

PLATE LXXV.

THE STONE OF ST. CADVAN, TOWYN.

The stone of St. Cadvan preserved in the church of Towyn¹ is, as regards its philological elements, the most important of the ancient Welsh stones, containing on each of its four sides an inscription in the oldest form of the language of the country. It was described and figured by Dr. Taylor in 1761, and by Edward Lhwyd in Gibson's Camden, p. 622; Gough's Camden, iii. p. 172, tab. IX. figs. 1-5; Pennant's Wales, ii. p. 93, supp. tab. V. fig. 3, but the inscription was so inaccurately given in these works as not to be intelligible. In 1848 casts of the stone were presented to the museum at Caernarvon by W. W. E. Wynne, Esq., during the Meeting of the Cambrian Archæological Association in that town, who also kindly placed in my hands a series of rubbings of the stone. These materials enabled the Rev. John Williams (Ab Ithel) and myself, after many hours' labour, to prepare a memoir with figures, which appeared in the Archæologia Cambrensis, 1850 (pp. 90-100), being also referred to in the Report of the Caernarvon Meeting (Arch. Camb., 1848, p. 364).

The stone itself is about 7 feet long and about 10 inches wide on the two broadest sides, the other two sides being considerably narrower. In the accompanying figures the sides are arranged as the observer walks from right to left, B being upon that part of the stone which is represented in shadow in A, and C in the shaded part of B, whilst D is in like manner on the shaded part of C, and joins the unshaded part of A; and it has been supposed that there are at least two different inscriptions, each commencing with the + and carried on to the opposite side of the stone, where the inscription runs in the opposite direction. Thus, notwithstanding the two semilunar marks at the top of the inscription of A, which might be taken to indicate the termination of the inscription, it was supposed by the Rev. J. Williams that C is the termination of A, and that in like manner the inscription of B is continued and is terminated on the D side. The legend of these inscriptions appears to me to be as follows:—

- (A) + cungen celen \asymp
 (B) + tengrug c(?)i malte(d)gu
 adgan m
 a?...tr(or a)
 (C) an?terunc dubut marciau
 (D) molt tricet
 clode
 tuar nitanam.

¹ In the Cambro-Briton, ii. p. 121, it is said at that time to decorate the grotto belonging to a gentleman who took the liberty of removing it. It subsequently stood in a field close to the road-side, about half a mile from Towyn, on the road to Dôllgellau.

I must refer the reader to the detailed article on the stone above referred to for the reasons which led me to adopt the above readings in respect to several of the doubtful letters.

The Rev. J. Williams, adopting the supposition that there are two inscriptions on the stone as mentioned above, suggests that the first inscription is to be read in its modern orthography,

CYNGEN CELAIN AR TU RHWNG DYBYDD MARCIAU,

which may be translated, 'The body of Cyngen is on the side where the marks will be,' and the second in like manner as

TANGRUG CYVAL TEDD GADVAN MARTH
MOLL CLOD Y DDAEAR TRIGED NID ANAV,

i. e. 'Beneath a similar mound is extended Cadvan. Sad that it should enclose the praise of the earth. May he rest without blemish.'

The detailed philological considerations which led Ab Ithel to adopt the preceding reading and translation of the inscriptions must be consulted in his portion of the memoir in the Arch. Camb. above referred to.

The late Mr. Thomas Wakeman, a very competent authority, shortly afterwards (Arch. Camb., 1850, p. 205) published an extended memoir on the question of the identity of the two persons Cyngen and Cadvan or Guadgan commemorated upon this stone, arriving at the conclusion that 'if the Cingen of the monument be identified with Cyngen ap Cadell, Prince of Powis, *which appears very probable* (and whose era is pretty well established by the recorded death of his son Brochvael early in the seventh century, which shows the father to have been living at the latter part of the sixth), it is probable that Cadvan was a nephew, sister's son of Howel Vychan and a first cousin by the mother of Alan Fayneant, who was the father of Llonio Llawhir, and whose death, according to Armorican account, happened in the year 594; and we shall perhaps not be far out if we fix the date of his kinsman's monument to about the same period, still leaving it the oldest in Wales' (Arch. Camb., p. 212). The account of St. Cadvan in Professor Rees' Essay on the Welsh Saints and in Arch. Camb., i. 167, may be referred to, as well as the extended philological memoir on the stone by Mr. Thomas Stephens of Merthyr Tydvil in Arch. Camb., 1851, p. 59.

Prof. John Rhys visited the stone in 1874, and gave the following notice of it in Arch. Camb., 1874, p. 243:—'I agree with Prof. Westwood's reading (A) Cingen celen (the body of Cyngen), nor can I improve on his reading of (B), the only intelligible portion of which is the name Adgan, which occurs in the Cambro-British Saints, p. 88, in the form of Atgan or Adgan. Ab Ithel tried to make Cadvan, which has hitherto been searched for in vain on the stone¹. As to (C) I have not much to say, excepting that I find traces of the former presence of an *n* finishing the line, so that the last word was, if I am not mistaken, Marciaun, the name which we *now* write Meirchion or Meirchiawn.

¹ Prof. Rhys seems to have overlooked the terminal *gu* of the preceding line, which Ab Ithel read as = c.

That *marciau* (marks) could not be Welsh of the ninth century is evident to all who know anything about old Welsh¹. On (D) I find traces of an *a* before *nitānam*². This, with the word above it, would read *tricet anit anam*, "let him (or it) remain without blemish." The person's name is not intelligible to me, and a further difficulty arises as to whether *anit*, which would be now *onid*, could mean "without." Ab Ithel tried to make *nit* mean "without," which certainly looks impossible. Finally, it hardly need be remarked that this stone remains a *crux*.³

PLATE LXXVII. FIG. 8.

THE PASCENT STONE AT TOWYN.

In Gough's *Camden*, iii. p. 172, tab. V. fig. 7, and in Pennant's *Supplemental Tables*, tab. V. fig. 2, a stone is described and figured standing in the churchyard of Towyn, on which is described in debased Roman capitals the name of PASCENT, the second letter *A* having the cross-bar angulated and the *E* reversed. I find the name of Pascent among the great men and princes of Wales in the MS. of Nennius in the Harleian collection in the British Museum, and Pasgen as one of the sons of Brychan of Brecknock (*Cotton MS. Brit. Mus. A. xiv.*); and in Rees' *Essay on the Welsh Saints* we read (p. 163), 'It has been suggested that this stone was a monument to the memory of Pasgen, son of Dingad, grandson of Brychan; and though the circumstance of other persons named Pasgen occurring in Welsh history may so far render the fact uncertain, the coincidence that Gwenddydd, a daughter of Brychan, is recorded as one of the saints of this place, seems to offer a strong confirmation of the supposition.' The inscription may in fact be as early as the seventh century.

PLATE LXXVII. FIG. 3.

THE CROSSED STONE IN TOWYN CHURCH TOWER.

This stone, for a notice of which I am indebted to W. W. E. Wynne, Esq., is built into the modern tower of Towyn church. It was brought from a place a quarter of a mile from the town, called Bryn Pederau, which may be translated the Hill of Pater Noster. From this spot persons coming in one direction to Towyn would obtain the first view of the church, as well as of the chapel of St. Cadvan. It is 8 feet long and 12 inches wide, and is marked near one end with a large simple cross with the arms of nearly equal length.

¹ I am unable to find any trace of this final *n* in the various rubbings and drawings before me. The inscription on the Bardsey Island stone (Plate LXXXI. fig. 1) must not be overlooked.

² The crack across the stone before the word *nitānam* renders it difficult to determine the value of two marks preceding the first *n*, but a comparison with the form of both letters *a* in the word clearly disproves that the former can represent an *a*.