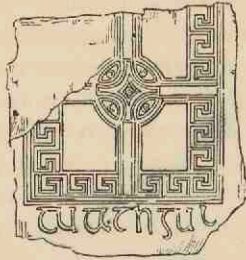


FIG. 16.—Abbot Tuathgal, A.D. 806.

Foliage was seldom used in Celtic ornament. The well-nigh universal grape-vine of Byzantine decoration, or motives remotely

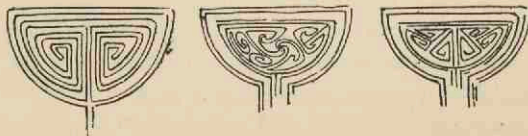


FIG. 17.—Details, Clonmacnois.

derived from it, are occasionally seen in the Irish manuscripts, and conventionalized trefoil leaves and wheel corollas are fairly common.

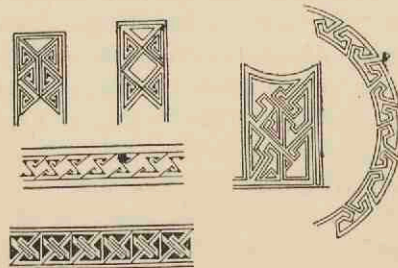


FIG. 18.—Frets, Clonmacnois, and MSS.

The multitude of new fret-patterns—one of the most original features of Irish ornament—deserves, however, some notice.

Figs. 16 to 18 show the great variety of fret forms in use. Though we do not intend to imply that the various forms were originated in the great School of Clonmacnois, the genesis of many of the forms may be seen upon the large series of sculptured gravestones there.

The square rectangular fret—a survival from the universally favoured fret of classical times—was, no doubt, introduced from the Continent (fig. 16). When, however, it is used, as at Clonmacnois, to fill semicircles of cross-ends, and curved border-patterns, the traditional form was broken, and all possible variations were entered upon, as we see in the mss., metal, and stone work (fig. 18).

II.—PENANNULAR BROOCHES; PINS.

THE divided ring-brooch, which may be regarded as a form of buckle, was in use in different parts of Europe about the first century, and probably for some time earlier. Such brooches are common among Roman remains; and their wide distribution is shown by finds in Austria-Hungary, Northern Europe, and Spain. They are small compared with the Celtic brooch of a somewhat later time. Some examples are dated from the associated objects to about 200 B.C. The original centre of the type, which seems to be chiefly provincial, is not quite certain: examples are numerous among the Roman remains in the Museums at Mainz and Zürich. But the type is well shown by the small plain brooch, fig. 19, from Ireland—in this case, no doubt, a good deal later. The pin is much longer than is usual with the earlier examples referred to.

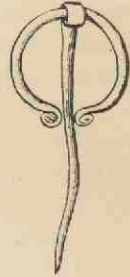


FIG. 19 (W. 246).

In some examples, the retorted terminations of the ring present some analogy to the turned-up tail terminations of the La Tène brooch; and there is a special Spanish form of brooch which combines the bow-type with the ring-brooch.

It has been suggested that the Celtic penannular brooch may have been derived from North Africa and the East, as these brooches are still worn in Algeria (J. R. Allen, "Celtic Art"). In the absence of evidence, this is, however, a very doubtful conjecture.

The penannular brooch was developed to a great size by the Celts of these islands. It became their most characteristic ornament. A small bronze example of an early Celtic type, slightly expanded at the flat ends, was found in the Broch of Okstrow, Birsay, with fragments of Samian pottery, so that this brooch possibly dates from the Roman occupation of Britain.

In the development of the Celtic brooch the terminal ends of the ring become much expanded; and the flat plates thus formed are richly ornamented with spiral and other forms, which continue the La Tène style of the preceding period. At the springing of the

plates, the ring displays strongly marked cusps derived from the La Tène style; and the head of the pin is often treated in a bold form of the same style. The ring is round in section, and often marked by fine transverse lines, or "wormed," a survival from older forms of treatment of rings. Many of the terminal plates are prepared for enamel, fragments of which frequently survive in the ornament or in the settings. The Celtic use of enamel in the La Tène period, the Heroic period of Ireland, is thus continued without interruption into early Christian times.

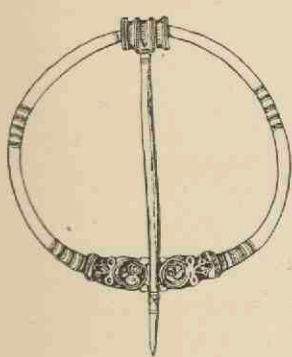


FIG. 20. (P. 735.)

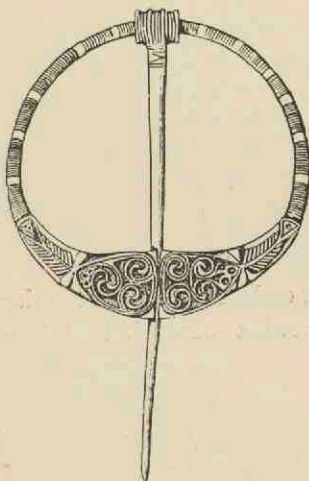


FIG. 21. (W. 362.)

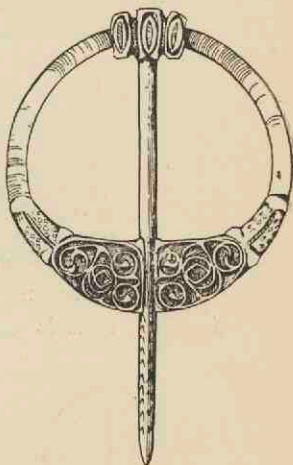


FIG. 22. (W. 368.)

In figs. 20 to 28 a number of these brooches are given. From the complete absence of any trace of interlaced ornament on them, as well as the many La Tène elements surviving in their decoration, they can be safely claimed as not later than about 700 A.D. Many of them are no doubt earlier, and follow more closely the Pagan period in Ireland. Possibly some may go back to a time preceding the coming of St. Patrick in the fifth century; but we shall have to wait for finds of associated objects for more precise dates.

All these brooches are of bronze; but, as we have said, the

ornament was usually enriched with enamel, though it has now completely perished in most cases, and that it was formerly applied to them may be easily overlooked. Fig. 26 has two small tubular settings or

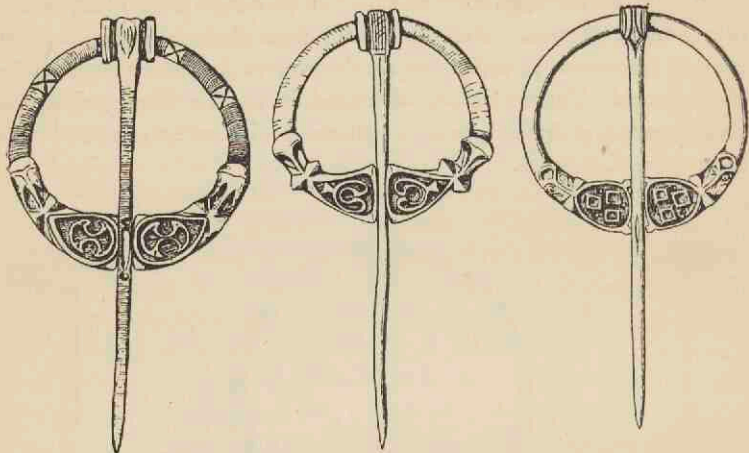


FIG. 23. (R. 1930.)

FIG. 24. (W. 363.)

FIG. 25. (W. 367.)

beads of red enamel at each of the ends of the ring. The form of the terminal ends is somewhat unusual, though other examples are

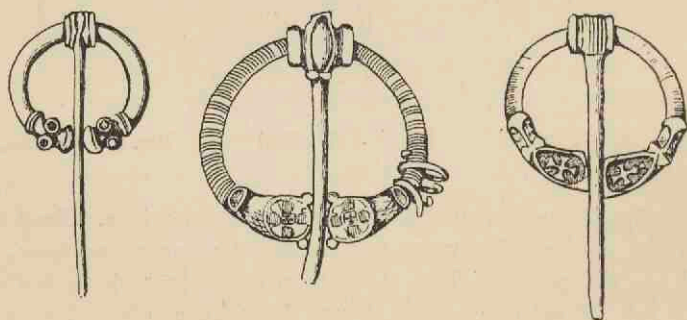


FIG. 26. (W. 467.)

FIG. 27. (W. 470.)

FIG. 28. (W. 358.)

known; and one of the same type in the collection (No. 80-1906) has much longer tubular settings, like those in the Hand-type of pin, and the ring is also "wormed."

The relation of the spiral and curved forms to the older style is very evident on the other brooches; and the heads of the pins in several examples carry a distinct La Tène suggestion (figs. 22, 25, 27). The lines of worming are well marked in many cases. Fig. 20, the ends of which are not much expanded, is probably an early example; but the ornament may be noticed as very good and careful.

Fig. 27 retains most of its enamel, which consists of square pieces of red enamel placed in a cruciform manner; the centre pieces have a small, dark cross in the centres; the ring has a loose coil of wire upon it similar to one of the "latchet" brooches, an example of which is illustrated on page 14. The ring is wormed; and the head of the pin shows a well-marked La Tène form; it may be noticed that on the back two simple wheel-forms are engraved. It is only necessary to mention the small equal-armed crosses on fig. 28 of Byzantine aspect. The field in this example is, as usual, sunk and "keyed" for enamel.



FIG. 29.—Blessington. (R. 2048.) ($\frac{1}{4}$)

In a few cases the enamel takes the form of glass "canes" with a diversified pattern in section (p. 33).

We may mention here the bronze finger-ring found at Rathbally, Blessington, Co. Wicklow (fig. 29). This is the only example in the collection, and clearly belongs to the same period as some of the brooches; it has been prepared for enamel.

It should be mentioned that some of the brooches were silvered, or coated with a silver-like metal, so that they must have had a bright and plated appearance. This has in most cases been worn away, or destroyed by the patina of the bronze; but careful examination will reveal traces of it in several, especially on the back of the small stout class, which were possibly somewhat later, and on which it seems to have been more usual.

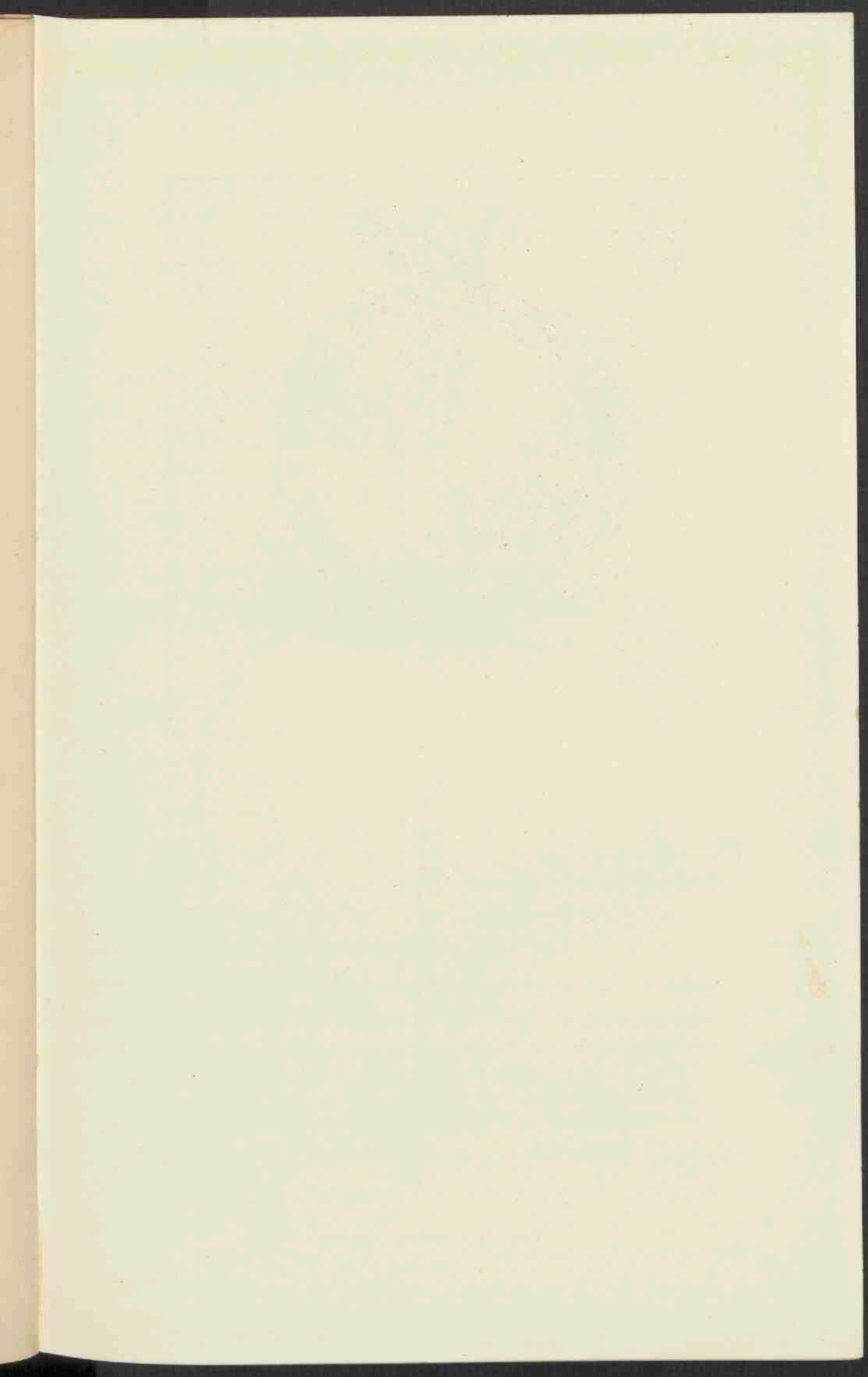
It is difficult to say to how early a time this method of coating bronze can be put back in Ireland; but it was in common use in the ninth century, as may be seen from many objects in the Danish finds.

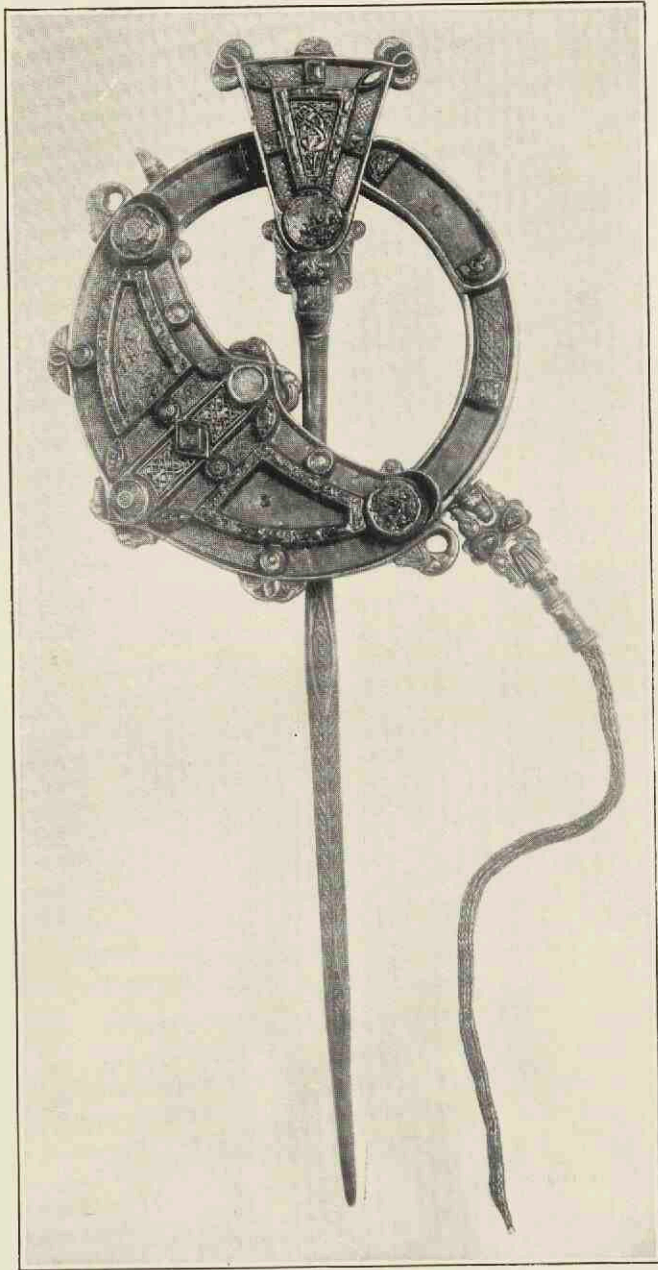
About the time interlaced ornament came into vogue at the end of the seventh century, becoming universal in the subsequent centuries, the practical intention of the brooch was modified by the closing of the divided ring. The pin could no longer be passed from front to back through the division in the ring of the brooch, which must have acted now as a large ring-pin, and could only have been used as a brooch by passing a band or a piece of the stuff through the ring over the pin, and then back through the ring. The pin may, however, have been detached at the head to enable the ring to be fixed as a brooch, and afterwards, when the pin was securely fixed again, the brooch may have remained as a permanent ornament on the garment.

Probably as early as 700 A.D. the divided brooch-ring began to be closed up by straps of metal.

The circular section of the old form was also abandoned, and the ring became flat, the terminations being greatly enlarged, taking the form of sub-triangular plates; and the head of the pin was altered to a flat triangular form. It should be noticed that this modification of form was accomplished at the same time that the change in the ornament takes place, though the divided ring was occasionally used through the subsequent time.

The brooch became much larger and much more ornate, being enriched with settings of enamel and amber, and insertions of gold filigree-work. The size of the ring often runs to 5 or 6 inches in diameter, with pins from 7 to 9 inches in length. As has been stated above, the first stage towards closing the brooch was joining the terminals by connecting straps of metal (fig. 30), the division of the two terminal plates being subsequently retained as an ornamental form. This brooch is of gilt bronze, silvered on the back; and though we cannot clearly date the example, it shows very plainly the course followed in uniting the divided ring. The difficulty in forming a series in order of progression must be allowed for as due in no small part to the devastation of the country caused by the Viking raids in the ninth century, and the subsequent Danish wars. The constant plundering of churches





THE TARA BROOCH: FRONT.

Reduced about $\frac{1}{3}$

To face p. 25

and monastic settlements during that time is frequently mentioned by the old chroniclers.

The manner in which the brooch was worn is shown on the sculptured figures of the High Crosses in at least three instances—Clonmacnois (A.D. 914), Monasterboice (A.D. 924), and Kells. (See

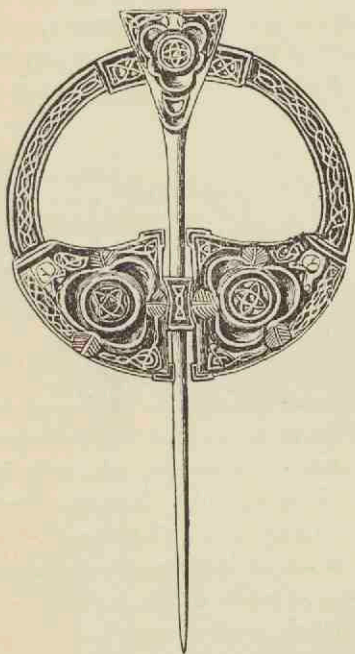


FIG. 30.—Dunshaughlin. (P. 728.)

casts and photographs in the Museum.) The pin was turned outwards, no doubt for convenience.

When the ring is entirely closed, the original division of the brooch is marked by the segments of the ornament, as in the Tara Brooch (Plates I., II.). This celebrated brooch was found in 1850 on the strand at Betaghstown (now Bettystown), near Drogheda, county Meath. It has no connexion with Tara, and was merely named "Royal Tara Brooch" by the jeweller to whom it was sold. The body of the brooch is of bronze, and is decorated with panels in fine

gold filigree-work, enamel, and settings of amber and glass. The ornament includes spirals, interlaced work, human heads, and animal forms. On the front the ornament is mostly confined to interlaced work; the trumpet-pattern may be noticed, however, at the base of the pin-head, and round the outer margin of the brooch.

The back of the brooch (Plate II.), which is freer in style than the front, has many examples of scroll- and trumpet-pattern. The two principal panels are formed of a hard, white bronze, and are inlaid with fine spirals, apparently of a copper alloy. The fineness of the work shown

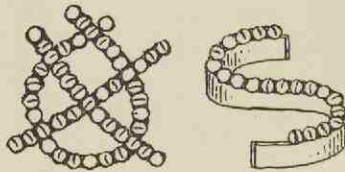
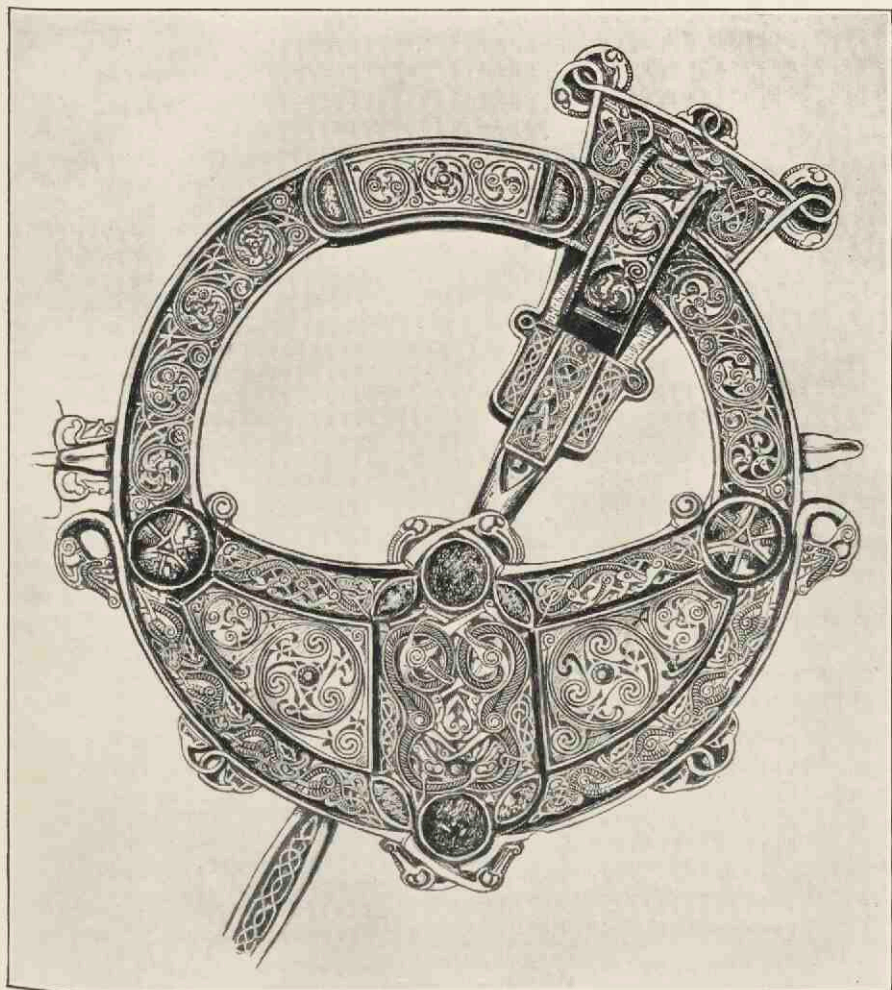


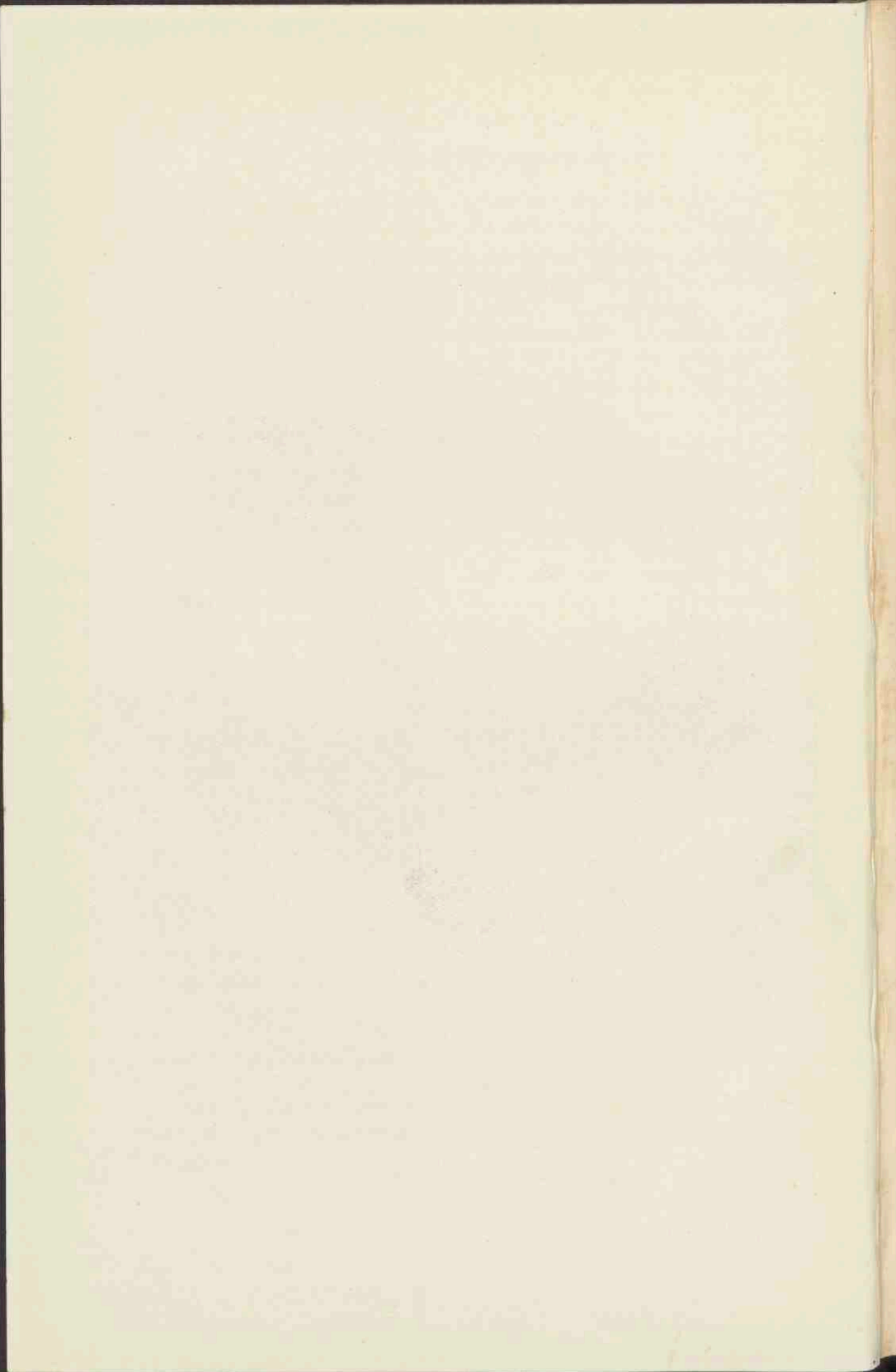
FIG. 31.

in this brooch is beyond belief. On the front, attention may be directed to the settings of amber, and blue and purple glass, and to the oblong amber insertions which frame the principal panels on the body of the brooch and the pin-head. Fine cloisonné enamels of dark blue and red are seen on the back. Two small, finely formed heads of purple glass, which are set in the chain-attachment, should not be overlooked. The inlay of scrolls on the back is equal to penmanship; and it cannot be too much insisted upon that the patterns and work of this brooch are quite equal in their own class to the work of the best mss. The extraordinary fineness of the gold work and the perfection of the soldering will be understood by an expert, when it is said that much of the work on the front may be classed with the filigree and granulae of ancient jewellery. Thus the fine wires of the interlaced patterns carry a minute beading, which can hardly be detected by the eye, but needs a strong glass to make it apparent. Even the thin gold ribbons of the central interlacements, and of those on the head of the pin, which are set on edge, have a similar minute beading on the edge of the ribbon. The greatly enlarged diagram (fig. 31) may serve to indicate the kind of work, which, strangely



THE TARA BROOCH: BACK.
From a Drawing by Miss E. Barnes.

To face p. 26.



enough, has been overlooked in previous notices of the brooch. This at once carries the mind back to Etruscan and Greek jewellery, and that from the lands at the eastern end of the Mediterranean; and it is of much interest to notice the old tradition of fine gold work appearing in Ireland in the full Celtic style.

A piece of chain of the form known as Trichinopoly-work it attached to the side of the brooch. It may be supposed that this class of work is not Irish; but the discovery of fine gold chains of the same form in the Limavady find, and fine silver chains of the same class attached to Late Celtic fibulæ in England, as well as an example attached to a pin from Clonmacnois, makes it probable that this class of work was done also in Ireland; and the excellence of the brooch shows that no technical difficulty was likely to have been too great. The form of the chain may have been, perhaps, first introduced from the East.

The ornament on this masterpiece of jeweller's art presents such a close analogy to the patterns of the "Book of Durrow," and especially to those of the "Book of Kells," that it is usual to assign it to about 700 A.D. The gaps in the record are, however, so many that, in the absence of dated objects, we hesitate to affix a definite date, further than to say that the style and patterns of the brooch are better placed in the period before the Viking raids and Danish invasions, from the end of the eighth century (795 A.D.), than in the tenth, or among the dated shrines of the eleventh century.

There are many other brooches in the collection of bronze, sometimes gilt, and of silver, which deserve attention. It is unnecessary here to describe them at length; several have settings of amber and of enamel; and some of the silver brooches have small insets of gold filigree, the work often very good.

The largest is the silver brooch found at Killamery, county Kilkenny, in 1858 (Plate III., No. 2). It is interesting on account of the hardly noticeable inscription slightly cut or scored on the back. The inscription reads: "OR AB CHIRMAC," 'a prayer for Kerwick' or 'Kirby.' This and the Ballyspellan brooch, with an Ogam inscription to be presently described, are the only examples of brooches in the collection with any inscription or indication of former ownership upon them. Unfortunately in neither case does the inscription help in dating the brooches.

Fig. 32 illustrates an example of a survival of the divided ring-brooch; it is said to have been found at Kilmainham, county Dublin.

The silver-gilt brooch, Plate III., No. 1, said to have been found in county Cavan, is generally known as the "Queen's brooch," a copy of it having been presented to Queen Victoria. The two small human heads at the junction of the ring-plates remind us of those on the Tara brooch, and should be noticed. Attention may also be directed to the similarity between the highly raised curves of the principal

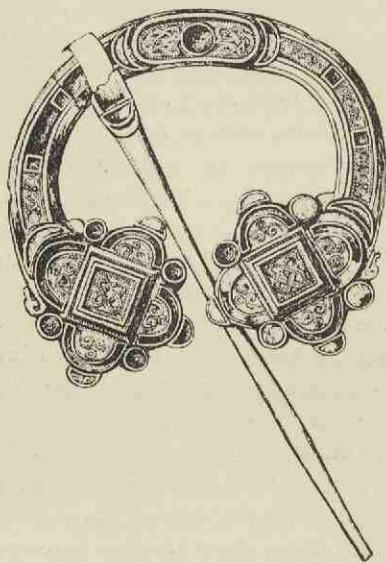
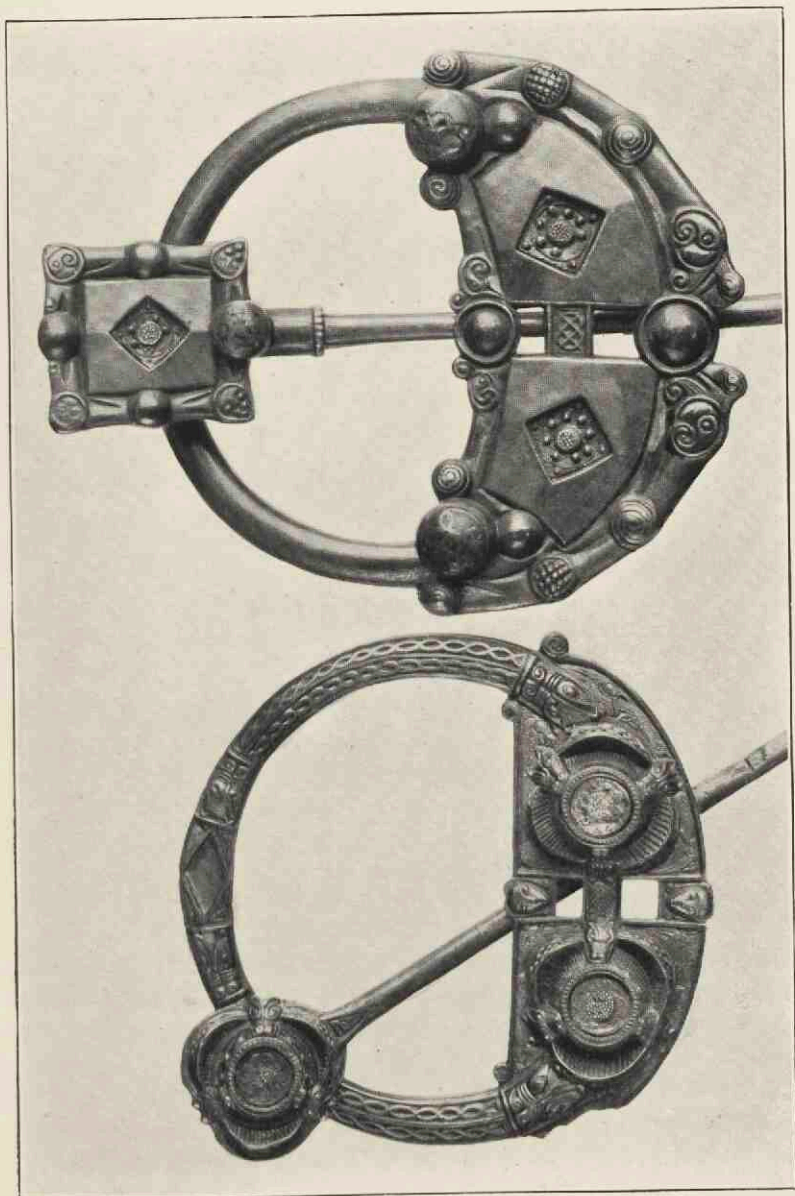


FIG. 32.—Kilmainham. (W. 45.)

bosses on this brooch to those on the bronze brooch from Dunshaughlin crannog (fig. 30).

About the tenth century, a form of the divided silver ring-brooch was in use, differing somewhat from the preceding.

The expanded flat-ring terminals of these brooches are decorated with bosses, generally three on each terminal plate, in the shape of plain caps. (See Plate IV.)



2. KILLAMERY, CO. KILKENNY.
Reduced about $\frac{1}{3}$.

1 CAVAN.
Reduced about $\frac{1}{3}$.

To face p. 28.

The bosses are joined by strap-work, dividing the terminal plate into panels filled with zoomorphic ornament.

The decoration of these brooches recalls that of the Scandinavian Tortoise brooches of the ninth and tenth centuries. (See case containing Danish objects.)

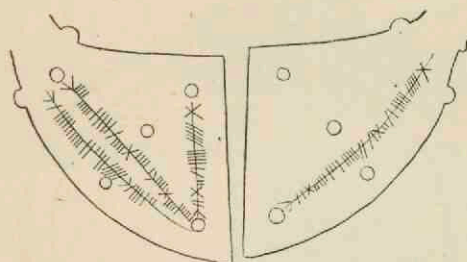


FIG. 33.—Ogams: back of Ballyspellan Brooch.

The backs of these brooches are usually ornamented with animal-heads at the junction of the ring and the terminal plates. Plate IV., No. 2, is a fine example of the usual form of this class of brooch. It was found at Ballyspellan, county Kilkenny, in 1806. On the back (fig. 33) are four lines of Ogam writing; and it is the only specimen so inscribed. They have been read (by Brash)—

MINODOR MUAD
CNAEMSEACH CEALLACH
MAEALMAIREA
MAEALUADAIG MAEALMAIREA.

The inscription, with the exception of the second word, apparently consists of proper names only. Conjectural attempts have been made to identify them with persons living about 1100 A.D., but with doubtful success.

The interlaced bands on one specimen (Plate IV., No. 1) are exceptional in being divided into three, one of the very few cases in which this form of band is found in Ireland.

This class of brooch is dated to about tenth century from associated coins (at Cuerdale, Lancs.), and, with the next type of brooch, is possibly of northern origin or suggestion. There are several complete

examples of this type of brooch in the collection, mostly without localities. A small form of the same type, of thin silvered bronze, almost plain, except for an edging of engraved dots, has been

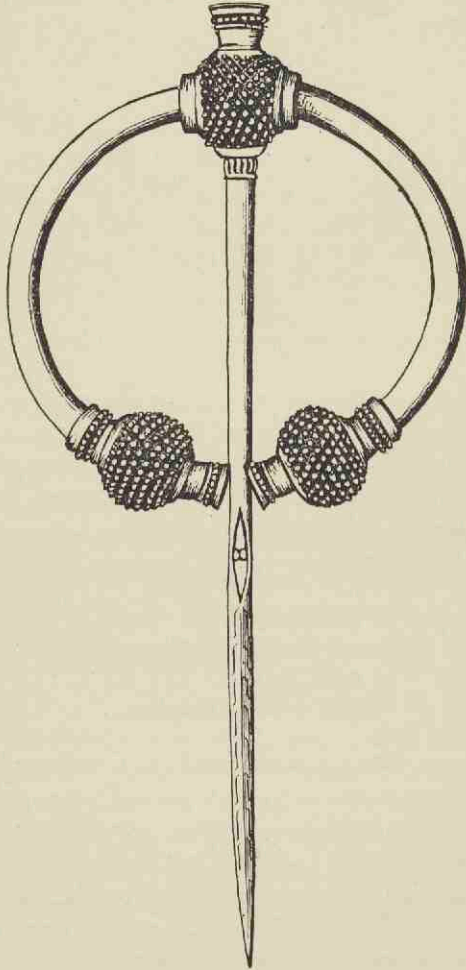
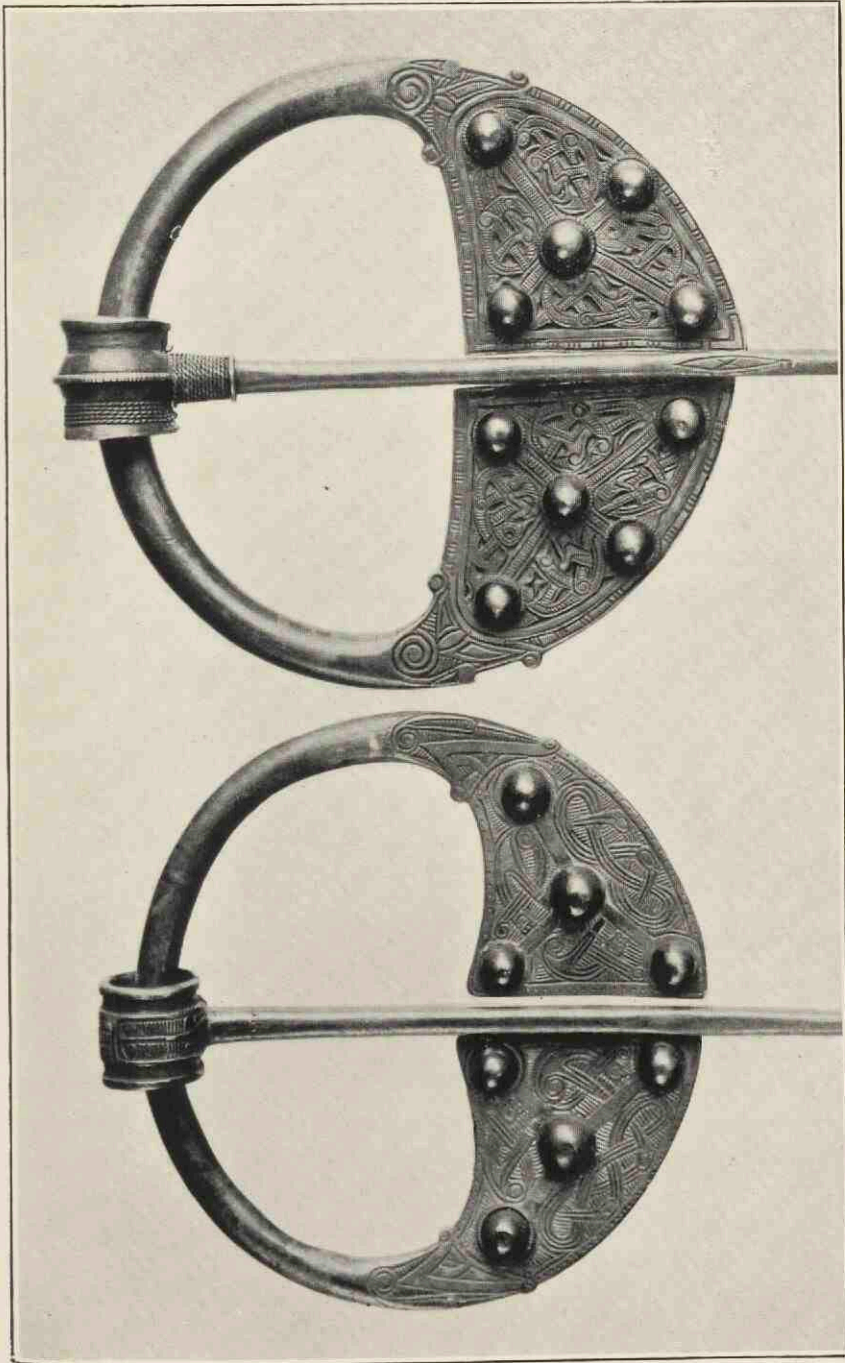


FIG. 34.—Co. Kildare. (W. 40.)

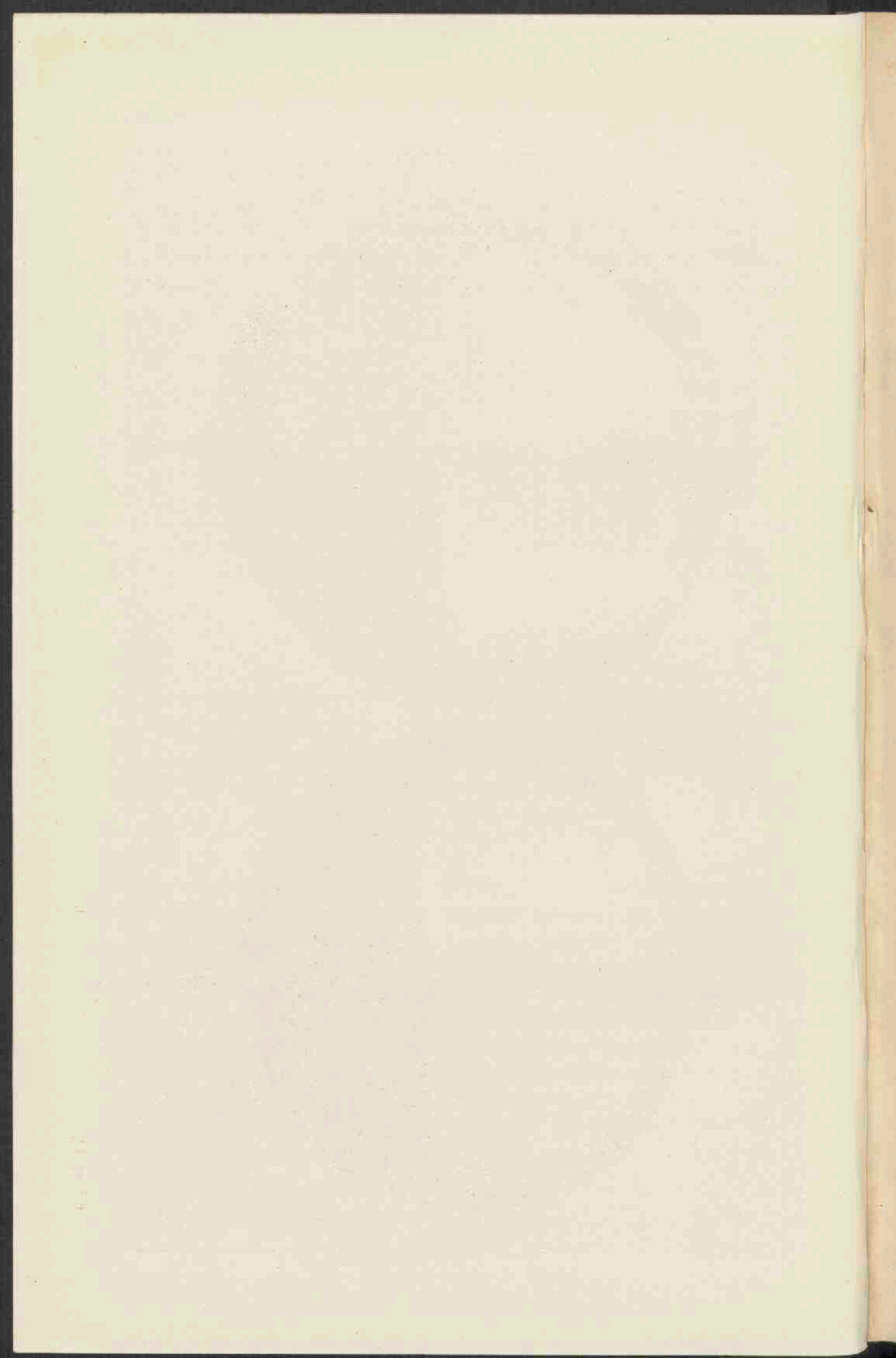
occasionally found, which may be regarded as a cheaper and possibly earlier form of the same type.



2. BALLYSPELLAN, CO. KILKENNY.
Reduced about $\frac{1}{3}$.

1. VIRGINIA, CO. CAVAN.
Reduced about $\frac{1}{3}$.

(To face p. 30.)



At about the same time, another form of silver penannular brooch was in use (fig. 34). These brooches have been found in the same hoards as the preceding (Cuerdale, Lancs., 910 A.D.) The pin-heads and ring-terminals are ornamented with large bosses or bulbs decorated with thistle ornament. In some cases interlacing bands, enclosed in a circle and divided into quadrants, replace the thistle ornament on one side of the bulbs. The ring was developed to a great size, and the pins to a great length; the pin of the brooch-head from Kilkenny (fig. 35), if in proportion, would have been 2 feet long, and the ring fully 10 inches in diameter.

A passage in the Brehon Laws states that men were legally

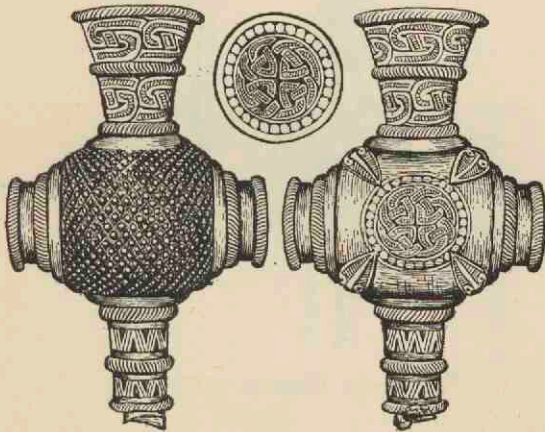


FIG. 35.—Kilkenny. (W. 41.)

obliged to curtail the length of their brooch-pins. The passage, as translated by O'Curry, runs: "Men are guiltless of pins upon their shoulders or upon their breasts; provided they don't project too far beyond it."

These brooches have been found in hoards in Lancashire, Yorkshire, the Isle of Man, and Orkney, in association with coins dating from 910 to 975 A.D.

The brooches found with the Ardagh Chalice included a brooch of this type, like fig. 34, but smaller.

This bulbous form of brooch is found in Norway, and from the usual absence of living forms in the decoration, and the number of Cufic

coins found in Scandinavia, it has been suggested that these brooches may have been worn by the merchants on the trade route between the Caspian or Black Sea and the Baltic. (Smith, Proc. S. A. Lond., Series II., vol. xix., p. 304, and vol. xxi., p. 70.)

Some large silver pin-brooches may be mentioned here; their heads, relatively small, have a hinge-joint enabling them to be used as a brooch (fig. 36). There is also in the R. I. A. collection a pin-brooch similar to that found at Clonmacnois, figured by J. Romilly Allen, in "Celtic Art," p. 221. The Clonmacnois pin has a chain

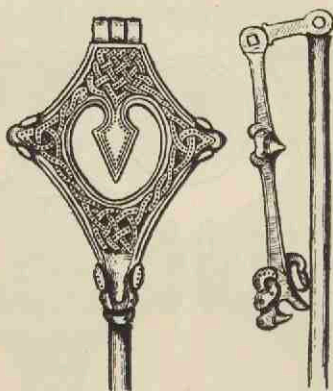


FIG. 36.—Co. Kilkenny. (1874: 73.)

attached of Trichinopoly-work passing through a ring at the end of the kite-shaped head, and, no doubt, the brooch in the collection was originally furnished with a similar chain. The interlaced ornament on the Clonmacnois and the similar pin-brooch in the Academy's collection is of a fine character, and the work of a more Irish form than on the much larger pin-brooches, whose pins measure 22 and 20½ inches in length; they also have a ring at the back of the end of the head.

Some simple iron penannular brooches have been occasionally found, and may be mentioned. (See Dunshaughlin crannog finds.)

PINS.

Bronze pins have been found in practically all parts of the country; but it would be tedious to attempt to classify them closely. The tenth to the eleventh century may be taken as the approximate date to which most of them may be ascribed. There are, however, some which can be assigned to an earlier period, such as the 'hand-type' pin mentioned at page 7, and other pins of that class, which show ornament earlier than the interlaced style. Among the few silver pins in the collection is also the very finely ornamented pin, fig. 45, which may be attributed to an early date, from both its shape and ornament.

Fig. 39 is a particularly beautiful piece of work, decorated with

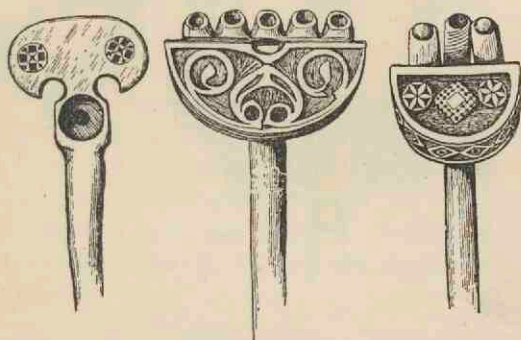


FIG. 37. (P. 694.) (†) FIG. 38. (W. 193.) (†) FIG. 39. (P. 636.) (†)

sections of glass canes, not enamels, formed by placing a number of rods of different-coloured glass together, and drawing the bundle out in a single rod, so that a section of the combined rod shows a various-coloured pattern. We may quote Miss Stokes's description of this pin: "The pin is of bronze, inlaid with ornaments of glass . . . ; a rose pattern, white on blue ground, $\frac{1}{8}$ inch diameter, is set at either side of a diamond-shaped ornament . . . , consisting of a centre of translucent crimson glass on a diaper pattern of yellow and white; [around the head] is a star of crimson and blue, which ornament is repeated six times along the side of the pin. Here it would seem that these pieces of coloured glass were put together so

as to form a mosaic-work of canes of different colours; that they were fused together and drawn out; and the pieces used in the ornament are sections of the canes when drawn out." ("Early Christian Art in Ireland," p. 79.) The bronze of the pin shows traces of having been silvered on the head.

Another pin, with a simple flat head, has two remarkably fine settings of similar glass canes (fig. 37).

This beautiful process, generally called 'millefiori,' was known to the Egyptians, from whom it appears to have been borrowed by

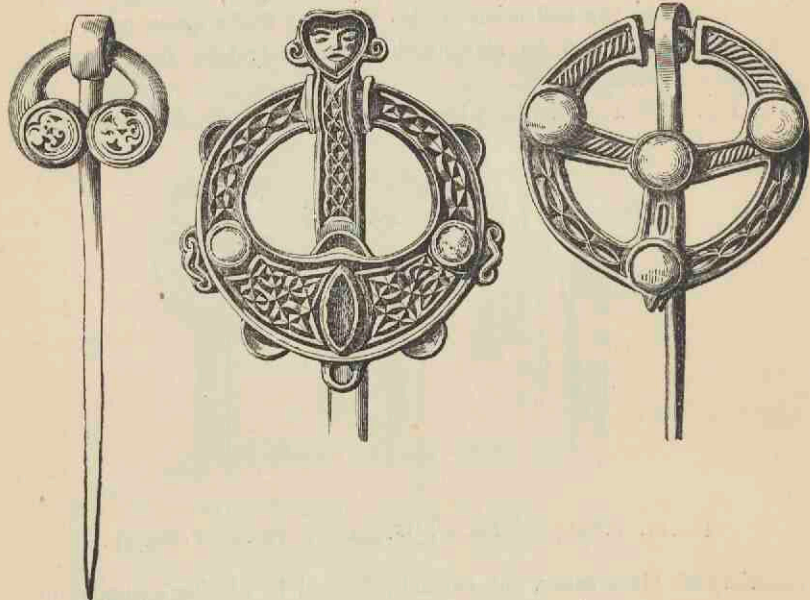


FIG. 40. (W. 326.) (†)

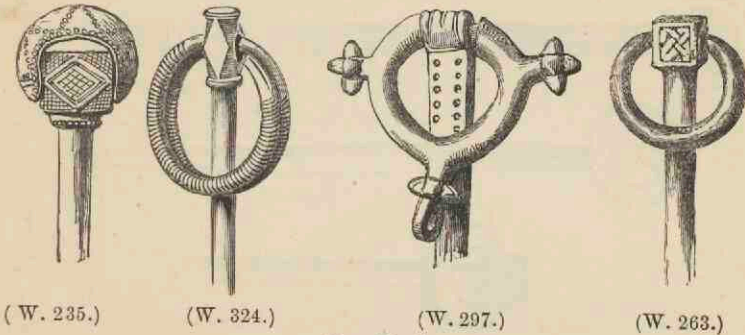
FIG. 41. (W. 346.) (†)

FIG. 42. (W. 344.) (†)

the Romans, who employed it to a considerable extent, fragments of the glass canes being still occasionally found at Rome. There are several examples of this class of work among the Roman remains at Mainz; also in the British Museum, and elsewhere.

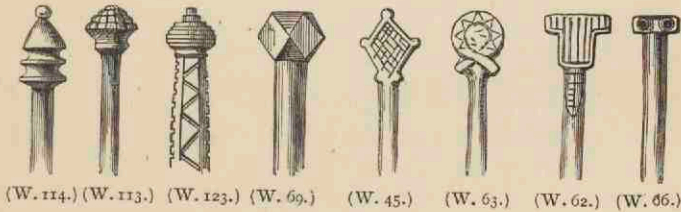
In the subsequent interlaced period many of the pins adopt the general features of the brooch, from which they are chiefly distinguished by their diminished size. They are often enriched with interlaced ornaments and with settings of amber (figs. 40, 41, 42).

There are many other pins with various forms of attached ornamental ring-heads (fig. 43). The first, with a curious close-fitting movable ring or loop, has been considered to be an early form. Several examples are tinned or silver-plated. The heads of the smaller pins, without any rings or other attachments, are often

FIG. 43. ($\frac{1}{2}$)

simple, but sometimes very ornamental and various (fig. 44). Many have been found in the sandhills of coast settlements, in crannogs, and other formerly inhabited sites.

Great numbers of these small pins were found in the excavations connected with Christ Church, and in other street excavations in old parts of Dublin.

FIG. 44. ($\frac{1}{2}$)

There is no reason why the form of the more simple of these pins should have suddenly ceased; and their use may have lasted later than is sometimes supposed.

Silver pins, and bronze pins inlaid with silver, are rare; but a few are contained in the collection.

Fig. 45 is, as has been mentioned, a very highly ornamented silver pin of early type.

The bronze ring-pin inlaid with silver and niello, said to have been found at Clontarf, is shown (fig. 46).

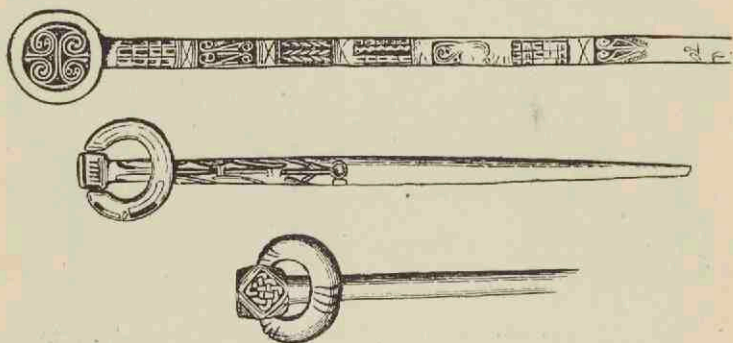
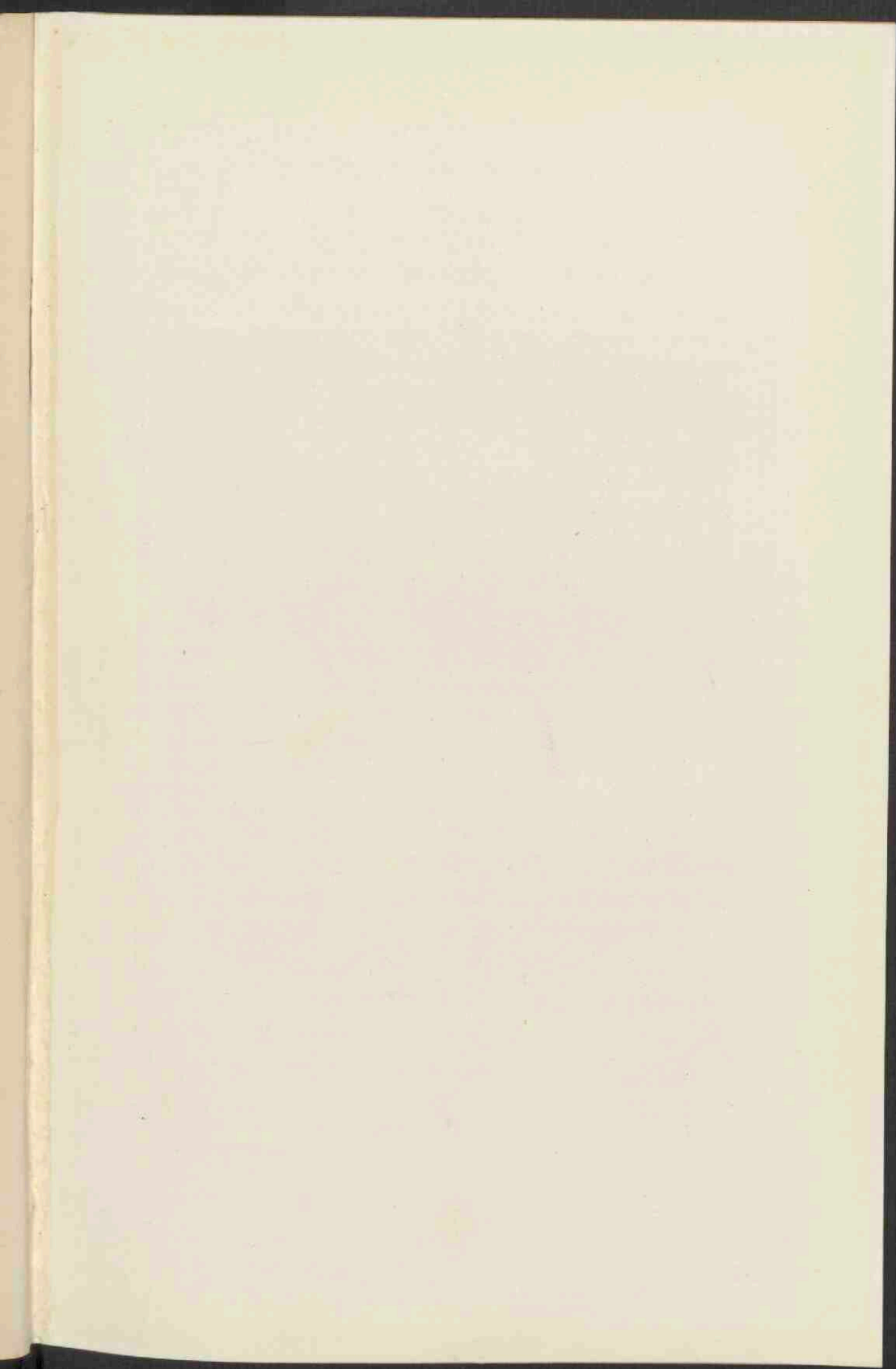


FIG. 45. (W. 26.) ($\frac{2}{3}$) FIG. 46. (1907: 116.) ($\frac{2}{3}$) FIG. 47. (1881: 115.) ($\frac{2}{3}$)

A fine silver ring-pin, ten inches long, is shown (fig. 47).

[The figures in this chapter, brooches and pins, are all half size, except where otherwise indicated by a fraction.]





ARDAGH CHALICE.

III.—ARDAGH CHALICE AND BROOCHES.

THE Ardagh chalice, together with a bronze vessel and four brooches, was found in 1868, when digging potatoes at the rath of Reerastra, close to the village of Ardagh, Co. Limerick. The brooches and the bronze vessel were inside the chalice, which is described as having been found laid in the earth with a rough flagstone on one side of it. The small bronze vessel was damaged by the spade of the digger; the other objects were not much injured by the finders.

The chalice is composed chiefly of gold, silver, and bronze, with rich settings of enamel and amber. It is of the two-handled minstral form in use in the early Church. It measures 7 inches in height and $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter; the foot is $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, and the cup 4 inches deep. Chalices of this early period are extremely rare; the examples existing throughout Europe can be counted on one hand. The Ardagh Chalice is not only rare but unique, being the only Celtic example which has survived down to our own times.

In its construction, 354 different pieces, with twenty rivets, are included. It is fully described in Lord Dunraven's paper, where the chalice is technically described by Mr. Johnson, and the enamels by Professor Sullivan. (Trans. R.I.A., vol. xxiv., p. 433.)

The following description will, with the help of the plates, convey to the reader a sufficient idea of the chalice and the other objects.

The band that surrounds the bowl between the two silver rings with punched dots above the inscription of the Apostles' names, consists of panels of fine filigree work, interlaced and zoomorphic patterns, divided by half-beads of cloisonné enamel.

Below the inscription is an ornament consisting of interlacements terminating in dogs' heads; this goes round the handles and the central bosses. It is cut with a chisel and hammer, as is shown by the lines being slightly raised up at each side, and, though in good preservation, is very faint. At the lower part of the curve of the cup is a fillet of Greek fret cut in the same way as the ornament. The

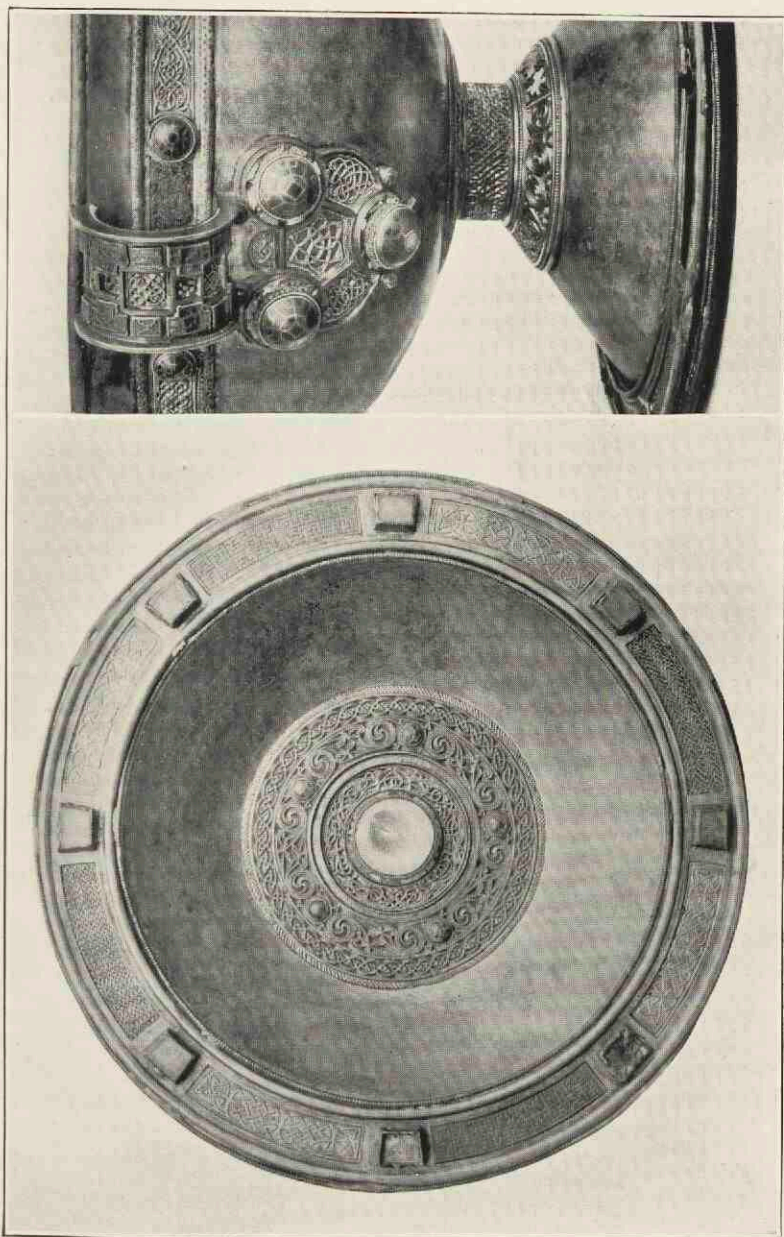
ornaments on each side of the chalice are divided into panels, and decorated with gold spirals which are finely beaded. In the centres are fine cloisonné enamels; and on the margin of the circle are four small settings, two of amber, and two of blue glass.

The stem of gilt bronze is decorated with interlaced work; but the lower part should be noticed for its beautiful decoration of fret and trumpet-pattern. Round the margin of the foot are places for eight panels. Four pierced plates of gilt bronze remain, backed by pieces of mica, which throw out the fret designs. Enamels fill the intermediate spaces.

The very beautiful design on the under side of the foot is richly ornamented with interlaced patterns, trumpet and zoomorphic ornament; the two last divided by a circle of amber surrounding a large crystal set in a second circle of amber. The margin of the under side is ornamented with panels of interlaced work, fret-patterns, and a remarkable kind of work resembling Trichinopoly chain-work, and similar to that which surrounds the enamelled bosses of the handles. The panels are divided from one another by square settings of blue glass backed by rusticated silver plates. The enamels on the chalice are very interesting; they have been technically described at length, as previously mentioned, by Professor Sullivan in Lord Dunraven's paper (extracted at length by Miss Stokes in "Early Christian Art in Ireland"; and see account in Mrs. Nelson Dawson's book, "Enamels"). They consist of champlévé and two kinds of cloisonné; the handles are especially finely decorated, the panels of enamel being shaped to their curves. Below each handle are three fine bosses of cloisonné enamel, surrounded by a circle of amber.

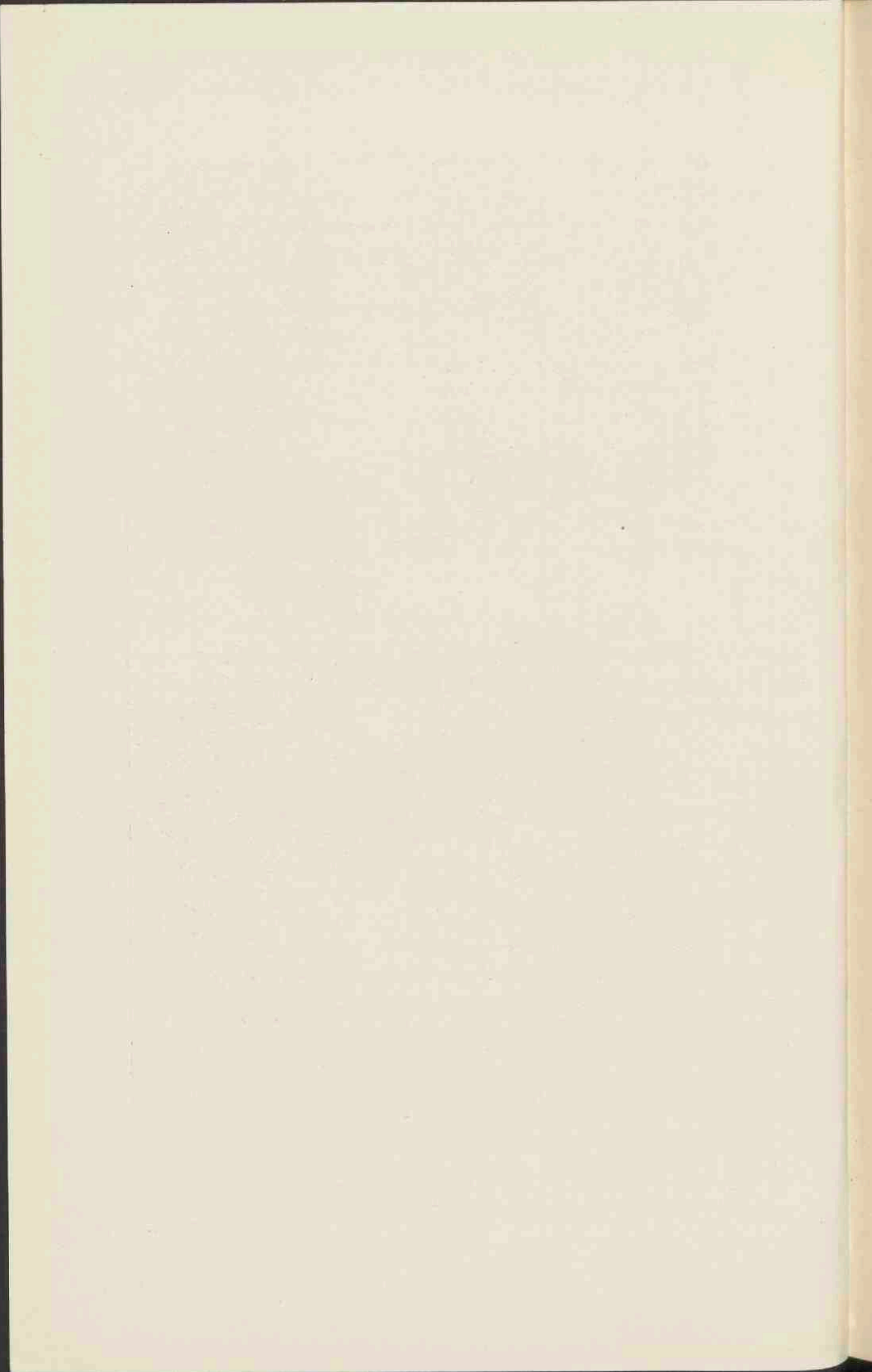
The centres of the lowest of these bosses are filled with large gold granulé work, impressed on the enamel when soft. Similar work may be noticed on the enamelled half-heads on the base, where it takes the form of spirals.

The names of the Apostles occur on the bowl in the following order:—PETRI, PAULI, ANDRI, JACOBI, JOHANNIS, PILIPPI, BARTHOLOMEI, THOMÆ, MATHEI, JACOBI, TATHEUS, SIMON, and are of much interest, as furnishing some idea of the probable date of the chalice. The letters are rather more than an inch in length, and, as mentioned, although well preserved, are hardly visible. They can be studied in



ARDAGH CHALICE: DETAILS OF HANDLE AND UNDER SIDE OF FOOT,

To face p. 38.



the drawing in Lord Dunraven's paper. The forms of the letters correspond with those used in the Book of Kells, the Book of Dimma, the Book of St. Moling, and the Book of Armagh.

Lord Dunraven dates the chalice from the ninth to the tenth century; but Miss Stokes adduces various reasons for believing it to be contemporary with the Tara brooch; while J. Romilly Allen is inclined to place it not much later than the eighth century.

The chalice is especially perfect in its proportions, and the work is only surpassed by the Tara brooch, the artistic balance of the



FIG. 48.—Bronze Vessel found with Chalice ($\frac{1}{2}$).

design being beyond all question. Some of the interlacements on the handles almost anticipate Gothic tracery (Plate VI.).

The way in which the design on the under part of the foot is balanced and graduated, from simple interlacement through trumpet pattern to zoomorphic interlacement, has perhaps never been surpassed in Celtic art, and gives a good idea of the power of design possible in Irish art of the best period. Anyone who knows the difficulty of obtaining a combined unity of patterns will recognize this.

The BRONZE VESSEL (fig. 48) found with the chalice is exceptionally well made; it is perfectly plain and is of the same shape as the chalice, into which it just fits.

The BROOCHES are shown in Plate VII., and fig. 49. (This is the first time all the objects of this find have been published.)

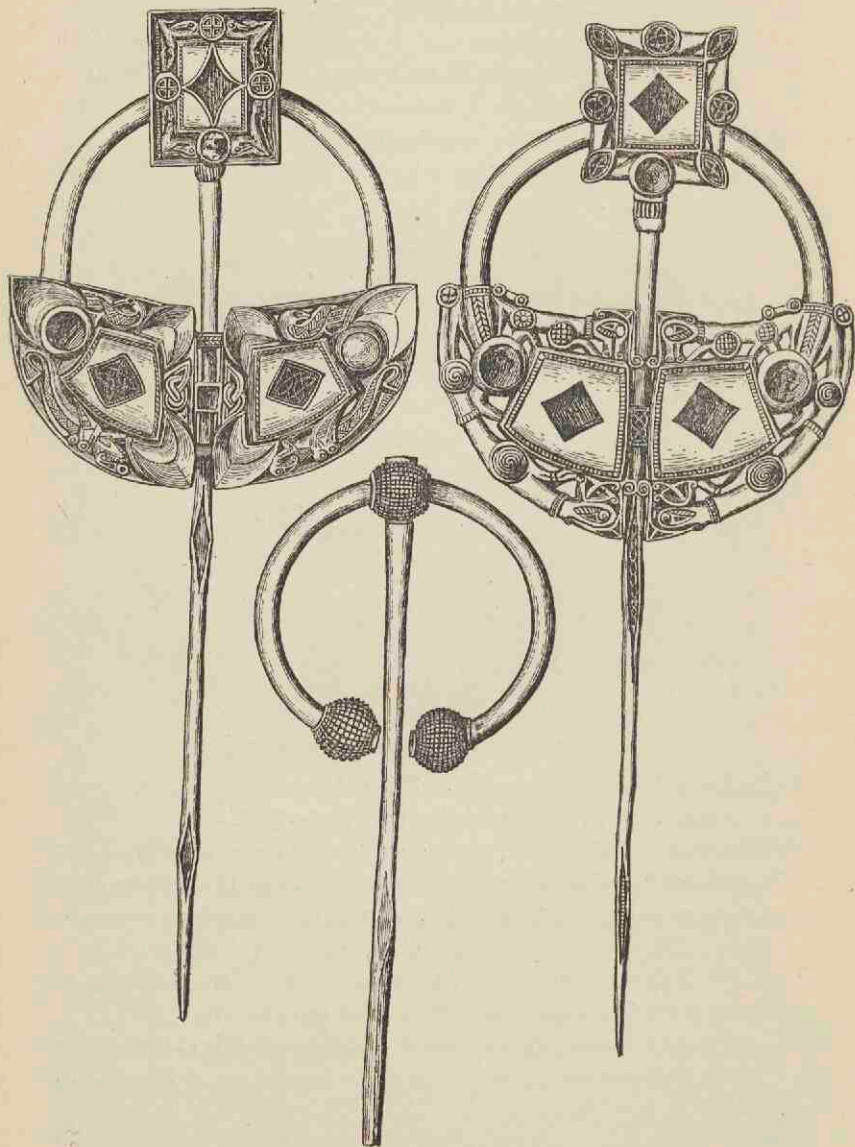
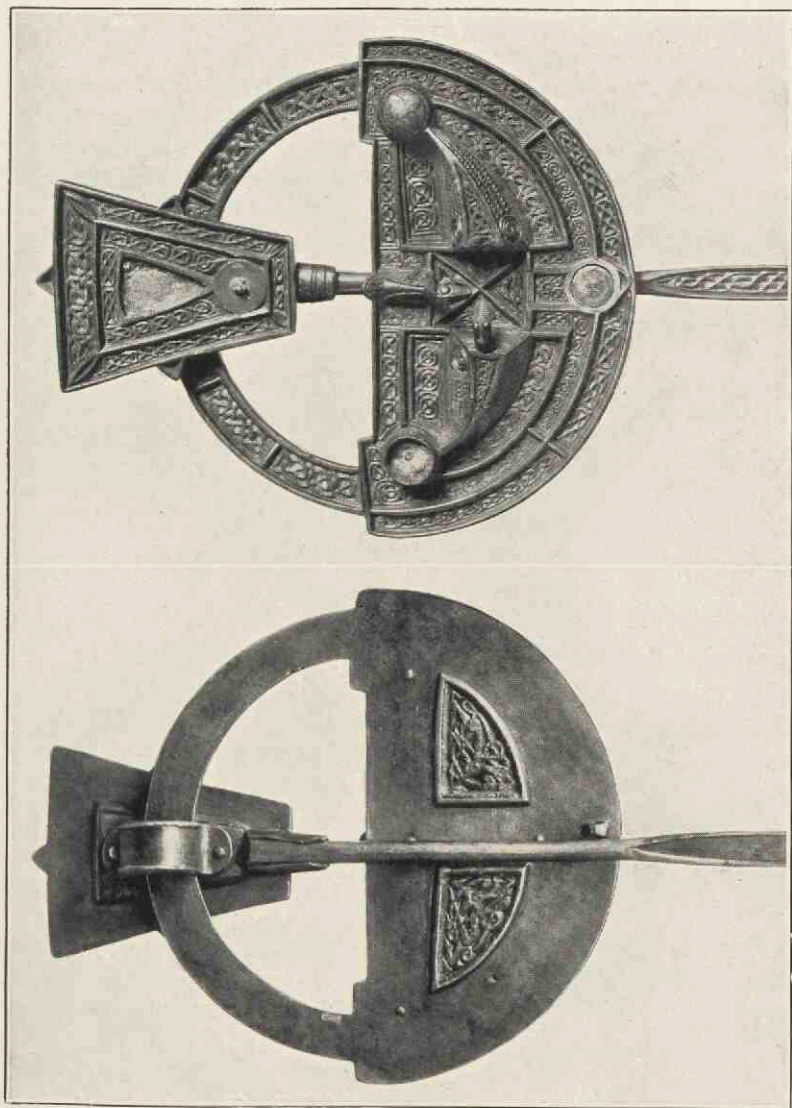
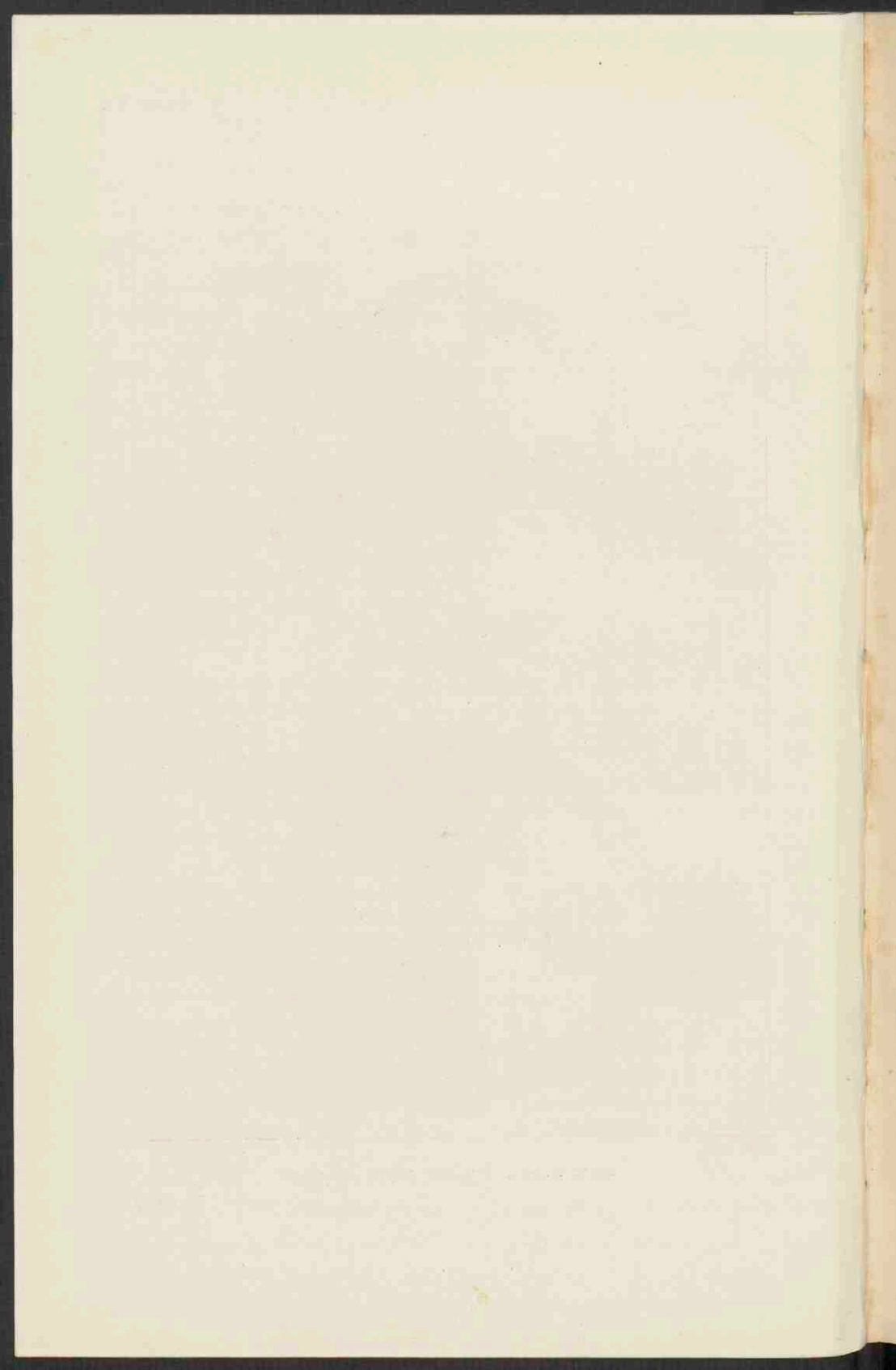


FIG. 49.—Smaller Brooches found with Chalice ($\frac{1}{2}$).



LARGE ARDAGH BROOCH: FRONT AND BACK.

To face p. 40



They do not at all approach the chalice in fineness of work. They are of silver, partly gilt. The largest one is a fine piece of design. The three raised birds (the head of one is broken off) on the body of this brooch are remarkable, and the spiral-work on their wings, and some engraved S-spirals on their breasts, perhaps point to this brooch not being so far removed in date from the chalice, though it is much inferior in workmanship. It measures $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, and $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches in breadth (Plate VII.).

The other brooches figured are smaller and much less richly ornamented: one is like the Killamery brooch. They have been usually considered somewhat later than the chalice—an opinion chiefly based upon the absence of trumpet pattern. However, the secondary and subordinate position occupied by the trumpet-pattern on the chalice renders this at least doubtful.

The Thistle brooch is a somewhat late form, and probably belongs to the ninth or tenth century.

IV.—SHRINES.

THE LOUGH ERNE SHRINE.

The Lough Erne Shrine is the earliest shrine that has been found in Ireland. It was discovered in the spring of 1891 by some fishermen who were engaged in their trade on the western shore of Lower Lough Erne, about half-way between Belleek and Enniskillen, by becoming entangled in one of their lines, and being drawn out of the water. The find was communicated to Mr. Thomas Plunkett, M.R.I.A., who obtained the shrine, and it was procured from him by the Royal Irish Academy.

The shrine measures 7 inches in length, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, and $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height. It consists of a yew-wood box, covered by bronze plates, apparently tinned, and has the remains of a hinge for suspension at each end. Inside it was found a smaller undecorated box of similar shape, measuring $4\frac{1}{8}$ inches long, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, and $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height, and also having remains of hinges.

The shrine, which resembles in shape the well-known hipped-roofed temple in the Book of Kells, was apparently ornamented on either side with three circular medallions, having amber centres surrounded by a pattern of interlaced work. One of these remains, and traces of the others can be observed. The corners are covered with curved bronze mountings; and a metal band decorated with an interlaced pattern covers the joining between the sides and the eaves of the roof. A bronze bar, ornamented with interlaced work, and terminating in projecting gable ends, on which may be seen the triquetra, a form of interlacement usually considered to be a symbol of the Trinity, is placed horizontally upon the apex of the roof and forms a roof ridge.

The following shrines of similar form are known to exist:—

1. A shrine found in the Shannon, now preserved in the Edinburgh Museum.

2. The well-known Monymusk Shrine, preserved at Monymusk House, Aberdeenshire.
3. A shrine in the Copenhagen Museum, said to have been found in Norway.
4. A shrine discovered in the autumn of 1906, at Melhus, near Namos, Norway, in a Viking-age boat burial.

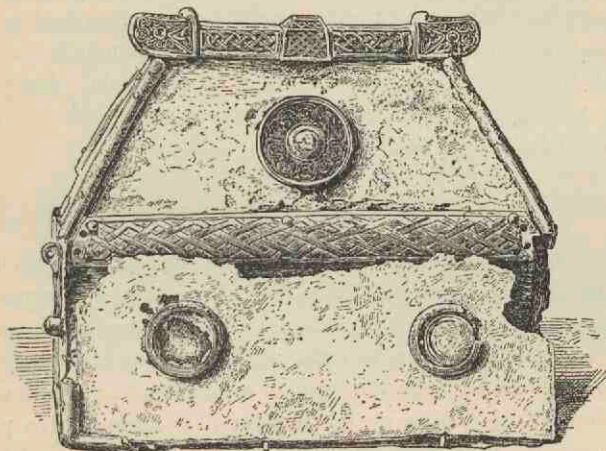


FIG. 50.—Lough Erne Shrine.

This last important find is fully described by Th. Peterson, in "Det. Kyl. Norske Videnskaters Selskabs Skrifter," 1907, No. 8. In addition to the five shrines enumerated, there are in the Academy's collection two ridge-pieces that probably belonged to shrines of the same type.

The Melhus Shrine is decorated with trumpet-pattern, and shows no trace of interlaced or zoomorphic work. Th. Peterson, on this account, considers that shrine the earliest of this type of reliquary, and dates it to the seventh century, and thinks it was probably carried to Norway some time in the early part of the ninth century.

The Monymusk Shrine displays zoomorphic designs, and must be placed somewhat later; and the Lough Erne Shrine, which shows

no trace of trumpet pattern, but is decorated with restrained inter-lacements, without zoomorphic ornaments, may be dated perhaps to about the ninth century.

We now come to the inscribed shrines—Cumdachs and Bell Shrines, &c.—dated by their inscriptions to the eleventh and subsequent century.

In cases where the shrines are not inscribed they have been often known traditionally by the fact that it was customary to appoint an hereditary keeper, to whom certain privileges, such as grants of land, &c., appertained, as custodian of the relic. A change in the keepership of the relic is often mentioned in the Annals. Many of the shrines were obtained by the Academy from a descendant when the family had fallen into decay.

THE SOISCÉL MOLAISE.

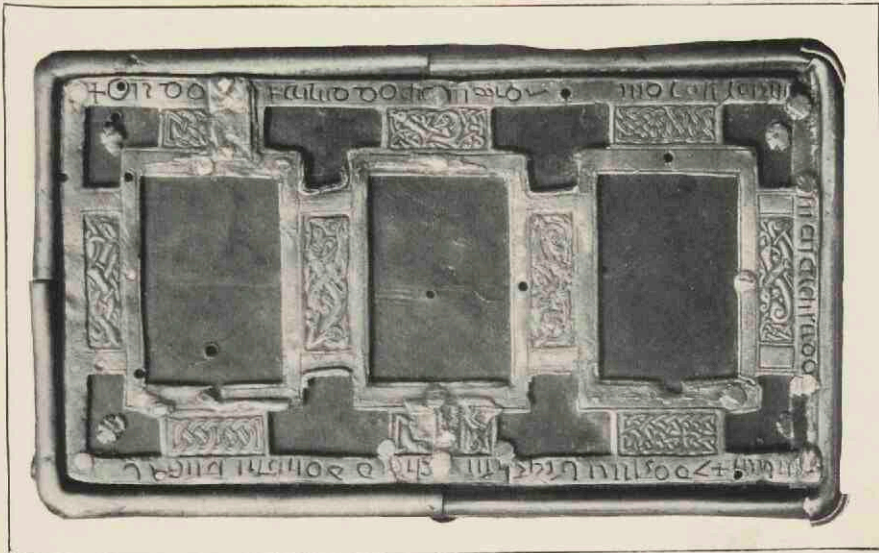
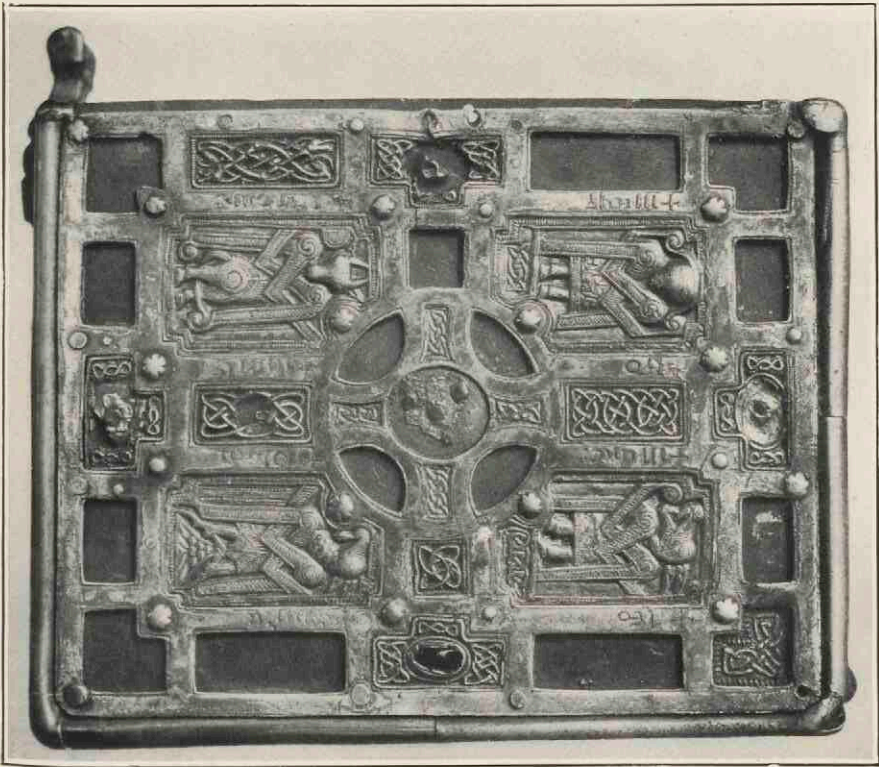
This shrine was made for a copy of the Gospels, believed to have belonged to St. Molaise (died A.D. 563), founder of the monastery on the island of Devenish, Lough Erne, and of many churches. This manuscript is not known to exist at the present time.

The shrine is made in the form of a small oblong box, measuring $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches; it is made of five plates of bronze, covered with worked silver plates. The sixth, which would form the lid, is missing. The panels, which were inlaid in these, have mostly disappeared, but, on the front, some of them remain, and are filled with interlaced ornaments in large gold filigree; that on the right contains a carbuncle in a cabouchon setting, and there were probably at one time five of these settings.

The following inscription is engraved on three sides of the bottom of the case (Plate VIII.):—

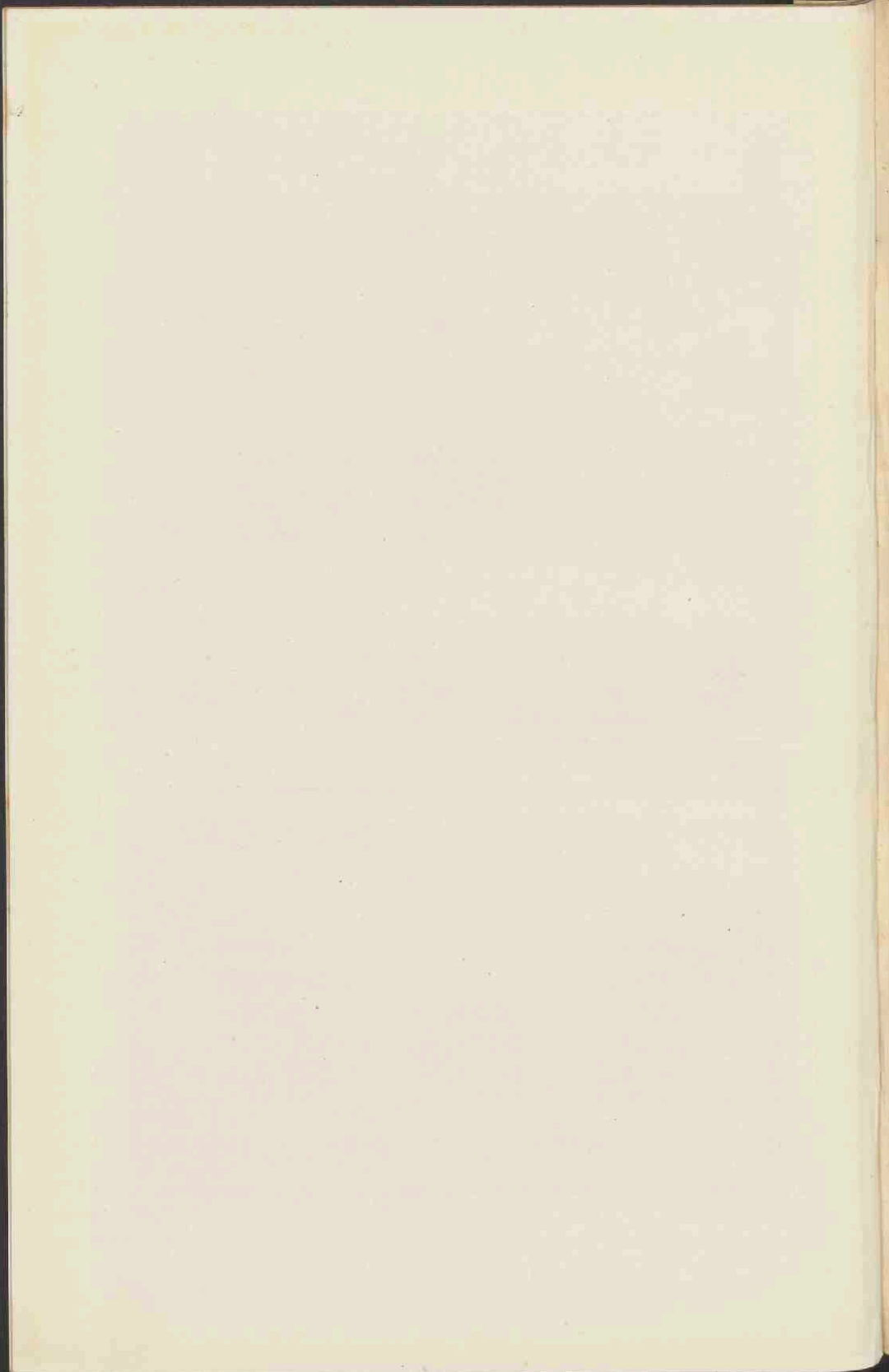
+ OIR DO NFAILAD DOCHOMARBY MOLASI LASAN
INCUTACHSA DO . . . INLAN + 7 DO GILLUBÁITHÍN CHERD DORIGNI IGRÉSA.

Translation:—A prayer for [Cen]nfaelad, the successor of Molaise, by whom this case (was made), for . . . and for Gilla Báithín, the artisan who did the work.



SOISCÉL MOLAISE: FRONT AND BOTTOM

To face p. 44.



Cennfaelad, Abbot of Devenish, succeeded Cathalan Ua Corcorain as Abbot in the year 1001; and his death is recorded in the "Annals of the Four Masters," and "Annals of Ulster," at the year 1025. The shrine appears to have been made therefore between the years 1001 and 1025.

The design on the front face consists of an Irish cross, in the outer quarters of which are represented, in a somewhat Byzantine manner, the four Evangelistic symbols.

The names of the symbols, Leo, Aquila, Homo, can still be read, also those of the Evangelists, Marc, Johan, Math, Lucas. The trumpet pattern may be noticed on the front of the dress of the winged man symbolising St. Matthew. On the left end of the case is a figure of an ecclesiastic, probably St. Molaise, wearing a chasuble, and holding a book, and what is supposed to be an aspersory.

The hinge by which the case was suspended was decorated with red enamel, portions of which remain. The silver panels are richly decorated with interlaced zoomorphic work. On the right side the central panel is missing; the designs of interlaced and zoomorphic patterns are of fine workmanship. The ornamentation on the back consists of a parallelogram of pierced rectangular crosses covering a plate of copper or bronze, ornamented with various small designs. This is a usual design for the backs of shrines of this period, and can be noticed on the Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell and the Shrine of St. Moedoc.

All the principal panels on the bottom of the case are missing; the silver plate cut with interlaced and zoomorphic designs, and the inscription described above, alone remain.

The shrine was purchased in 1859 from a member of the family of the O'Mithideins or Meehans, the hereditary keepers. (Miss Margaret Stokes, "Archæologia," 43.)

DOMNACH AIRGID.

There is one other Cumdach in the Academy's collection in the Museum—the Domnach Airgid. Its original intention as a case for a book has been doubted. It consists of a yew case covered with bronze, and plated. The interlaced pattern with which this is

decorated can be seen at the ends; lastly, a richly decorated silver case was placed on the shrine about 1350, the work of John O'Barrdan. The older case was known as belonging to the See of Clogher in the eleventh century. The detailed consideration of the later case is postponed.

The MS. contained in the shrine was long believed to date from the time of St. Patrick, and to be the oldest copy of the Gospels extant in Ireland; but it is now considered to be not earlier than the eighth century; the yew case could not have been made to contain it, as the MS. measures 9 inches by $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and the case only $7\frac{3}{8}$ inches \times $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches \times $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches. (Dean Bernard, *Trans. R.I.A.*, vol. xxx., p. 303.)

Cumdachs are peculiar to Ireland; and it may be of interest to give a list of those at present known to exist or to have existed formerly. The following existing MSS. are known to have had Cumdachs, from references in the Irish Annals, though the later have not been preserved:—

The Book of Durrow, enshrined A.D. 877 to 914.

The Book of Armagh, enshrined A.D. 938.

The Book of Kells, enshrined before A.D. 1007.

There are two Cumdachs in the R. I. A. collection preserved in the National Museum:—

Cumdach of St. Molaise's Gospels, A.D. 1001 to 1025.

Cumdach of St. Patrick's Gospels (Domnach Airgid).

In addition to these there are preserved in the R. I. A. Library:—

Cumdach of the Stowe Missal, A.D. 1023.

Cumdach of Columba's Psalter, A.D. 1084. (The Cathach.)

And in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin:—

Cumdach of Dimma's Book, A.D. 1150.

THE SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S BELL.

This shrine and bell are among the most famous objects in the country.

THE BELL is quadrilateral, and was formed of two plates of sheet-iron, which were bent over so as to meet, and fastened together by large-headed iron rivets, the bell being then dipped in bronze. The handle is of iron let into the top of the bell. The clapper is apparently of later date than the body of the bell. The bell measures 6 inches high, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches broad at the shoulder, and 5 inches at the foot. The handle is 3 inches long, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high.

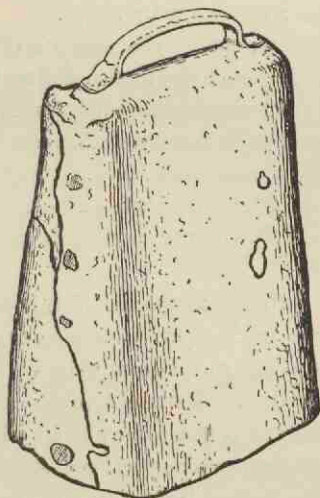


FIG. 51.—St. Patrick's Bell.

This bell is that traditionally believed to have been buried in St. Patrick's grave, and removed from thence by St. Colomeille. It is mentioned in the "Annals of Ulster" under the year 552 A.D., where, on the authority of the "Book of Cuana," it is stated that three reliquaries, including the Bell of the Will, were taken from St. Patrick's tomb by St. Colomeille. (The bell was placed at Armagh.) This passage is supposed to be referred to in a statement

in the Book of Armagh before 807. It is probable that the distinctive epithet "Bell of the Will" had its origin in the disposition of it to Armagh.

According to Bishop Reeves, it "in all probability is *fourteen hundred years old*."

In the eleventh century, to quote Bishop Reeves, "it was judged worthy of being enshrined in a manner suited to its noble origin. . . . The parties to this act of veneration were the Sovereign of Ireland and the Archbishop of Armagh, who, in doing honour to the reliquary, testified that it commanded at that time the greatest respect, both secular and religious."

The framework of the shrine is formed of bronze plates, to which the decorated portions are secured by rivets.

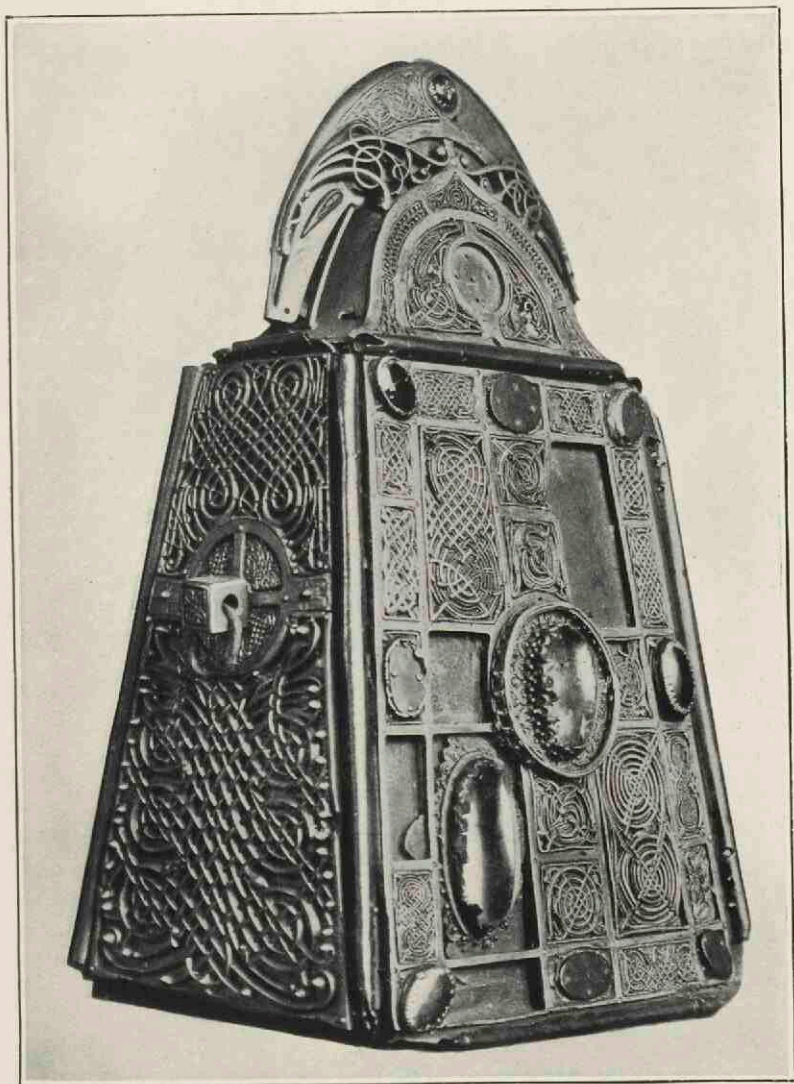
The upper or handle portion of the shrine is of silver, and deserves especial attention as an example of decorative treatment. At the top is a setting of enamel with a cloisonné centre. The back of the handle portion of the shrine is treated with great freedom; the lower portion is divided into a semicircle, in each half of which is a conventionalized figure of a bird somewhat like a peacock, surrounded with interlaced lines. The upper portion is decorated with scroll-work in silver.

The front of the shrine is composed of thirty-one compartments. A crystal set in a framework of silver, of later work than the rest of the shrine, occupies the centre. Below this, on the left, is an oval crystal with a late setting. Seventeen of the compartments retain their original decorations of gold filigree and interlaced work. Round the front are four cabuchon settings of red stones, originally eight; they may be doubted as having formed part of the original design.

The sides of the shrine are in admirable preservation; and the articulation of the animals with small blue glass settings is worthy of special study.

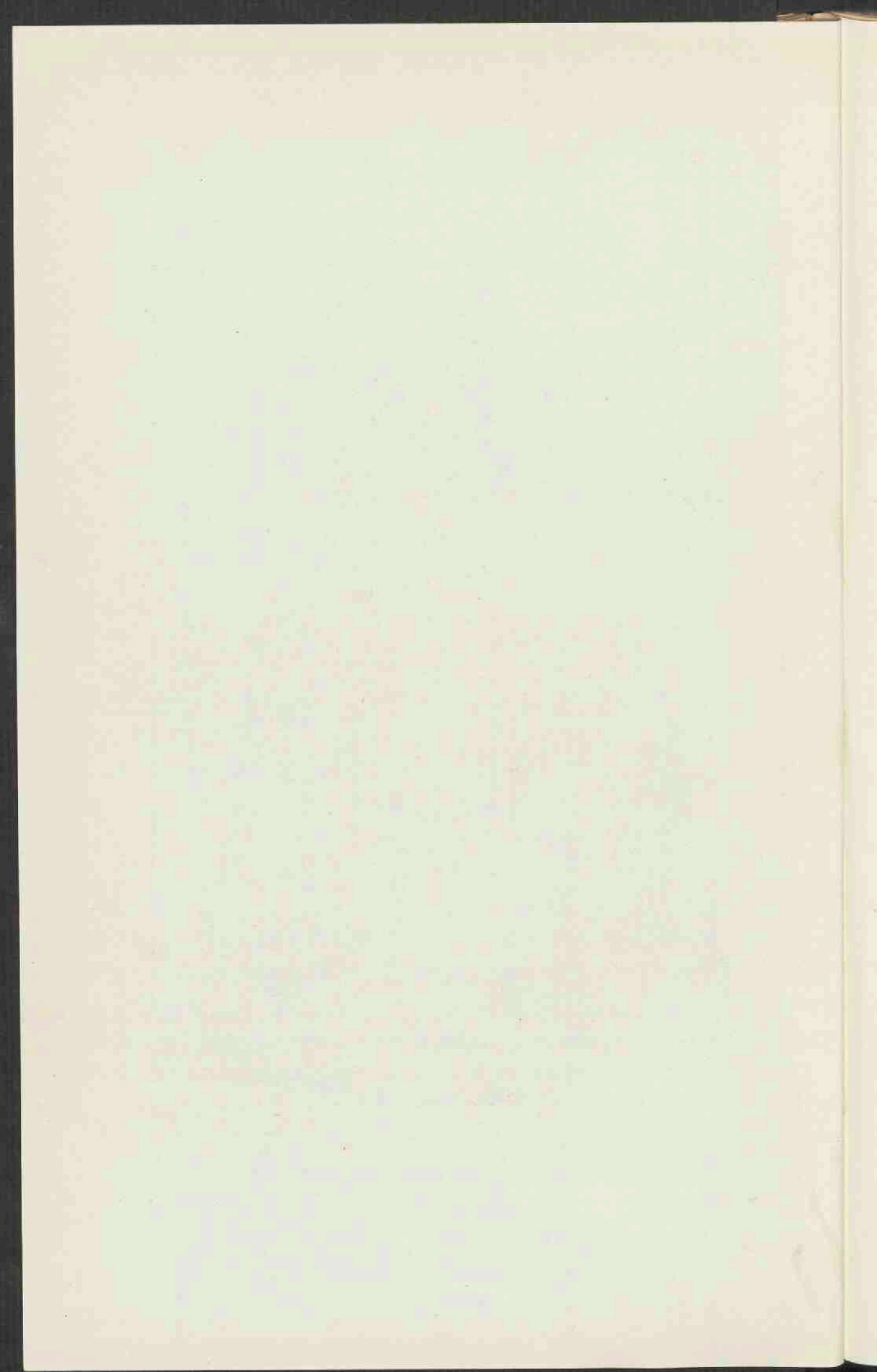
On each side above and below the circle which surrounds the handles are ornaments representing serpents interlaced, their eyes formed of blue glass. The handles are composed of a knob and ring for suspension. The interlacements within the rings are heavily plated with gold.

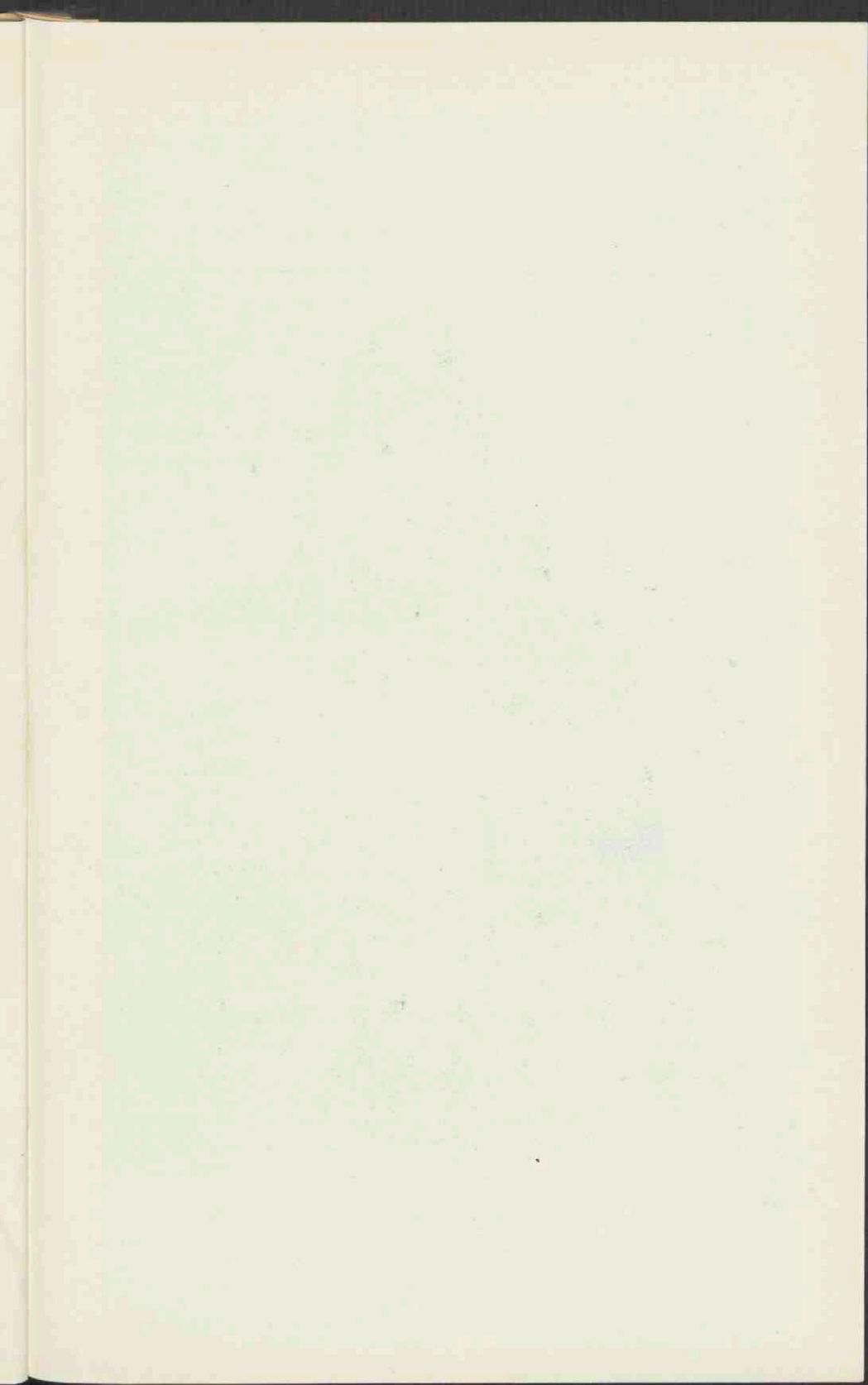
The back of the shrine is overlaid with a silver plate cut through

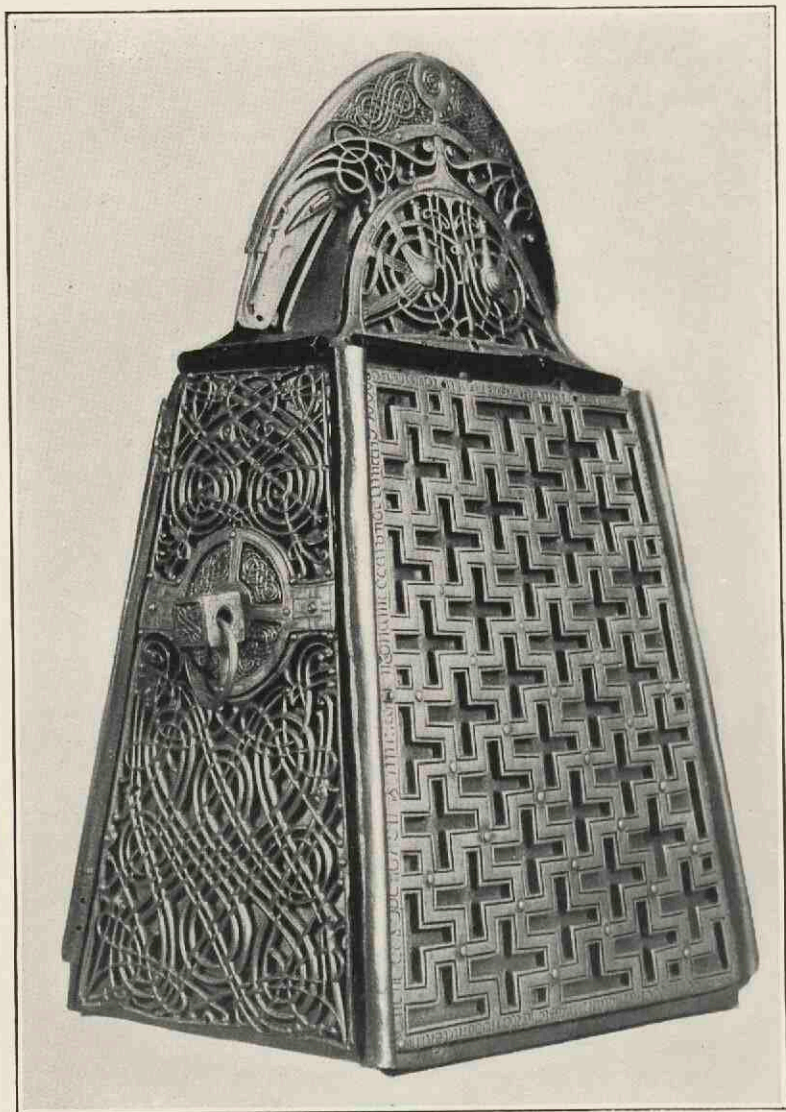


SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S BELL: FRONT AND RIGHT SIDE.

To face p. 48.







SHRINE OF ST. PATRICK'S BELL: BACK AND LEFT SIDE.

To face p. 49

in a cruciform pattern. This ornament, as has been mentioned (p. 45), is usual on shrines of this period. The base of the shrine is formed of a sliding plate of bronze, which closed the shrine, and in which in one corner a large hole has been worn by the end of the clapper. The shrine has been said to betray Danish influence, which, from its date, is more than probable. Round the margin of the back is engraved the following inscription (the words run on without break on the shrine):—

OR DODOMNALL ULACHLAIND LASINDERNAD INCLOCSA || OCUS DODOMNALL
CHOMARBA PHATRAIC ICONDERNAD OCUS DODCHATHALAN UMAELCHALLAND
DOMAER INCHLUIC || OCUS DOCHONDULIG UINMAINEN CONAMACCAIB
ROCUMTAIG.

TRANSLATION.

“A prayer for Domnall Ua Lachlainn, by whom this bell [shrine] was made, and for Domnall, successor of Patrick, by whom it was made, and for (dod *sic*) Cathalan Ua Maelchallann, the keeper of the bell, and for Cudulig Ua Inmainen with his sons who fashioned it.”

The reign of Donnell O’Loughlin or MacLoughlin, King of Ireland (at whose expense it would seem the shrine was made), is dated by the Four Masters, 1088 to 1121 A.D. Donnell MacAulay, Bishop of Armagh (successor of St. Patrick), filled that see from 1091 to 1105.

The shrine was therefore made some time between the years 1091 and 1105. The name of the artificer and his sons (Cudulig O’Inmainen) is given according to the custom of the time. The family of O’Inmainen was a southern one.

The family of O’Mellan were hereditary keepers of the bell till the year 1441, at which date it is recorded in the Annals that on account of some misdemeanour on O’Mellan’s part, the custody of the bell was committed to O’Mulchallyn (O’Mulholland). The bell and shrine were then removed to the barony of Loughinsholin, Co. Derry, where the head of the Mulholland family had settled. They remained in the possession of that family till 1758, and were bequeathed by Henry Mulholland to Mr. Adam M’Clean, of Belfast, from whose executors they were purchased by the Rev. James Henthorn Todd, D.D., F.T.C.D., after whose death they were purchased by the Royal Irish Academy.

SHRINE OF ST. MOEDOC.

This very interesting shrine is probably of the eleventh century, though some points are uncertain. It is known as the Breac Moedog, and is reputed to be the shrine in which were preserved the relics brought from Rome by St. Molaise, and given by him to St. Moedoc.

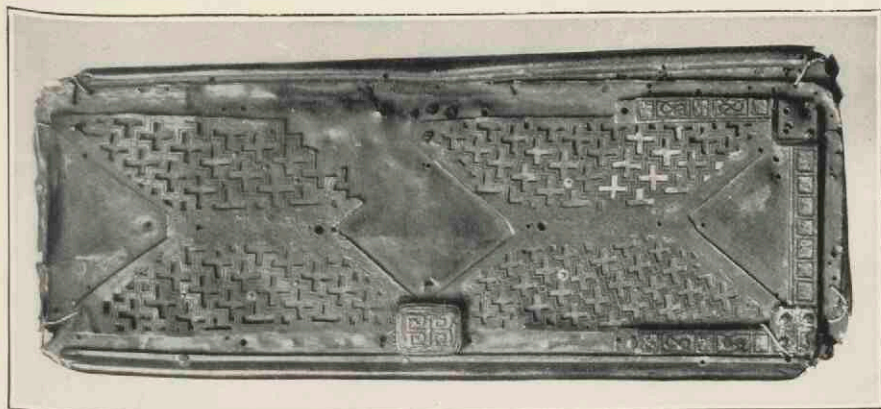
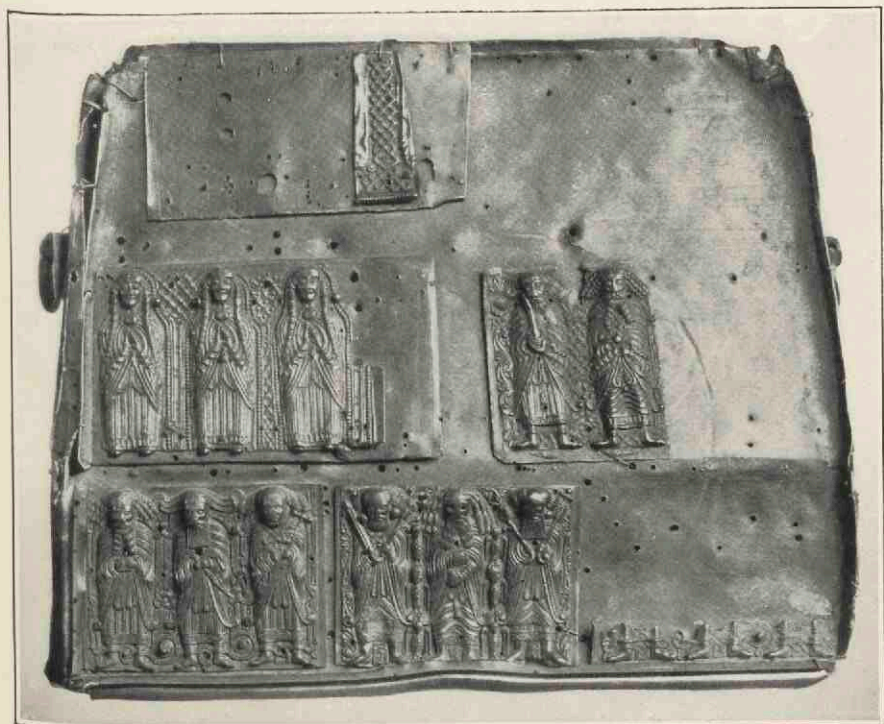
The shrine is said to have received its name from a story related in the "Life of St. Molaise" ("Silva Gadelica," i. 32), which states that when St. Molaise returned to Ireland he gave Moedoc many relics; and that Moedoc on receiving them said: "Is breac go maith uait me anossa," "I am well assorted by thee now." Then, speaking of the reliquary, he said: "Breac Maedoig shall be its name for ever."



FIG. 52.—Figure at end of Shrine of St. Moedoc.

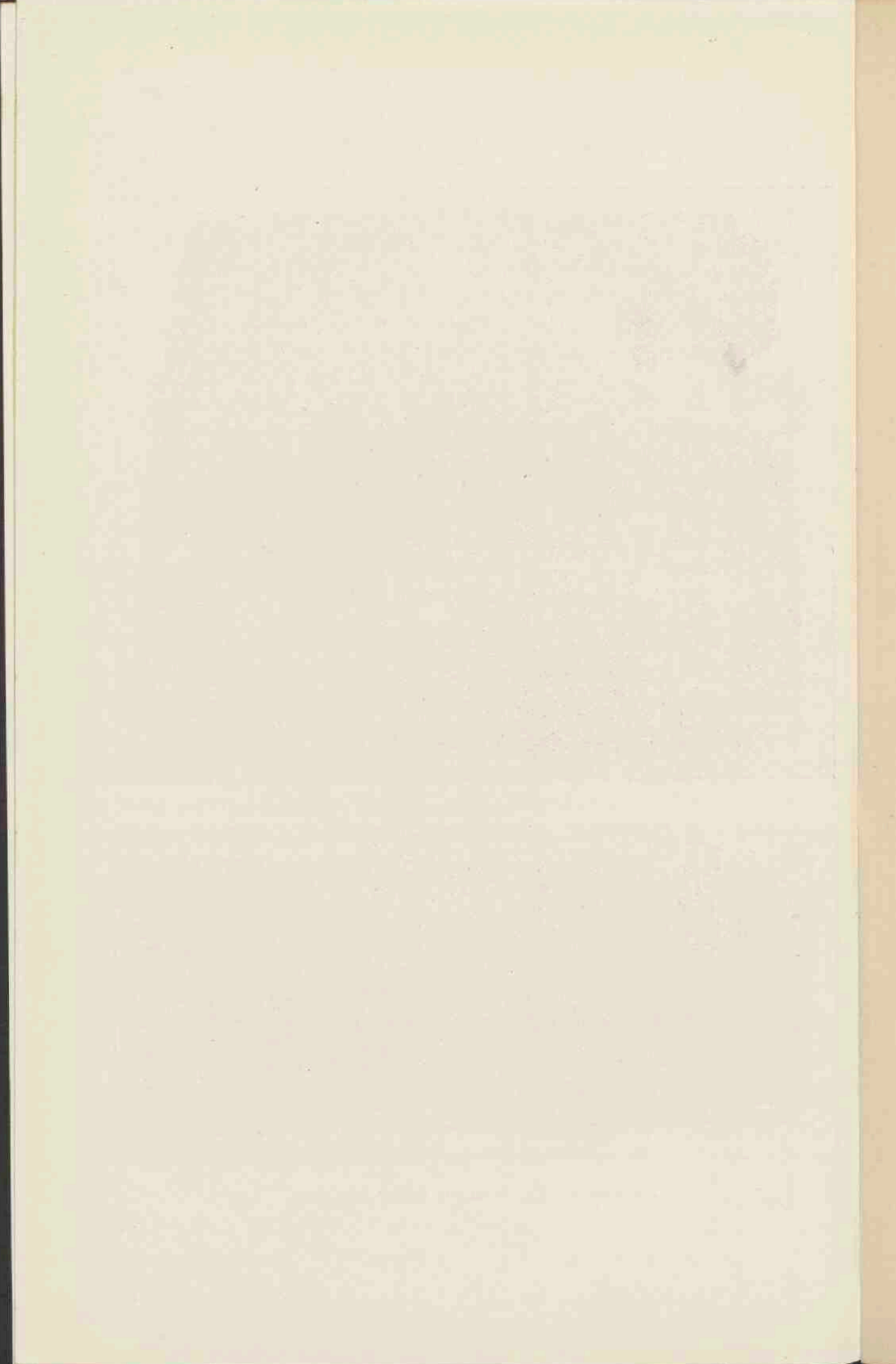
The shrine was formerly preserved in the Church of St. Moedoc, at Drumlane; it was afterwards purchased by Dr. Petrie from a Dublin jeweller, and passed with the Petrie Collection to the Royal Irish Academy.

It resembles in shape shrines of the Loch Erne type, but it is larger and the roof is not hipped. It is of bronze; to the front are attached plates of bronze with figures of saints in high relief. There were originally twenty-one of these figures, but only eleven, with three fragments, remain.



SHRINE OF ST. MOEDOC: FRONT AND BASE

To face p. 50.



The ends were decorated in the same way, but only one figure remains. This, a seated figure (King David), playing a harp, and a bird (in gilt bronze), are of much interest, the former as an early representation of that instrument; it is one for which both hands are required—the left for treble, and the right for bass—and so accurate is the representation, that the manner of playing, by pulling the strings with the nails, is clearly shown. (R. B. Armstrong, "The Irish and the Highland Harps," p. 24.)

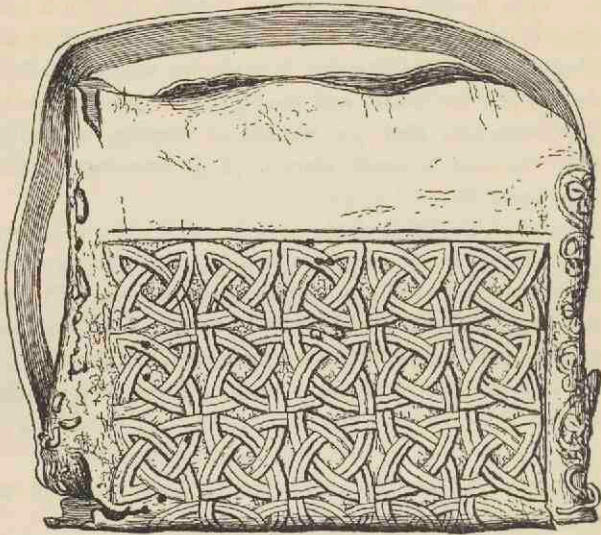
The figures on the front of the shrine are of great interest. The male figures are, with one exception, bearded, and hold in their hands various objects—such as books, sceptres, and swords. The hems of their robes are ornamented with skew frets and interlaced patterns, and some interlaced knots intertwine their feet. One of the patterns is perhaps derived from trumpet pattern. These Irish details make it certain that the work was done in Ireland, and show that the art of designing figures in relief had made considerable advance.

The group of female figures represents three saints in uniform costume, with their hair hanging in long plaits.

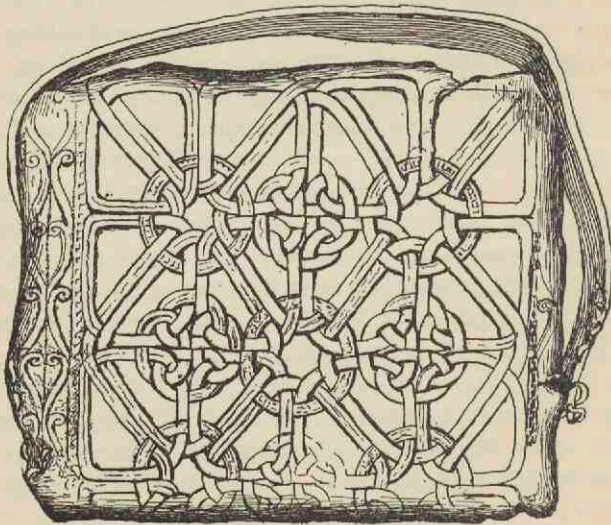
The practice of cutting off the hair in the profession of holy virgins was not adopted generally as early as the regulation of wearing a particular habit. An historical notice in the "Chronicum Scotorum" refers to this custom—"A. D. 888, change of cutting of hair by the virgins of Erin." The figures have the general appearance of being enclosed in arcading, as in some of the continental shrines—see the twelfth-century shrines illustrated in "Trésor de l'Abbaye de Saint-Maurice D'Agaune,"—and the work between some of them reminds us of the wall-arcades of Cormac's Chapel at Cashel. On each side of one of the male figures are well-worked cherubim and birds of prey, resembling the cherubim and ill-omened birds on the illumination of the Crucifixion in an Irish ms. of the eighth century, preserved in the Library of Würzburg. (Miss Stokes, Observations on the Breac Moedog, "Archæologia," 43.)

The back of the shrine was covered with a plate, pierced with rectangular crosses, the marks of which can still be seen, similar to the back of the Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell. The same design is found on the bottom of the shrine, enclosed in a border of interlaced rectangles inlaid with enamel and millefiori work. In the centre of the border at one side is a boss on which is a "swastica" in blue enamel.

(1)



(2)

FIG. 53.—Leather Satchel of Shrine of St. Moedoc ($\frac{1}{4}$).

POLAIRE.—By the side of the shrine is exhibited a leather case or satchel (fig. 53), ornamented with different patterns on each side and at the ends, in which the shrine was carried. It is of exceptional interest, as very few such satchels of leather, or polaires, have been preserved; others that may be mentioned are the satchel of the Irish Missal at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and that of the Book of Armagh in Trinity College.

SHRINE OF ST. LACHTIN'S ARM.

This shrine was made about A.D. 1118–1127, to enshrine the hand of St. Lachtin (seventh century), patron of Donaghmore Church, Muskerry, county Cork, and Abbot or Bishop of Freshford, county Kilkenny. It is of bronze, inlaid with gold and silver (only a few fragments of gold remain); the hand, which is riveted to the arm at the wrist, being inlaid at the nails, also in the palm, and at the back and round the wrist, with silver, which is ornamented with scroll- and knot-work; the upper end of the arm has a setting of blue stones. Round the centre of the arm is a band of large interlacements, which, with the inscriptions, divides the arm into twelve large panels, decorated with interlacements in silver and niello; the base is surrounded by bands of zoomorphic and interlaced work. The end of the arm was closed by a circular cap fastened with four pins; this was inlaid with silver, the centre having mosaic work surrounded with silver filigree. The ancient wooden case which contained the hand, as far as the wrist, is still preserved in the shrine. The inscriptions, which have been defaced and are quite illegible on the upper portion of the arm, are as follows:—

1.)R̄ DOMAELSECHNAILL UCELLACHAĪ DOARDRIG UANEC . A . . . M . . .
INCUMTTACHSO
2.)DOCHORMAC M̄C MEIC CARTHAIG I DORIGDĀNU MUMAN DORAT(HAĪE ?)
D . . . D . . . ID . . . D . . .
3.)R̄ OR̄ DOTADC M̄C MEIC : : RTHAIG I DORIG . . .
4.)R̄ DODIARMAIT M̄C MEIC DENISC DOCOMAR : A : . . .

TRANSLATION.

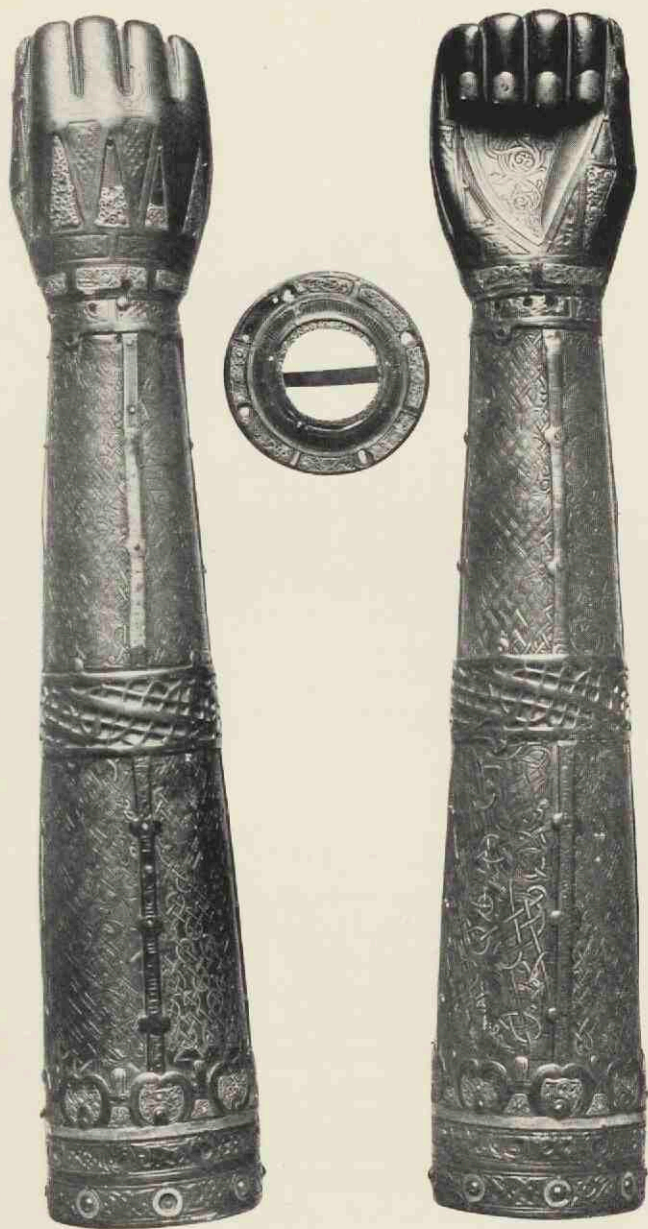
1. A prayer for Maelsechnaill Ua Cellacháin, high-king of the Ua Echach [of Munster] . . . this case.
2. [A prayer] for Cormac son of Mac Carthaig, that is the crown-prince of Munster . . .
3. A prayer for Tadhg son of Mac (Ca)rthaig, that is, . . .
4. [A prayer] for Diarmait son of Mac Denise, the successor of . . .
(O'Curry, Proc. R. I. A., vol. v., p. 463, read L, i.e., initial of Lachtain).

Cormac Mac Carthaig, mentioned in the above inscription, King-Bishop of Ireland, was builder of the church known as Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel (1127); his death is recorded in the "Annals of the Four Masters," at the year a.d. 1138. The exhaustion of the interlaced and coming of a new style are indicated by this shrine.

The shrine was preserved at St. Lachtin's Church, Donaghmore, till about 1750, when it was acquired by Sir Andrew Fountaine, of Narford Hall, Norfolk. It was purchased by the Government at the Fountaine sale, and deposited with the Royal Irish Academy, 1884.

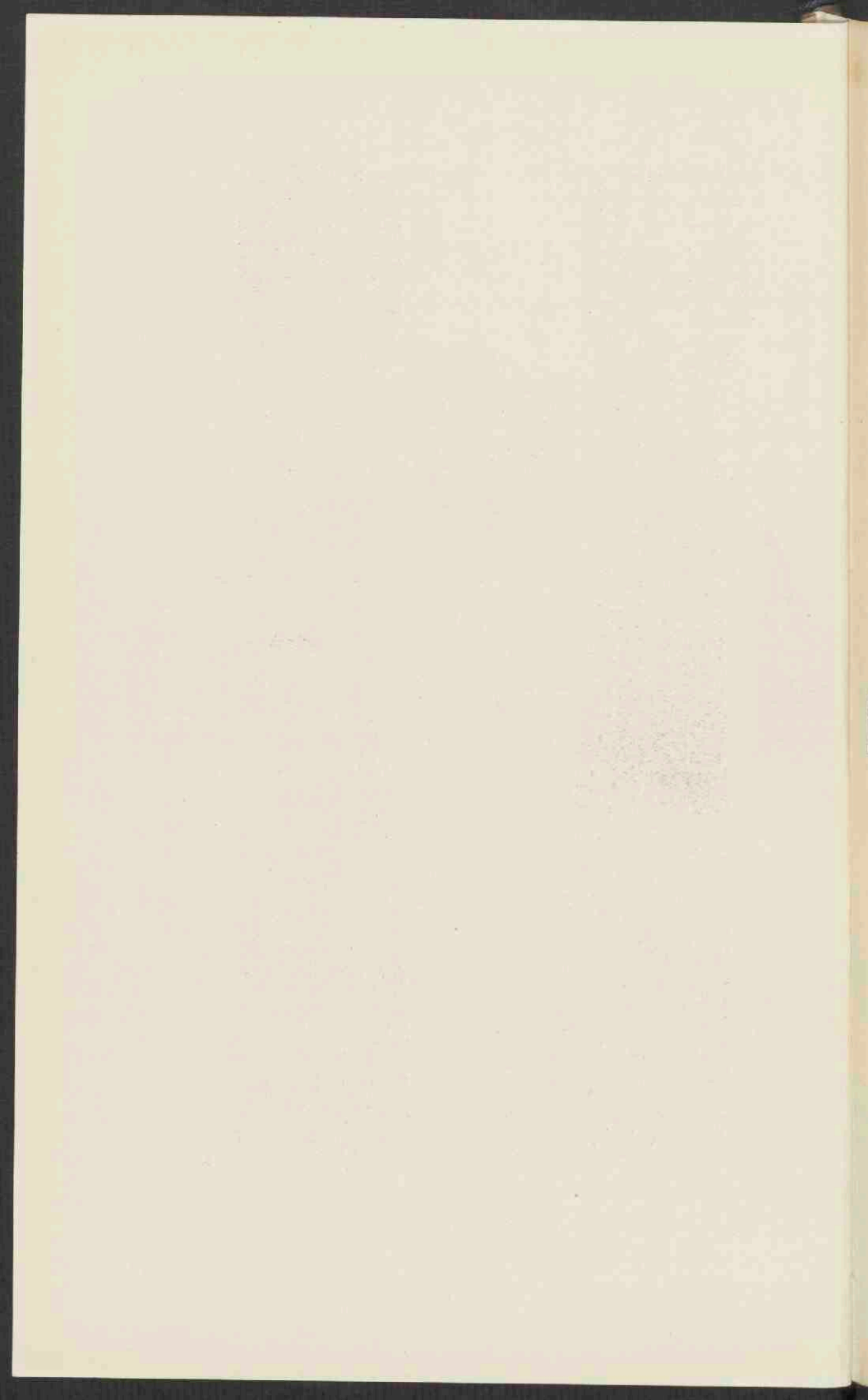
THE CORP NAOMH.

Another shrine, which completes the pre-Norman work in the collection preserved in the Museum, may be mentioned, the "Corp Naomh" (Holy Body). It has been much added to in medieval times, but retains some portions of earlier work. It is a bell shrine; the front of the upper portion is decorated with a figure of an ecclesiastic holding a book. This figure has on each shoulder a cross in a circle, supposed by some to be early examples of St. Patrick's crosses; it is of interest to students of ecclesiastical dress. On each side of this figure is a horseman, and above each of these a large bird. The interlaced work which fills the spaces between the horse's legs, &c., should be noticed. The ridge of the shrine is decorated with open interlaced



SHRINE OF ST. LACTIN'S ARM.

To face p. 54.



work. This upper part of the shrine which we reproduce (fig. 54) is original; the rest, with some possible exceptions, is medieval.

The shrine formerly belonged to the Church of Temple Cross, County Meath, and was obtained by the Academy in 1887.



FIG. 54.—The Corp Naomh. (Lent by R.S.A.I.)

THE CROSS OF CONG.

The Cross of Cong is one of the greatest treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Collection. It was made about the year A.D. 1123, for Turlough O'Connor, King of Connaught and Ireland (A.D. 1106–1156).

The cross was made to enshrine a portion of the "true cross," presented by the Pope; and it was recorded in the "Annals of Inisfallen," at the year A.D. 1123, that "a portion of the true cross came into Ireland, and was enshrined at Roscommon by Turlogh O'Connor." It appears to have been originally made for the Church of Tuam, the seat of the Archbishopric of Connaught; and it was probably transferred to the Augustinian Abbey of Cong (where it was afterwards preserved) either by Archbishop Muiredach O'Duffy, who died there A.D. 1150, or by King Roderic O'Connor, who founded and

endowed the Abbey. The series of inscriptions, the first of which is in Latin, run all along the edge of the cross, and are as follows:—

✠ HÁC CRUCE CRÚX TEGITUR QUÁ PASUS CONDITOR ORBIS.

✠ HÁC CRUCE CRÚX TEGITUR QUÁ PASUS CONDITOR ORBIS.

OR DOMUREDUCH UDUBTHAIG DOSENOÍR ÉREND.

OR DOTHERRDĒL UCHONCHŌ DORÍG ÉREND LASANDERNAD INGRESSA.

OR DODOMNULL MĀ FLANNAČÁN UDUB DEPSKUP CONNACHT DOCHOMARBA
CHOMMAN ACUS CHIARÁN ICANERNAD INGRĒSSA.

OR DOMAÉLÍSU MĀ BRATDAN UECHAN DORIGNI INGRESSA.

TRANSLATION.

In this cross is preserved the cross on which the founder of the world suffered.

A prayer for Muredach Ua Dubthaig, the senior of Ireland.

A prayer for Terdelbach Ua Conchobair, King of Ireland, by whom this work was made.

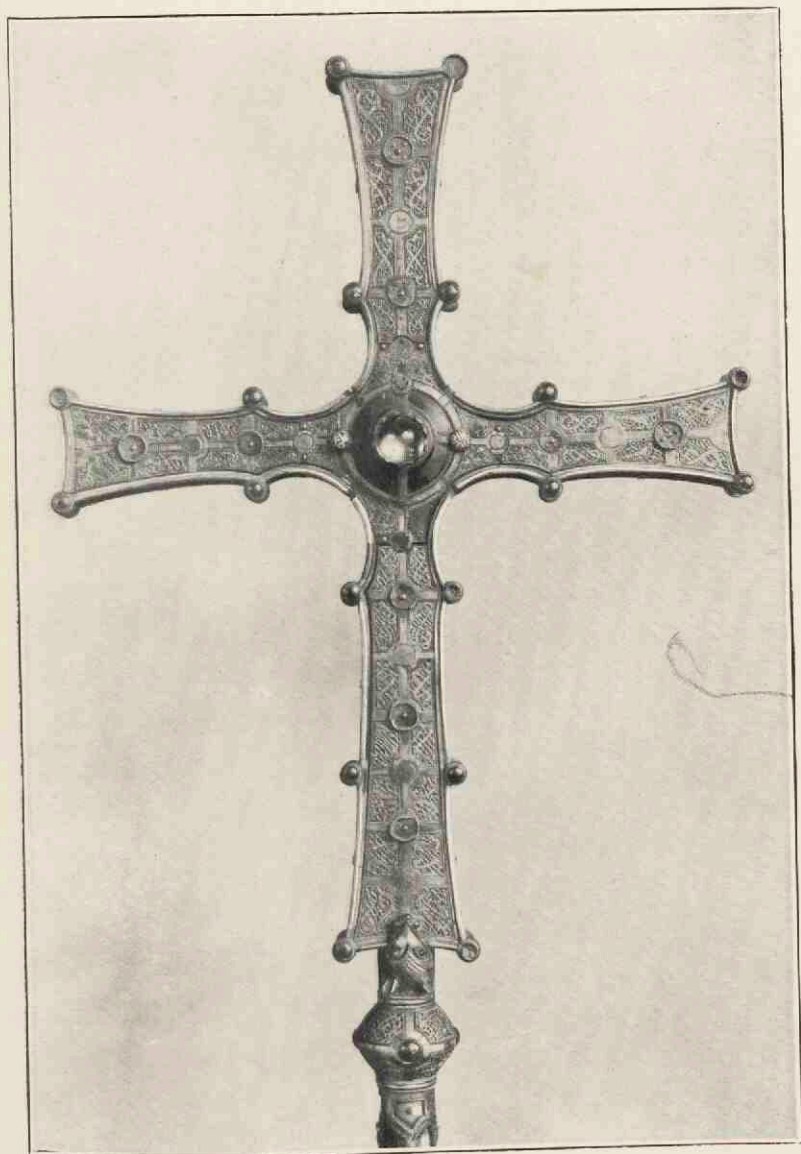
A prayer for Domnall son of Flannacán Ua Dub[thaig], Bishop of Connacht and successor of Comman and Ciaran, by whom this work was made.

A prayer for Mael Ísu son of Bratán Ua Echan, who made this work.

(The Latin inscription is repeated on another side of the cross. The first letter read as p in EPSKUP is strange in form, or is blundered by the engraver.)

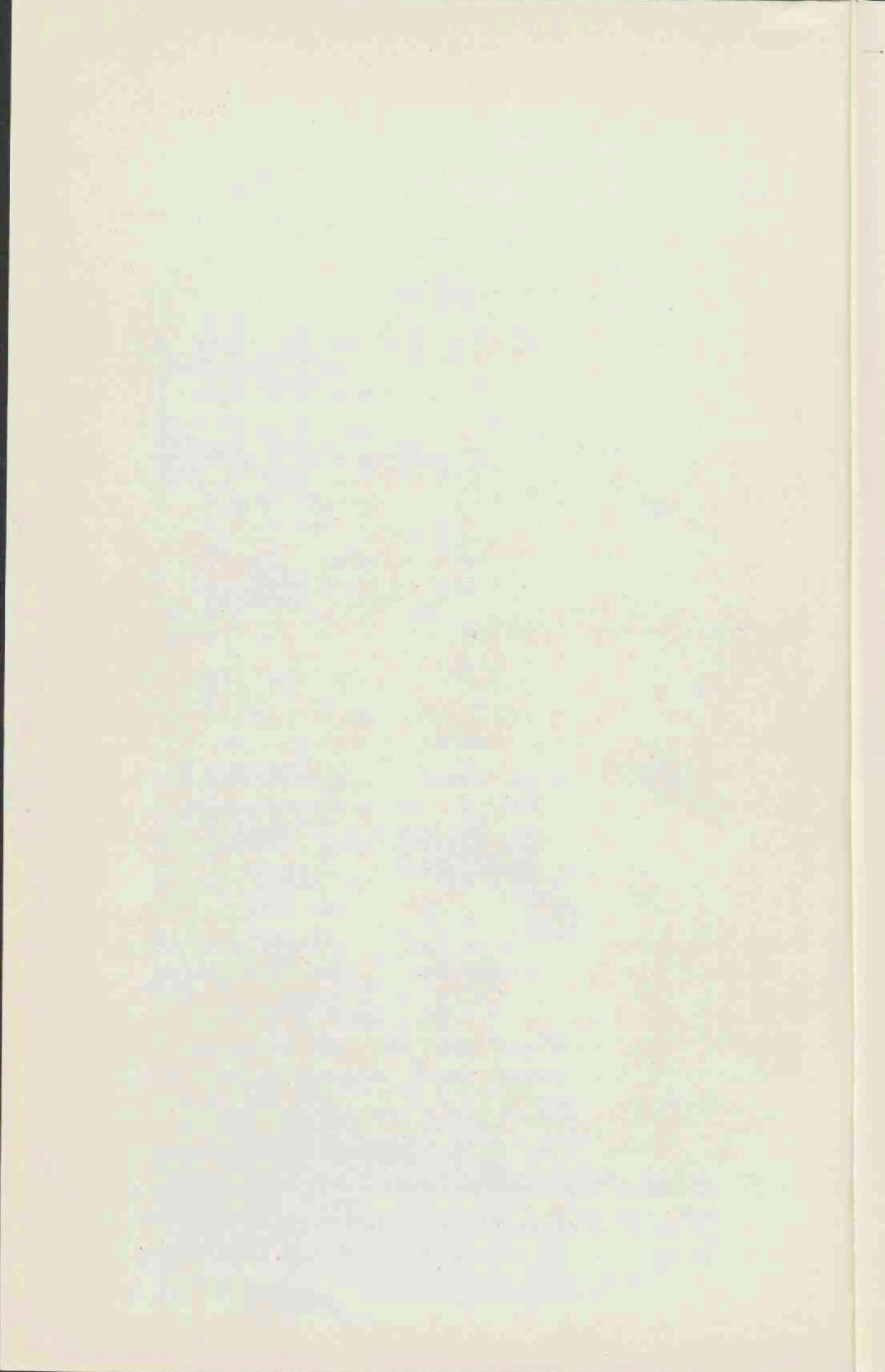
The cross measures 2 feet 6 inches in height, and the breadth of the arms is 1 foot 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches; it is formed of oak, encased with copper plates, enriched with interlaced ornaments of gilt bronze; the sides are framed in silver, the whole being held together by nails ornamented with little heads of animals.

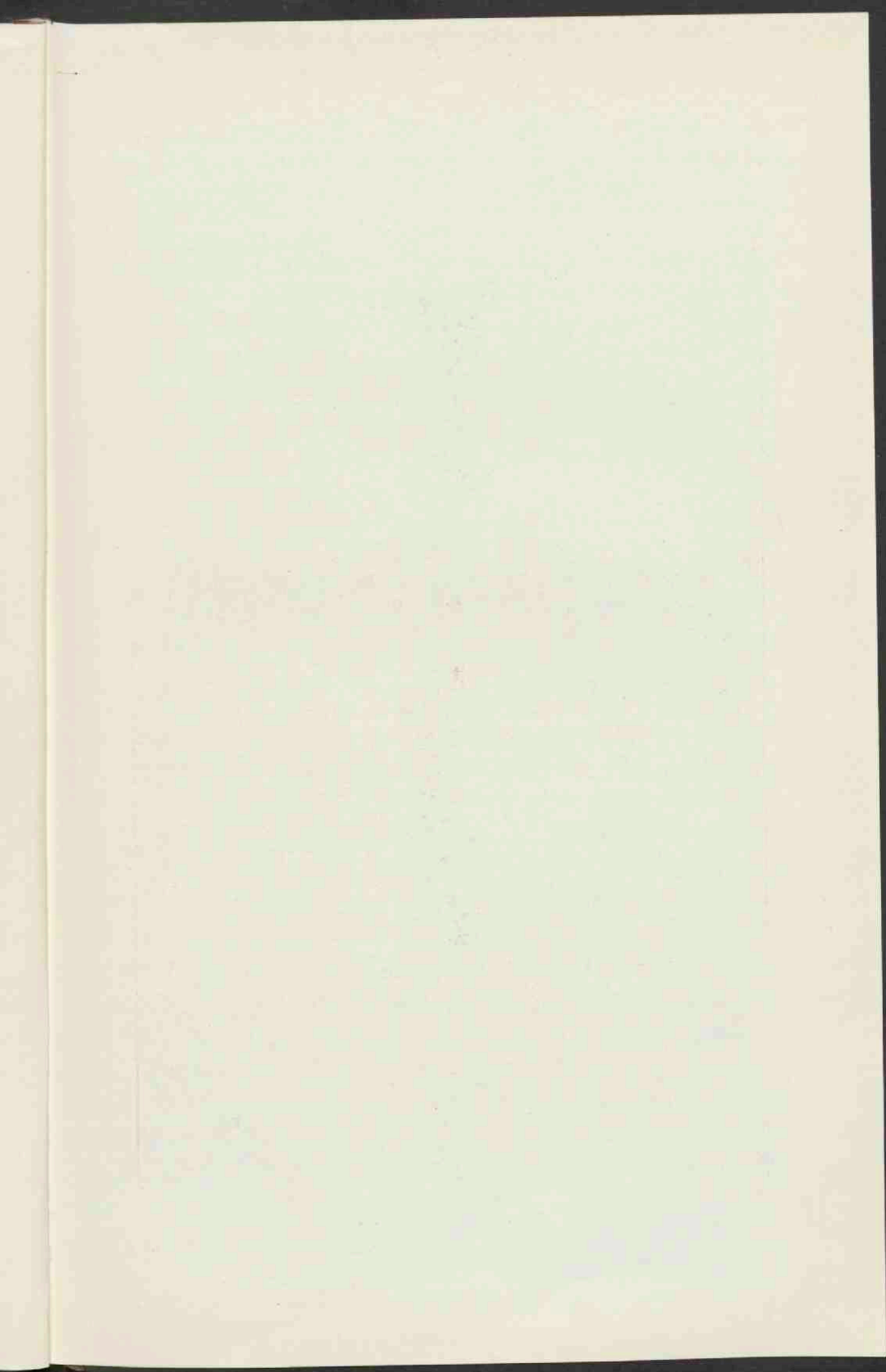
On the front, the shaft and arms are divided into a number of small panels by silver strap-work decorated at its intersections with settings alternated with flat silver discs in niello work. A crystal of quartz set in the centre of the front face of the cross probably covered the relic. The enrichment of filigree work in the panels immediately adjoining the setting of the crystal is of gold, and the spiral pattern contrasts with the interlaced designs of the other

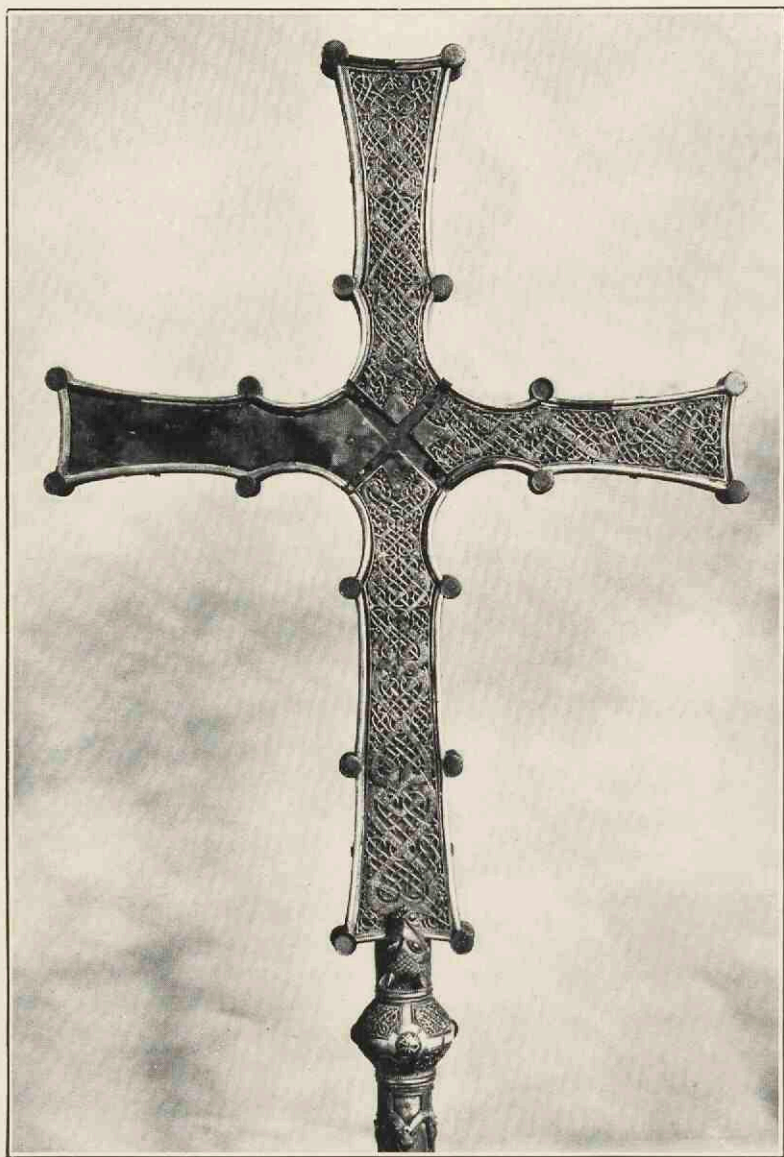


CROSS OF CONG: FRONT.

To face p. 56.







CROSS OF CONG: BACK.

To face p. 57.

panels. Thirteen settings remain of the eighteen which were originally placed at intervals along the edges of the shaft and arms. Two of the four which surrounded the central boss remain.

The shaft is held in the mouth of a grotesque animal surmounting a boss which carries down the interacements and settings of the shaft, and terminates in four small grotesque heads, the whole forming a socket in which was inserted the pole for carrying the cross.

The interlaced ornaments in the panels on the front of the cross are designed in pairs, the panel on one side of the central line being a reversed copy of that on the other side (Blot work). The design of each pair of panels is different and in no instance repeated.

On the back of the cross, along the projecting silver rim, and corresponding with the settings on the front, are flat disks of enamel with simple geometrical designs. The shaft and arms are not divided into panels as on the front, but are covered by single bronze plates (three of which remain), which were connected at the centre by an ornament now missing. The interlaced ornament of gilt bronze at the back is larger and more vigorous in treatment than on the front, as is often the case in the work of the period.

The cross was purchased by Professor MacCullagh, F.R.S., F.T.C.D., from the successor of the last abbot of Cong and representative of the Augustinian Order in Connaught, and presented by him to the Royal Irish Academy in 1839.

V.—CROSIERS.

The Pastoral Staff or Crosier was one of the earliest Christian symbols; it appears upon gems in company with the fish and palm-branch and in representations of the Good Shepherd. The latter is one of the commonest figures painted in the catacombs of about the third century A.D., the wand being either straight or the ordinary curved shepherd's crook.

Pope Celestine's letter to the Bishops of Narbonne and Vienne, probably the earliest reference, shows Pastoral Staves to have been in use by the episcopal order in the fifth century. They are, therefore, amongst the first emblems prescribed by the Church for her ministers.



FIG. 55.—Base of North Cross, Ahenny.

Some writers have considered the lituus of the Roman augurs as a possible origin of the crosier. It is, however, more probable that the crosier was suggested by the symbolism of the shepherd and his flock.

Crosiers were carried by Abbots as well as by Bishops and Archbishops, and, up to the tenth century, by the Pope. The representations of crosiers on Early Christian monuments show great variety in the shape of the head. By the seventh century, however, the crook shape had become the usual one, although tau-shaped episcopal staves were in use down to the twelfth century, as they are at present in the Greek Church. After the twelfth century, the tau cross appears to have been regarded as the distinctive staff of Abbots.



FIG. 56.
Crosier of
St. Columba.

The form of the Irish crosier, preserved to us from pre-Norman times, differs distinctly from that of the usual medieval crosier. Its form is shown on the base of one of the crosses at Ahenny, Co. Tipperary (fig. 55).

It was not designed to represent the conventional shepherd's crook, but was a shrine or metal covering made to protect the old pilgrim's staff, or crooked stick of the saint, which was venerated and carefully preserved in the district. Within the metal casings, the original stick can be seen in several examples. The richly decorated metal casings of the crosiers are, as a rule, the work of the eleventh century, and therefore much later than the enclosed staff by whose name the crosier was traditionally known; but some fragments and plain crosiers, which have lost their ornaments, may date from preceding times, and there is literary evidence that the metal crosier was known in Ireland in the ninth century, if not earlier.

The authenticity of these ancient Irish crosiers generally rests on the fact that, as in the case of the ecclesiastical bells, the keepership of the crosiers was hereditary in a particular family. Certain privileges, grants of land and others, pertained to the custodianship of the relic, originally committed to some person associated with the church or monastery, in whose family the office and its privileges descended from generation to generation.

One of the largest crosiers in the R.I.A. collection formerly belonged to the Abbey of Durrow, King's Co., and is supposed to be the crosier of St. Columba. This crosier, although unfortunately much mutilated, is of great interest; it still retains some traces of its original magnificence, and must have been a beautiful specimen of ancient Irish art. It was preserved since the dissolution of the monasteries by the Macegeoghan family, represented by Sir Richard Nagle, Bart., at whose death it became the property of Mr. Nugent, from whom it was obtained in 1851. It measures 4 feet 2 inches in length, and is,

with the exception of the head of the Crosier of St. Blathmac, the only specimen of the larger crosiers in the collection. The ornament on this crosier is of a refined and restrained character, and appears to be somewhat earlier than the bold and free decoration of the later period.

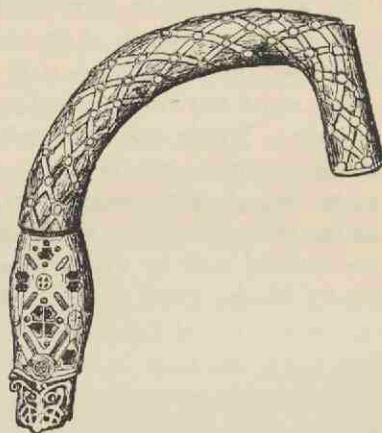


FIG. 57.—Head of Crosier of St. Blathmac.

Figure 57 is supposed to be the head of Crosier of St. Blathmac, of Rath-Blathmac, near Corofin, Co. Clare. Its height is $11\frac{3}{8}$ inches, and the drop is $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches long. It was purchased by the R. I. Academy, with the crosier from Durrow, in 1851. The metal case is of bronze inlaid with strips of silver, forming a lattice pattern. Through an open space in the bronze covering may be seen a decayed wooden staff wrapped in a cloth, now almost turned to dust. For detailed description of crosier, see T. J. Westropp, *Journ. R.S.A.I.*, 1894, p. 337.

Of the small crosiers several are of great historical interest, but they have suffered much in the course of centuries, and have lost portions and ornaments. Some are probably earlier than the eleventh century, but are now little more than plain metal casings.

Figure 58 represents what is known as the Gearr Berach or Short Crosier of St. Berach. St. Berach, to whom this ecclesiastical staff is ascribed, lived in A.D. 580. The crosier measures 2 feet $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the staff is yew, cased in bronze. The cresting is wanting, otherwise the crosier is in good condition, though practically unornamented.

It was purchased by the R. I. Academy from its hereditary keepers, the O'Hanlys of Sliabh Bawn, Co. Roscommon, in 1863.

A very interesting crosier is that of St. Dympna, of Tedavnet, county Monaghan, Abbess (sixth century), Patron Saint of the Oriels, and of several churches in Belgium, Ghael among others. The metal casing of the crosier dates from the late tenth or eleventh century. It is imperfect, part of the curve of the head being wanting; the silver termination on the drop is a later addition. The crosier is ornamented with bosses, connected by a strip upon part of which the remains of an inscription can be seen; it is decorated with plain and zoomorphic interlaced work in panels; and the head is ornamented in a similar manner. This crosier measures 2 feet 2 inches in height. The family of O'Luan in county Monaghan were its hereditary keepers. It was purchased by Dr. Petrie from the last representative of the family, whose name had been anglicized to Lamb.

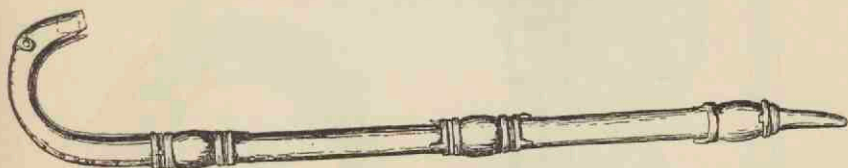


FIG. 58.—Crosier of St. Berach.

The head of the Crosier of the Dysert O'Dea Monastery, Co. Clare, is of bronze with traces of gilding (fig. 59). The crook is divided into a number of lozenge-shaped spaces, from which the decorative panels are now missing. The lower boss is ornamented with two shield-shaped settings in enamel. The zoomorphic cresting is almost perfect (Westropp, *Journ. R.S.A.I.*, 1894, p. 339). This crosier-head was purchased from its hereditary keepers, the O'Quinns, and was formerly in the Petrie collection.

The Crosier of St. Murus of Fahan, co. Donegal, Patron Saint of the O'Neills, measures 2 feet 4 inches in height. Fahan or Fahanmura was a monastery dedicated to St. Murus or Muranus, and founded by St. Columba. St. Murus, second abbot, lived in the early part of the seventh century. In the time of Colgan, 1645, who wrote the life of this saint, his shrine, books, crosier, chain, and bell were

in existence. St. Murus' bell is now in the British Museum; the shrine and books are unknown. The chain as well as the crosier is in the R. I. Academy collection. The chain, which is bronze, is remarkable, being 7 feet 5 inches in length and $\frac{7}{8}$ inches in breadth, composed of a number of small riveted links. The crosier was presented to Dr. Petrie by Mr. Woods of Sligo. The metal casing is of bronze, the head is ornamented with panels of interlaced work, and has a cresting whose derivation from the zoomorphic type can be distinguished.

The most complete crosier in the collection is known as the Crosier of the Abbots of Clonmacnois (Pl. XV.). It was formerly in the collection of Major Sirr, but its history previous

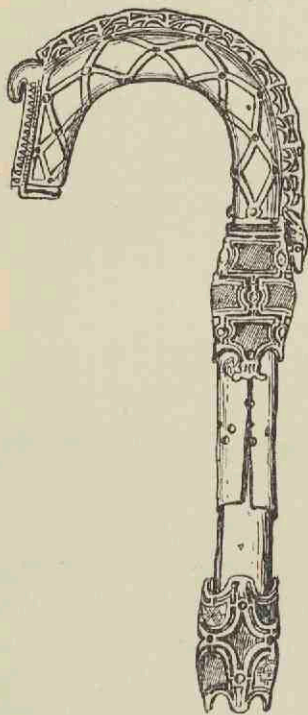


FIG. 59.

Crosier of St. Tola, of Dysert O'Dea.



FIG. 60.

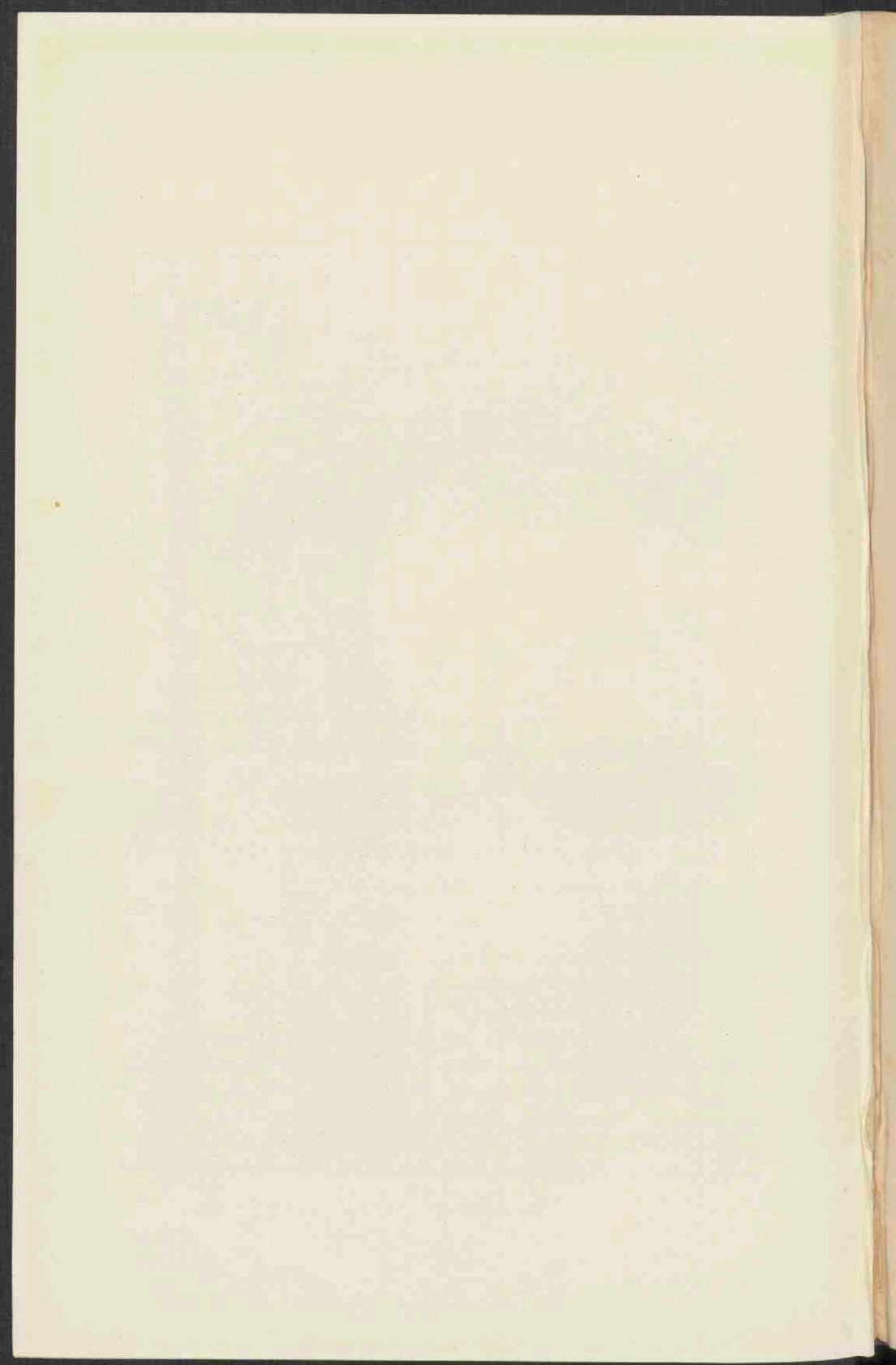
Crosier Head: Locality unknown.

to this is unknown. The crosier measures 3 feet 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length. It is of bronze, and the bosses at the foot, centre of the staff, and head are decorated in the bold, free manner of the late or Hiberno-Danish style, with inlays of silver, niello, and bead-settings of blue glass. The small human figure (Plate XV.) shows the design on the flattened head of the crosier. This is a representation of a mitred



CROSIER OF CLONMACNOIS.

To face p. 62.



figure, holding a crozier of the scroll type, which is also seen upon the High Cross of Tuam, showing that form of crozier to have come into use about this time.

The zoomorphic cresting of this crozier should be noticed. In other examples, when the spaces of the cresting are filled up, the animal forms disappear, being replaced by panels of interlaced work and settings of enamel. (See the crozier (fig. 60) deposited with the Academy by Trinity College, Dublin, which in its divisions betrays the origin of the type from the zoomorphic crest: history unknown.) An intermediate type is seen on the Crozier of the Dysert O'Dea monastery and on the Crozier of the O'Bradys, which should be compared with the former.

An interesting crozier-head (No. 28: 1899), made out of two parts of entirely different workmanship, should be noticed. The knob and portion of the crook immediately above it are of bronze, inlaid with silver interlaced decoration. The top of the crook is decorated with quite different incised interlaced ornament. The terminal end bears a head in high relief surmounted by a mitre of early pattern. This crozier was formerly in the collection of Dr. Frazer, who purchased it in London. It has been alluded to as the missing crozier of St. Ciaran, and is said to have been found at Clonmacnois.

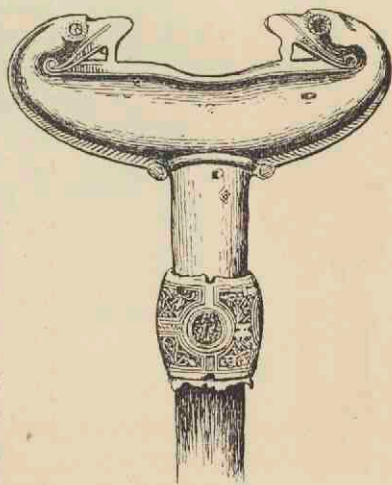


FIG. 61.—Tau Crozier ($\frac{1}{3}$).

The only Celtic tau-shaped crozier that has come down to us is composed of bronze, inlaid with silver (fig. 61); the crutch-shaped head terminates in two grotesque animal heads with silver studs and enamel settings in the eyes. From the style of the panels of this crozier, which resemble those of the Cross of Cong, it may be ascribed to the end of the eleventh century. This crozier was formerly in the Kilkenny Museum, and was deposited in the Academy's collection by the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.

Tau-shaped crosiers were in use down to the twelfth century, and are still retained in the Greek and Coptic Churches. There are two tau crosses of stone in Ireland: one is on Tory Island, Co. Donegal; and the other is the well-known cross, carved with two faces, at Kilnaboy, Co. Clare.

Among the portions of crosiers in the collection is one found in co. Cavan, and known as the Crosier of the O'Bradys; another is the lower portion of a crosier figured by Miss Stokes in "Early Christian

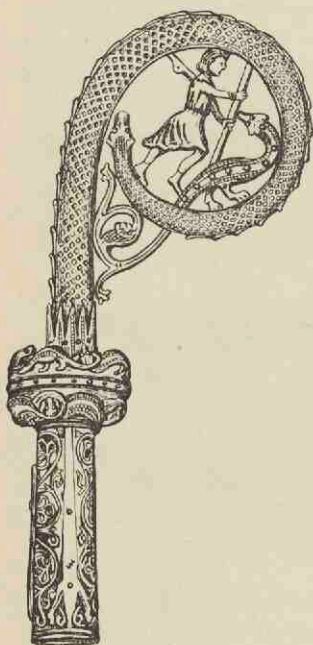


FIG. 62.
Crosier of Cormac Mac Carthy.

Art in Ireland," p. 104, which may be earlier than the eleventh century; it has some trumpet pattern, and small interlaced work upon it. There is also a portion of a crosier, of silver or white metal, known as the Crosier of St. Aodh Mac Bric; and another partly plated with silver, whose history is unknown, deposited by Trinity College, Dublin. The material of these two last is unusual.

Figure 62, supposed head of the Crosier of Cormac MacCarthy, King-Bishop of Cashel, who died 1138 A.D., was found in a stone tomb in an outside recess at Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel; it measures $11\frac{7}{8}$ " in length, and $4\frac{3}{4}$ " broad at the head.

Cormac's Chapel was consecrated about 1134 A.D., and is contemporary with the High Cross of Tuam, at the base of which is a representation of a crosier of this form, similar to the figure on the Crosier of the Abbots of Clonmacnois previously described. This crosier is of the scroll type, and is decorated with Limoges enamel-work of the twelfth century. The terminal hook is formed by a serpent bending round a figure of St. Michael and the dragon. (See Petrie, "The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland," etc., pp. 303-311.)

VI.—BELLS.

The form of the portable Ecclesiastical Bells, so numerous in Ireland, can be well seen on a panel of the cross at Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare, where it figures with the book and crosier, the three most revered relics of the early teachers of Christianity. The bells are simply cattle bells adapted to ecclesiastical purposes, and differ little from the former, except in the size of the larger ones.



FIG. 63.—From the Cross of Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare.

They appear to have been first made of iron, hammered and riveted, their joints being afterwards filled, and the whole consolidated by being dipped in bronze, as is done with some modern sheep bells.

The type, as an ecclesiastical bell, belongs especially to Ireland, where these bells are found in great numbers, and whence they spread to England and Scotland and parts of the continent. These old iron bells vary in height from about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 14 inches including the handle, and from $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 9 inches by $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches at across the mouth. They were probably at first sounded by being struck from the outside. Some of the larger bells may have been used in the round towers, as is implied by the name mentioned in our

Irish Annals, cloictheach (bell-tower), but there is no evidence that they were mounted on them. The earliest bell of which we have evidence is the celebrated Bell of St. Patrick (fig. 51), enshrined about 1100 A.D., as already described (p. 48).

There are many iron bells of this type in the collection, and it was customary about the eleventh century to enshrine such of them as were known by the names of the saints associated with them; many are recorded at that time as being in a gapped or broken state, which shows the veneration in which they were held. They are now scattered in different museums and places. The Black Bell of St. Patrick, formerly in the keepership of the Mac Beolans of Galway, is in the Academy collection, though in a much damaged condition.

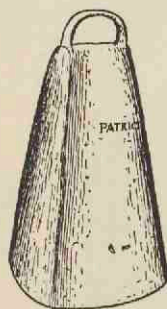


FIG. 64.—Bell of Clogher.

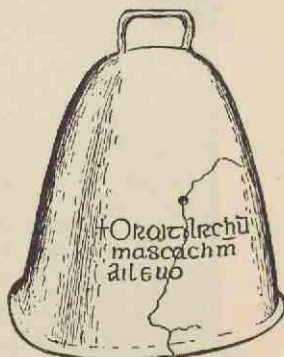


FIG. 65.—Bell of Armagh.

At least as early as the end of the ninth century, bells were cast of bronze in the same quadrilateral form as the iron ones, which did not, however, go out of use. We may infer that the iron form is earlier than the bronze from its shape, which is necessary in the case of iron but unsuitable for cast bronze. In bronze the type becomes more graceful in its lines, and there are some very fine specimens in the collection. Among these are the inscribed bells of Clogher and Armagh.

The Bell of Clogher (fig. 64) measures $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height, including the handle, which is of bronze, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the mouth. It is said to have been given to St. Mac Carthan, Bishop of Clogher, by St. Patrick, and was formerly preserved at Donagh-

more Church, Co. Tyrone, by the O'Mellans, its hereditary keepers; it was obtained from a descendant of this family by Dr. Petrie, and passed with his collection to the Academy. It is inscribed in Roman letters with the name PATRICI, and a date, 1272, on the other side; but the inscription is later than the bell.

The Bell of Armagh (fig. 65) measures $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches in height and $8\frac{3}{8}$ inches by 11 inches at the mouth; its body is of cast bronze, but its handle and clapper are iron. It is inscribed in minuscules in three lines:—

✠ OROIT AR CHŪ MASCACH M̄ AILELLO

(A prayer for Cummascach son of Ailill.)

Cumascach son of Ailill was steward in the Monastery of Armagh, and his death is recorded in the "Annals of Ulster" at the year 908 A.D.

The most beautiful bell in the collection is the ornamented but uninscribed Bell of Lough Lene Castle, Co. Westmeath (fig. 66). It measures $13\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, including the handle, and $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches at the mouth. It is decorated on each of its two large faces with an incised cross, and its mouth is surrounded by a border composed of fret-patterns on the two larger faces and straight interlacements on the smaller. This bell is said to have been found on Castle Island, Lough Lene, and was purchased from the finder in 1881. Two other bells very similar to this are known, one found at Bangor, Co. Down, now in the possession of Colonel MacCance, of Holywood, Co. Down, and the other at Cashel, Co. Tipperary, now in the possession of the Earl of Dunraven, at Adare Manor, Co. Limerick.

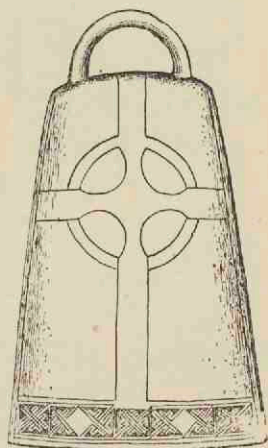


FIG. 66.—Bell of Lough Lene Castle.

There are several other bronze bells in the collection of various sizes, some quite small. These have no history beyond the localities where they were found; and though they will bear study, they need not be more particularly described.

VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

One of the most interesting objects that may be treated under this head is a bronze plaque representing the Crucifixion, found at Athlone (Plate XVI.). It was probably the mounting for a book-cover, and the early character of the plaque is indicated by the good trumpet pattern with which it is decorated, resembling that of the mss. Three other small bronze plaques of the Crucifixion, which are probably later, may be noticed; two are figured by J. Romilly Allen in "Christian Symbolism."

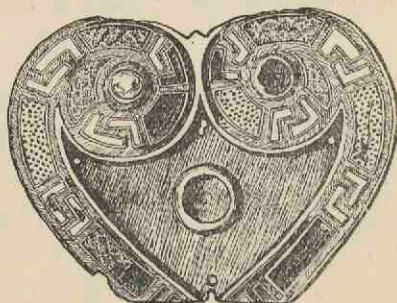


FIG. 67.—Enamel Fragment (under full size). (38—1906.)

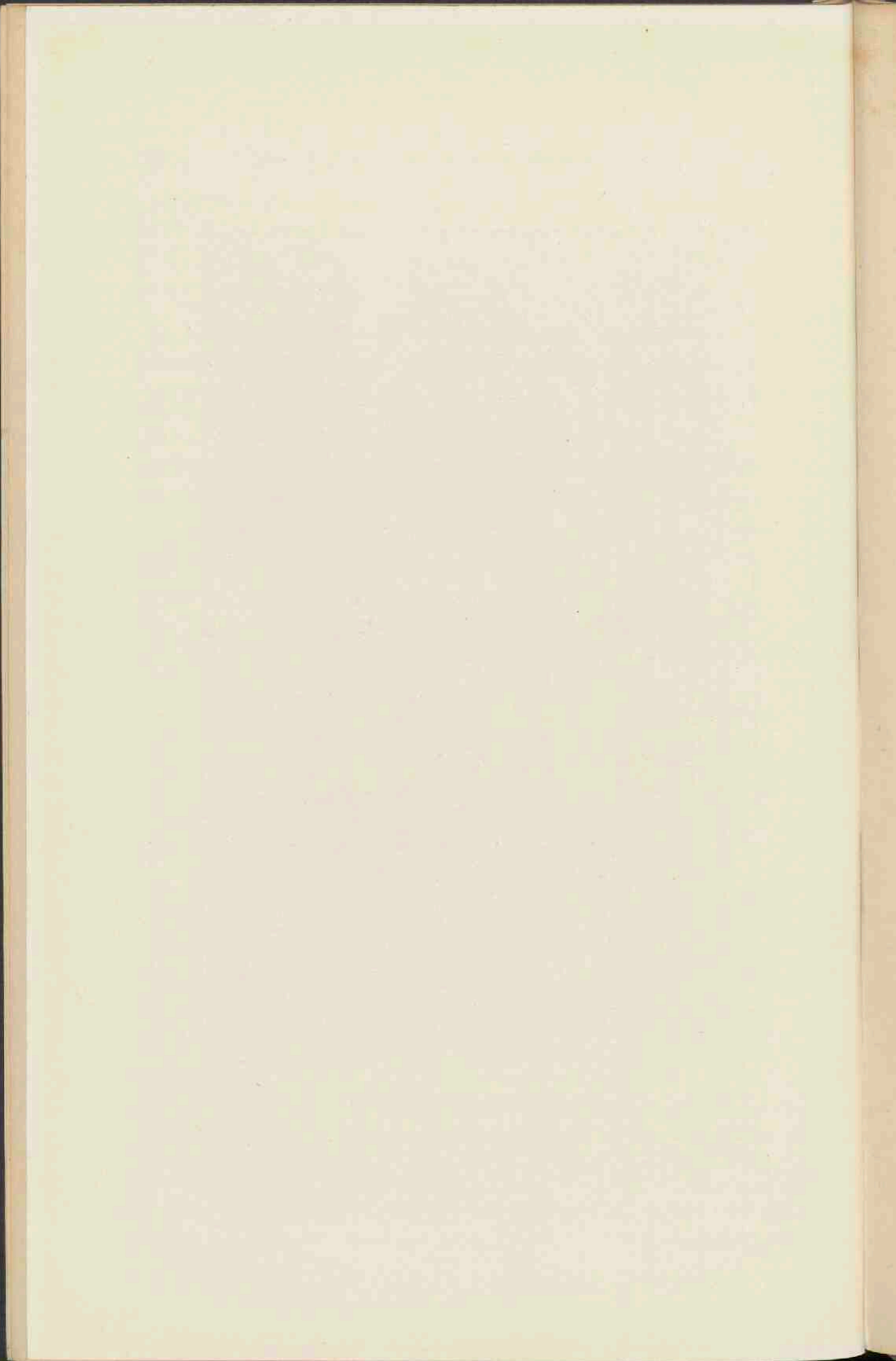
ENAMEL FRAGMENT.

A most important example of cloisonné enamel is a piece formerly in St. Columba's College (fig. 67). The enamels of this are very interesting, and probably not later than the tenth century. They will repay study, and are striking in colour. They are enclosed in an outer border of red enamel, which frames the panels. The frets are of an opaque yellow, and the other spaces are alternately sage green with dark spots, and dark blue with a network of minute white spots. These panels do not seem to be really enamels; the dots are square and go right through; as Mr. Lewis Day says, in "Enamelling," they have more the appearance of glass-work. They were probably put together after the manner of millefiori work. Some



PLAQUE OF CRUCIFIXION, ATHLONE.

To face p. 68.



figures of Gallo-Roman or Merovingian millefiori work should be compared with this piece, which is illustrated in part by Mr. Day. It may be doubted if these panels could have been done in the same way as ordinary enamel. Some interlacements, including a fish, are slightly engraved on the back: it may have been a finial. This piece presents certain analogies to the enamel and millefiori work on the mounts of a bucket in the recently found Viking vessel at Oseberg, Norway; the latter is dated not later than the ninth century. The western origin of the bucket, probably Ireland, is inferred from the distribution of other finds. See Professor Gabriel Gustafson (*Saga-Book*, Viking Club, vol v., part ii., 1908).

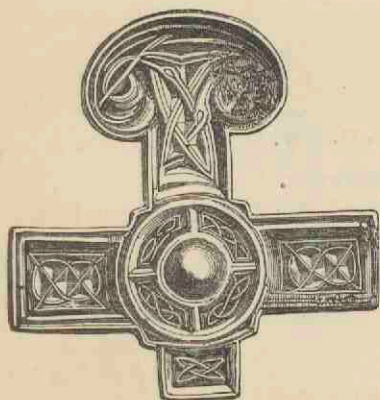


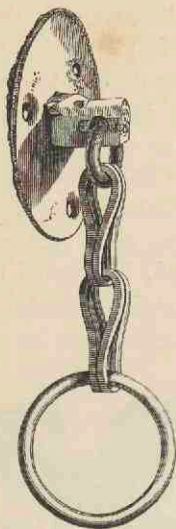
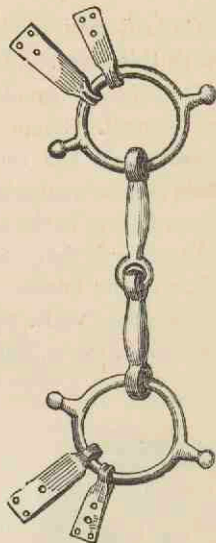
FIG. 68. (W. 559.) ($\frac{1}{4}$)



FIG. 69. (W. 561.) ($\frac{1}{4}$)

NAVAN FIND.

The fine ornaments found at Navan in 1848 should be noticed; the trumpet pattern on some of them places the objects probably before the tenth century (figs. 68-71). They were found with human remains and the skull of a horse. The plate for the chariot (*carbat*) belonging to the same find, a bronze bit, a bronze portion of the harness and four iron rings, are very interesting. The plate for the chariot consists of a flat disk, plated with white metal, from which projects a bronze stud in the shape of a dog's head, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, with a human face engraved at its extremity (fig. 70).

FIG. 70. (W. 139.) ($\frac{1}{2}$)FIG. 71. (W. 71.) (Slightly under $\frac{1}{2}$)

RUNIC INSCRIPTION.

The only specimen of a Runic inscription found in Ireland is on a bronze piece found at Greenmount, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth, probably not later than the tenth century. The inscription has been read *DOMNAL SEALSHED OWNS THIS TRAPPING.*

Two figures from shrines may be noticed, and several pieces of buckles and book-mountings, including the fragment of a knife-handle; one of the

FIG. 72. (W. 623.) ($\frac{1}{2}$)FIG. 73. (W. 520.) ($\frac{1}{2}$)

few examples of enamel (yellow) on iron, figured in "Early Christian Art in Ireland," p. 112. Fig. 72 represents a highly decorated and enamelled button (full size); and fig. 73 a bronze hook, one of the most beautiful specimens of inlaying bronze with silver and niello in the collection.

Fragments such as these show how frequently enamel and niello were used in Ireland, and how artistically they were applied.

Crannogs form a special subject, but many items of information on the work and dress of the period may be gleaned from a study of the pre-Norman relics found in them. We may notice some leather shoes found with several other fragments of shoes, etc., in the mud of the kitchen-midden at Craigywarren crannog, which cannot be later than the tenth century (fig. 74).

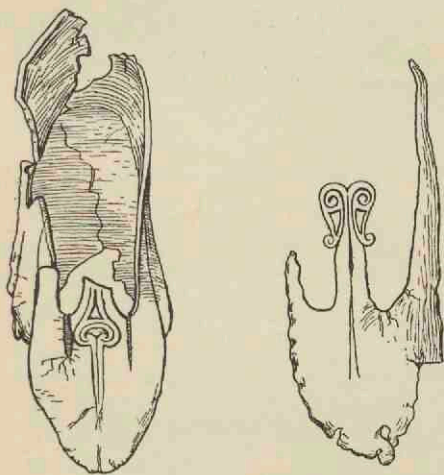


FIG. 74.—Shoes, Craigywarren Crannog. (66 and 67 : 1902.)

We have seen the art of enamelling beginning in Ireland with the red sealing-wax enamels towards the end of the pre-Christian period, then culminating in the marvellous enamels of the Tara Brooch and the Ardagh Chalice of early Christian times. It will be asked, have not some traces of the practice of the art been found in the country? Many small crucibles and fragments are often found in crannogs,

frequently marked with enamel or portions of melted glass (fig. 75).

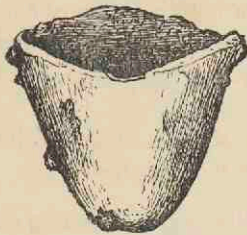


FIG. 75.—Crucible,
Dunshaughlin ($\frac{1}{2}$).

These may be fragments from the equipment of enamellers and metal workers in the crannogs. A great lump of raw or exhausted sealing-wax red enamel was found at or near Tara, and this may be the red enamel of early times. The sealing-wax red colour, due to copper, is the despair of modern enamellers, who have discovered no method of getting the right shade. This piece measures in its present state $6\frac{3}{8}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches, and the colour is very bright.

CARVED BONES.

In Lagore crannog, Co. Meath, and Strokestown crannog, Co. Roscommon, were found a number of bones, some incised with fine carvings of interlaced and animal designs. It has been conjectured

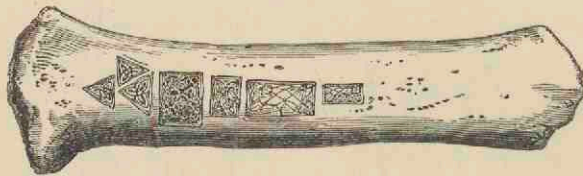


FIG. 76. (W. 28.) (Over $\frac{1}{2}$)



FIG. 77. (W. 29.) (About $\frac{1}{4}$)



FIG. 78.



FIG. 79.

these were intended merely as specimens of the designer's or engraver's art. (See figs. 76-82.)



FIG. 80.



FIG. 81.



FIG. 82.

PAILS.

The four pails and some portions of others in the wall case in Room IV should be noticed. The date of these is uncertain. The trumpet pattern on one of them may point to their being of some antiquity; but its workmanship is not very good. This highly decorated example (fig. 83) was found in the river at Kinnegad,



FIG. 83.—Kinnegad, Co. Westmeath. (2977: 1854.)

near the old cathedral at Clonard, and was presented to the Academy by Dr. Barker, M.R.I.A. It measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height and $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches across at the mouth. Its sides were made from one block of yew-wood, and are surrounded by four thin metal bands decorated with open-work trumpet and lattice patterns. The kite-shaped mounts for attaching the handle are ornamented with spirals, and appear to have been enriched with amber, two half-bead settings of which remain.

The two smaller vessels are each made from a single block of wood; the larger, which is $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches in height, was found in the River Glyde, and presented by the Board of Works. It is bound with thin bronze bands with lozenge-shaped perforations, and the handle mounts are cruciform in shape. The smaller is $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, and is in good condition; its handles are engraved with concentric circles, and it is bound with thin, narrow bands. It was found in Clonfree crannog, Co. Roscommon, and presented by Mrs. Ferns.

HIGH CROSSES.

The High Crosses may be studied in the series of photographs presented by Mr. H. S. Crawford. This almost exhaustive series of high and lesser crosses, numbering about 160, has been arranged for the Academy by counties, and the sites are marked on maps of the provinces.

The question as to the origin of the free wheel-cross with projecting arms has given rise to some speculation. In Ireland it is an almost distinct type, known as the Irish Cross, but on the continent the form is unknown. The developed free-standing type is known at least from the beginning of the tenth century, when it may be treated as a branch of architecture, to which the discussion of the High Crosses more properly belongs. One of the most beautiful is that of Monasterboice, A.D. 924, which is constructed in three architectural pieces:—base, shaft and cross, and head. It shows no signs of a beginning, and the type must have been fixed by that date. Judging from the incised crosses at Clonmacnois, the type was fixed before A.D. 800 (see Abbot Tuathgal tomb, A.D. 806 (fig. 16), p. 18).

The wheel-cross is believed to be derived from the Chi-Rho symbol. The monogram is often enclosed in a circle or even a circular wreath on the early Byzantine and Italian monuments. The unperforated wheel-cross of the Isle of Man and elsewhere in Britain is explained in this way, and thence the Irish circle-cross is derived. (See J. Romilly Allen, "Christian Symbolism," Lecture II.) But Miss Margaret Stokes expresses reason for doubting the early dates which have been assigned to many of the crosses in Britain. (See "Early Christian Art in Ireland," p. 125.)

There is a tendency among modern archæologists to believe that, if objects can be arranged in a series of development, the development

must have proceeded along the line so determined regardless of local gaps and cross-currents. The theory outlined above does not explain how it is that the unperforated wheel-cross, as distinguished from the disk-cross, should be rare in Ireland, or why the Irish disk- and circle-cross should be so common in Ireland and infrequent in other places where the wheel-cross is known.

There is another possible explanation. It is a widespread belief among symbolists that symbols—of, say, a beneficent meaning—tend to run together and adopt analogous meanings, though originally quite distinct. At the end of the pagan period the circle with a centre was commonly used as a sun symbol, and generally as a beneficent symbol. The tendency of the cross not to obliterate but to absorb this is quite in accordance with the principles of the early Church, which often allowed pagan customs to continue, and gave them a harmless meaning, converting them to Christian uses. In the incised *leac* crosses on slabs at Rathmichael, Dalkey, and other places, with concentric circles and cup-centres, we appear to have something of this idea (Journ. R. S. A. I., 1901); and we seem to see the same idea carried out on the sculptured cross at Ballymore-Eustace, Co. Kildare (fig. 84). Earlier examples may be instanced, and the disk-cross appears to be more common in Ireland than has generally been supposed.

Both explanations may have played contributing parts in determining the type of the Irish circle-cross; but the subject is too large, and too much outside the limits of the present work, to be discussed further. We merely indicate some of the lines upon which it may be pursued and studied in Mr. Crawford's series of photographs.

STONE LAMPS AND CUPS.

In the left-hand wall-case in Room IV may be noticed a number of stone lamps of various shapes, several of which were found upon old church sites. Some of these have been described and illustrated as stone chalices (fig. 85); but their weight, their Romanesque ornamentation, and the absorbent stone from which they are carved, show

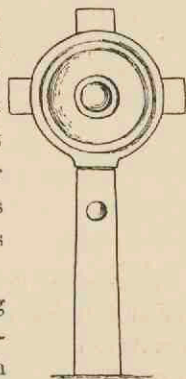


FIG. 84.

they had a different use. Chalices of glass and bronze are said to have been used in the early Church, but afterwards by various decrees chalices were ordered to be made of gold or silver. That the stone vessels were lamps is evident from the blackening and burning of which all of them show traces. There is no evidence that any of them have been used for burning incense.

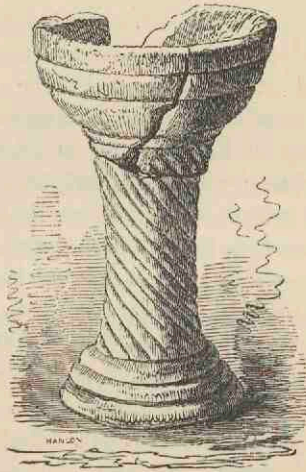


FIG. 85.—Co. Wicklow ($\frac{1}{4}$).

Some stone drinking-cups (five), with single perforated handles similar to those often found in Scotland, which are ascribed to the Iron Age, or even later, may be seen in the left-hand wall-case in Room IV. One, No. 266: 1905, found at Clonmany, Co. Donegal, is ornamented with a band of fret pattern on the outside, so it evidently belongs to the Christian period. These vessels were probably in use as drinking-cups.

The merit of Celtic design is often supposed to consist in a marvellous complexity and in the fineness of the lines of the spirals and interlacements, which are the despair of imitators. This excellence appeals chiefly to the reason, but the artistic interest will lie in other things. The swing and life of the curves, and the perfection of their quickening as they approach completion or run to a spiral, give them

a feeling of life comparable to skating, coupled with a fineness and sureness of line which endow them with a rare perfection.

In the interlaced style, while a general balance is preserved, the individual patterns in the best period are rarely repeated; some difference or change is subtly introduced, so that, though appearing at first to be similar, on examination there is always a variety. This principle is of the first importance, and generally lost sight of in modern work. It introduces an unexplored element in ancient design, so that the interest is not exhausted in a single glance, but new elements reveal themselves on closer examination. This element is a perpetual delight, and it gives a feeling of life to the design, enlisting our sympathy in a way that repetitions fail to do. We feel the design was always a source of joy to the artist unexhausted in imagination and taking no interest in the mechanical work of copying his own patterns.

It is always a sign of exhaustion of motives preceding a break-up or change of style when repetitions and blot-work become common, the same pattern doing duty for the four corners of a design suitable to our modern mechanical but inartistic work.

The subject may be pursued by examining some of the High Crosses. The bossiness of the sculpture is well felt out by the artist, and, as we should say, the effect of freehand work is finely given throughout. Now we are accustomed to think of the irregularities of the lines in the panels and the spacing of figures as due to the incompetency of the artist, forgetting that symmetry was not valued at that time, consciously or unconsciously, but the law of life-balance and a constant change in details was always sought. Life and, as we should say, free-hand effect was the main thing that was aimed at. We cannot suppose that the men who struck out these noble crosses could not have made the details exact if they had so desired. The way that the sculpture is subordinated to the effect of the cross as a whole, yet made to tell by its bossiness and light and shade, is a true piece of artistic feeling.

The symmetry and dead effect, as of a steel die in modern work, will not be lost until we abandon the use of the mechanical exactness of rule and compass for details, and so recover the joy and life of freehand work.

VIII.—END OF INTERLACED STYLE.

From the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion (1172) the Hiberno-Danish style may be said to have ceased, and to have been soon replaced by the general Romanesque and Gothic styles, indications of the coming change being apparent some time earlier. Few pieces of good work of the period following the invasion have survived to us. For, although the skill of the native craftsman still remained, the disappearance of objects of the later times can be explained by many circumstances.

OUTER CASE OF DOMNACH AIRGID.

From the inscription on the outer case of the Domnach Airgid (see p. 45), we know it was the work of a native craftsman, John O'Barrdan, living about the middle of the fourteenth century. The inscription is as follows:—

JOH̄S : O KARBRI : COMORBANUS :
S : TIGNACII : PMISIT.

(John O'Karbri, successor of St. Tighernach ordered it.)

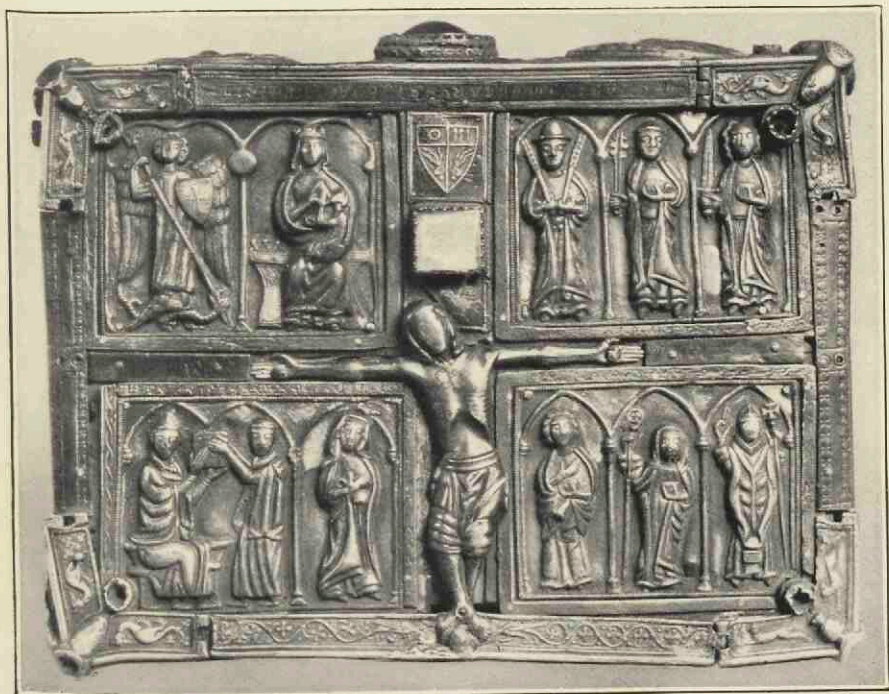
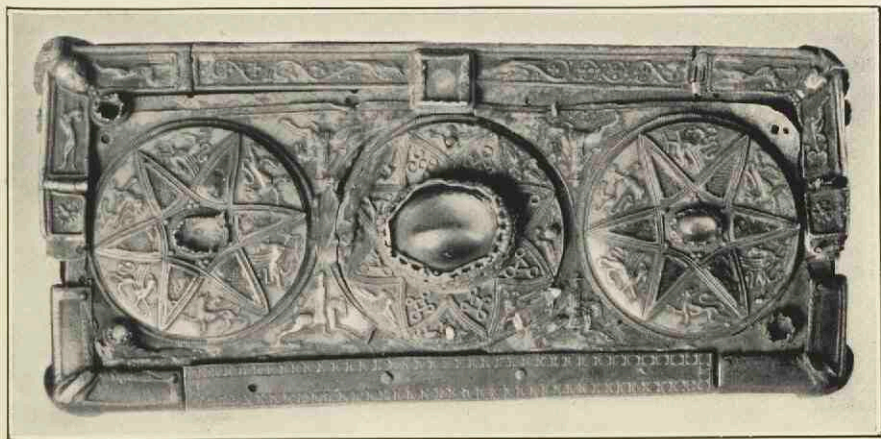
JOHANES : O BARRDAN : FABRICAVIT.

(John O'Barrdan made it.)

The death of John O'Carbry, Abbot of Clones, is recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters at the year A.D. 1353.

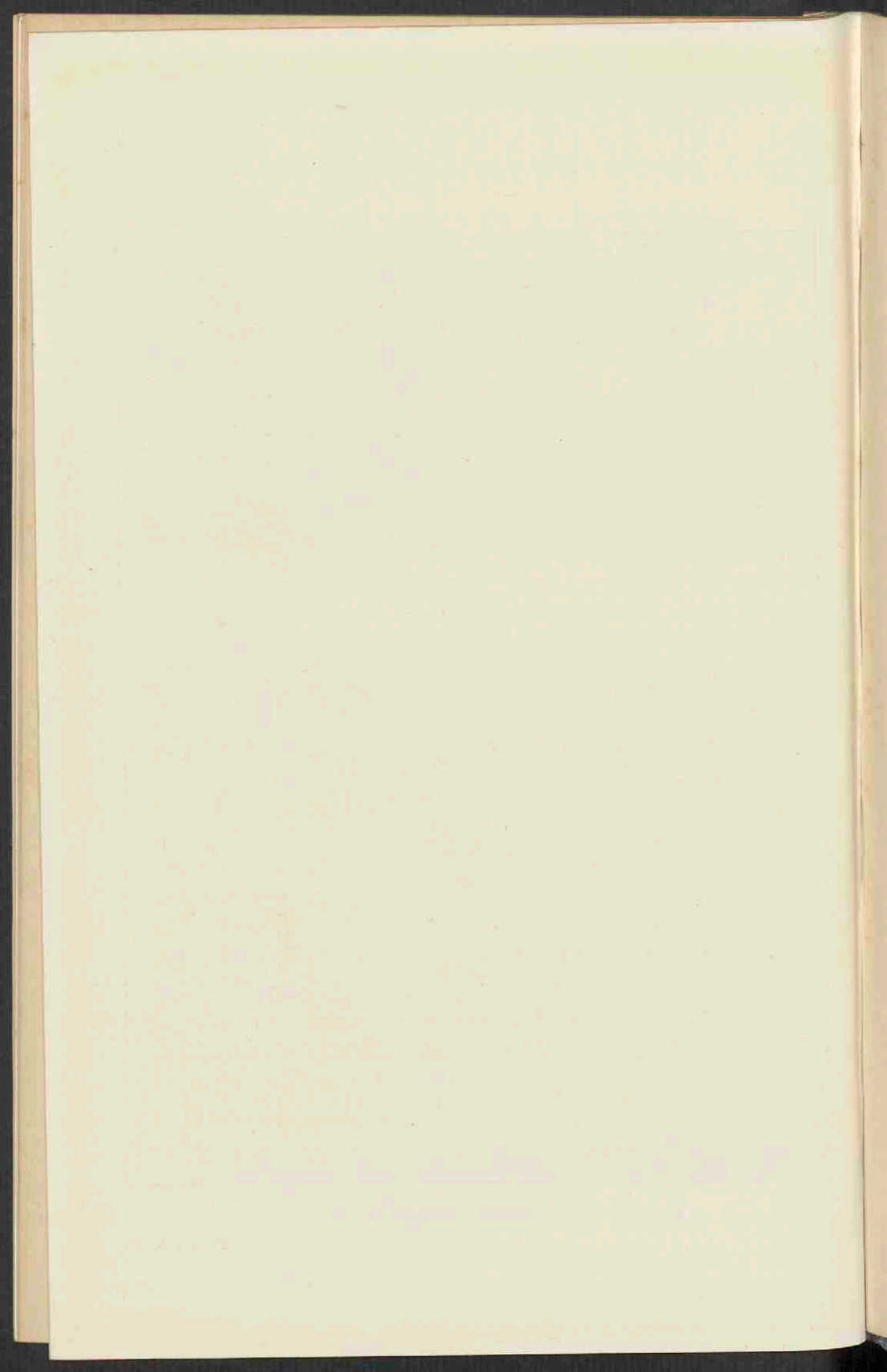
On the front of the shrine is a representation of the Crucifixion, surmounted by a shield, on which are the implements of the Passion. At the head of the Saviour is a dove in gold, on a blue enamelled ground, and above this a small reliquary covered with a crystal. In the panels right and left, are the figures of eleven saints—SS. Columba, Bridget, and Patrick, James, Peter and Paul, Michael, and the Virgin and Child; St. Patrick presenting a copy of the Gospels to St. Mac Carthen; and a female figure whose name is unknown.

The top of the shrine is enriched with three bosses, ornamented with figures of grotesque animals, etc., blue enamel and settings of



DOMNACH AIRGID: TOP AND FRONT.

To face p. 78.



uncut crystals filling the spaces; between the bosses are the figures of four horsemen in the costume of the fourteenth century.

The sides have lost the outer casing and show the inner case, decorated with interlaced ornament.

On the bottom of the shrine are the figures of St. John the Baptist, St. Catherine, and, probably, St. Mac Carthen or St. Tighernach.

The back of the shrine is of bronze, and bears a large plain cross, on which is an inscription ending with the word *CLOACHAR*; the rest is illegible.

FIACAIL PHADRUIG.

This shrine contains some portions of early work, but most of it is of the fourteenth century. It was made to contain the tooth of St. Patrick, believed to be that which is said to have fallen on the door-sill of the church of St. Brone, at Killaspugbrone, Carbury, Co. Sligo.

Across the centre of the front-face is the following inscription:—

THOMAS DE : BRAMIGHEM̄ : DNS : DE : ATHUNRY :
ME FECIT : ORNARI : P[R]ISCA : PARTE. :

(Thomas de Bramighem, Lord of Athunry, caused me to be ornamented in the original portion.)

Thomas de Bramighem, Baron of Athenry, died in the year 1376, and was the only baron of Athenry who bore this name.

The shrine is of silver, richly decorated with figures in bas-relief and settings of crystals, coloured glass, and amber. It has suffered much. On the front face is a figure of the Crucifixion in full relief, accompanied by eight saints in bas-relief. The names of the four saints in the upper compartment are illegible; in the lower they are—

BENON : BRIGIDA : PATRIC . COLUMQILLE : BRANDAN.

The figure of St. Brigid is missing. The design on the back of the shrine is cruciform, with remains of a setting of gold in the centre, and panels of silver filigree. In two compartments of the cross figures of ecclesiastics are engraved. The other two compartments are filled by figures in bas-relief. One of these, the lower left,

represents King David playing on the harp. It is of much interest as a representation of that instrument in the fourteenth century. (See "The Irish and the Highland Harps," by R. B. Armstrong, p. 24.) The shrine is mentioned as the most venerated relic of the province, in a seventeenth-century account of Connaught. It was for some time in the possession of the Abbot of Cong, and afterwards preserved by the Blake family at Blake Hall, near Cong; thence it was removed to Menlough, to the care of a member of the same family, who bequeathed it to Dr. William Stokes of Dublin, by whom it was deposited in the Royal Irish Academy.

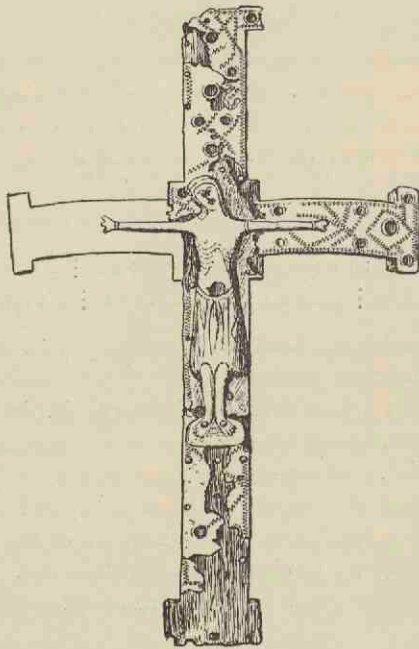


FIG. 86.—Woodford, Co. Galway. (1575: 1863.)

MEDIEVAL CRUCIFIXES, ETC.

Among the medieval crucifixes an interesting one should be noticed. It was found in a stream opposite Woodford Castle, Co. Galway, in 1853. This crucifix, which measures $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches by

7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, is one of the earliest found in the country subsequent to the interlaced style. The jewels with which it was studded have all disappeared, but the places where they were fixed can be seen.

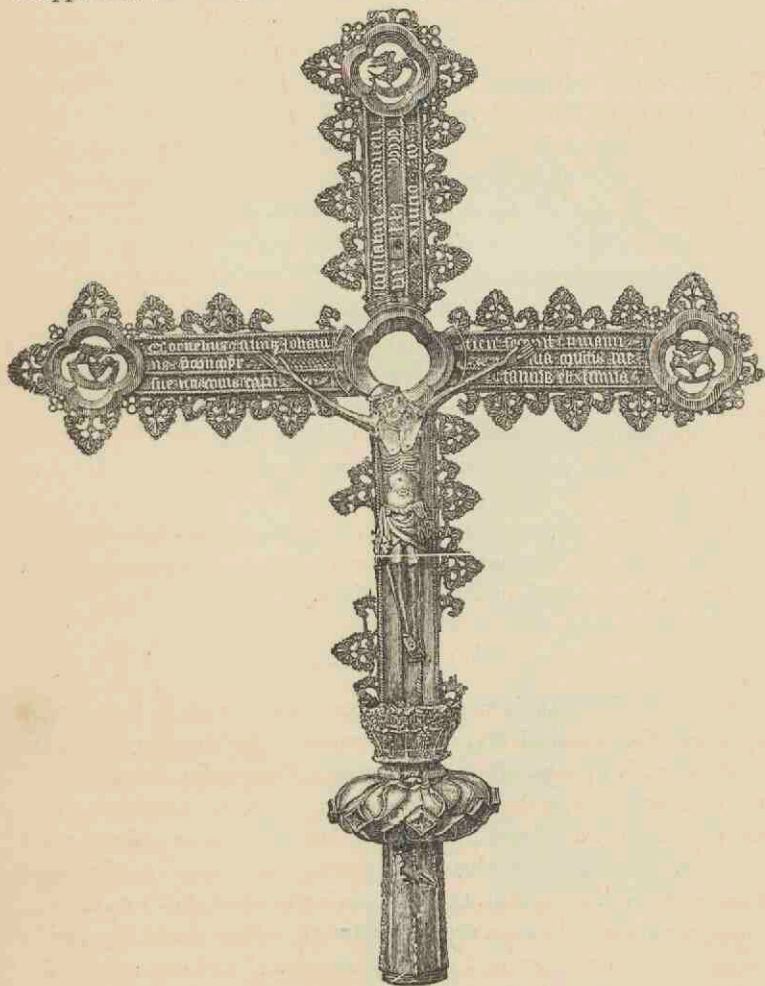


FIG. 87.—Processional Cross, Ballylongford, Co. Kerry. (Lent by R. S. A. I.)

PROCESSIONAL CROSS, 1479.—This cross (fig. 87) is made of brass soldered together, and gilt, and measures 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, and 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

wide. It was found in 1871 near Ballylongford, Co. Kerry. It has an inscription in Latin upon the front, which was read as follows by G. J. Hewson, in his paper in the *Journal* of the Royal Historical and Archæological Association of Ireland, vol. v., 4th series:—

“Cornelius filius Johannis Y Conchyr sue nacōnis capitanius et X Julina filia militis me fieri fecerūt p manū Wllialmi Corneli M^cXXI° OOOOO X Juno iu.”

(Cornelius, son of John O'Connor, chief of his sept, and Juli[a]na, daughter of the Knight, caused me to be made by the hand of W[il]liam [the son of] Cornel[i]us. June IV., MCCCCLXXIX.)

In a table of descents of the O'Connors, Kerry, as given by the late Archdeacon Rowan, from the Madden ms. in Trinity College, Dublin, it appears that Conor, Fundator de Carrigafoil, son of Johannis, Fundator de Lislaghten (A.D. 1478), married Johanna, filia de Thomas Fitzgerald Equit. Valis. It is thought that Conor may be the person mentioned in the inscription, as the place where the cross was found is only two miles from the Abbey of Lislaghtin, founded by Conor's father, and to which it is probable that the cross originally belonged.

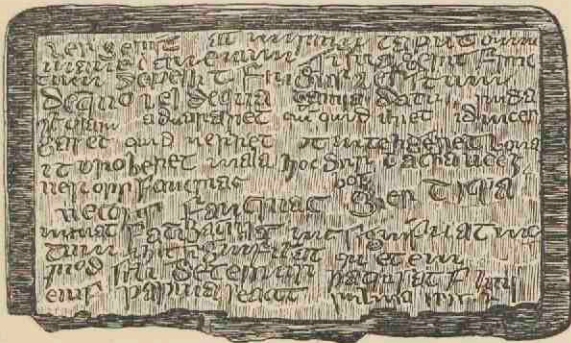
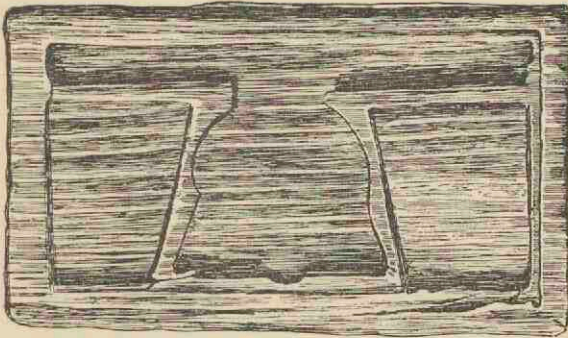
Of the maker of the cross, William, son of Cornelius, unfortunately nothing is known. Some animals and a piece of simple plait or knot-work are inserted in the inscriptions.

WAXED TABLETS.

Of much interest is a waxed-tablet case found in a bog near Maghera, Co. Londonderry, and presented to the Academy in 1845, by the Rev. J. Spencer Knox. It consists of a wooden cover divided into compartments for holding the materials (fig. 88), containing thin wooden leaves, waxed and inscribed on both sides with a sharp point or stilus. (Some of the pins mentioned in the previous section were intended to be used as stili, the heads being often shaped for erasing.) Some fragments of leather, ornamented with patterns, which probably formed an outer cover for the book, were found with the case. The tablets are written in Latin in Irish characters. Dr. J. H. Todd examined the tablets, and succeeded in deciphering most of the writing, though much of the Latin was meaningless. One leaf (fig. 89) contained, with others, the following words:—

“uer gerit at mirum caput omni
 mane canenum silua gerit fruc
 tum depellit frigus vesstum
 de quo vel de qua causa datur lingua ”

.....



FIGS. 88 AND 89.—Tablet Case and Waxed Tablet. (3)

He concluded that “the book . . . was probably the property of some schoolmaster, or scholar, who had inscribed upon it, amongst other things, his exercises in grammar and dialectics. The contents, as far as they are legible, are of no interest or value, and do not even aid us much in forming an estimate of the age of these curious relics: nevertheless, it can scarcely be doubted, judging from the characters

inscribed on them, that the tablets are at least as old as the thirteenth or fourteenth century." (Transactions R.I.A., vol. xxi., Antiquities, p. 3.)

It is not necessary to mention particularly the other objects collected by the Academy, such as many stone querns (various dates) and a large collection of wooden objects, some of them used as receptacles for bog butter. A number of the typical Irish wooden methers, often mentioned in the tales, may be seen; most of them are late, but some may go back to earlier times. They vary in height from 6 to 12 inches, and, together with the handles, are formed of a single piece; the bottom was separate, and inserted into a groove. Figs. 90 and 91 show the two-handed and four-handed varieties.

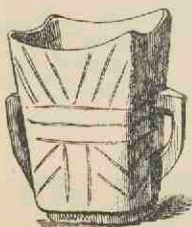


FIG. 90.—Two-handed Mether.

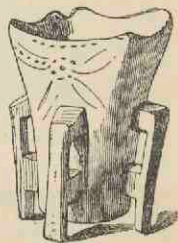


FIG. 91.—Four-handed Mether.

IX.—OGAM-INScribed STONES.

Ogams are a special study to which some scholars have devoted considerable time.

It is one which involves questions of much linguistic value, and, though the inscriptions contain few words except names, they are the oldest examples of the Irish language that have come down to us, going back to probably Roman times.


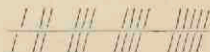

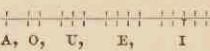
Sir John Rhys, a leading authority, has published full descriptions of the Academy's collection of Ogams in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* for 1902. Some reprints of this publication have been made for the Museum, from which we take a few extracts of the more complete readings, concerning which there is a general agreement among scholars. We also print Sir John Rhys' introductory remarks almost in full. Figs. 92, 93, and 94 are kindly lent by the Society:—

“In the following notes an attempt is chiefly made to give some account in detail of the Ogam-inscribed stones collected by the Royal Irish Academy . . . and as they form the largest collection of the kind in existence, I may perhaps be allowed a few words of preface. In the first place may be mentioned the distribution of Ogams, for besides those found in Ireland, others have been found in Britain, numbering as follows:—(a) Wales, 26, of which 13 belong to Pembrokeshire alone, and 1 only to North Wales; (b) Devon and Cornwall, 5; (c) the South of England, 1, which was found in the Roman town of Calleva, or Silchester; (d) Pietland, or the east of Scotland, and the islands of Orkney and Shetland, 15; (e) West Scotland, 1, which is in the island of Gigha, to the west of the peninsula of Kintyre; (f) the Isle of Man, 6. Of these 54 Ogam-inscribed stones, perhaps the most important and instructive are those of Wales and the South-west, as they are, in the majority of instances, accompanied with legends in Latin.

“To come back to Ireland, this country alone numbers nearly five times as many as all the other British Isles together: they are nearly all on stone, and comparatively few are known to be lost or destroyed.

On the other hand, hardly a year passes but that an Ogam or two is brought to light. . . .

“It is often asked where the key to the Ogam alphabet was found, but as a matter of fact it was never lost: it was always accessible in several of the ancient manuscripts of Ireland, but it has been helped in some important respects by the bilingual inscriptions found in Wales and Dumnonia. A study of the twofold evidence enables one approximately to give the early values of the Ogam scores as follows:—

<p>(i) </p>	<p>(iii) </p>
<p>(ii) </p>	<p>(iv) </p>

“As the scoring never exceeded five in any one case, and as twenty symbols at least were wanted, the alphabet is divided as above into four groups or families, each called an *aicme*, and the foregoing is the order followed in the tracts on them, especially the elaborate one in the Book of Ballymote of the fifteenth century: see folios 308–14.

“But besides the above twenty Ogam there was at least one other occasionally wanted, namely, for the consonant *p*, and for this two symbols seem to have been extemporized, to wit X and \wedge . Thus the total of the Ogam alphabet reaches the number 21; but even then the alphabet was found inadequate, and digraphs were resorted to (consisting mostly of Ogam symbols doubled), or else the same symbol had to represent more than one sound: instances of both kinds of spelling will come under the reader’s notice in due course.

“It ought to be mentioned that, in nearly all the early inscriptions, the Ogam are on or near the edge, or *arris*, of the stone on which they are carved: the *B*-group occupy the right of the edge and the *H*-group the left, while those of the *M*-group slope across the edge, and the vowels are usually notches in the edge itself. In the foregoing table the continuous line represents the natural edge of the stone on which the writing occurs.

“On the 11th of August, 1899, Mrs. Rhys and I began a careful examination of the Ogam stones in the Dublin Museum. . . . We had seen most of them before in 1883, when they were lying in the

cellars of the Royal Irish Academy's House. The following notes embody our readings as revised by me in April and September, 1901. . . ."

Sir John Rhys then describes thirty-one stones in detail, from which we extract the three following, with some omissions:—

MONATAGGART.—“This Ogam has its scores inverted, and reads as follows, with an accidental and modern scratch in front of the first *q*:—



That should mean ‘The Monument of Fiachra, kin of Glunlegget.’ The first vowel has one notch too many.

“The inscription does not belong to the oldest class of Ogams by any means, as may be inferred from its using *q* for *e* in *mogoi*, and for *ch* in *Vegreg*; for the name is doubtless that written later, *Fiachrach*, genitive of *Fiachra*. . . . The use, moreover, of *mogoi*, that is *mocoi*, the genitive of *moeu* or *muco*, without *maqui*, reminds one of Adamnan’s application of the same vocable as in *Fintenus*, *gente Mocumioie* (p. 20), *Lugbeus Mocumin* (p. 43), and *Oisseneo nomine, Ernani filio, gente Moeu Neth Corb* (p. 22). At first sight one would say that our inscription comes much nearer to the early Ogams of Ireland than Adamnan’s formulæ with *moeu* always undeclined; but as regards Adamnan, other considerations enter which cannot be discussed here: see the *Proceedings* of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. xxxii., pp. 353, 354. On the whole I should regard this inscription as belonging to the seventh century, and forming a specimen of the transition from the early Ogams to the Old Irish of the eighth or ninth centuries.

“An account of the finding of the Monataggart stones will be found contributed by the late Sir Samuel Ferguson and his correspondents to the second series of the *Proceedings* of the Royal Irish Academy, i., 289-94.”

KILLORGLIN.—“A stone presented by the late Bishop Graves, who says in a letter published in the Royal Irish Academy’s *Proceedings*, vol. ii., s.s., p. 279, that it was found by a young man named

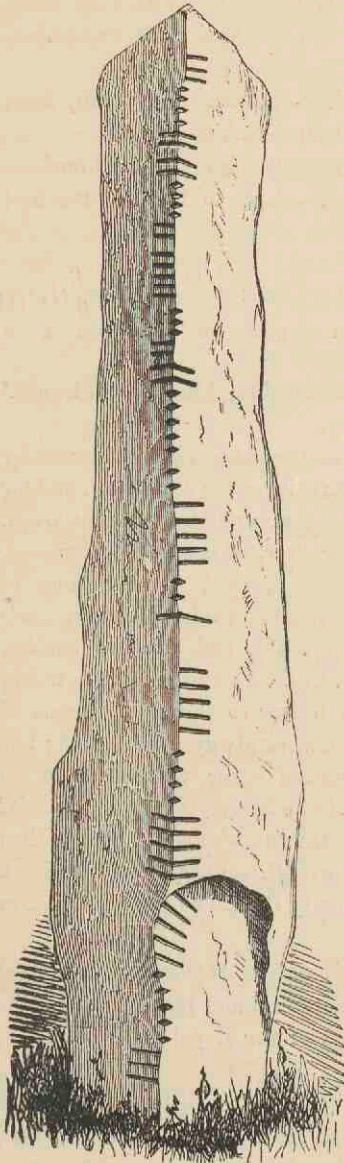


FIG. 92.—Monatagart.

Fitzgerald, in 1877, near Killorglin : in a letter to me in 1884 he states more exactly that it was found 'in a rath cave.' He was positive in the published letter that it reads *Galetos*, nothing more or less. . . . Our recent reading is as follows :—

G A L e A T O S

“ . . . Now as to *Galetos* or *Galeotos*, taking it to be the genitive of *Galeatus* or *Galeotus*, in which one cannot help seeing the Latin word

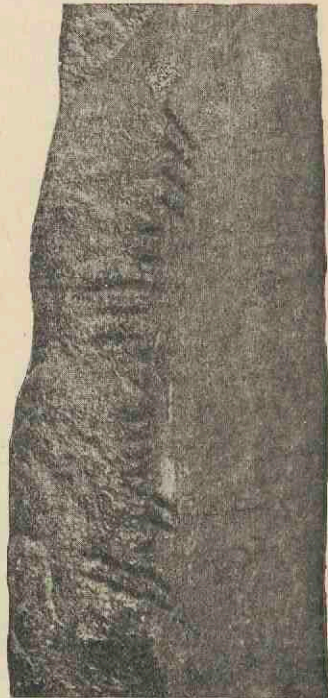
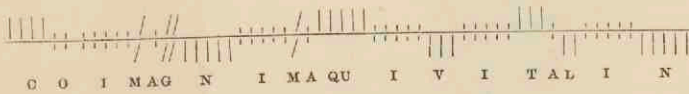


FIG. 93.—Killorglin, Co. Kerry.

galeātus, 'a helmed soldier, a man who wore a *galea* or helmet.' The occurrence of such a name is very remarkable as proving the influence of Roman civilization to have extended to Ireland. The name may have been used simply to translate a native one, but it is more probable that it was first given to a Goidel who had worn the Roman *galea*, that is one who had served in the Roman army. For one cannot help comparing it with *Qoeddorian-i* as connected with *Petrianæ*, and the name *Saggitarius*, of which the genitive *Saggitari* was found in Ogam on a stone discovered at Burnfort, in the neighbourhood of Mallow, in Co. Cork. All three names are, presumably, to be explained on the supposition of Goidelic touch with Roman institutions, especially the military system; not to mention such Latin names as *Marianus*, *Latinus*, and *Columbanus*, or their significance, so to say, in this context."

BALLENVOHER, IN CORKAGUINY, "where the stone was found of which Bishop Graves has given an account in the Third Series of the *Proceedings* of the Royal Irish Academy, vol. iii., pp. 374-9. He read it as follows, and I find no correction to make:—



It reads up the left edge and round the top with every Ogam perfect, which makes it the harder to suppose that the second name was originally written *Vitalini*, as one would have expected: we could not satisfy ourselves that the *n* ever had a vowel following it. *Coimagni* is the genitive of *Coimāgn*, found written later *Cóemán* and *Caemán*, which, with the *m* reduced as usual into *v*, has given its name to Ard Cavan in Wexford, which, according to Stokes, comes from *Ard Coemáin*, 'the Height or Hill of St. Cóemán.' The Bishop passes under review seven saints of the name Cóemán, five of whom belonged to the Patrician period and two to the sixth century, of whom one died in 614. He did not venture, however, to identify any one of the seven with our Coimagn-i. But he was successful in discovering the later form of *Vitalin*, namely, in the man's name *Fidlin*: his references are to the Book of Leinster, fo. 272^b, 372^c, and

the Book of Ballymote, fo. 213^b 12: the same is evidently of somewhat rare occurrence."

In the *Journal* of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland will be found many papers on Ogams, including those by the Rev. Edmond Barry; and among recent writers on the general subject of Ogams, may be mentioned Mr. R. A. Stewart Macalister, "Studies in Irish Epigraphy," vol. i, 1897; vol. ii, 1902; vol. iii, 1907; and Mr. John MacNeill, in *Proceedings R.I.A.*, vol. xxvii, Section C, p. 239. The latter ascribes

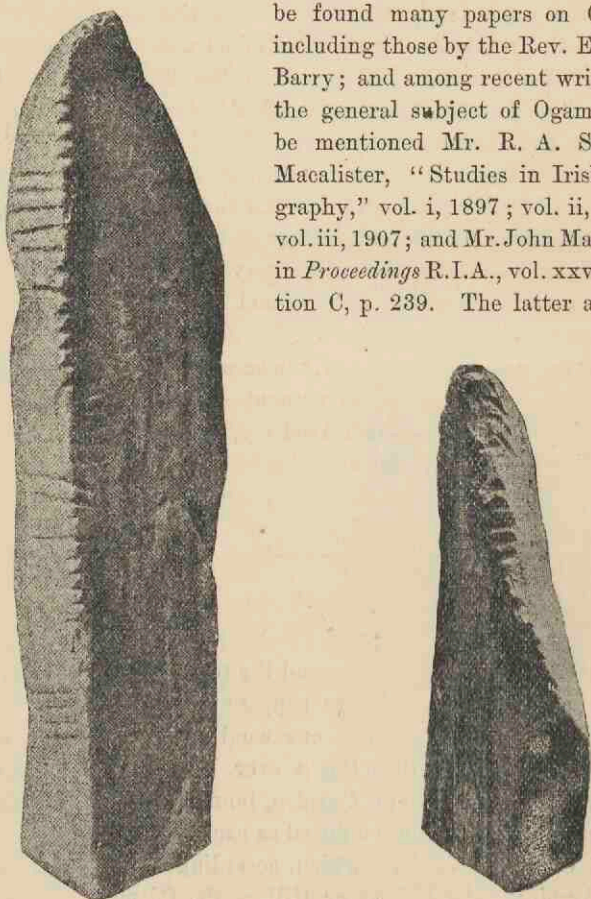


FIG. 94.—Ballinvoher, Co. Kerry.

the bulk of the Ogams to the fifth and sixth centuries, and hesitates to place the date of any known inscription earlier than the fifth century, though many contain forms which may be a century older.

INDEX.

A.

Ægean spiral, 9.
 Aidan, St., 17.
 Allen, J. R., 20, 32, 39, 68, 74.
 Amber, 26, 34, 73.
 Animal forms, 14-16, 26, 29, 37, 43-45, 48, 53, 57, 61, 72, 78.
 Anthemion, 1, 5.
 Ardagh Brooches, 37, 40, 41; Chalice, 31, 37-39, 71.
 Ardakillen Brooch, 15.
 Armagh, Bell of, 66, 67.
 Armstrong, R. B., 51, 80.
 Athenry, Thomas de Bramighem, Lord of, 79.
 Athlone Crucifixion Plaque, 68.
 Aylesford, 4.

B.

Ballinvoher Ogam Stone, 89, 90.
 Ballymore-Eustace, cross at, 75.
 Ballyspellan Brooch, 29.
 Bands, division of, in Irish ornament, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17.
 Barker, Dr., 73.
 Bells, 65-67.
 Bell of Armagh, 66; of Bangor, 67; of Cashel, 67; of Clogher, 66; Lough Lene Castle, 67; St. Patrick, 47, 48, 66; Black Bell of St. Patrick, 66.
 Benon, St., 79.
 Berru, ornament on helmet from, 2.
 Bibracte, 7.
 Blake, family of, 80.
 Blot-work, 57, 77.

Bobbio, 12.
 Breac Moedog, 50.
 Bronze vessel found with Ardagh Chalice, 39; objects, plating or tinning of, 23, 24, 35, 69.
 Broch of Okstrow, 20.
 Brooches, Penannular, 20-23; Brooches, Ardagh, 37, 40, 41; Ardakillen, 15; Ballyspellan, 29; Dunshaughlin, 24, 25; Iron, 32; Killamery, 27; Kilmainham, 28; Queen's, 28; Silver, 32; Thistle, 30, 31.
 Byzantine decoration, 9-15, 18, 23.

C.

Carved Bones, Lagore and Strokestown, 72.
 Cathalan Ua Maelchallann, 49.
 Cattaneo, 11, 12.
 Celestine, Pope, 58.
 Celts, 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 14, 20.
 Celtic ornament, 1, 76, 77.
 Cennfaelad, 44, 45.
 Chalices, etc., 76.
 Chi-Rho Symbol, 74.
 Christ Church, Dublin, 35.
 Circle, used as sun symbol, 75.
 Clogher, Bell of, 66; See of, 46.
 Clonfree Crannog, 74.
 Clonmacnois, Cross-slabs at, 18, 19, 74; High Cross, 25; Pin found at, 27, 32; Crosier found at, 63; Crosier of Abbots of, 62.
 Coire, 16.
 Clontarf, Pin found at, 36.

Constantinople, 13.
 Copenhagen Museum, Shrine in, 43.
 Coptic Art, 13; Church, 64.
 Coral, 6.
 Cong, Cross of, 55-57, 63.
 Cormac's Chapel, 51, 54, 64.
 Corp Naomh, 54, 55.
 Craigywarren Crannog, 71.
 Crannogs, 71, 72.
 Crawford, Mr. H. S., 74, 75.
 Crosiers, 58-64.
 Crosier of St. Aodh Mac Bric, 64; of Berach, 60; of Blathmac, 60; found in Co. Cavan, 64; of Cormac MacCarthy, 64; of St. Columba, 59; of St. Dymphna, 61; of Dysert O'Dea, 61; of St. Murus of Fahan, 61; O'Brady's, 64; deposited by Trinity College, Dublin, 63.
 Cross, Processional, Ballylongford, 81.
 Crosses, High, 25, 74, 75, 77; St. Patrick's, 54.
 Crucible, Dunshaughlin, 72.
 Crucifix, Woodford, 80.
 Cudulig Ua Inmainin, 49.
 Cuedale, Lancashire, 29, 31.
 Cuffie Coins, 31, 32.
 Cumaseach son of Ailill, 67.
 Cumdachs, 44, 46.
 Cumdach of Book of Armagh, 46; of Columba's Psalter, 46; of Dimma's Book, 46; of Book of Durrow, 46; of Book of Kells, 46; of Molaise's Gospels, 46; of St. Patrick's Gospels, 46; of Stowe Missal, 46.

D.

Dalkey, incised Cross on slab at, 75.
 Dalmatia, 13.
 Day, Mr. Lewis, 68.
 Diarmait Mac Denisc, 54.
 Dimma, Cumdach of Book of, 46.
 Disk, bronze, 5, 7, 8.
 Domnach Aigid, 45, 78.
 Domnall, Bishop of Connacht, 56.
 Domnall Ua Lachlainn, 49.
 Donaghmore Church, 53, 67.

Donnell Mac Aulay, 49.
 Dunraven, Earl of, 37-39, 67.
 Dunshaughlin, Crannog, 28, 32.
 Durrow Abbey, crosier of, 59.
 Durrow, Book of, 8, 16, 17, 27; Cumdach of, 46.

E.

Eadfrith, 17.
 Eastleach, 13.
 Edinburgh Museum, shrine in, 42.
 Egyptians, 34.
 Enamel, 6, 7, 21-23, 26, 37, 38, 45, 47, 51, 57, 64, 68, 71, 72, 78; lump of from Tara, 72.
 Enamelled Button, 71.

F.

Fiacail Phadruig, 79.
 Filigree Work, 26, 27, 44, 48, 53, 56.
 Fontaine, Sir Andrew, 54.
 France, 7.
 Frazer, Dr., 63.
 Freehand-work, 77.
 Fret-patterns, 12, 18, 19, 37, 38, 51, 67, 68, 76.

G.

German interlaced patterns, 14-16.
 Germany, ornaments from south-west, 4.
 Guilloche, 10, 12.
 Glass canes, 23, 33, 34.
 Granule, 26, 38.
 Green, J. R., 14, 17.
 Greenmount, Co. Louth, Runic inscription found at, 70.
 Gustafson, Prof. Gabriel, 69.

H.

Hampel, J., 15.
 Hand-type pins, 7, 22.
 Harp, figure playing, on shrine of St. Moedoc, 50, 51; on Fiacail Phadruig, 80.
 Hereditary Keepers, 44, 45, 59, 61, 67.
 Hewson, G. J., 82.
 Hiberno-Danish style, 62, 78.
 High Crosses, 25, 74, 75, 77.

I.

- Inscription on Bell of Armagh, 67; on Bell of Clogher, 67; on Brooches, 27, 29; on Cross of Cong, 56; on Domnach Airgid, 78; on Fiacaill Phadruig, 79; on St. Lachtin's Arm, 53, 54; on Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell, 49; on Soisceal Molaise, 44.
- Interlaced Patterns, 8, 10-16, 24, 26, 32, 38, 45, 48, 51, 53, 54, 56, 57, 61, 69, 72; style, 33, 77, 81.
- Irish Bells, form of, 65; Crosier, form of, 59.
- Iron Brooches, 32.
- Italian Ornament, 14.

J.

- Johnson, Mr., 37.

K.

- Kells, Book of, 17, 27, 39, 42; Cumdach of Book of, 46; wearing of Brooches on High Cross at, 25.
- Kildare, Bronze Disks from, 5.
- Kilkenny, Pin-head from, 31.
- Killamery Brooch, 27, 41.
- Kilmainham, Brooch found at, 28.
- Kilnaboy, tau cross at, 64.
- Killorglin Ogam Stone, 87.
- Kinnegad, Pail found at, 73.
- Knot-work, 11-13, 53.

L.

- Lachtin, St., Shrine of Arm of, 53, 54.
- Lagore Crannog, 72.
- Lamps, Stone, 75, 76.
- Latchet-brooch, 14, 23.
- Late Celtic Fibulae, Chains attached to, 27.
- La Tène Period and Style, 1-5, 7-9, 14, 17, 20, 23.
- Limavady find, chains in, 27.
- Limoges Enamel on Crosier, 64.
- Lindenschmit, Dr. L., 2, 15.
- Lindisfarne, Book of, 17.

- Lisnacrogher Crannog, 6.
- Lituus, 58.
- Lough Erne Shrine, 42, 43.

M.

- Macalister, Mr. R. A. S., 90.
- MacBeolan, Family of, 66.
- MacCarthen, St., Bishop of Clogher, 66, 78, 79.
- MacCullagh, Professor, 57.
- McClellan, Mr. Adam, 49.
- Macegeoghan, Family of, 59.
- MacNeill, Mr. John, 90.
- Mael Ísu, 56.
- Maelsechnaill Ua Cellacháin, 54.
- Mainz Museum, 20, 34.
- Manuscripts, Hiberno-Saxon, 10, 17; Illuminated, 8, 10, 13, 14, 17.
- Marseilles, 1, 6.
- Meander patterns, 1, 5.
- Medieval Crucifixes, 80.
- Melhus, Namos, Norway, Shrine found at, 43.
- Methers, 84.
- Millefiori work, 34, 51, 68, 69.
- Moedoc, St., 50; Shrine of, 50-53.
- Molaise, St., 44, 45, 50; Shrine of, 44-46.
- Moling, St., Book of, 39.
- Monasterboice, High Cross at, 25, 74.
- Monataggart Ogam Stone, 87.
- Monymusk Shrine, 43.
- Mosaic Pavements, 10, 17; Work, 53.
- Mount Beuvray, 7.
- Muiredach O'Duffy, Archbishop, 55.
- Muredach Ua Dubthaig, 56.
- Mulholland, Henry, 49.

N.

- Naue, Dr., 4.
- Navan, Ornaments found at, 69.
- Nelson Dawson, Mrs., 38.
- Newgrange, Spirals at, 9.
- Niello, 36, 53, 56, 62, 71.
- Norfolk, Fonts at, 13.
- Norway, bulbous Brooches found in, 31.

O.

- O'Barrdan, John, 46, 78.
 O'Connor, Cornelius, 82.
 O'Curry, 31, 54.
 Ogam alphabet, Key to, 86; Inscribed
 Stones, 85-90; Inscription on Brooch,
 27, 29.
 O'Hanlys, Family of the, 61.
 O'Karbri, John, 78.
 Old Kilcullen, Cross at, 65.
 O'Luan, Family of, 61.
 O'Mellans, Family of, 49, 67.
 O'Mithideins, Family of, 45.
 O'Mulchallyn, Family of, 49.
 O'Quinns, Family of, 61.

P.

- Pails, 73, 74.
 Patrick, St., 21, 46, 47, 49, 66, 78, 79;
 Crosses, 54.
 Patrick's, St., Gospels, Cumdach of, 46;
 Bell Shrine, 47-49.
 Palmette, 2.
 Penannular Brooches, 20-32.
 Peterson, Th., 43.
 Petrie Collection, 6, 50, 61; Dr. George,
 50, 61, 62, 64.
 Philostratus, 7.
 Pins, 33-36.
 Plait-work, 10, 15.
 Pliny, 6.
 Polaires, Leather, 52, 53.
 Plunkett, Mr. Thomas, 42.

Q.

- Queen's Brooch, 28.

R.

- Rathmichael, incised slabs at, 75.
 Ravenna, 10.
 Reeves, Bishop, 48.
 Reinach, Salomon, 6.
 Rhone Valley, 6.
 Ridge-Pieces of Shrines, 43.
 Ring, La Tène, 23.

- Ring-Pins, 35, 36.
 Roderic O'Connor, King, 55.
 Runic Inscriptions, 70.
 Rhys, Sir John, 85-90.

S.

- Sacred Monogram, 74.
 Salin, Dr., 16.
 Scandinavia, 13, 14, 16, 17, 32.
 Schools, Irish Monastic, 9, 14, 19.
 Scotland, 7, 13, 65.
 Scribes, Irish, 10.
 Scroll patterns, 1, 26, 53.
 Shannon, Shrine found in, 42.
 Shrines, 42-57.
 Shrine of Corp Naomh, 54, 55; of Cross
 of Cong, 55-57; of Domnach Airgid, 45,
 46, 78, 79; from Lough Erne, 42-44;
 of St. Lachtin's Arm, 53, 54; of St.
 Moedoc, 50-53; of St. Patrick's Bell,
 47-49; of Soiscél Molaise, 44, 45.
 Shoes, Leather, 71.
 Silver Pins, 35, 36.
 Sirr, Major, 62.
 Skew frets, 12, 51.
 Smith, Mr. Reginald A., 32.
 Spiral patterns, 1, 4, 8, 9, 23, 26, 38, 41,
 56, 73.
 Ställi, 82.
 Stoechades, 6.
 Stokes, Dr. William, 80.
 Stokes, Miss Margaret, 12, 33, 38, 39, 45,
 51, 64, 74.
 Stowe Missal, Cumdach of, 46.
 Strokestown Crannog, 72.
 Strzygowski, M., 13.
 Sullivan, Prof., 37, 38.
 Swastica, 51.
 Syria, 12.

T.

- Tara Brooch, 8, 25, 39, 71.
 Tau Crossiers, 58, 63, 64.
 Temple Cross Church, 55.
 Terdelbach Ua Conchobair, 56.
 Teutonic Fibula, 15.

Thistle Brooches, 31, 41.
 Tighernach, St., 78, 79.
 Todd, Rev. J. H., 49, 82.
 Tortoise Brooches, 29.
 Tory Island Cross, 64.
 Trichinopoly-work, 27, 32, 38.
 Trumpet pattern, 2-4, 12, 17, 26, 38, 39,
 41, 51, 69, 73.
 Tuam, High Cross at, 63.
 Tuathgal, Abbot, Tomb of, 18, 74.
 Turlogh O'Conor, 55.
 Turoe, La Tène Stone at, 4.

V.

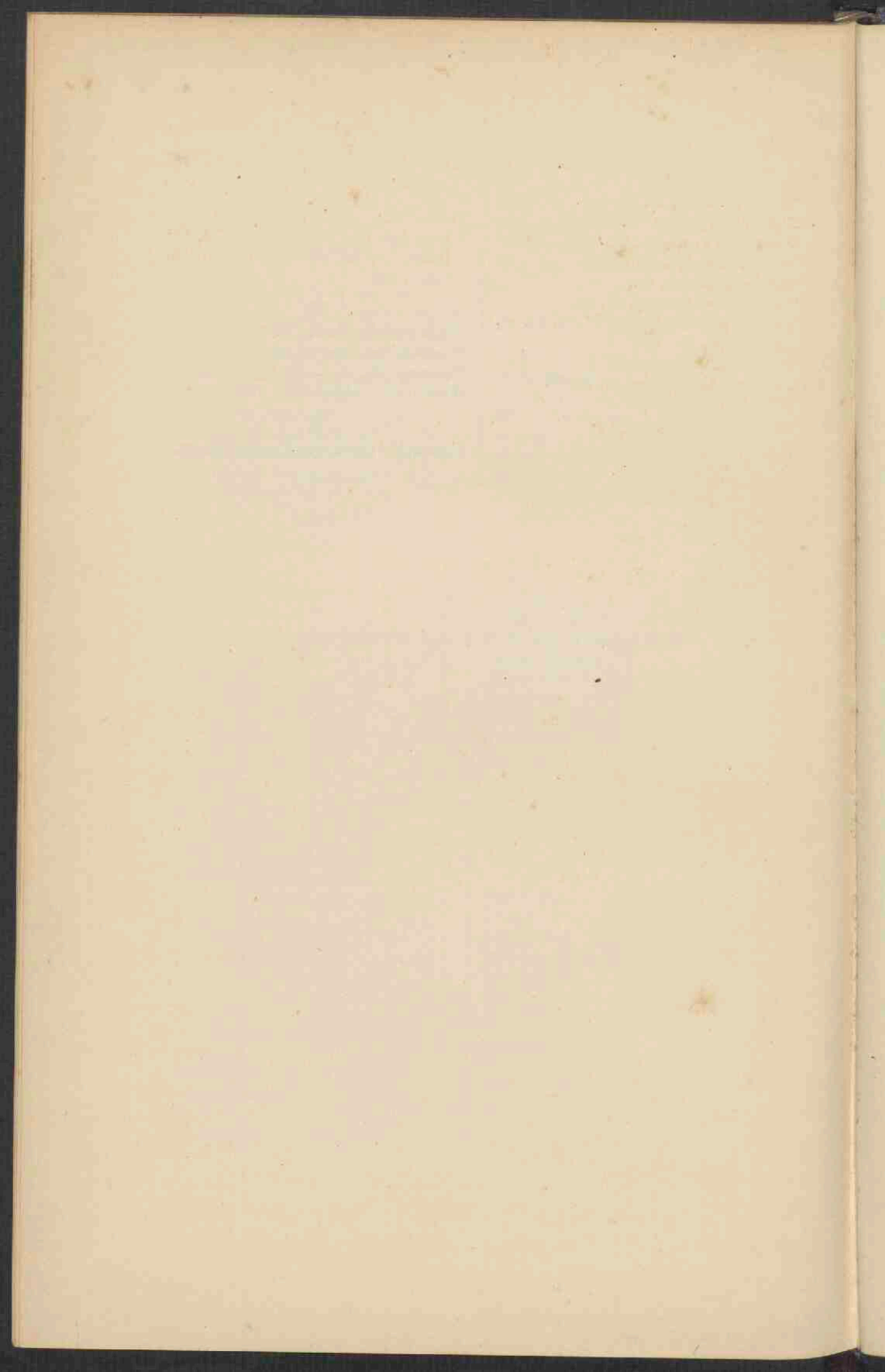
Verona, 10.
 Viking-Age, boat burial, 43; Period, 16;
 Raids, 17; 24, 27; Bucket found in
 vessel, 69.

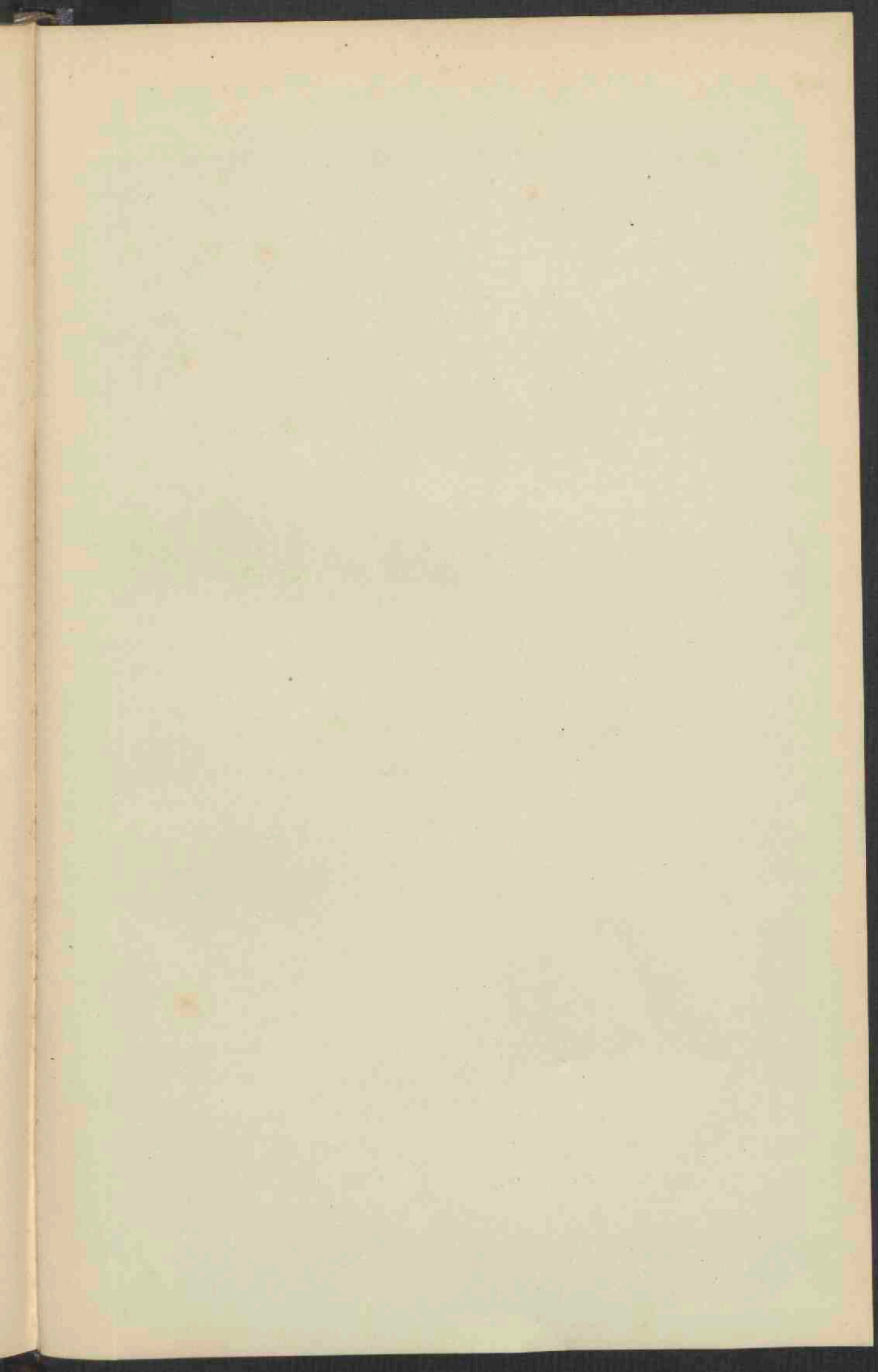
W.

Waldalgesheim, find at, 2, 3.
 Waxed-tablet Case, 82, 83.
 Westropp, Mr. T. J., 60, 61.
 Wheel-cross, origin of, 74, 75.

Z.

Zoomorphic Cresting of Crosiers, 61-63.







VAN