

III.

NOTICE OF A CHARM-BEAD FROM CRAIGNISH. By GEO. F. BLACK,
ASSISTANT-KEEPER OF THE MUSEUM.

The charm-bead here described was brought under my notice only a few days ago by Andrew Ross, Esq., Marchmont Herald, a Fellow of the Society. The charm is a globular bead of red jasper, three-fourths of an inch in diameter, with the surface cut into facets, and is the property of James Campbell, Esq., Ardnacreggan, Callander, a Fellow of the Society, representative of the ancient family of the Campbells of Craignish.

The charm was principally used for the cure of murrain in cattle, and was lent out by Craignish to neighbours for that purpose. In using this amulet, care had to be taken that it was not touched with the first finger of the right hand of the person using it, otherwise its curative virtues were of no avail.

To cure the diseased animals the bead was dipped into the water given to the cattle to drink, and a speedy cure was expected to follow. In addition to its use as a curative agent in cattle disease, the bead was equally potent in alleviating the pains of childbirth, and acting as a protective amulet when on a journey. In cases of childbirth the bead was hung in the room until the birth was over; and on any female member of the Craignish family setting out on a journey, she wore the amulet hung round her neck to preserve her from danger on the way.

Mr Campbell possesses among his papers a bond of manrent, dated 1610, between Angus Campbell of Innerlyver on the one part and Ranald Campbell of Barrichibyan on the other, in which mention is made of a "precious stone," believed to be the one here described. The

document, which is in possession of Mr Campbell, the present representative of the family of Craignish, reads as follows :—

At Cambusanestrin the last daye of Februar the yeir of God 1610 yeris. It is apointit and finallie endit betuix the pairties following to wit Angus Campbell of Innerlyver on the ane pairt and Rannald Campbell of Barrichbyane on the vther pairt in maner following. That is to say Bothe the saidis pairties vnderstanding of gude memorie that the twa houssis of whom thai ar descendit hes bene of befor in auld freindschip and familiaritie and that thai have asistit vtheris hithertillis and willing herthrow that the lyk freindschip be uphalding be theme and thair successoris berand thair armis and surname ilk ane of thame to vtheris hes bund and oblist them and thair foirsaidis to satisfe assist and defend vtheris in all thair lesum effaires and bissenes and contrair all men, the autoritie [of] the Erle of Argyll and Glenvrquhay exceptit, And sall wit nor heir of ather of thair skaith or hurt bot sall fortifie vtheris thair of according to thair power; And the said Ronnald hes grantit him to have ane precious stane perteneing to the said Angus quhilk stane the said Ronnald hes oblessit him and his airis quhatsumeuer to mak furthcomand to the said Angus and his airis, And to that effect sall anis delyuer the said stane in the handis of the said Angus, And the said Angus sall redelyuer thaireftir the said staine againe in and to the custodie and keping perpetuallie of the said Ronald and his airis berand his surname and armis; And thairfoir the said Rannald obliissit him and his airis foirsaidis to present and delyuer at all tymes at requist the said stane when the saidis Angus and his foirsaidis sall haue to do thairwith the samen beand reportit bak agane eftir thair turne be done: And if it happinis that the said Ronnald and his foirsaidis failzie in making of the said stane extant and furthcomand in manner and to the effect foirsaid to the said Angus and his foirsaidis in that cace oblessis them to content and pay to the said Angus and his foirsaidis the sowme of ane hundrethe merkis money as pryce and value of the said stane now presentlie modifeit, all guyle beand secludit. In Witnes wherof written be Patrik Makcoran Notar, bothe the pairties hes subscrivit this present mutuall band day yeir and place foirsaid befor thir witnesses Alaster M^cV^cConcill V^cEan, George his brother, Duncan Dow M^cCure V^cEan, Neill Donchie V^cDoull servitor to the said Angus, and the said Patrik Makcoran.

A. CAMPBELL of Innerlyvir
 RANNALD CAMPBELL of Barrichbyan
 P. MAKCORAN Witnes.

In the middle ages jasper was believed to possess numerous virtues of a curative nature, but was principally used in stopping hæmorrhage.

Robert Henryson, in his "Moralitas" to "The Tail of the Cock and the Jasp,"¹ ascribes seven virtues to the jasper, and says that it makes a man strong and victorious and preserves from cases of peril, and that he that has this stone need dread neither fire nor water :—

"This jolie Jasp has properteis sevin :
 The first, of cullour it wes marvelous ;
 Part lyke the fyre, and part lyke to the hevin,
 It makis ane man stark and victorious ;
 Preservis als fra caissis perrillous :
 Quha hes this stane, sall haif gude hoip to speid,
 Or fyre, nor watter him neidis nocht to dreid.

"This gentill Jasp, richt different of hew,
 Betakinnis perfite prudence and cunning ;
 Ornate with mony deidis of vertew,
 Mair excellent than ony irthlie thing ;
 Quhilk makis men in honour for to ring,
 Happie, and stark to wyn the victorie
 Of all vycis, and spirituall ennemie."

A jasper or cornelian-stone carried upon the person by a woman is one of the many preventatives of the inordinate flowing of the menses recommended by the famous John Monerief of Tippermalloch.² The same author says further that the jasper-stone or "the Ætites, called Eagle-stone, carried, effectually retaineth the birth."³ In another place he says "the stone Ætites bound to the arm, or Saphire, or Jacinth, or Jasper, or Diamond-stones, worn and carried" upon the person will cure a "weak or depraved appetite."⁴

Of the many accounts of the virtues of jasper-stone perhaps the fullest and most interesting is that of Bartholomew Glanvil, who writes :⁵—

¹ *Poems and Fables*, ed. Laing, 1865, p. 106.

² *The Poor Man's Physician*, 2nd ed., 1716, p. 142. The first edition was published in 1712.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁵ *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, Trevisa's translation, London, 1526, lib. xvi. cap. 53. This work is based on the *Speculum Naturale* of Vincent de Beauvais.

“Jaspis is a precious stone, and is greene lyke to Smaragdus : but hit is moore dymme of colour. And there be seuentene kyndes therof as Isidore saith. For Jaspis that is grene, is called Gemma pinnasin, and thoughe the chiefe colour therof be grene, yet it hath many other colours meddled amonge. The vertue therof distroyeth feuers and droppesie in them that beare hym chastely : and helpethe in traualyng of chyldre : and driueth awaye fantasies : and makethe a manne sure in perylle, and abatethe heath within and stauncheth bledynge and sweatte, and withstondeth lecherie, and letteth conception and stauncheth menstruall bloude and emoroydes, yf it be in powder and take with mylke, it helpeth and healeth olde botches and byles and clensethe the eyen of fowlenesse and fylthe : And sharpeth and comforteth the syght and withstondeth witchecraftes and enchauntmentes and is more vertuous in syluer than in golde. In the heade of an adder that hyghte Aspis is founde a lyttell stone that is called Jaspis : and men trowe, that it is a stone of wounder vertue. And some men trowe that it hath that name as hit were Aspis¹ and men trowe that it hath as many vertues, as diuers colours and veines, as Dioscorides sayth. And best Jaspis is founde in the Mountaynes of Scithia, and Gryphones kepe this stone, as they done Smaragdus, as Isidore saythe.”

¹ The word jasper is derived from the Hebrew *yashpêh*, through the Greek *ιασπης*, Latin *jaspis*. The Semitic name of the stone was probably given to it from its toughness. The belief that the asp carried a stone in its head arose probably from the similarity of the words *jaspis* and *aspis*.