

MONDAY, 13th May 1895.

THOMAS GRAVES LAW, Foreign Secretary, in the Chair.

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

(1) By FRANCIS TRESS BARRY, M.P., Keiss Castle, Caithness.

Sculptured Stone, being a slab, of irregularly oblong shape, from the pavement beds of the Old Red Sandstone of Caithness, 3 feet 2 inches in length by 21 inches in breadth, and bearing incised sculpturings on one side only. The stone, which is exceedingly friable, had been broken through the middle, and a triangular space of the upper or sculptured face separated into many small

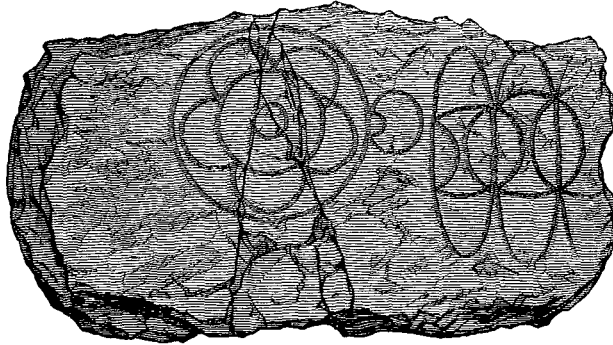


Fig. 1. Sculptured Stone, from the Birkle Hills, Keiss, Caithness. (17.)

fragments, which were, however, carefully preserved by Mr Barry, and after the receipt of the stone at the Museum the whole were pieced together and the stone bedded in cement. It was found on the smaller of the two sand-hills known as the Birkle Hills, at the mouth of the Water of Wester, on the estate of Keiss. These sand-hills are thus

described by Mr Samuel Laing, who made some superficial examination of them in 1864 :—“ They stand amidst the hillocks of blown sand, about 200 yards from the sea-shore on the raised beach of sand and flat shingle stones which can here be traced distinctly for some distance. The larger mound is roughly conical, about 40 feet high and 120 yards in circumference at the base. The lower mound commences about 100 yards north-east of the other, and is a long irregular mound, which may be taken roughly at 30 feet high, 100 yards long, and 10 yards wide. The surface of both mounds is of sand, covered with small stones from the adjacent raised beach, and, in the case of the smaller mound especially, with a vast number of limpet or periwinkle shells, and animal teeth and bones.”—(Laing’s *Prehistoric Remains of Caithness*, 1866, p. 30, and *Proceedings*, vol. viii. p. 47.) Mr Barry’s recent excavations have disclosed the existence of the lower part of a very well-preserved broch on the larger Birkle Hill, which is titled Castle Linglas on the Ordnance map. The smaller mound has also been shown to bear the foundations of a dry-built structure, apparently of an oblong rectangular outline, and the sculptured stone was found among a number of other slabs laid flat in the area within these foundations, having been placed there apparently as pavement. The incised sculpturing is on one side only, and consists of two of the peculiar symbols of the early sculptured monuments, viz., (1) a disc or mirror-like figure, with a smaller disc at one side, answering to the handle of the mirror, and the body of the disc ornamented with two concentric circles, surrounded by five arcs, not unlike a five-petalled flower figure ; and (2) a figure of three ovals placed side by side, and each intersected in a peculiar way by four curves in the centre. The mirror-like figure, or mirror-case as it has been called, occurs on a good many of the sculptured monuments of the early incised class, from Aberdeenshire northwards, and one bearing on the disc a four-petalled flower-like figure very similar to this occurs at Inverury. The triple oval symbol is only known in Caithness, however. Until quite recently it was altogether unknown, the first example having been discovered at Sandside in 1889, and the second having been detected on the back of the Skinnet stone by Mr J. Romilly Allan shortly thereafter. This example from Keiss is therefore the third known of

these northern stones bearing the new symbol, and is consequently a most welcome addition to the National Museum.

Circular Disc of red sandstone,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter and  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch in thickness, found in the course of the excavation by Mr Barry of the Road Broch at Keiss. The disc has been artificially shaped and smoothed, and bears on one side (fig. 2) some obscure markings like incised letters, and on the other (fig. 3) a number of incised markings within a border of two parallel lines, which have a suggestive resemblance to runes. Enlarged photographs of these have been submitted to Professor Stephens



Figs. 2 and 3. Disc of Sandstone, from the Road Broch, Keiss—(slightly enlarged).

of Copenhagen, Professor Bugge of Christiania, Dr Soderberg of Lund, Dr Bernhard Saline, of the National Museum, Stockholm, and other authorities, but without eliciting any decisive contribution towards the elucidation of the nature and significance of these inscriptions, if such they be. They certainly present more of the appearance of inscriptions than of ornament, and in this respect they can scarcely be classed with the discs of similar form and material, but slightly larger in size, from Scatness, near Sumburgh Head, in Shetland, which were also found in the ruins of a broch, and present ornamental designs on obverse and reverse.

(2) By THOMAS JOHN, 18 St Bernard's Crescent.

Perforated Wedge-shaped Stone Hammer, 11 inches in length, found in a moss at Auchencairn, Kirkcudbrightshire, in 1859.

(3) By Dr R. DE BRUS TROTTER, Perth.

Small Stone Hammer of gneissose stone, found ten years ago at a tumulus on the farm of Toft Hill, parish of Tibbermore, Perthshire.

(4) By JOHN GRAHAM.

Two Arrow-heads of reddish chert, from Louisiana, United States of America.

(5) By J. MAXTONE GRAHAME, F.S.A. Scot.

The Stool of Discipline of the parish of Monzie. This "Stool of Repentance" was the seat upon which the delinquents found guilty by the Kirk Session of offences implying church discipline were placed to receive their rebukes from the pulpit in face of the congregation. In this case it is an ordinary oblong stool of pinewood,  $21\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length by 8 inches in breadth, and standing 17 inches high. Its supports are two boards joined to the seat near the ends, and having a triangular piece cut out of the lower end of each so as to make the stool stand, as it were, on four feet. A round hole in the top of the stool serves to put the finger through for carrying it. But for its height, it might have been an ordinary kitchen stool.

(6) By FRANCIS J. GRANT, W.S., F.S.A. Scot., Carrick Pursuivant, the Author.

The Grants of Corriemony. Privately printed. 4to, 1895.

(7) By V. BUSUTTIL, Head-master, Government School, Vittorioso, Malta, the Author.

Holiday Customs in Malta. 12mo, 1895.

The following Articles for the Museum and Books for the Library, acquired by the Purchase Committee during the Session 30th November 1894 to 4th May 1895, were also Exhibited :—

Eight polished Stone Axes, and seven oval Knives of Porphyry, part of a hoard found at Modesty, Bridge of Walls, Shetland, in 1894. [See the previous Communication by Mr Kinghorn.]

Polished perforated Stone Axe, with hollowed sides, found at Lough Erne, Ireland.

Small Whetstone found at Leswalt, and another found at Markinch, Wigtownshire.

Twelve Discs of shale, from Portpatrick Churchyard.

Stone Axe, from Dunedin, New Zealand.

Iron Floor Candlestick, from Corsock, Dumfriesshire.

Polished Stone Axe, from Giffnock, Dumfriesshire.

Collection of Flint Implements, from Culbin Sands.

Report of the Commission on the Ober Germanische Raetische Limes. Heidelberg, 1894, 4to, Part I.

Antiquités de la Russie Meridionale. By Reinach, Kondakoff, and Tolstoi. Paris, 1891, 4to, Parts II. and III.

Spurrall's English-Welsh Dictionary. Carmarthen, 1872, 8vo.

Memoirs of John Napier of Merchiston, his Lineage, Life, and Times ; with a History of the Invention of Logarithms. By Mark Napier. Edinburgh, 1834, 4to.

Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose. By Mark Napier. Edinburgh, 1856, 8vo, 2 vols.

Memorials illustrative of the Life and Times of John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee. By Mark Napier. Edinburgh, 1859, 8vo, 3 vols.

Nugae Derelictae : Documents illustrative of Scottish Affairs, 1206-1715. By James Maidment. Edinburgh, 1888, 8vo.

Genealogical Fragments. By James Maidment. Berwick, 1855, 8vo, pp. 15. Printed for private circulation.

Scotland and Scotsmen in the Eighteenth Century. By Alexander Allardyce. Edinburgh, 1888, 8vo, 2 vols.

History of the Burgh Schools of Scotland. By James Grant. London, 1876, 8vo.

Memoranda of the State of the Parochial Registers of Scotland. By William B. Turnbull. Edinburgh, 1849, 8vo.

The Origins of Invention. A Study of Industry among Primitive Peoples. By Otis T. Mason. London, 1895, 8vo.

Satan's Invisible World Discovered. By George Sinclair. Edinburgh, 1871, 8vo.

Ancient Lives of Scottish Saints. By Rev. W. M. Metcalfe. Paisley, 1895, 8vo.

The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland. By Col. W. G. Wood-Martin. Dublin, 1889, 8vo.

A Survey of the Antiquarian Remains on the Island of Innismurray. By W. F. Wakeman. Dublin, 1893, 8vo.

The Evil Eye: an Account of this Wide-spread Superstition. By T. T. Elworthy. London, 1895, 8vo.

There were also Exhibited:—

(1) By JAMES PATTEN MACDOUGALL of Gallanach.

Collection of Animal Bones, and Implements of Stone, Bronze or Brass, Iron and Pottery, from the refuse-heap at the base of Dun Fheurain, Gallanach, Argyllshire. [See the subsequent Communication by Dr Joseph Anderson.]

(2) By JAMES CURLE, jun., F.S.A. Scot., Librarian.

Six Early Iron-Age Brooches, from the Island of Gotland, Sweden. [See the subsequent Communication by Mr Jas. Curle.]

(3) By WILLIAM M'LAREN, Architect, Perth, through A. G. REID, F.S.A. Scot.

Stone Cup, with handle of steatitic stone,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches in total length, the hollow of the cup being 3 inches by  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches, and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in depth, the handle broken, the interior ornamented with a band of irregular oblique lines, apparently cut with a knife, found on the farm of Lochlane, near Crieff.