

V.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF CISTS ON THE FARM OF SLAP, NEAR
TURRIFF, ABERDEENSHIRE. BY MR JOHN LEDINGHAM. IN A
LETTER TO THE SECRETARY.

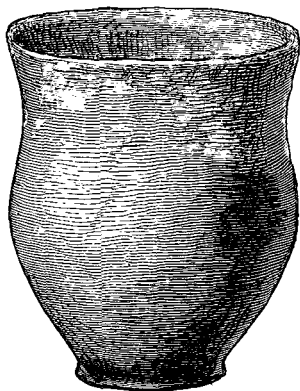
On the 30th June 1873, whilst digging sand from a natural rolling hillock on this farm, where nothing unusual was expected, the men came on a stone which proved to be the east end of a cist 3 feet by 2, lying east and west, with a large oblong block on the top, leaving a height inside of about 20 inches. The stones composing the cist were sandstone conglomerate, packed up with a few outlying boulders, not unlike an old-fashioned stone drain. The large stones might have been got near the surface, and within a quarter of a mile of the spot. Very little, if any, labour had been expended in squaring or dressing the stones, save a little flattening on the inner surfaces.

On careful search being made in the interior of the cist a few pieces of flint were found, but no finished implements, although some of the flakes indicate design. Such as they are, they show the period to which the cist belongs. With the exception of a little blackened sand, no organic remains were found. The bottom of the cist was nearly 5 feet from the present surface; but being, as before stated, on a slightly rolling eminence, where dwelling-houses stood about thirty years ago, it might have been at one time considerably deeper.

Nothing further was observed until January 1874, when another cist was discovered, giving decided evidence of sepulture. It was similar in size and construction, about the same depth from the surface, and packed about with boulders in the same way. It is about ten yards in a north-east direction from the last-found cist. In this case we had the bones to

indicate the way in which the body had been laid. The skeleton seemed to have been of the ordinary size, and was doubled up so as to be got into the small area of 3 feet by 2, and laid on its right side. There remained one tibia and fibula, one thigh bone, and part of another, the pelvis, some of the spinal processes, some bits of ribs, one radius or ulna, and one humerus, rather more than half of the cranium, and half the under jaw. The skull is well developed; the teeth have all been sound, and are in remarkable preservation, all a little worn on the crown, but not indicating more than fifty years of age.

At the back of the head, in a corner of the cist, stood the clay urn or vessel here figured. It is of hand made pottery, 6 inches high by $5\frac{1}{2}$



Urn found in a short cist at Slap, near Turriff.

inches diameter at the mouth, and of similar shape and material to one got in a barrow, nearly a mile to the north-west, some years ago; but unlike it in having no herring-bone marks on it, and unlike it also in being empty, whereas the one found in the barrow was full of calcined bones, and was not enclosed in a cist. In this cist, also, we found one piece of flint fully $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches square, two of its sides a little chipped.