

IV.

NOTE ON AN EARLY SCOTTISH BRONZE JAVELIN OF AN UNCOMMON TYPE. BY COLONEL W. ROSS KING OF TERTOWIE, F.S.A. SCOT.

The bronze spear or javelin head, of which a representation is here given (fig. 1), was found in the year 1858 in the Moss of Lochlundie, Aberdeenshire, where it was dug out of solid peat by a farmer, who came upon it at a depth of more than 6 feet below the surface. At the time of its discovery it was handed over to a neighbouring proprietor and known antiquary; from his family it some years subsequently, came into my

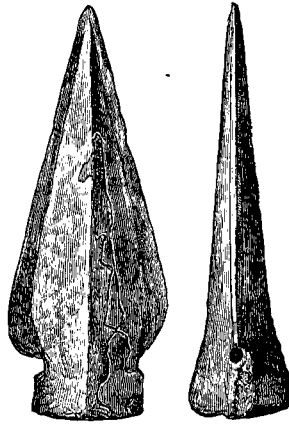


Fig. 1. Javelin Head of Bronze, found at Lochlundie ($4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length).

possession; and I have now thought it worth exhibiting, as being of an uncommon and probably of a very early type (certainly anterior to the invasion of the Romans, to which people it has been erroneously assigned by the author of *The Peat Mosses of Buchan*, in which it is alluded to). I may mention that, in the same *moss* in which this bronze relic was discovered, a roughly-made stone celt and a flint spear-head had been previously found. That the present specimen is of a very unusual form is evident from the fact that the extensive collection of bronze

implements and weapons in the British Museum does not contain a single specimen of similar form ; that there is none like it in the Museum of this Society ; and that neither Sir William Wilde, Professor Wilson, nor Mr Evans mentions any example resembling it.

Its length is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and its breadth at the widest part rather more than $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, so that while too small for a spear, it must have been a heavy javelin. A marked peculiarity is, that in place of having a midrib, either semicircular or angular, as in ordinary types, a sharp central ridge slopes away on each side to within less than $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch of the outer edge, which for that width all round the blade is quite flat and thin (a form, by the way, to which its great sharpness is in some measure due). The ridge is continued throughout the weapon from its point to the base of the socket. Another peculiarity is the extreme shortness of the neck, which measures barely $\frac{5}{8}$ of an inch over all. It is perforated for two rivets, one on either side immediately under the edges of the blade, and is roughly four-sided, owing to the prolongation of the ridge above alluded to ; at the mouth it is 1 inch in diameter from angle to angle, and $\frac{7}{8}$ of an inch between the opposing faces. The hollow of the socket upwards follows the external form, and ends about $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch from the extreme point, which for that space is solid. From a flaw on one face of the blade, it will be noticed that the maker's supply of molten metal had cooled or run short in the process of casting, for an irregular patch or flake of added and imperfectly-united metal extends for $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches longitudinally, which has apparently been poured inside the socket after removal from the mould and withdrawal of the core. Though this repair has been carefully finished externally, the flaw is not at all concealed ; the botching however, if detracting from the workmanship, adds in my opinion to the interest of the specimen, bringing one as it were face to face with the maker and his operations. To the above accident also is perhaps attributable the inequality or discrepancy in the form of the bases of the blade on either side ; that next to the flaw (where from the same cause the rivet hole is irregular and larger than the other), is rounded off like the leaf-form class of spear, while the opposite base somewhat approaches the type which Mr Evans classes as additional to the four adopted by Sir William Wilde. The metal of which

this specimen is made appears to an inexperienced eye like unalloyed copper; tin, however, does not much affect the colour, and there is little doubt the metal contains about 10 per cent., more or less, of that admixture; being the proportion which, according to Mr Evans, seems to have been usually aimed at, notwithstanding the great variation found in examples of implements even of the same general character.

The weapon is no doubt one of the earliest of Scottish bronze javelins, and perhaps the first of this form that has been discovered in the country.