

VI.

NOTICE OF A FLINT ARROW-HEAD FOUND AT BALLACHULISH, AND ANOTHER AT BOLESKIN, EXHIBITED BY ALEX. ROSS, F.S.A. SCOT., INVERNESS. BY DR D. CHRISTISON, SECRETARY.

This beautiful specimen (fig. 1) was dug up in the autumn of 1888 by a man who was cutting turf on Tom Iain, of the ancient township of North Ballachulish, not far from the spot where a large "find" of worked flints was discovered about fifteen years ago.¹ The arrow is remarkable for its large size, sharp point, and perfect symmetry of form, when looked at in front or back; a symmetry which, as in all flint arrow-heads, disappears entirely on a side view. As shown in the woodcut, the serration of the edges is also remarkably fine and regular, the number of teeth being about twenty on each edge.

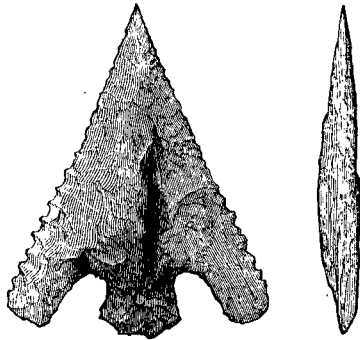


Fig. 1. Arrow-Head of Flint, found at Ballachulish.

On passing the finger along the serrated edge, it feels much rougher from barb to point than from point to barb, as if the teeth were purposely set backwards, but it is difficult to see any great object in this, and it is probably merely the natural result of getting a fine edge by chipping. Serration of the edges is quite common in flint arrow-heads, but I have not noticed this setting backwards in other examples. No

¹ See *Nether Lochaber*, by the Rev. Alexander Stewart, LL.D., p. 232.

attempt has been made to sharpen the barbs, which are large, and wide at the ends.

Superstitious respect for flint arrow-heads still lingers in the Highlands. A Ballachulish crofter picked up one, which he is fully persuaded he heard whizzing past his ear, and although offered a considerable sum, he refused to part with the *saighead shith*, or fairy dart, as it brings luck to his family.

The arrow-head from Boleskin is only worthy of note, because it was turned up by a mole.
