

The following Communications were then read :—

I.

MEMORANDUM RELATIVE TO A PIECE OF ORDNANCE, FOUND 28TH MARCH 1856, IN THE COURSE OF EXCAVATIONS BY THE ROYAL ENGINEER DEPARTMENT, AT BROUGHTY CASTLE. COMMUNICATED BY LIEUT.-COL. R. C. MOODY, ROYAL ENGINEERS, F.S.A., SCOT.

This piece of ordnance (the 'Pierrier' now presented to the Museum of the Society) was found in the interior of the North-East Tower, Broughty Castle, about one foot below the ground floor, which is six feet below the surface. This floor is composed of earth and clay of a dark colour, and such parts of it as were cleared by the excavations were found to be very hard. This, however, does not appear to have been the original floor, as there were noticed on the same level with the piece of ordnance and hammer, several pieces of slate and lime; and, on further examination, similar substances were traced for two feet farther down, this being the greatest depth attained. It is possible, therefore, that there may be another floor below this. Although the present surface round the Tower is as high as six feet above the present floor, it is quite evident from the string course round the outside of the circular part of the tower, that they were originally about the same level.

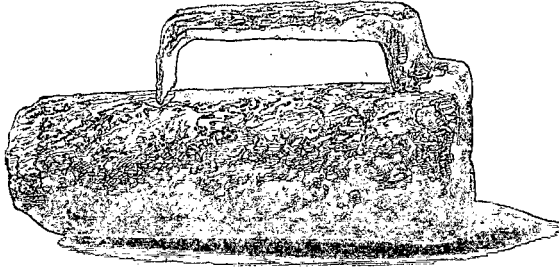
Being doubtful whether the piece of ordnance was very ancient from its disfigured appearance by rust, I was induced to heat it, which led to the discovery of the touch-hole, or vent, and also the supposed charge of powder, the ashes of which were afterwards taken from the breach, and are now inclosed in the piece. I am induced to think that it was powder that was contained in the piece, from the colour of the flames, and from the strong smell of sulphur, which proceeded from the fire while the piece was being heated.

ROBT. MAIR, R.E.D.

ROYAL ENGINEERS' OFFICE, EDINBURGH,
2d April 1856.

[Colonel Moody has since stated that a variety of "Pierriers," improved and enlarged by Cöchorn, the famous Dutch engineer, have been in use in sieges down to the most modern times (but not, he believed, at Sebastopol) in advanced trenches, towards the close of a siege, to throw volleys of stones, small balls,

grape, &c., in showers over on the defenders of the "covert way." The French, from a fanciful comparison to the flight of a covey of partridges, call such volleys "Partridges."



The piece of ordnance (which is here figured) is a moveable chamber or breech belonging to the pieces called *Pierriers*, or *Pierrieres*, from their being used to throw stone balls, which, according to Grose, in his "Military Antiquities," were vulgarly called *Pattereras*. It is 11 inches long by 4 inches in diameter across the butt, and the bore is 2 inches wide at the opening in front, which is bevelled to allow it to be fixed in the barrel of the gun, the handle by which it was carried projects about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the side, and is 6 inches in length, the touch-hole is placed close to the base of the handle at the left side, and at about 1 inch distance from the butt.

On a sculptured stone, in the Museum of the Society, showing various pieces of ancient artillery and other weapons of war, and which formerly formed a part of the ancient entrance or Barrier Gate-way to the Castle of Edinburgh, demolished in 1800, we find no less than seven of these *Pierriers* represented of a somewhat similar character to the one now presented, only the bevelled part in front for fitting into the bore of the gun is defined into a distinct neck; and the touch-hole, instead of being, as in this one, close to the handle, is cut in the middle of the side, half way across the piece from the handle.

"The ancient Barrier Gate-way stood immediately within the drawbridge. It was adorned with pilasters and very rich mouldings carried over the arch, above which was an oblong panel containing the curious piece of sculpture in basso relievo, of which this (referred to above) formed a part. Another portion of it, containing a representation of the famous old cannon, Mons Meg, mounted

on its ancient carriage, is now placed over the entrance to the Ordnance Office in the Castle. The Barrier Gate-way was probably erected on the restoration of the fortifications of the Castle, after the celebrated siege of 1572."—*Synopsis of Museum of Soc. of Ant.*, p. 145.—ED.]