

The reverse of the cross bears a Greek cross formed of equal-sized plain bars within a raised circle, the spaces between the arms of the cross forming sunk panels, each enclosing a raised circular boss.

## PLATE XXV. FIG. 3.

## THE FIGURED STONE AT GNOLL CASTLE, NEAR NEATH.

Adjoining to the Caratinus stone in the wall of the grotto at Gnoll Castle (*ante*, p. 6) is the stone here represented, destitute of inscription, but of considerable interest as an archæological relic. It is of irregular form, about 30 inches high and 20 inches wide in the middle, having its surface nearly occupied by a rudely-designed human figure, with the head round and uncovered, the arms raised, with the hands open and fingers spread out, and with a short apron or kilt reaching from the waist to the middle of the legs. Above the head is a series of short straight spokes or bars, some being longer than the rest and bent at right angles, forming a kind of canopy over the figure, which is raised, or rather the surface of the stone is cut away, leaving the figure itself in relief. The surface of the face is also cut away, leaving the sides of the cheeks, with the eye-brows, eyes, nose, and mouth also in relief. The kilt is formed of a series of longitudinal strips radiating from a waistband, and giving the appearance of a short and very thickly quilted petticoat, just as in several of the Irish figures on the shrine of St. Manchan.

Such representations of the ancient Britons on the sculptured stones of Wales are extremely rare, differing in this respect from those of Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man. With the exception of the stone at Llandevailog, Brecknockshire, in which an uncovered figure holds a short club in each hand, and who appears to be clothed in a similar short kilt (figured in *Arch. Camb.*, 1858, p. 306, and *post*, pl. XXXIII. fig. 2), the small stone at Llanfrynach near Brecon, on which is sculptured a diminutive figure with uplifted arms and outspread hands (also figured by me in *Arch. Camb.*, 1856, p. 141, and *post*, pl. XXXIX), and the Llanhamlech stone (*post*, pl. XXXVIII. fig. 3), I recollect no other single figure of an ancient Briton represented on a stone monument. Much space might be occupied in discussing the two peculiarities observable in these figures, namely, the upraised hands and the dress. I shall only observe, however, that the attitude of this and the other figures agrees with that which is found repeatedly in the Catacombs of Rome, and which is generally interpreted as representing the act of prayer or worship, and which seems especially suitable for the tomb of a Christian, whilst the peculiar character of the dress seems especially Celtic, as it is seen in many of the early sculptured remains in other parts of the kingdom, as well as in early Irish metal-work, as in the small full-length figures of the shrine of St. Manchan, above referred to.