

## II.

NOTICE OF CAIRNS RECENTLY EXAMINED ON THE ESTATE OF  
ROTHIE, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY JOHN STUART, Esq., SEC. S.A.  
SCOT.

These cairns are on the farm of Blindmill, on the opposite side of the hollow from Burreldales, part of the lands of Darley, on which a cairn stood till recently, and of which a notice was given by Mr Chalmers in the Proceedings of the Antiquaries, vol. iv. p. 429.

Three of them are on a piece of whinny ground, sloping down on the south to a small burn, and they are on a line nearly the same as that of the boundaries of Auchterless and Fyvie, which meet here. One, almost in a line to the south-west of the others on the adjoining farm of Darley, had been opened by the farmer shortly before our arrival, and it was found to contain a large rude urn in the centre, filled with bones. There was no cist, and the urn was merely inserted in a hole in the till.

On 14th September 1864, Colonel Forbes Leslie, the proprietor of the ground, Mr James Hay Chalmers, advocate, and myself, proceeded to open two cairns on Blindmill, lying near to each other, on the brow of the hill. The first was a flat cairn about 32 feet across, surrounded by a ditch. A cist was found in the centre, about 3 feet in length, by 2 feet across, lying north-east by south-west. In the south end burnt bones were observed, but nothing else.

The next was also a flat cairn, about 23 feet across, surrounded by boulders, and, on digging, a cist was found nearly in the centre, and

<sup>1</sup> Old Stat. Acct., vol. xiii. p. 101.

almost east and west, about 3 feet 4 inches in length, and 2 feet 8 inches in breadth, formed of rude flags. The bottom was on the till, and the cover had been removed, so that the cist was filled with mossy debris. An urn was found in pieces on the south side; bones appeared in the east end, and also in the middle in small portions, and beads of a jet necklace were found in the ends of the cist; and also, both beads and bones outside of the cist towards the east. The bones were mostly on the south, and portions of charred wood were found throughout.

On the sloping fields of Burreldales, where the cairn removed by Mr Chalmers stood, many round hillocks of charred stones and black earth-like ashes were till quite recently. They were always near a spring of water. One close to a spring was pointed out to me near the farm-house of Burreldales, and, although in crop, the earth which was turned up was all blackened. The farmer showed a quarry from which great blocks of a hard quartzite stone are got, and from which, he thinks, the blocks round some of the cairns had been got. Flint arrow-heads used frequently to be found on the brae side, beside the other remains.

Another and larger, but still a flat cairn, in the arable ground below the slopes, was opened. It had been surrounded by a circle of pretty large stones, of which a few remained. No remains were found, except that in the centre, fragments of burned matter and bones, mixed with the sub-soil, were turned up.