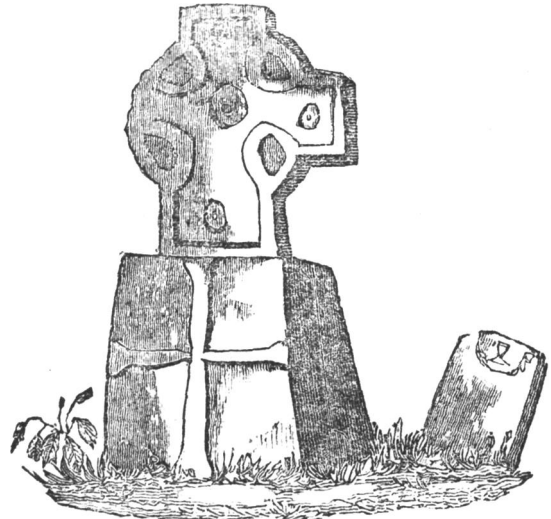


ANIMAL SAGACITY.

The following curious circumstance occurred about twenty-four years ago, in the neighbourhood of Belfast : A Mr. F. having a water-dog, about a year old, which his father conceived had the effect of drawing too much of his attention from business, advised that the dog should be disposed of. This was promptly complied with, and Neptune, (such was the dog's name,) was given to his father's head mill-wright, a Mr. Scott, who resided at a place about three quarters of a mile distant. Although Nep. appreciated the favours of his new owners with evident manifestations of the warmest gratitude, he did not forget his old master, to whom he was in the habit of paying an occasional visit. Some time after our hero had taken up his abode in the house of the overseer, it came into the head of his mistress to send a present of a few fine young ducks to Mrs. F. They were accordingly forwarded, and duly acknowledged. On the following morning, however, it was discovered by Mrs. Scott, to her great surprise, that all the ducks were back again, safe and sound, at her own door. This created some enquiry and amazement ; for, as ducks are bad travellers, and their wings not being grown, they could not fly, it could not be surmised how they had got back. Off the ducks were packed a second time ; but lo ! next morning, they were again home at Mrs. S.'s door. This was too bad. The girl was strictly examined, who deposed that she delivered them all to the cook. The cook was examined, whose testimony agreed with the girl's. The ducks, however, were once more restored to Mrs. F., who ordered two to be killed for dinner, to break the charm. This left seven, there being nine at first. All was now right, but fairies or witches are not just so easily mastered.— On the following morning the seven ducks had once again taken up their station at Mrs. S.'s door. Back they went a fourth time, and now effectually to prevent their return, the heads were cut off the entire. This was a settler to all witchery. The mystery, however, of how nine young ducks could make their way through three close-barred gates, and travel nearly a mile in the short space of a summer's night, continued for several months. It was at last explained. One day a gentleman passing Mr. S.'s door, observed the dog, Neptune, and recognised

him to be one he had met on the road several months before, ere sun-rise, driving ducks, and carrying a lame one in his mouth, which was unable to travel. This at once unravelled the mystery, and cleared the "good people" or fairies of the crime of transporting them. The circumstance is certainly true as it is strange. That Neptune knew his mistress's ducks, and stole them home to her three several nights, is placed beyond any doubt ; and it now remains for the philosopher to define the "thinking substance" by which the sagacious animal was actuated to the performance of so extraordinary an achievement.

R. M.

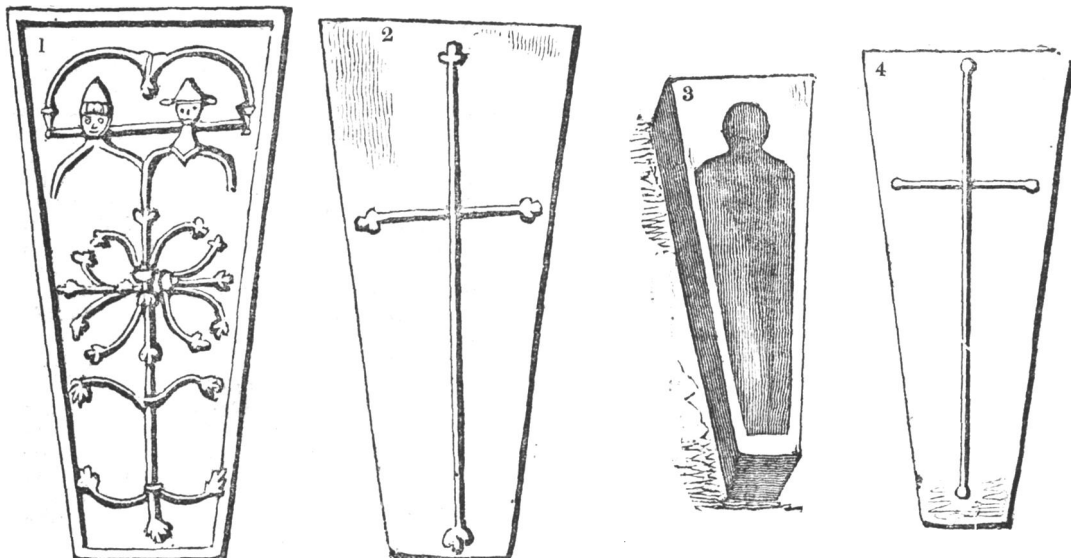


TAGHMON—COUNTY OF WEXFORD.

I send you a rough outline of a stone cross, now standing in the church-yard, near the village of Taghmon, in the county of Wexford.

An abbey was founded in, or near this village, about the year 599, by St. Munnu, from whom the town derives its name, being formerly called Teach-Munnu, or Teagh-mun, no remains of which can now be traced.

ANCIENT RELICS IN BANNOW CHURCH, COUNTY OF WEXFORD.



1.—Perhaps among the ruins of the Irish Hercules, none can so well claim the attention of the antiquarian and stranger, as those tombs which lie in undisturbed repose, within the walls of Bannow church, of which the above are copies.

No. 1 represents, on the upper part, a knight and lady in a recumbent posture, their heads resting on a pillow, beneath separate canopies ; on the lower appears a cross, of a very highly ornamented order : the inscription being in relief, is nearly effaced, and quite illegible, though the letters, DSS, are deeply engraven on the band of the knight's helmet.

2. A simple cross, ornamented with similar flowers as the former, but no inscription whatever is visible.

3. A stone coffin, remarkable for having a place for the head excavated—its length is about six feet.

4. The lid of a stone coffin, generally supposed to have covered the preceding, but from which opinion I differ, as the coffin is of blue lime-stone, and this a slab of grey sand-stone ; it bears neither date nor inscription.

It is rather curious that none of the stones are sunk in the ground, but are on a level with the surrounding grave-yard.

C. D.

Wexford.