

NOTICE OF REMAINS OF THE RAVEN (*CORVUS CORAX*, LINN.),
FOUND IN THE CLAY BED OF AN OLD LOCH NEAR DUNDAS
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In the paper on the "Remains of the Red Deer found in the South of Scotland," I stated (p. 38) that the thigh bone of a bird had also been found in the clay-bed of the old loch near Dundas Castle, Linlithgowshire, where the remains of the red deer were found. The bone is a femur of the right leg. It was not quite perfect, and was perhaps in consequence rather cursorily examined at the time, when it was supposed, it might probably be that of a common pheasant.

I have, however, since sent the bone for careful examination to Professor Newton, of Cambridge, and he kindly gives me the following information on the subject. He says:—"A bird's *femur* is at the best not very easily determinable with precision, and of this, the extremities and some prominences have been rather worn away, so that the difficulty was greater than would otherwise have been the case. I soon found out that it could not have belonged to a Pheasant, or indeed to any gallinaeous bird, but it took some time before I could satisfy myself that it did belong to a Raven. Of this, however, I have now no doubt. It would unquestionably have been a matter of very great interest to have established the fact of the occurrence of the pheasant in Scotland at a period so remote as that when this bone was probably deposited—a result which would have followed had the original supposition been confirmed; but it is far better that the truth should have been ascertained." All the more, as comparatively little has been done in defining the species of birds found in a semi-fossil state, and indeed but few discoveries or notices of the kind have been made, or come under the observation of naturalists.

Though the raven is not now met with in this district of country,

Macgillivray, writing in 1837, states ("British Birds," vol. i. p. 510) that he had seen it on the Pentland and Lammermoor Hills; and that, not many years before, a pair "used to build in the rocks of Arthur's Seat, near Edinburgh." Its coeval occurrence with the red deer near Dundas Castle is only what may have been expected, and, curiously enough, it is also the very bird we might have expected to have been present, to feed on the carcase of the deer.