

MONDAY, 11th April 1881.

Rev. THOMAS MACLAUHLAN, LL.D., Vice-President, in the
Chair.

A Ballot having been taken, the following Gentlemen were duly elected
Fellows :—

J. H. BALFOUR, M.D., LL.D., Emeritus Professor of Botany,
University of Edinburgh.

GEORGE W. HILL, 6 Princes Terrace.

JOSEPH CARNE ROSS, M.B., C.M., 5 Chalmers Street.

ALEXANDER YOUNG, 9 Lyndoch Place, Glasgow.

JAMES DEWAR, 40 Windsor Terrace, Glasgow.

Rev. HUGH PRICHARD, Dinam, Anglesey.

SALE OF COIN CABINET FOR £3500.

Before proceeding further with the business of the meeting, Dr Arthur Mitchell made the following Communication to the Society :—

In 1872 an important collection of coins, and the cabinet or case containing it, were purchased from the Faculty of Advocates. The coins in the Museum are, as far as possible, exhibited under glass, with a view to the public advantage, but in this cabinet the coins were stored in the usual manner in trays or drawers. It was not a coin case, therefore, which could be utilised in the Museum, and accordingly it found a place in the Library, the contents being to a large extent removed from it and added to the general collection.

The cabinet was probably of the time of Louis XV. It was not in itself an object of archæological value, but it had high merits as a work of art. These gradually came to be understood and appreciated, and offers to purchase it began to be made. At length these offers reached a high figure, and the Council then felt that it was their duty to consider whether it was not desirable that a sale should be effected. The result of the Council's deliberations on the subject was a resolution that the sale of the

cabinet was desirable ; but, as it was national property, it was necessary that the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury should authorise the sale. Accordingly the following Memorial was addressed to the Treasury, and was transmitted through the Honourable the Board of Trustees for Manufactures in Scotland, in whom the Museum is vested for behoof of the public, and who gave the prayer of the Memorial their support.

*Memorial of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland to the Lords
Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.*

The memorialists desire to submit to the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury the following statement :—

1. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, by Deed of Conveyance executed in 1851 in favour of the Honourable Board of Trustees for Manufactures in Scotland, transferred to that Board “for behoof of the public, subject to the general direction and control of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, the entire collection of antiquities, coins, medals, portraits, manuscripts, and books belonging to the said Society of Antiquaries ; with all such additions as may hereafter be made thereto, together with the cabinets, glass cases, fittings and others in which the same are contained.

2. This transfer was made and the collection placed in the Royal Institution under the Honourable the Board of Trustees in terms of an arrangement fully set forth in the Treasury minute of 1st July 1851, in which, *inter alia*, it is provided that the charge and management of the collection thus established as a National Museum of Antiquities is to remain with the Society of Antiquaries.

3. In the exercise of this charge and management the Council of the Society of Antiquaries in 1872 acquired from the Faculty of Advocates of Edinburgh “the Sutherland Collection of Coins,” chiefly Scottish, and as the result of this acquisition the collection already in the National Museum was greatly enriched, and became the most complete series of

the Scottish coinage in existence. In acquiring the said collection the Council also acquired with it from the Faculty of Advocates the Cabinet or case in which it was contained.

4. The price paid to the Faculty of Advocates for the collection of coins and the cabinet was £783. 12s., of which £50 was taken by both parties as the sum applicable to the cabinet. The money to pay the price was obtained partly by a loan or advance of £450 made by the members of the Council, and the balance was provided from the Society's own funds, the whole being afterwards liquidated by the sale of duplicates resulting from the conjunction of the said Sutherland collection with that already in the National Museum.

5. In consequence of the artistic merits of the said cabinet or case, various offers for it of considerable amount have since been made to the Council. These offers have risen recently from £2000 or £2500 to £3500, and if the Society had now the power of selling the cabinet an advance even on that sum might possibly be obtained.

6. The Council, as managers of the national collection, are desirous of increasing its scientific value and public utility by the purchase of important objects or collections of objects necessary for the illustration of the unwritten history of Scotland, but are precluded from doing so by the scantiness of their funds, there being no provision made either by Parliamentary grant or otherwise from any public fund for this purpose. The Council have therefore in the exercise of their charge and management of the Museum resolved that it is desirable that the cabinet or case in question should be sold.

7. The Faculty of Advocates, from whom the said cabinet or case was acquired, were equally with the Council of the Society of Antiquaries unaware of the value of the cabinet or case as a work of art at the time when they sold it to the Society. They have great difficulty from want of funds in maintaining their Library, which is the most extensive and valuable in Scotland, and the use of which they freely accord to persons engaged in historical, scientific, or literary research, and the Council have resolved that in the whole circumstances it is desirable to give to the said

Faculty for the benefit of their Library a portion of the price to be obtained for the said cabinet, their view being that if a price of £3500 or £4000 should be obtained, a sum of £1000 or thereby should be given to the Faculty.

May it therefore please the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to concur in the said resolution of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries (1) as to the sale of the cabinet or case, and (2) as to the giving of a portion to be fixed by the Council of the price which may be obtained for it to the Faculty of Advocates, the residue being retained in the hands of the Council for the purchase of objects or collections of objects illustrative of the unwritten history of Scotland, which shall form additions to the National Museum of Antiquaries, and become national property to the advantage of students of Scottish archæology and of the public generally, and to grant authority accordingly.

The answer to this Memorial was forwarded to the Society by Mr Bouverie Primrose on the 23d of March. It runs as follows:—

TREASURY CHAMBERS, *21st March 1881.*

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—With reference to Mr Primrose's letter of the 10th inst., transmitting a Memorial of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland relating to the proposed sale of a cabinet which now forms part of the collection which the said Society has conveyed to your Board on behalf of the public, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you that my Lords are willing to sanction the proposed sale of the cabinet in question as recommended by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

But with regard to the proposed application of the proceeds of such sale, I am to state that my Lords are unable to assent to the proposal that a portion of it should be paid to the Faculty of Advocates for the benefit of their Library. Considering that the deed of conveyance which transferred the collection of antiquities to your Board on behalf of the public expressly included all such additions as may hereafter be made thereto, "together with the cabinets, &c., in which they are now contained" my

Lords think that the whole of the proceeds of sale should be retained by your Board and applied from time to time to the purchase of such objects or collections of objects illustrative of the unwritten history of Scotland as the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland may recommend. The articles so purchased will be added to the collection of antiquities now in the possession of your Board, the charge and custody of which is entrusted to the Society of Antiquaries.

If it appears to your Board that some time is likely to elapse before the whole or a considerable portion of the said proceeds of sale are likely to be expended in the purchase of antiquities, my Lords authorise you at your discretion to invest the said proceeds or any portion of them temporarily in exchequer bills or other government securities in the names of the Secretary to your Board and the Queen's Remembrancer, Scotland. In that case the interest on such securities, in addition to the proceeds of them when sold, would be applicable to the purchase of additions to the collection of antiquities now in your possession.

I am to request that my Lords may be informed as soon as the cabinet has been sold what price has been obtained for it, and in what manner it is intended to dispose of the proceeds of sale.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) F. CAVENDISH.

Mr Primrose in sending the letter from the Treasury wrote thus :—

BOARD OF MANUFACTURES, ROYAL INSTITUTION,
EDINBURGH, 23d March 1881.

SIR,—Having been summoned to attend before a Select Committee of the House of Commons upon the Herring Brand, and knowing as I do the anxiety of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries to effect a sale of the cabinet which they propose to sell out of the Museum of Antiquities in the Royal Institution while good offers for it are still pending,

I transmit to you for the Council, without previously submitting it to a meeting of the Board of Manufactures as I should otherwise have done, the enclosed (copy) reply dated 21st instant, received yesterday, from the

Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to the Memorial of the Council for permission to make this sale, granting that permission, but declining to allow any of the proceeds to be made over to the Faculty of Advocates, and

I am to request that the Council will give careful consideration to the instructions of the Lords of the Treasury for the application of the proceeds of sale, and will report to me for the Board as soon as the sale has been effected and the net sum realized.

I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

B. F. PRIMROSE, *Secretary*.

Dr Arthur Mitchell, M.D., *Secretary*,
Society of Antiquaries, Edinburgh.

On receiving these communications the Council at once proceeded to complete the sale, and this was done on the 2d inst., the price realised being £3500.

The purchaser is a French gentleman, but no information has been given as to the destination of the cabinet. It is thought, however, that the transaction was speculative.

The money obtained for the cabinet is national money, and is to be devoted, as the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have ordered, to the purchase of objects or collections of objects illustrative of the unwritten history of Scotland, to be placed in the Museum as national property. The Society has no Parliamentary grant for this purpose, and the wonderful increase of the national collection of late years has resulted chiefly from free gifts or from purchases made out of the proceeds of subscriptions among the members of the Society. Great things have been done in this way, and it is not saying much when I say that we can look with pride on the vigorous growth of the Museum of which the Society has the charge and management. Nevertheless we have very often had occasion to deplore our want of a purchasing fund. That want is now

supplied. Under the management of the Society £3500 will accomplish a great deal.

Before the £3500 are exhausted, however, I hope some of us still remaining at work here will look on a greatly enriched and properly accommodated collection, which will be in the full sense a National Museum of Antiquities, not simply a museum which is national because it is the property of the nation, but a museum which is national because it fairly reveals and exhibits the unwritten story of Scotland and her people.

It is intended that this statement, with the documents I have read, shall appear in the "Proceedings" of the Society.

The following Donations to the Museum and Library were laid on the table, and thanks voted to the Donors:—

(1.) By GILBERT GOUDIE, F.S.A. Scot.

Sculptured Stone from the Churchyard of Papii, Island of Burra, Shetland; acquired for the Museum from Mr John Inkster, with consent of the Misses Scott of Scalloway, and Lewis F. U. Garriock of Berry, through Mr GOUDIE. (See the subsequent communication by Mr Goudie.)

(2.) By Rev. JAMES MORRISON, Urquhart, Corr. Mem. S.A. Scot.

Collection of Flint Implements from Urquhart, consisting of two flakes each $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length, trimmed on one edge as knives. Flint Knife (broken) with polished surface and ground edge, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length, apparently burnt; Leaf-shaped Spear-head of flint, 2 inches in length; two triangular Arrow-heads $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in length, and several flakes more or less worked.

(3.) By Mr JAMES MARR, Abernethy, through ALEXANDER LAING, LL.D., F.S.A. Scot., Newburgh.

Weaver's Rubbing Stone of Greenstone, smoothed and rounded on the ends and edges. It measures $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length by $2\frac{3}{4}$

inches in breadth and 1 inch in thickness, and was in use in Strathmiglo in 1871.

- (4.) By Mr DAVID BENNET, Abernethy, through ALEXANDER LAING, LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Small Bronze Bell for Horse Harness found near Invershin, Sutherlandshire. It is globular, about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter, and has a narrow elongated opening below and a loop for suspension above.

- (5.) By Mr JAMES ROBB, Haddington.

Three whorls of Sandstone, $1\frac{3}{4}$ inch, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch, and $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch diameter respectively; two Amber Beads, one St Cuthbert's Bead, and a small naturally perforated water-worn flint found in a British Camp at Long Yester, East Lothian.

- (6.) By Rev. CHARLES ROGERS, LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Four Stone Implements from Niagara, viz., Celt of Micaceous Schist, greenish coloured, partially polished at the cutting end, flattened on one side and with rounded butt. It measures 5 inches in length and 2 inches in greatest breadth. Three roughly chipped knives of flint, from $2\frac{3}{4}$ to 3 inches in length, sub-triangular with irregularly convex sides and straighter base.

Register of Cupar Abbey. 2 vols. 8vo, 1880. Grampian Club.

Genealogical Memoirs of the Family of Knox. 8vo. 1879. Grampian Club.

Chartulary of the Cistercian Priory of Coldstream. 8vo, 1879. Grampian Club.

Register of the Collegiate Church of Craill. 8vo, 1877. Grampian Club.

Genealogical Memoirs of the Family of Sir Walter Scott. 8vo, 1877. Royal Historical Society.

Genealogical Memoirs of the Families of Colt and Coutts. 8vo, 1879. Royal Historical Society.

Genealogical Memoirs of the Scottish House of Christie. 8vo. 1878.
Royal Historical Society.

(7.) By WILLIAM MILLER, S.S.C., 59 George Square.

Journal of the Society for Reformation of Manners in Edinburgh, 1699-1745. MS. folio. Containing the regular minutes of the Meetings of the Society.

Laws and Roll Book of the Knights of the Cape, 1764-1808, MS. folio. The Society already possessed the insignia of the order and a number of documents connected with it.

A Bundle of papers belonging to the late David Herd.

Genealogical Tree of the Royal Family of Scotland. By John Brown, 1792. On Rollers.

(8.) By Messrs J. WILLIAMSON and B. H. HOSSACK, through Capt. F. W. L. THOMAS, R.N., F.S.A. Scot.

Slab of Undressed Sandstone, 22 inches by 17 and about 3 inches in thickness, containing a hollow resembling the imprint of a human foot, found at Toab near Kirkwall, Orkney. The hollow, which is much of the shape of a footprint, measures 9 inches in length by $3\frac{1}{4}$ in greatest breadth, the breadth across the heel being $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch. It differs from the artificially hollowed footprint on the top of Dunadd (of which there is a cast in the Museum) not only by its being so much smaller than an ordinary sized foot, but also in having the bottom and sides of the depression concavely hollowed, and exhibiting an undressed surface indistinguishable from the natural surface of the slab.

(9.) By the ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CUMBERLAND AND WEST-MORLAND, through their Secretary R. S. FERGUSON, F.S.A. Scot.

Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Archæological Society, vols. i.-iv. 8vo. 1876-1880.

(10.) By ALEXANDER J. WARDEN, F.S.A. Scot., the Author.

Angus or Forfarshire; the Land and the People. Vol. I., 4to. Dundee, 1880.

(11.) By DAVID DOUGLAS, 9 Castle Street, the Publisher.

The Past in the Present; What is Civilisation? Being ten of the Rhind Lectures in Archæology delivered in 1876 and 1878. By Arthur Mitchell, Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, M.D., LL.D. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1881.

Scotland in Early Christian Times. The Rhind Lectures in Archæology, 1879. By Joseph Anderson, Keeper of the National Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1881.

There were exhibited:—

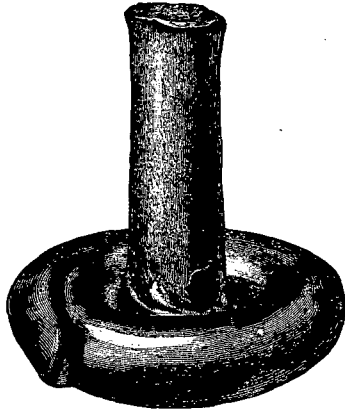
(1.) By J. ROMILLY ALLEN, F.S.A. Scot.

Implement of Black Glass obtained in Edinburgh, its locality unknown. It measures $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and stands $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height. It is more concave in the upper part and less symmetrically formed than the Gribdæ specimen (described below), which it closely resembles in form and appearance. Like it, also, this specimen has been a good deal worn by use on the convex side. It has been presented to the Museum by Mr Allen, and is well shown in the accompanying figure.

In a note to the word "slekystone" in the *Promptorium Parvulorum* written in the fifteenth century, Mr Albert Way remarks, "In former times polished stone implements in form of a muller were used to smooth linen, paper, and the like." Mr John Evans in his *Ancient Stone Implements, Weapons, and Ornaments of Great Britain*, quotes Cotgrave, who, in his French Dictionary, translates *Calendrine* or *Pierre Calendrine* as a sleekstone; and under the word *lisse* makes mention of "a rowler of massive glasse wherewith carriers do sleeke and glosse their leather."

(2.) By GEORGE HAMILTON, Kirkcudbright, F.S.A. Scot.

Linen Smoother of Black Glass, the flattened globular part being 5 inches diameter and fully 2 inches in thickness, with a cylindrical handle of the same material rising from the centre 6 inches high and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter. Mr Hamilton gives the following account of it in a letter to Mr Anderson:—



Linen Smoother of Black Glass in the Museum ($7\frac{1}{2}$ inches high).

ARDENDEE, KIRKCUDBRIGHT,
2d February 1881.

MY DEAR SIR,—In your account of the Viking graves in Islay, at p. 63 of the recent volume of the "Proceedings," you describe a linen smoother, and you remark upon it as of rare occurrence in this country.

I send you such an implement made of bottle Glass, with a handle, which we have in our local Museum, to which it was presented by William

Bell, Esq. of Gribdae, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

It was found about forty years ago in digging a drain in Gribdae, and lay tossing about Balgreddan, a neighbouring farm where Mr Bell's father resided, used for crushing sugar or saltpetre and the like.

There are now no traces of old remains on Gribdae, but Mr Bell remembers some talk of another old drain being met with when they were draining the farm, which was thought singular, being lined with stone at the bottom, sides, and top, and above which were many cart loads of loose stones.

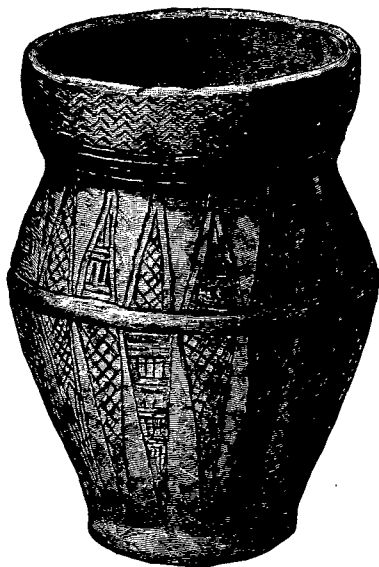
I have no doubt this was an old cairn, but I can find no one now alive who can tell me anything about it.

[It may be added that the early specimen from the viking grave (to the description of which we owe our knowledge of the three specimens of the modern implement) has never had a handle, at least of glass.]

(3.) By ALEXANDER LEITH of Freefield, F.S.A. Scot.

Urn of Drinking-Cup type, 7 inches high and 5 inches diameter at the mouth, and elaborately ornamented. Mr Leith furnishes the following account of the discovery of the urn, which was brought to the Museum in many fragments, but has now been carefully reconstructed :—

About ten years ago, after many solicitations on the part of the late Colonel Jonathan Forbes Leslie of Rothie, Charles Elphinstone Dalrymple of Kinnellar, and Capt. Courtney, R.E., then in charge of the Ordnance Survey, I determined, in conjunction with them, to open a grassy conical mound, on the home farm of Freefield, 60 feet in diameter at base, and about 15 feet in height, on the top of which were fir trees of perhaps eighty years of age. The sacrifice of any of these had been the cause of my reluctance to open the mound, but eventually I did not sacrifice more than three or four of the smallest. By Mr Dalrymple's advice, we began to cut a passage in, on the south-west side of the mound, at a level slightly above that of the surrounding grass field. Under the superintendence of these



Urn found in a Cairn at Freefield
(7 inches high).

gentlemen and myself, five or six country labourers and tenants worked with zest and expectation for about six consecutive days; we found successive strata, sloping from the circumference towards the apex at an angle of (from memory) about 45 degrees, of alternate layers of puddled clay and of calcined bones and ashes. On reaching the centre we came to a conical pile, 5 feet in diameter at ground and 4 feet high at apex, and composed of rough, common stones, from 3 or 4 to about 6 or 8 inches

diameter. Here we found only a dreadfully rusted piece of iron, somewhat in form of a chisel ; a piece of stone, smoothish and having the appearance of a whetstone, and masses of curiously coloured conglomerate of great tenacity, radiating from the cairn on all sides. But no urn was found there. Shortly after this time the mound had been excavated to the very outer walls of the clay, and the people, hopeful to the last, began to despond. A small patch of clay remained on the north east side, about 5 feet above the ground level. We had all given up the excavation as a disappointment and a failure, and most of the people had moved off finally, with spade, pick-axe, and crow-bar over shoulder, when I desired a tenant of my own name to "give that remaining lump of clay a quiet touch with his crow-bar, before setting off." He gave it a push which was followed by the immediate downfall of the urn, along with the half of a well-formed alcove of clay in which it had been placed originally on a pedestal of slate or thin stone.

The following Communications were read :—