

## The Archaeological Journal.

---

DECEMBER, 1853.

---

ON THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE VARIOUS STYLES OF ORNAMENTATION EMPLOYED BY THE EARLY BRITISH, ANGLO-SAXON AND IRISH ARTISTS.

THE practice of decorating, with some kind of ornament or other, such objects as are or have been regarded with more than ordinary interest, appears to be universal among mankind, and to have been adopted in every age and by every nation ; a child cuts notches at regular intervals on his little switch, and a South-Sea islander decorates his favourite war club as elaborately as ever monkish artist illuminated the pages of his psalter or missal.

It is, however, in the elimination of the various styles adopted by different artists and in different nations, that we look for the result of a higher or lower degree of mental cultivation, and of national prejudices and tastes ; for, if we except the few primary principles of ornamentation which are to be found, necessarily, in the earliest attempts of every age and nation, we find that the more elaborate a style of decoration becomes the further does it recede from the primitive type, and a more fixed and national mannerism is the result. Every one, for instance, at once recognises the divers styles adopted by the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Chinese, the New Zealanders, &c., because each of these styles is marked by its own peculiar features, which, although they may be traced back to certain simple types, have yet acquired such distinct characteristics as to make themselves known at once to the experienced eye.

I think it the more important to dwell on this subject in some detail, because it appears to me that some unlooked-for results of considerable importance, with reference to the early history of different portions of our own country, may be

obtained from an investigation of the various styles of ornament not only found in the most ancient manuscripts executed in Great Britain and Ireland, but also which appear on the carved stones and crosses scattered over these islands, and on the few and valuable specimens of metal-work of those early times, which have survived to our days. I am aware, for instance, that suggestions have been made to form a geographical classification of our Anglo-Saxon manuscripts by the style of the writing; but the style of the ornamentation of the illuminated letters seems to me to be a safer mode of discrimination. In like manner, whilst the stone crosses of England are generally of a form very different from that of the Irish ones, yet we find upon many of the former such an entire similarity in the ornamental details as to show that the artists were of the same school; and indeed, in some of those of the west of England and Wales, erected by the early British Christians, we have the same type of form as the Irish crosses, proving (as completely, as do such manuscripts as the Welsh Psalter of Ricemarchus, in Trinity College, Dublin,) that the latter were executed with an identity of feeling which led to the construction of the former. Such a result further necessarily proves the historic fact of the identity of the religious principles of both countries as completely as the assertion of Venerable Bede himself; and it is this point of view (which I shall not here further allude to) that I consider may be rendered highly important, if fully worked out, with reference to the question of the introduction of Christianity, as well as the effects of intercommunication, among the various tribes which inhabited these islands from the first to the tenth century.

The most ancient of our manuscripts offer several peculiarities in their ornamental details quite at variance with those of all other coeval European MSS. Instead of the "incipit" of the volume and the first few words of the text being simply written in a slightly larger hand, and in a differently coloured ink, generally red, as is the case with all the oldest classical manuscripts of Italy; or, instead of having an ornamental bar running across the top of the first page, containing the title of the book, as in oriental codices, our oldest and finest manuscripts have the first page entirely ornamented, the first letter often of a gigantic size, and the few following words written in letters varying from half an inch to two inches in

height; in addition to which, the books of the Gospels were often decorated by having the page facing the commencement of each Gospel, filled with the most intricate work, in the midst of which the cross is represented.

The great stone crosses which, in early ages must have been extremely numerous throughout these islands, were also often covered with the most elaborate ornamentation, and the arms of the cross were often connected together by segments of a circle, which have not inaptly been regarded as an attempt to represent the glory around the head of the Saviour.

It is proper to observe further, that in the following remarks I have confined myself to the works of the early Christian inhabitants of these islands, as well as to the more ancient Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, since, in the latter half of the tenth century, or perhaps earlier, a grand style of ornament was introduced by the monks of Winchester, under Bishop Ethelwold, totally unlike that of the earlier works, and in which foliage was introduced with great effect. The noble Benedictional of the Duke of Devonshire, fully illustrated in the twenty-fourth volume of the *Archæologia*, is the finest example of this class of manuscripts, to which belong also the two Rouen volumes, the Canute Gospels in the British Museum, the Gospels of Trinity College, Cambridge, and others of minor importance. It is, in fact, a curious circumstance that, whilst the early British, Irish, and Anglo-Saxon artists adopted the principle of introducing grotesque or artistic figures of animals into their ornaments, vegetable forms were almost universally disregarded. I know, indeed, only two or three manuscripts in which any attempts to introduce leaves or flowers, or even foliated scrolls, has been made, and that with but poor success.<sup>1</sup> The same remark of course

<sup>1</sup> Thus in the Book of Kells there are various representations of leaves and flowers, but all angulated and interlaced in the most remarkable manner, in accordance with the prevailing feeling of the designer. The remarkable Cotton MS. known as the Psalter of St. Augustine, exhibits in the upper angles of the illuminated page containing the figure of David and his attendants, a pair of ornaments like a reversed flower and leaves, quite unlike anything to be met with in any other early Anglo-Saxon MS. The drawing of the Psalmist is also quite classical, but the border and arch are entirely of the early Northern design. The initials throughout the book are also equally

Anglo-Saxon, but the writing of the text is in a pure large Uncial character, thus accounting for the introduction of a classical floriated ornament in the frontispiece. In like manner the *Biblia Gregoriana*, (Brit. Mus. Reg. 1, E. VI.) in the rich purple colour of some of its pages, and in the foliated borders to the illumination of St. Matthew, clearly evinces a classical influence sufficient to account for the scroll-like termination of some of the fanciful animals represented on the borders. The early copy of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, *Bibl. Cott.*, Tiberius C. II., has similar scroll-like terminations to the dragons in the initial letters.

applies to the stone carvings, since those crosses, &c., which exhibit foliage in their patterns, such as the Bakewell cross, appear to me to be of a much more recent date than those which are ornamented with interlaced and other analogous patterns. I need not, I apprehend, enter into any argument to prove that the artists who executed the illuminations of the manuscripts were also the originators of the early carved crosses in question. The style of ornament in both classes of monuments is, in fact, so essentially identical, that the ornamented shaft for instance, of the Carew or Neverne Cross (Journ. Arch. Instit., vol. iii., p. 71), might be considered as the tall, upright stroke of one of the initial letters of the gospels of Mac Regol or St. Gall worked in stone.

In the ornamental work, as well as in their more ambitious attempts at art, the early British, Anglo-Saxon, and Irish artists appear to have had not the slightest idea of the effects of light and shade, their colours being universally laid on in flat solid unbroken washes, no attempt at rotundity being ever attempted even in the "human face divine," which is simply coloured with a mass of white paint. It is the more necessary to point out this peculiarity because Dr. Rock tells us that some of their ornaments in MSS. were like narrow ribbons, *flat*, whilst others were like string, *round*. (Church of our Fathers, i., p. 276). Only in the folds of the garments of the Saviour or Saints do we find any attempt to vary the uniform flat effect; and this is performed in the most ludicrous manner by lines of a colour in contrast with that of the ground of the drapery, thus in the green robe of St. Matthew in the Gospels of Lindisfarne, the folds of the drapery are indicated by red lines.

Another circumstance especially deserving of notice is the extreme delicacy and wonderful precision, united with an extraordinary minuteness of detail, with which many of these ancient manuscripts were ornamented. I have examined, with a magnifying-glass, the pages of the Gospels of Lindisfarne and Book of Kells, for hours together, without ever detecting a false line or an irregular interlacement; and, when it is considered that many of these details consist of spiral lines, and are so minute as to be impossible to have been executed with a pair of compasses, it really seems a problem not only with what eyes, but also with what instruments they could have been executed. One instance of the minuteness of these

details will suffice to give an idea of this peculiarity. I have counted in a small space, measuring scarcely three-quarters of an inch by less than half an inch in width, in the Book of Armagh, not fewer than one hundred and fifty-eight interlacements of a slender ribbon-pattern, formed of white lines edged by black ones upon a black ground. No wonder that an artist in Dublin, lately applied to by Mr. Chambers to copy one of the pages of the Book of Kells, excused himself from the labour on the ground, that it was a tradition that the lines had been traced by angels: Giraldus Cambrensis, probably speaking of this very book, having affirmed, "sin autem ad perspicacius intendendum oculorum aciem invitaveris et longe penitus ad artis arcana transpenetraveris, tam delicatas et subtiles, tam actas et arctas, tam nodosas et vinculatim collegatas tamque recentibus adhuc coloribus illustratas notare poteris intricaturas, ut vere hæc omnia *angelica* potius quam humana diligentia jam asseveraveris esse composita."

This excessive intricacy of the more elaborate of the ornaments described in the following pages, seems, at first sight, the more extraordinary, because the attempts to represent the human figure, or to depict events, made by the same artists, are entirely puerile and barbarous, as may be seen by reference to my article on this subject in this *Journal*, vol. vii., p. 17; but it appears to me to be almost a necessary result of æsthetical development, that where the mind is fully imbued with the capabilities of higher art, the mere technical details of ornament are lightly regarded and superficially treated: whereas, in cases where, either from ignorance or from religious or superstitious feelings, the delineation of the higher objects of art is not at all, or at best but rudely attempted, the mind of the artist necessarily dwells upon, and elaborates ornamental details of various kinds, and often with an astonishing perfection and intricacy. With such a principle in view, we may almost arrive at the conclusion that, starting from the simplest elements of ornamentation, the British, Anglo-Saxon, or Irish artist, living, as was the constant custom, in a monastery, and having, secularly, his mind and time fully occupied with this one subject, would work out these elements into elaborate results which could scarcely fail, in some instances at least, to be identical with those obtained by similarly-occupied ornamentists in other countries. In such a case it needs not, for

instance, to assert, with regard to the intricate interlaced ribbon-patterns of British or Anglo-Saxon work, that the artist obtained an idea of the pattern from the tessellated pavements of the Roman villas scattered over the country; in fact, the prevalence of such a pattern in Ireland, where no Roman pavements were ever laid, sufficiently proves that such was not the origin of the design. On the contrary, the twining of a cord, bundle of twigs, or strip of parchment would suggest much of the intricacy in some of these patterns, independent of the ingenuity of the artist in planning and inventing the more elaborate interlacements. I would by no means, however, desire it to be inferred that our early artists did not obtain the idea or principle of some of their ornaments elsewhere than from their own fancy; indeed, from the repeated travels of the British, Anglo-Saxon, or Irish missionaries, not only over Europe, but also to the Holy Land and Egypt, it is not to be supposed that their eyes would be closed against ornaments which were in use in those countries. The inquiry, therefore, whether any of these ornamental designs were thus borrowed, and, if so, whence derived, is one of too much interest to be closed without further research.

The grand manuscripts of the Charlemagne period offer several important peculiarities for our consideration as intimately connected with the question of those of our own MSS. In them, for the first time, are introduced on the continent the great illuminated title-pages with gigantic initials; and these we find ornamented with many of the precise patterns which occur in our earlier manuscripts. Indeed, a few of them are so strongly tinged with the Anglo-Saxon spirit of design, that they have received the term of Franco-Saxon Manuscripts. Such is, for example, the Great Bible of St. Denis, of which forty of the leaves are in the British Museum Library. When we recollect the intercourse which was kept up between our Anglo-Saxon and Irish missionaries with those of France, it is not astonishing that the French artists should have adopted the fine features which they had seen employed in our manuscripts, and should have copied the very ornaments which they found in them, always, however, increasing their size and omitting much of their intricacy. But the elegant addition which they made to these ornaments in almost all their manuscripts by introducing the acanthus with foliage, and

scroll patterns of purely classical design, gives a gracefulness to their pages which we look for in vain in the elaborate but often absolutely painfully intricate work of our artists. In designing these graceful ornaments, they appear to have been as prolific as the Irish and Anglo-Saxons were in their knot-work patterns; and D'Agincourt has given, in his forty-fifth plate, no fewer than seventy different designs of borders from the great Bible of St. Paul at Rome executed either for Charlemagne or Charles the Bald, all of which (save two) are composed of foliage and scrolls.<sup>2</sup> Count Bastard has also given a vast number of fac-similes from these ornamented Caroline volumes, and some specimens may be seen in my "Palæographia Sacra Pictoria" from the Evangelium of Charlemagne at the Louvre, the Bible of Count Vivien, in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, and the Bible of Alcuin in the British Museum. It is impossible to doubt that it was from classical models that these designs were adopted. Indeed, the great friendship which existed between Charlemagne and Pope Hadrian, will easily allow us to account for so strong a classical influence being visible in the Caroline MSS. The very psalter which Charlemagne presented to this pope is still in the Imperial Library at Vienna (Silvestre "Paléographie Universelle," pl. 122) and the pope, in return for the services rendered him by Charlemagne, sent him "chanters, the Gregorian chant, grammarians, mathematicians, scientific instruments and monuments of art." Neglecting these historical facts, as well as the classical character of the ornaments of the Caroline MSS., Dr. Rock (Church of our Fathers, vol. i. p. 282) asserts that when Charlemagne had induced the French clergy to lay aside the old Gallican for the Roman liturgy and fresh ritual codices were needed, recourse must have been had to this island for them, where, according to his assertion, the ritual of Rome had been always practised, from the day of their conversion among the Anglo-Saxons, and hence inferring the Anglo-Saxon origin of the Frankish ritual MSS. of the ninth and tenth centuries.

Instead, however, of the artists of the Caroline period simply copying our insular designs, it cannot be doubted that the adoption of classical ornaments in their manuscripts and

<sup>2</sup> This is the copy of the Bible mentioned by Dr. Rock as having been given by Alcuin to Charlemagne, and which, regardless both of the style of the writing, which is a pure Caroline minuscule, and

of the ornamentation and general character of its illuminations, which are almost identical with those in the Bible of Count Vivien, is considered by that writer as the work of an Anglo-Saxon hand.

architecture must have had great influence in modifying the style of our own artists. The Alfred Jewel (beautifully illustrated in the second Volume of this *Journal*, pp. 164, 165) is, in fact, an illustration of this influence, supposing it to have been made for King Alfred. The back of this beautiful relic exhibits an ornamentally designed plant with its leaves and flowers. Now we know that Ethelwulf,<sup>3</sup> the father of Alfred, married as his second wife, Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald;<sup>4</sup> and Alfred himself went to Rome several times whilst young, and at a later period of his life was compelled, from the dearth of learned men in England, to send for Grimbald from St. Omer's, and John the monk from Corbie, as teachers in his new establishments.

The Walton Cross, represented in this *Journal* (vol. v., p. 62), is another instance in stone-work in which foliage and scrolls with birds, are introduced in connection with intricate interlaced ribbon patterns. Mr. Petrie has also given various examples of ornamental architectural details from Glendalough, &c., in which foliage and scroll-work is introduced, and which he regards as of the ninth or tenth century, considering not only that ornamental churches in the Romanesque, or, as it is usually called in England, the Norman style, were not uncommon in Ireland before the English invasion, but that much of this ornamental architecture remaining in Ireland is of an age anterior to the Norman Conquest of England, and even probably of the Danish irruptions in Ireland.

It must however be observed that the stone-work at Glendalough is in an entirely different style from the true Irish ornamentation seen in such MSS. as the Gospels of Mac Regol or Mac Durmanas as well as from genuine Norman work.

<sup>3</sup> The ring of King Ethelwulf in the British Museum inscribed with his name, has been carefully illustrated by Mr. Albert Way, in this *Journal*, (ii. p. 163) and Mr. Shaw. (Dresses, &c., i. pl. 1.) The narrowed hind part of the ring consists of three ornaments, an interlaced ribbon with the ends loose, dilated and pointed, a Maltese cross within a circle, and two spears armed at each end, crossing each other diagonally with four small triangles in the open spaces between the points. The design of the two birds on the front of this ring appears to me more Byzantine than Anglo-Saxon; but the inscription and interlaced ribbon pattern are more decidedly Anglo-Saxon.

<sup>4</sup> Every one is familiar with the state-

ment made by Asser Menevensis, how that on a certain day his mother shewed Alfred and his brothers a Saxon book of poetry which she promised to give to him who should first learn it, and that stimulated thereby and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, Alfred succeeded in learning and repeating its contents. There is some doubt among historians, whether the queen here alluded to was Alfred's own mother, Osburgha, or Ethelwulf's second wife, Judith. If the latter, the manuscript book was probably executed in France, if the former, it was more probably a Saxon MS., and indeed it is said to have been a "Saxon book of Poetry."

Previous to entering into the details of those peculiar features of ornamentation which more especially characterise the works of the early Christian British, Anglo-Saxon and Irish artists, it may be useful to say a few words on the leading elements of ornamentation. Ornament, then, is produced by a more or less pleasing change in the surface of an object, resulting either from its being incised or raised, or from its being marked with colours differing from the ground-colour of the object. By the introduction of shading upon a flat ground, of course the effect of an incised or raised ornament may be produced. The simplest ornament consists of a repetition of dots or points, circular, square, or triangular, instances of which may be seen in the sepulchral urns figured in this *Journal*, vol. iii, p. 68, and vol. i., 229. Of their effectiveness as a principle of book-ornamentation, the Gospels of Lindisfarne offer a striking example; the illuminated letters having a row of red dots all round them, a character which is regarded as distinctive of Anglo-Saxon (and Irish) MSS. by the Benedictine authors of the *Nouveau Traité de Diplomatique*.—"Quoique toutes les lettres ponctuées ne soient pas anglo-saxonnes, et que toutes les anglo-saxonnes ne soient pas ponctuées, c'est néanmoins un caractère qui leur convient plus particulièrement qu'à nul autre genre d'écriture, surtout quand elles sont majuscules." (Tome ii., p. 122). Not only, however, are the large letters generally edged with rows of red dots, but in some of the finer manuscripts, as in the same Gospels of Lindisfarne, figures of animals are introduced with the outlines of their bodies composed of red dots; and in the Gospels of S. Columba the entire bodies of the evangelical symbols are covered with small red dots.

A single line, or a series of parallel straight lines placed horizontally, vertically, or obliquely, forms another simple element in ornamentation.<sup>5</sup> The line being angulated forms a series of acute teeth producing a zig-zag pattern, or a succession of the letter **VVVV**, which may be varied by there being several rows under each other, or by having the lower angles of two adjoining **VV** opposed to the upper ends of the strokes of one placed below forming a series of diamond-shaped patterns.<sup>6</sup> Again, the angulated line, by having its lower angles rounded, produces a series of scollops or a succession

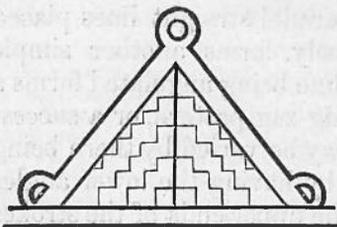
<sup>5</sup> As on the sepulchral urns from the Channel Islands, *Journ. Arch. Inst.*, i. 229.

<sup>6</sup> As on the same urns, *Ibid.*

of the letter **UUU**; and if both the upper and lower angles of the angulated line are rounded, we have a succession of waves **∞∞** like a number of the letter **S** conjoined and placed on their sides. Two such waving lines crossing each other alternately in the centre, produce the well-known architectural ornament called the *guilloche*, which may be considered as the simplest attempt at interlaced work. A specimen of the wavy line occurs in this *Journal* (vol. iv., p. 257), whilst the Cirencester tessellated pavement (vol. vi., p. 320) shows the *guilloche*:<sup>7</sup> and the lower marginal ornament from Shobdon Church (*Journal*, vol. i., p. 237), is an instance in which three ribbons are thus interlaced, each ribbon being, moreover, ribbed down the centre, giving a richer effect. The waved line is, however, more commonly enriched by scroll-work terminating in foliage, of which examples may be seen in the fourth Volume of this *Journal*, pp. 76 and 247. But the pure *guilloche* and the wavy line enriched with scrolls and foliage, are more essentially classical and are rarely, if ever, met with in the early manuscripts and other objects more particularly now under consideration. Equally rare also is the classical modification of the scroll pattern given in the accompanying sketch copied from the border of one of the Scotch crosses in Mr. Chalmers's great work.



Another simple modification of the right line consists in its



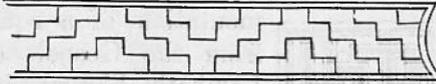
being more or less repeatedly bent at right angles in opposite directions and at equal distances, producing a series of steps, as in this marginal ornament, copied from one of the grand pages of the Gospels of Mac Regol at Oxford, in which, by colouring

the spaces between the angulated lines with contrasted

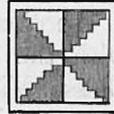
<sup>7</sup> It will be seen in this plate how clumsily the ribbons forming the pattern interlace when two portions of the design come in contact. The Anglo-Saxon and

Irish artists always effected the junction of their interlaced ribbon patterns with wonderful skill.

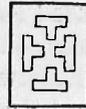
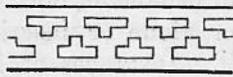
tints, an excellent effect is produced. A similar, but slightly altered, ornament is produced as the decoration of a fascia in the accompanying design from one of the less elaborately ornamented Irish



MSS. at St. Gall. Another modification of the same pattern, as the ornament of a square, is seen in this figure, also copied from one of the splendidly tessellated pages of one of the St. Gall MSS.

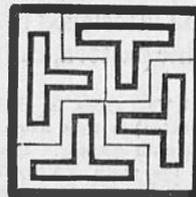


This step-like ornament, from the simplicity of its character, has been employed from the earliest ages. It occurs, for instance, as the ornament upon the dresses in the sculptures of Nineveh (in the dresses of females driven into captivity). It is found of very common occurrence on the *Kentish* Anglo-Saxon fibulæ. (See one in the Ashmolean Museum, figured in this *Journal*, vol. iv., p. 253). It is seen also on a small, very early Irish enamelled shrine, in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy. This ornament is often accompanied by another, which indeed



seems rather to be a modification of it, being the repetition of the letter **T** in various positions. These examples are copied from a silver armlet in the British Museum, in which this ornament has been formed by a single punch.

A far more artistic effect is produced by the same elements being slightly altered in their position, as in Mr. Deck's curious fibula (represented in vol. viii., p. 195).<sup>8</sup> Here the base of each **T** is not opposed to the base of the opposite **T**, but to that of the one next adjoining it. The same arrangement also occurs in this ornament which is of common occurrence on the crosses of Wales,<sup>9</sup> on which a square is divided into four equal parts,<sup>1</sup> each contain-



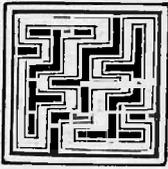
<sup>8</sup> A precisely similar brooch, found at Little Wilbraham, Camb., is figured by the Hon. R. C. Neville, in his *Saxon Obsequies*, plate 3, fig. 116.

<sup>9</sup> As on the upper part of the Carew cross, *Journ. Arch. Inst.*, vol. iii. p. 71.

<sup>1</sup> I have found this pattern precisely represented in Chinese drawings.

ing a **T**, in a similar position, the lines dividing the square forming a fyl-fot cross.<sup>2</sup>

A further modification of this pattern for the ornamentation of a square occurs in this figure from the Gospels of Mac Durnan in the Lambeth library, in which the alteration is produced by uniting the two letters **T** on each side, breaking the cross on these two sides.



Another instance in which the step-like pattern is united with the **T** occurs in the ornamentation of the seat of the Blessed Virgin and Child, in the Book of Kells, (see next page) accompanied by other ornaments to be subsequently noticed.

Another simple ornament is the Greek or Maltese cross, with all the arms of equal length. Often, of course, this is used as an emblem of Christianity, but it frequently occurs as a mere decorative element, as where it is often repeated so as to produce a diaper effect, as on one of the Cumberland crosses and on various early Irish relics, as on the cover of the Leabhar Dhimma, the back of the bell of St. Patrick, and the underside of Mr. Petrie's shrine of St. Madoc. Singly it is used as an ornament, both upright and as a Saint Andrew's cross, either alone or inscribed in a circle, as on the ring of Ethelwulf. Instances of its use as a Christian emblem may be seen in this *Journal*, vol. i., pp. 30, 126; vol. ii., p. 86; vol. iii., pp. 175, 177; vol. vi., p. 81.

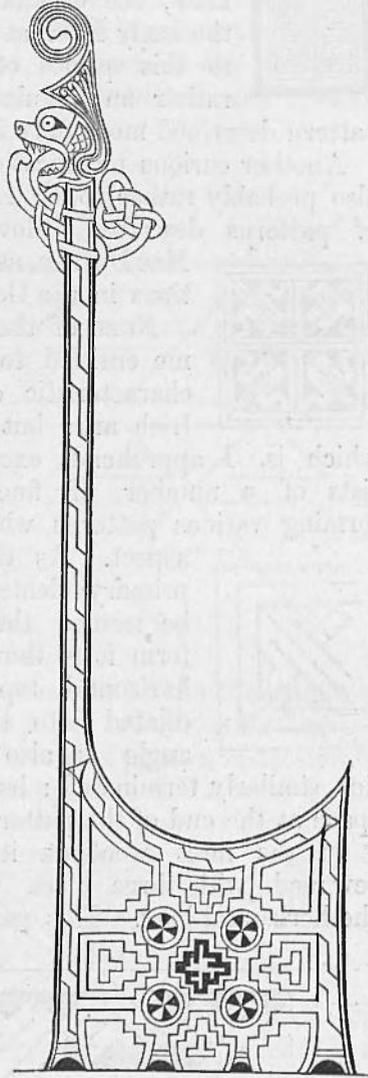
Other ornaments, which from their simplicity are naturally the results of the earliest attempts at decoration, and cannot be considered as belonging to any particular age or country, are also occasionally, but rarely, to be met with in the MSS. and other works under consideration. Thus, throughout the many illuminated pages of the Gospels of Lindisfarne, the only ornament which I have found, except the interlaced ribbon pattern, the elongated interlaced zoomorphic pattern, the spiral ornaments, and the diagonal pattern, all

<sup>2</sup> This cross (a kind of cross potent rebated) is thus named in a MS. of the fifteenth century. It was in use as early as the tenth century before Christ as a mystic symbol amongst the religious devotees of India and China: it occurs on very early Christian remains, and is found according to Mr. Waller, on the girdle of a priest of the date A.D. 1011. It occurs in the centre compartment of

the two great Welsh crosses at Carew and Neverne (*Journ.* vol. iii. p. 71) and in the beautiful circlet of gilt metal, found at Brougham (*Journ.* vol. iv. p. 63) between the forks of the beard of one of the angels. I have found it also in the tessellated page opposite the commencement of St. John's Gospel, in the Gospels of Lindisfarne.

subsequently described, and the step pattern above mentioned, is a small circle in the centre of one of the tessellated crosses, where the appearance of a rosette is produced by four straight lines being drawn through the circle, crossing in the centre, producing eight spaces or petals, each of which is rounded where it joins the circumference; although however thus imitating a vegetable form, this ornament, it will be seen, is essentially geometrical. So again a circle is occasionally intersected by four other circles of the same size, as in the Cumdach of the Gospels of Dhimma (Betham, *Ant. Res.*, vol. i., pl. vi), or a circle is cut into four parts by a Saint Andrew's cross, as on the Forres pillar; another analogous ornament may be seen on the Aycliffe cross (*Journ. Arch. Inst.*, vol. iii., p. 260).

The fret is another characteristic ornament to which, it is necessary to allude, consisting of one or more ribbons or fillets meeting in vertical and horizontal directions, and running at parallel distances equal to their breadth, the section of the channels between them being rectangular. This is a purely classical ornament,<sup>3</sup> being, I believe, occasionally termed the "Gammadion," and it and its modifications are very rarely met with in the early works of



Seat of the Virgin and Child. Book of Kells.

<sup>3</sup> It is very common on the Etruscan vases, and a specimen of it occurs in the Cirencester tessellated pavement (*Journ. Arch. Inst.*, vol. vi. p. 321).

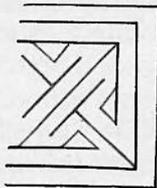
our artists. The Pen-môn font (*Journ. Arch. Inst.* vol. i., p. 122), offers an instance of a comparatively simple kind; the ornament here figured from one of the early MSS. at St. Gall, seems to be referrible to this species of pattern, if indeed it be not rather an angulated modification of the spiral pattern described more fully below.



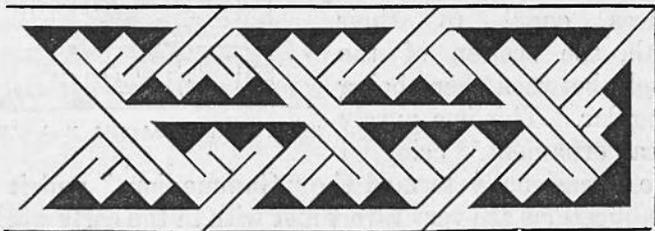
Another curious modification of this design (which ought also probably rather to be referred to the diagonal series of patterns described below) occurs in the Gospels of Mac Durnan, as well as with very slight alterations in the Gospels at St. Gall.



None of the preceding designs appear to me entitled to be considered as peculiarly characteristic of British, Anglo-Saxon, and Irish art; but we have now arrived at one which is, I apprehend, exclusively national. This consists of a number of fine lines arranged diagonally, forming various patterns which have a very Chinese-like aspect. As the letter **Z** seems to be the primary element of the ornament, it might be termed the **Z** pattern: in its simplest form it is thus delineated: the ends of the horizontal top and bottom stroke being dilated into triangles, the right hand top angle is also accompanied by a vertical line similarly terminated; but this is added to fill up the space at the end of the pattern.

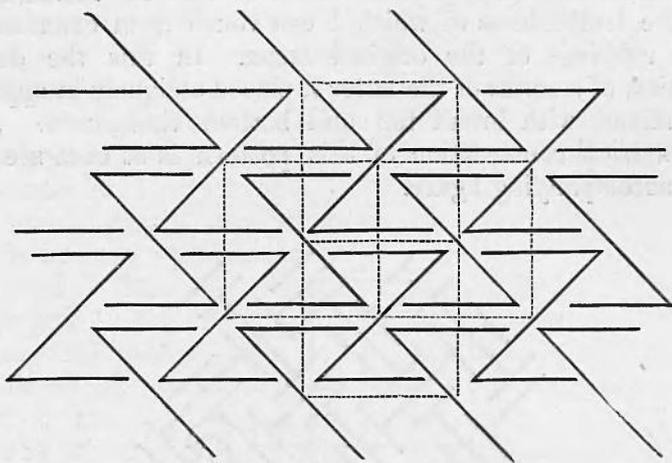


In the next woodcut, it will be seen that the **Z** is reversed, with three black triangles attached to each of the horizontal bars. This pattern is very common, both in

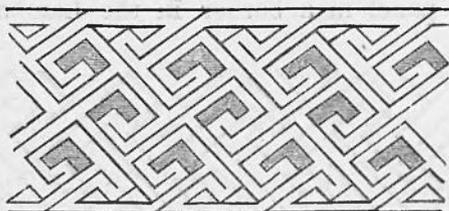


manuscripts and carved stone-work, and it often fills up large spaces and squares, the pattern being easily extended; thus

the two diagonal lines, extending from the outer upper margin of the above figure to the second row of black triangles from the top, forms one-half of a pair of supplemental letters **Z**; the design is, indeed, rows of the letters **Z**, alternately in the ordinary position and reversed, as seen in the following diagram, in which the pattern is magnified and drawn geometrically.



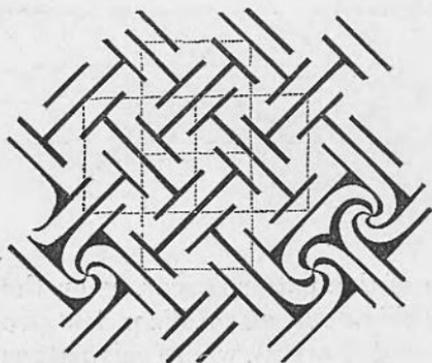
Modifications of this pattern occur, as on the tombstone of Suibine, given in this *Journal*, vol. iii., p. 183 (from Mr. Petrie's work on the Round Towers), where this pattern is accommodated to fill up four semi-circular spaces ; and also as in the



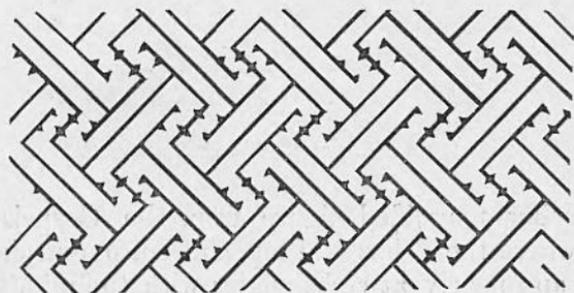
accompanying magnified figure from the Gospels of Mac Durnan, where the **Z** has the top and bottom strokes drawn obliquely and nearly at right angles with the middle stroke, and their ends are further angulated and alternately thickened. Sometimes also the thickened part, instead of resembling, as here, a broad letter **Λ**, is formed into a crescent shape

(Gospels of Mac Durnan and Gospels at St. Gall). Sometimes also, as in the first tessellated page of the Gospels of Lindisfarne, it is formed (in conjunction with the opposite angulated end) into a square, and the thin lines being drawn very close together, the appearance of tessellation is produced.

To this class of ornament must also, in my opinion, be ascribed the device upon the Penally cross, represented in this *Journal*, vol. i., p. 384, from drawings by Mr. A. Way, to the truthfulness of which I can vouch from examination and rubbings of the original stone. In this the design consists of a series of the letter I, placed obliquely in opposite directions, with broad top and bottom tip-strokes. The geometrical construction of this pattern is at once seen in the accompanying figure.



The following figure is a much magnified representation of part of a panel in a border in the Lambeth Aldhelm,



and it will be seen that it is essentially identical with the Penally ornament, differing only in having one end of each

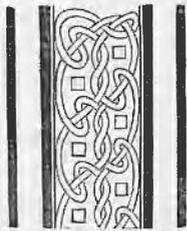


Fig. 1.

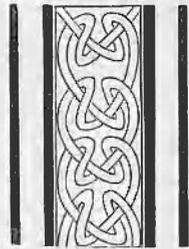


Fig. 2.



Fig. 6.



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.

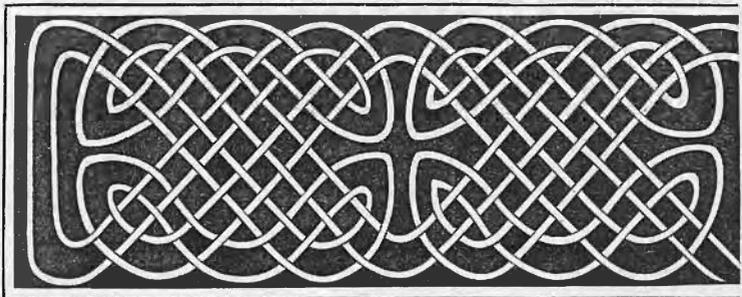


Fig. 3.

of the top and bottom tip-strokes united with that of the opposite I.<sup>4</sup>

The next pattern to be noticed as of almost universal employment by all classes of artificers in the early period under consideration, is the interlaced ribbon pattern, which, although simple in some few rude instances, in almost every case is excessively intricate in its convolutions, which are often symmetrical and geometrical. In the two sketches opposite figs. 1 and 2 (from the Gospels at St. Gall) we have two single narrow ribbons curiously intertwined, whilst in the three following (figs. 3, 4, and 5) two ribbons run closely parallel to each other, but are interlaced alternately. Figure 3 is greatly magnified from a panel in the Gospels of Mac Regol at Oxford, and the ribbons are very narrow, and white on a black ground. In figure 4 (magnified from the Lindisfarne Gospels) the ribbons are much broader, touching each other, and variously coloured; at the point also where one curve approaches another they become angulated, thus producing a series of ✠ down the centre of the pattern. The same effect is also produced in the centre of the figure 5, magnified from one of the tessellated pages of the Gospels of Mac Regol, and which is in fact only a modification of fig. 4 by uniting the alternate third and fourth lateral semicircles.

Specimens of such interlaced work in various metals are given in this *Journal* (vol. iv. p. 63), from the chased Brougham circlet; (vol. iv. p. 253) from the Ashmolean fibula; (vol. vii. p. 37) the small Caenby circular disc (in which three ribbons are laid side by side); the Melton buckle (vol. ix. p. 116) and the Castle Bytham fibula (vol. x. p. 81); both of the same date and character as the Caenby disc, and (vol. vi. p. 216) from the Thornbrough fibula.<sup>5</sup>

In stone work, the Penally crosses (vol. i. p. 384), having also three ribbons laid side by side; the Isle of Man crosses, (vol. ii. pp. 75, 76); the Carew and Neverne crosses (vol. iii. p. 71), and the Lancaster cross (vol. iii. p. 72); the Bedale, Aycliffe, and Hawkeswell crosses (vol. iii. p. 259, 260); the

<sup>4</sup> Had both ends of each tip-stroke been united to the tip-strokes of the opposite I, a pattern would have been produced almost identical with that upon the great Chinese bell in the British Museum, and this brings us very near to the classical fret of Greek and Roman artists alluded to above in page 287, except that the latter

are almost always horizontal and vertical, but in the tessellated pavement at Northleigh, Oxfordshire, are four lozenge-shaped compartments, in which the fret is arranged diagonally.

<sup>5</sup> The interlacings in the so-called cruciform fibule are ordinarily very clumsily arranged.

Bath cross (vol. iii. p. 356) ; the Barningham gravestone (vol. iv. 357), and the Walton cross (vol. v. p. 62), furnish various illustrations of interlaced ribbon patterns.

The interlacings on the Hackthorn cross (vol. vi. p. 400), are very curiously arranged to form birds, occupying the upper spaces above the arms of the cross.

In horn, a curious example, from Switzerland, is given in vol. iv. p. 75 ; but several examples of bone carved with interlaced work and dragons occur in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, and in Mr. Wakeman's collection.

The leathern covering of the Book of Armagh, and of the shrine of St. Madoc (of which figures are given by Mr. Petrie) are elaborately ornamented with interlaced work.

In the early manuscripts this species of ornament may be considered as the most prevalent of all.

There are some variations of these interlaced ribbon designs which merit attention. A very simple effect is produced by two ovals crossing each other at right angles, an ornament very greatly distributed, occurring in Greek and Syriac MSS., in Roman tessellated pavements, &c. An instance in early stone-work occurs on the Llan Jestyn font (' Journ. Arch. Ins.' vol. i. p. 126), but it is very rarely met with in MSS. Another simple design is formed by the intersection of four semi-ellipses and lines parallel to their major axes. Mr. Petrie has given an example of it from Irish stone work, and there are several elaborate modifications of it on the Scotch crosses figured in Mr. Chalmers' fine work. It occurs also in the fine early MS. which I regard as portion of the *Biblia Gregoriana* (Brit. Mus. MS. Reg. 1 E. vi.), and in the curious Psalter, Vitellius, F. 11, which has furnished the accompanying figure.



Another ornament very commonly employed in filling up small triangular spaces in all kinds of work, is the triquetra, in which the outer corners of the interlacing are angulated, of which this figure is an example. It is sometimes elaborated, as in the specimens from metal work (the crozier of Damhnad Ochene) given by Mr. Petrie (*Round Towers*, p. 230). An instance of its occurrence on one of the Isle of Man crosses may be seen in this *Journal* (vol. ii. p. 76.) By some persons it is considered as emblematical of the Trinity.



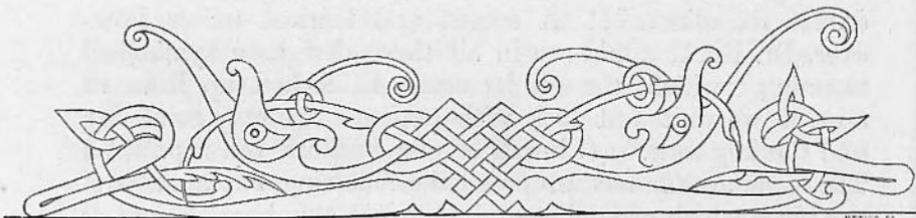
Triquetra.

Another very distinguishing species of ornament, profusely adopted in the early work of all kinds, consists of monstrous animals, birds, snakes, lizards, &c. of various kinds, generally extravagantly elongated with tails, top-knots, or tongues forming long interlacing ribbons, and intertwining together in the most fantastical manner; often these designs are, like the ribbon patterns, symmetrical, but occasionally they are drawn so as to occupy the required space in an irregular manner. "Les lettres historiées anglo-saxonnes," say the Benedictine authors of the "Nouveau Traité de Diplomatie," tom. ii. p. 122, "se distinguent des autres parcequ'elles aboutissent en têtes et en queues de serpens," adding in a footnote, "Les ornemens des lettres grises anglo-saxonnes semblent n'être le fruit que d'imaginacions atroces et melancholiques. Jamais d'idées riantes; tout se ressent de la dureté du climat"!! A recent and learned writer, however, Dr. Rock, would see in all these designs a symbolical meaning, "which, though its sense be locked up from us now, if we wait and look with patience, we may some day find the key to it." (Church of our Fathers, vol. i. p. 279.) The same author has proposed the following explanation of the birds which are delineated in great numbers on one of the tessellated cruciform pages of the Gospels of Lindisfarne (that opposite the commencement of St. John's Gospel); these he supposes are intended for eider ducks, or the ducks of St. Cuthbert, as that species of *Anas* is popularly termed; and as the volume was written and illuminated in honour of that saint, the birds which he loved during his life were represented in the volume thus decorated by his followers. A closer examination would, however, have shown this writer that the birds are not ducks, but have the beaks and talons of eagles, and if any symbol is to be traced from them (which I cannot however affirm) they ought rather to be considered as illustrations of the evangelical symbol of Saint John. They also occur in all the early MSS., Irish as well as Anglo-Saxon, which is another reason why their attribution to St. Cuthbert cannot be maintained.

These zoomorphic ornaments may be divided according to the classes of animals which they represent. Occasionally, but of rare occurrence, the human figure is thus treated; on one of the panels of the smaller cross of Monasterboice, and on one of the Kilklispeen crosses are carved groups of

human figures, strangely attenuated and interlaced ; in metal-work the same occurs on one of the bosses of the Duke of Devonshire's Lismore crozier ; and in MSS. the Book of Kells offers numerous instances (one of which is represented in *Palæogr. Sacr. Pictoria*, pl. 1 of the Book of Kells), and the design (fig. 6, *ante*, opposite page 291) is from the Gospels of Mac Regol at Oxford.

Of quadrupeds the most ordinary animal which appears to be figured is the greyhound, or more probably the old, and now, I believe, extinct Irish blood-hound, of which a tolerably good representation is given in one of the fanciful marginal ornaments in the Book of Kells. The accompanying letter, *m*, (fig. 7, opposite) from the Gospels of Lindisfarne, exhibits four of these dogs in the thick strokes of the letter, whilst in the



open space are represented two large dogs' heads with the ears extended into a pair of large wing-like appendages. The greater attenuation of the animal, and the shortening of the legs, the fore-paws placed towards the head, and the hind ones at a great distance behind, with a long interlacing tail, gives the quadruped the appearance of a lizard, and hence I apply to this modification the term *lacertine* rather than *dracontine*, wings being rarely, if ever, added to the figure with the head of a quadruped. The design given above is a magnified drawing from one of the marginal ornaments in the Gospels of Mac Durnan, and represents a very curious treatment of two of these monstrous creatures.

In the next (fig. 8) design we have the letter *q* formed of a creature with a long angulated body, the head of a greyhound with one ear forming a sort of horn, extending over the nose, and the other ear, or a top-knot, produced into a whirling ribbon of great length ; the neck is encircled with a collar of pearls, there are no fore-legs, and the hind pair are singularly bent back and interlaced with the long knotted tail. This

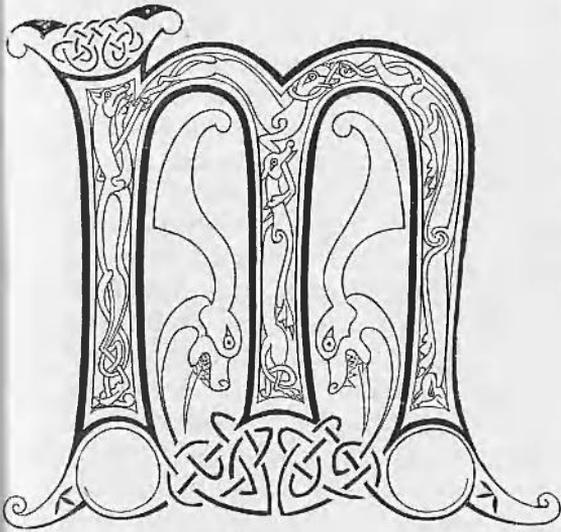


Fig. 7.



Fig. 9.



Fig. 8.

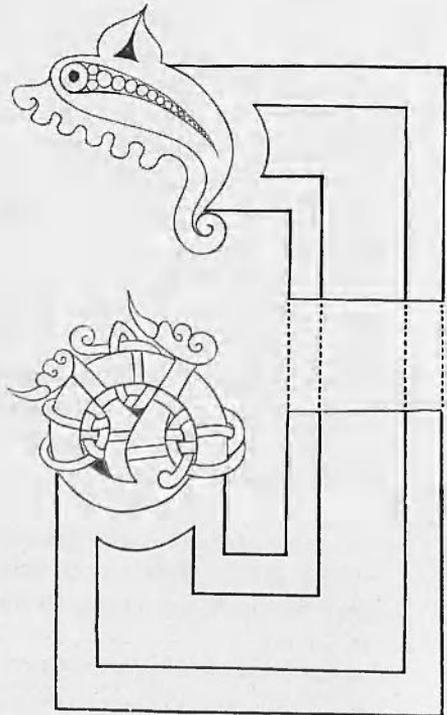


Fig. 10.

letter is from the Psalter of Ricemarchus, Trin. Coll. Dublin. The same Psalter supplies us with an instance (fig. **W.**) of the mode in which these monstrous animals were employed as marginal ornaments round three, or nearly the whole of four sides of a page, the open spaces in the supposed body of the animal being filled with panels of interlaced ribbons, animals, &c., in the ordinary manner, the hind-legs and tail forming the termination of the ornamental border. Sometimes, instead of these, we find a fish's tail represented, as in the Book of Kells and Gospels of St. Gall. In the Gospels of Lindisfarne are also various instances of this treatment. The Psalter of St. Ouen, which appears to me to be of the same date as that of Ricemarchus, although the French palæographers place it several centuries earlier, offers many curious letters, formed of strange animals, of which the accompanying is a specimen, in which a dog's head is accompanied by a fish's tail, without any legs, forming the letter C.



Birds also are introduced to a very great extent with similar elaborations and often equally attenuated. Thus in the figure (9, opposite p. 294) from one of the grand tessellated pages of the Gospels of St. Chad, are eight birds, some with long slender interlacing tails, and some with top-knots, strangely elongated and intertwined, forming an almost endless series of regularly alternate overlapping ribbons. The toes of all the birds are also curiously elongated with the claws of rapacious birds.

Of snakes or snake-like animals, without either legs or wings, scarcely any representations occur in the MSS., although they are found occasionally on the carved crosses, as on Muiredach's cross at Monasterboice, and on some of the Scotch crosses figured in Mr. Chalmers' great work. In the engraving of the Runic cross at Kirk Braddan, given in this *Journal*, (vol. ii. p. 75,) the animals have the appearance of short snakes, but the drawing was in this part incorrect, as they are carved on the original cross with short legs.<sup>6</sup> They occur in their true form as serpents intertwined and

<sup>6</sup> In this instance the bodies are shorter and thicker than ordinary, and apparently scaly, bearing a great resemblance to the

"Drachenzierathen" of Danish monuments figured in the "Guide to Northern Archaeology," p. 70.

biting each other's tails, in the remarkable Anglo-Saxon tomb at Bedale (*Journ. Arch. Instit.*, vol. iii. p. 258).

A curious arrangement of dog-like animals occurs as the crest of the head of several ancient Irish croziers, a number of these quadrupeds being represented in succession, each biting the tail or hind legs of the preceding; the same occurs also in some of the oldest MSS., as in the Gospels of St. Columba and those of Lindisfarne. The Cuerdale fragment (*Journ. Arch. Instit.*, vol. iv. p. 189, no. 88), apparently formed portion of a similar arrangement, but I apprehend it was originally portion of a fine brooch of the form given in this *Journal*, (vol. vii., p. 78; ix. 90, and ix. 200). The fragment, (vol. iv. p. 190, no. 94), is also part of another brooch in which the flattened part is ornamented with dragons—many examples of which were shown in the Dublin Exhibition of 1853. The heads of dogs or lizards' heads were also often used as terminal ornaments, the gaping mouth serving as the termination of a long stem, as in the Cuerdale fragments, 91 and 97, which are also portions of brooches.<sup>7</sup>

As the termination of an ornament also, the heads of dogs or similar animals were of very common occurrence both in MSS. and metal-work, as for instance in the jewel of Alfred above referred to (vol. ii. p. 164). The magnificent cross of Cong in the Royal Irish Academy, figured also in this *Journal* (vol. v. p. 245), is mounted upon a finely carved dog's head, and such also occurs in the grand Tara brooch, of which excellent figures of both sides have been given in the *Art-Journal* during the past autumn.

In the MSS. it is also of common occurrence; of which the drawing of the chair of the Virgin, given above (p. 287), is an example.

It is worthy of remark that the ancient stone crosses of

<sup>7</sup> Nothing can more completely prove how little our national antiquities have been studied, owing chiefly to the want of a national collection in the British Museum, than to find these Cuerdale fragments described, in 1847, by so excellent an antiquary as the Keeper of the Antiquities in that establishment, as objects of unknown use, and probably of Eastern origin (*Journ. Arch. Inst.*, iv. 189, 191, 198). It is one of the benefits of the Dublin Exhibition of 1853, that it has

afforded to many English antiquarians an opportunity of studying the antiquities of the Sister Island, which are so peculiar that we may well excuse an English antiquary for not being able to determine the nature of fragments such as those found at Cuerdale, especially when the use of some of the most curious articles in the Irish Collections remains unknown even to the Irish antiquarians themselves.



Fig. 11.

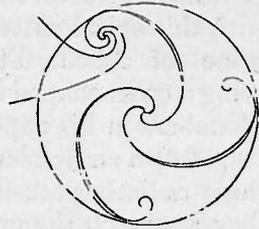


UTTING 5"

Fig. 12.

Wales are very rarely ornamented with these zoomorphic patterns. The only instance which I can call to mind is the sculptured stone standing on the north side of the Church of Penally, near Tenby.

The only other species of ornament worthy of notice, is, perhaps, still more characteristic of the early works of these islands than any of the preceding. It consists of a number (2, 3, or 4) of spiral lines starting together from a central point, each of which after several circumvolutions goes off to another adjacent similar spiral, the direction taken by each line being constantly that of the letter C, and not scroll-wise, that of S. The principle of the ornament will be seen from the accompanying diagram, and the mode of its more ordinary execution in fig. 11, copied from the heading of one of the large initial letters in the Gospels of St. Gall. The spirals in this ornament are composed of



only two or three lines, each having the end next the centre of the circle thickened;<sup>8</sup> in none of these spirals moreover are there more than six circumvolutions, that is, each of the three spiral lines in the circle only makes two circumvolutions, but in the more elaborate MSS., as in the Gospels of Mac Regol and in the Paris Gospels, there are as many as 18 or 20 circumvolutions in a circle, drawn with extraordinary precision and delicacy. A peculiarity in the pattern further consists in having the open space between the adjacent whorls divided into equal sized spaces, coloured alternately, light and dark, with a small transverse dark-pointed oval in the light ground, and a similar light-coloured one in the dark ground. This ornament, with this additional peculiarity, is exactly represented in the early metal-work in which the space between the whorls is raised to a ridge (the dark portion in the MS. representing the shaded side of the space), and the small-pointed ovals are impressed, giving to this portion of the design something of the appearance of one of the long

<sup>8</sup> As a further instance of the manner by which an unequal number of spiral lines is produced in a given pattern, it may be mentioned that one of the Killcullen crosses exhibits a panel containing a set of nine bosses (three in three rows)

formed of spiral lines; the centre boss consists of four lines extending to the middle boss on the top, bottom, and two sides. These four bosses consist of only three spirals, whilst the four at the four angles consist of only two spirals.

ancient curved Irish trumpets dilated at the mouth, which is represented by the ovals in question, and hence the pattern has obtained the name of the trumpet-pattern in Ireland, where it is very common on the stone crosses, grave-stones, metal-work, brooches and in manuscripts. In the collection of the Royal Irish Academy are several bronze circular plates about 9 inches in diameter (the use of which is unknown) in which this pattern is employed of a large size. Mr. Petrie has given a figure of the grave-stone of Suibhne Mac Maelhumai, one of the three Irishmen who visited Alfred the Great, as related in the Saxon Chronicle, and who died A.D., 892, in which the centre of the cross is formed into a circle filled with this spiral pattern (Round Towers, p. 323). The grave-stone of Abbot Flannchadh is more simple, the design being a cross-shaped figure *with* (not *within*, as printed by Mr. Chambers in his paper on ancient crosses, Ecclesiologist, vol. ix. p. 96) a circle placed in the centre of the limbs formed by three radiating eccentric lines merging into one another as they approach the circumference, leaving between them three pear-shaped spaces somewhat similar to the circular portion of the diagram given above. Flannchadh died in 1002.

The C-like arrangement of the spiral pattern is so uniform that, in the very few instances in which it is departed from either in metal, stone, or MSS. ornamentation, we may suspect extraneous influence; thus, on a slab near the junction of the upper and right arms of the cruciform vault at New Grange (for a rubbing of which, made in October, 1853, I am indebted to Mr. Way), is a series of incised spiral lines, forming whorls, each whorl formed of two lines, each of which makes two circumvolutions, and then both lines are carried scroll or  $\infty$ -like to form the next whorl. This is the stone engraved by Mr. Wakeman (Archaeologia Hibernica, p. 24), but he has not drawn the junction of the whorls correctly. Now, judging from the types of ornament given in the "Guide to Northern Archaeology," p. 70, the spiral patterns of Denmark are of this scroll-like character, and from this circumstance alone I would infer that this singular mound is of Scandinavian rather than Celtic origin. Mr. Chambers, on the other hand, from the cruciform arrangement of the vault, and the ornaments carved on its stones, considers it to be a comparatively modern Christian structure, instancing a pattern (Wakeman, p. 29) as identical with one on the

borders of the Gospels of St. Chad at Lichfield (Ecclesiologist, vol. viii). This is, however, not exactly the case. The New Grange pattern is simply a series of St. Andrew's crosses, separated from each other by perpendicular lines, the spaces between the arms forming sunk triangular spaces, leaving the crosses in relief, whereas the ornament in St. Chad's book, to which Mr. Chambers refers, is the simpler diagonal Chinese-like pattern represented above, page 288. The other ornaments, also carved on the New Grange stones, are of that rude character which is seen on earthen vases found in barrows. The cross within the circle occurs in the cruciform chamber at Dowth, not at New Grange (Wakeman, p. 34), in conjunction with other rudely carved simple patterns, without, as I apprehend, any Christian character belonging to it.

One of the curious little circular bronze Irish instruments with a curved slender handle, of unknown use, but which have been termed *crepitacula*, in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy, has this spiral ornament beautifully impressed. Another of the same instruments in the collection of Mr. Cooke of Parsonstown, was produced in the Dublin Exhibition, and described as a "Pagan Sacerdotal Badge," and was similarly ornamented in enamel. Mr. Petrie possesses another small bronze implement of unknown use, of the most beautiful execution, in the shape of a thin funnel with a circular disc and two semi-circular ones attached at the top, having the spiral pattern in relief on it; he possesses also several small plates of bronze most elegantly chased with this pattern. The Duke of Northumberland likewise possesses a small metal ornament, probably the cover of a reliquary, with the same kind of pattern elaborately tooled on it. The same design occurs on several small circular enamelled plates of early work, one of which, in the Museum of the Warwick Natural History and Antiquarian Society, has been figured in this *Journal* (vol. ii. p. 160), another is represented by Mr. Rogers (*Journal Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, vol. iii., p. 282); these were found near Chesterton. Another very similar is in the collection of Lord Londesborough, and another is in the hands of an antiquary in Oxfordshire, which was dug up in one of the Anglo-Saxon graves at Eynsham in that county. Two similar roundels are described in *Archaeologia*, (vol. ix., p. 190) which were found in Derbyshire. The two

remarkable silver relics from Largo, represented in this *Journal* (vol. vi. p. 252), also exhibit these spiral patterns.

It is worthy of notice that I have not found any instance of this spiral ornament on any of the carved stone crosses of Wales. It occurs, however, on several of those of Scotland, but the only instance of its occurrence in sculpture in England, of which I am aware, is the font of Deerhurst Church (figured in *Journal Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, vol. i., p. 65). Judging from the figure, and bearing in mind that this style of ornament was not used in MSS. in England after the 9th century, this may be the oldest ornamented font in England.

The large design (fig. 12, opposite p. 297), is the magnified representation of one of the small compartments (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch square) in one of the grand tessellated pages in the Gospels of Lindisfarne, in which great variety is produced by separating the spiral lines in the centre of each whorl, and giving them various terminations, sometimes having very much the appearance of the head of an animal with gaping jaws. I believe I may safely affirm that such a design as the one represented in this figure is not to be found in the ornamental work of any ancient people except the Irish, British, and early Anglo-Saxons.

The sculptures of the grand chancel arch of Tuam cathedral, a cast of which formed so conspicuous an ornament in the Dublin Exhibition, presents us with a S-like modification of this spiral pattern, conjoined with the redoubled scroll pattern; the accompanying figure, copied from Mr. Petrie's work (compared with rubbings made by myself), shows a fascia on the lower part of the capital in which three ribbons start from one centre; the middle one descending and joining the lower row of scrolls; upon the sides of the capital, the plain redoubled scroll is represented, similar to that figured above.



In the preceding pages I have purposely left untouched the

question as to whence the early artists of these islands obtained the very characteristic styles of ornament here described. By some writers they have been considered as exclusively British,<sup>7</sup> by others as Anglo-Saxon, whilst others have regarded them as exclusively Irish. By some<sup>8</sup> they have been described as Runic and Scandinavian, by some as entirely of Roman origin,<sup>9</sup> and by others as Byzantine and Eastern in their derivation. Tempting as it is, I shall defer the consideration of this branch of the enquiry until a future occasion.

J. O. WESTWOOD.

<sup>7</sup> "Britain taught Ireland a peculiar style of script and ornament;"—"although some beautiful samples of our British MSS. were taken over to Ireland, the Irish never made any progress in the art of illuminating."—Rock, *Church of our Fathers*, i. pp. 275-278.

<sup>8</sup> Ledwich is the chief author of this popular notion. Not a single Runic monument occurs in Ireland, and the sculptured Runic stones in the north of Europe are several centuries more recent than the Irish monuments.

<sup>9</sup> "The whole of these devices and ornaments, including even the Scandinavian device of the intertwined serpents, are exclusively Italian, with an occasional mixture of Greek designs, and not of native, or Celtic, or Teutonic origin."—Chambers, in *Eccelesiologist*, ix. 91. This gentleman moreover gives a variety of reasons in support of the opinion that one or more of the finest of the Irish crosses, including one of those at Monasterboice, were executed in Italy and imported into Ireland. *Ibid.*, p. 99.