

II.

NOTICE OF HIMALAYAN AND KABYLE BROOCHES, AND THE MODE OF WEARING THEM. BY WILLIAM SIMPSON, Esq., LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON. (SPECIMENS OF THE BROOCHES WERE EXHIBITED.) (PLATE XXV.)

In the Loan Exhibition of 1862 at South Kensington, I saw one of these Himalayan brooches among a number of old Irish ones. No doubt but it had fallen into the hands of some person, who naturally came to the conclusion that it was only a variety of the ancient brooches of this country. Certainly there is a very strong resemblance, sufficient to explain why the mistake was made, and sufficient at the same time also to demand that some comparison should be made between the Celtic and Himalayan specimens.

To many, the similarity of these brooches will be only another link connecting the Aryan and the Celt, but the probability is, that it is rather an evidence that similar conditions produce similar results—the similarity of condition in this case being, that the dress is composed of a piece of thick and heavy woollen cloth requiring a strong means of fastening it on the person. In the plains of India, where the great heat demands slighter garments, where cotton and muslins are the fabrics, no brooches are used, not even a bodkin, a simple process of tucking in is all that is necessary both with men and women. In a hill country the case is different; there is not only the rough climbing, but the cold climate necessitates wool, and that fabric cannot be fixed with tucks.

The Kabyles of Algeria, who wear woollen garments, are said to use brooches identical with the Celtic ones. The Kabyles are an ancient race, true Highlanders on the slopes of Mount Atlas.

In that part of the Himalayas where these brooches are worn the primitive character of the people is evidenced by their customs, and by the relics of very ancient religious rites still performed among them. The principal house of each village is the temple, where resides a god, *Khuda*, which is carried on staves, and bears a wonderful resemblance to the ark of the covenant. To this deity they sacrifice kids, and offer blood, and the first fruits of the land. There is no Brahi-

minical caste, only the owners of the land and coolies, the latter are bound to labour, and have a right of food and clothing in return. Polyandria is the custom,—that is, when the elder brother of a family marries, the woman becomes the wife of all the other brothers. This is all most ancient, but there are fragments of even greater antiquity said to be about this spot, and if one could credit what is said, even a glimmer of the golden age must be believed to linger in this out-of-the-way corner of the world; for I was told they had no priests, no lawyers, no doctors; nobody stole, nobody told lies; and as there were no thieves, there was no need of prisons or police. This happy spot is called Bussahir, and is about 100 miles north-east from Simla. It is on the Sutlej, where that river passes the higher ranges of the mountains.

The men wear a made dress of coat and trousers, so that the brooches are the peculiar characteristic of the women. Their dress is formed of one piece of thick woollen cloth, goat's hair, about 4 yards long by rather more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ yard wide. It is generally striped; white, with three black stripes and one red being a favourite pattern. As this piece of cloth is put on to form the skirt of what seems a gown or petticoat, and is wrapped round so as to fully cover the body, it suggests a very strong resemblance to the old manner in which the Highlander formed his kilt and plaid all out of one piece—the belted plaid—and this I should say seems a much more suggestive point of resemblance than the form and construction of the brooches. In putting it on, the width of the cloth is what may be called the length of the skirt, that is from under the armpit to the feet. The end of the cloth is brought over the left shoulder, where it hangs down to nearly the waist, the only attempt at ornament being a simple border and a fringe. The rest of the cloth passes round the body, under the right armpit, leaving the right arm and shoulder bare. As with the Highlander this leaves the right arm free in its action. Some (few only) wear a jacket with sleeves under this. The cloth is then passed round, keeping the upper edge high so as to cover the bosom. The end hanging from the left shoulder is placed over this, and the brooch is here inserted to hold the dress together. The brooch is really the key-stone of the whole costume. The rest of the cloth is then plaited into folds; a kummerbund or waist-band is placed under the middle of these plaits, and they are passed round behind, and are held in that position by the tying of the waist-

band. As about one-half of the cloth is put into these plaits, it makes a most picturesque mass which hangs gracefully behind. These women generally wear silver bracelets, and necklaces and ear-rings of the same. A large chignon of bright red wool is the proper thing in this part of the world, and a jaunty hat, much like the pork-pie hat of a late date at home here, and generally a flower is stuck into the hat or the hair, the whole forming about as elegant and picturesque a dress as can be found in any part of the world.

The large brooch consists of two circular portions connected by an arch or bridge, and is suggestive of the shape of a spring eye-glass, it measures $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches across; they are not uncommon, but the usual size is the one about $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 4 inches. It will be noticed that the workmanship is very rough, and that the ornament is not in the least like that of the Celtic; still it is a good pattern, and the effect is such that it could not fail to attract the eye of an artist. The brooches are almost all made to the one design; the smaller of the three is different in detail, but it is quite exceptional. A bodkin attached with a chain is common; it is used for the end of the plaits, which are at times brought round and pinned before.

The sketch, as exhibited, will help to make the description clear.

The native name of the brooch is *bammoo*, and they are made in the locality. The making of a complete dress to cover the person from one piece of cloth is not peculiar to the hills in India. The most of the women in the plains do the same. It is done with a long piece of cloth called a *garee*, but it is not put on in the same way as the *dohroo*, or dress of the hills. No brooch or pins are used. It is held on merely by tucks and plaits, and it is in many cases so ample that it covers the head as well, doing duty for the *chudder* or veil.



*a woman of
Bussahini
on the Sutlej.
Himalays.
W.S. 1873.*