

either in a church, or some public museum or other public building. It is 34 inches high and 20 inches broad, rounded at the top, having a large cross with equal-sized limbs irregularly carved on the upper portion, with the panels between the arms of the cross sunk, leaving only the edges of the limbs in relief. In the centre is a raised dot surrounded by a small circle in relief, with similar circles and dots at the ends of the upper and lower limbs and outer angles of the lower panels. The bottom of the stone, or at least so much of it as still remains, bears the inscription—

prop

aravi

tgaic

. . .

i. e. preparavit gaic. The letters are of the minuscule form and of the Anglo-Saxon or Hiberno-Saxon type of the eighth or ninth century, the r and g being especially characteristic. The word 'properavit' naturally suggests the addition of the words 'hanc crucem,' and Mr. Rhys has ingeniously suggested that the proper name is not Gaic but Gai, and the apparently terminal letter c the initial of the word 'crucem;' whilst the apparent fragment of a letter at the commencement of the fourth line is considered by him to indicate a r (making with the preceding c crucem) or a h, whence he would read the inscription as Proparavit Gai, c. h., that is, Preparavit Gai crucem hanc. 'At all events,' he says, 'I do not believe in a name *Gaic*, whereas we have in the *Annales Cambriæ*, *Gaii Campi*, which in a later MS. is given as *Gai*.'

#### PLATE XV.

##### MARGAM. THE GREAT WHEEL-CROSS.

This is one of the most beautiful specimens of ancient native art remaining in this country. It is preserved within the ruins of the chapter-house at Margam, and stands upon a large quadrangular block of stone 42 inches wide, about 2 feet high and 2 feet thick, having its front divided into compartments filled with ornamental interlaced ribbon patterns and the curious Chinese-like diagonal pattern, surrounded by a narrow raised cable; the top of the block has a long excavation in the middle for the reception of the base of the cross, the hole having a border of interlaced ribbon along its front and two sides. The base of the cross is 23 inches wide and 18 inches high, and the wheel itself is 39 inches in diameter and about 5 inches thick. It is remarkable that the outline of the stone should have been left irregular, inclining somewhat on one side, whilst the centre compartment is also unsymmetrical, with the high boss not in the centre, so that the ornamentation is necessarily irregular. The cross is formed of a central square and four equal-sized square compartments at the ends of the limbs, which latter are united to the central square by smaller square spaces, and the circular wheel is completed by curved fillets between the outer square compartments, the lowest of which extends downwards through the base of the cross. All these compartments are filled in with elaborate interlaced raised ribbon-work of varied patterns, the spaces on each side of the stem or base of the cross having

a figure of a man rudely sculptured, the one to the right wearing what looks like a cowl on his shoulders, and which in the other figure seems to cover the head. Above the head of each figure is the triquetra ornament. The open spaces between the arms of the cross have been left unornamented and flat (not being pierced through), and appear to have been inscribed with small letters. Those on the upper left-hand space have been clearly inscribed obliquely, as though the sculptor had carved them standing on the top of the base and had to stoop towards the space to be inscribed. The letters are minuscules, and are to be read—

con belin fuit . . . .

The letters on the other compartments are so small and slightly carved as not to be decipherable, in fact they escaped my sight on several visits, and it is only from my rubbings that their presence has been detected. Careful casts held in various lights would, I doubt not, confirm my conjecture as to their existence, and would facilitate the reading of them.

The letters in the upper left space have been indicated, but incorrectly, in Gough's Camden, ii. pl. 18, fig. 2. Mr. Rhys having missed the inscription on his inspection of the stone, has suggested to Dr. Hubner that it does not exist and that I have confounded the great wheel-cross of Margam with the great cross of Merthyr Mawr.

The figures of this fine stone given by Strange in the *Archæologia* (vol. vi. pl. 3, fig. 7) and by Donovan in his *Tour in Wales*, ii. p. 24 and pl. opposite, are very unsatisfactory.

## PLATE XVI.

### MARGAM CHAPTER-HOUSE. THE CROSS OF ENNIAUN.

This elegant sculptured stone, of which no representation has heretofore been published, is now preserved in the chapter-house of Margam. It is 6 feet high and about 2½ feet wide across the middle of the stone. The circular head of the stone has been partially cut on each side to make the outline continuous with the lower part, but the ornamental design of the head has been but little injured. The head is sculptured with a cross, with the limbs of equal length terminating in dilated square spaces elegantly carved with an endless interlaced ribbon running through a double oval ribbon in each square compartment, the centre of the cross having also a small interlaced double oval pattern: the arms of the cross are united by curved bars ornamented with a curious Chinese-like pattern formed of oblique incised lines, leaving four plain semi-oval spaces between the bases of the limbs of the cross.

The base or stem of the cross is gradually dilated to the bottom, and is divided into two compartments, of which the upper is filled with a very simple but effective interlacement of triple ribbons, and the lower compartment bears on the right side an ornament in two oblong divisions formed by diagonal lines, forming patterns not uncommon in the Hiberno-Saxon and Anglo-Saxon MSS. and on a few of the Welsh stones.