

I.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF URNS AT CHESTERS, ROXBURGH-SHIRE; AND NOTES ON LAMPS, *CROCACH*, AND BRAZILIAN POTTERY, &c. BY PROFESSOR DUNS, D.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Perhaps 'Antiquarian Fragments' would have been a better heading to the remarks which follow than that on the billet. It would fit the 'notes' as well as the specimens. Both are fragmentary; but loose stones are necessary in order to compact building. What I have chiefly in view throughout this communication is, not so much to speak about the specimens referred to, as to exhibit them. Most of us are familiar with nearly all of them, but I have tried to select illustrative forms, which, in a general way, we are in the habit of regarding as identical, but which, in some respect of shape, or ornamentation, or locality, or environments, differ from those in our Museum.

The specimens now on the table may be arranged in three groups :— I., Prehistoric ; II., Historic, under two divisions, (a) ancient, (b) recent ; and III., Specimens once common, but now comparatively rare, and gradually passing out of sight.

I. *Prehistoric Forms*.—I at once acknowledge that an assumption underlies the use of the term ‘prehistoric’ as necessarily and appropriately applicable to the specimens to which I now refer—the urns and some bronze weapons. But the term serves my purpose here, and the assumption will be taken for what it is worth.

(1st) *Notes on the Discovery of Urns in Roxburghshire*.—I had hoped to have one of these to show to the Society. Instead of this, however, I have only a photograph of that most recently found. In a communication from a friend in the district, of date 22nd March, he says :—“ I am afraid that we cannot get the urn in time for your April meeting, as the lady who owns the estate is away from home. However, as soon as she returns, I will try and secure the loan of the urn.” The estate referred to by my correspondent is Chesters, a seat in Ancrum parish, on the river Teviot, four miles north-west of Jedburgh. This was not the first time a so-called cinerary urn had been found in the same locality. On the 11th January last my friend had informed me that “ the bank of a little stream had become disintegrated by the melting of the snow, and that a large part of it had split off and fallen down the slope towards the burn ; that a son of the gamekeeper on the estate had gone to examine the slide, and had noticed a bit of curious pottery and some calcined bones. Having called the attention of his father and others to these, they set to work, and eventually unearthed what seems to be a cinerary urn of great age, standing on its mouth. I found it much broken, the breaks being apparently old ; but large pieces were intact, and marked by a simple pattern.” That urn was, I understand, placed in the Hawick museum.

Writing again on March 15th he says :—“ Another of these cinerary urns has turned up at Chesters. There have now been three discovered, and there is a patch of charcoal in another place which points to a fourth there. We have evidently come upon a regular cemetery of them. This last one has been got out complete, though considerably crushed by

tree roots. I enclose a photo of it which I took the day it was found. The foot-rule standing beside it shows the scale. The colour of the print I have brought as near as I could to that of the urn. This urn stood, not on a shaped, flat stone as the others did, but upon a very rough pavement of small broken stones. Certain large stones are beginning to appear in the soil above, in a horizontal line over the line of urns, as if they had been put there purposely."

With the first urn to which my friend refers, two or three bones, much calcined, and one flint, almost white, were found. "This flint," he says, "was in two pieces, which, when fitted together, made a shape not unsuitable for an arrow-head. The bank in which the urns are found is about seventy feet above the burn, and sloping steeply to it. The soil is light at the top, but slightly clayey from a few inches down. The urns had been buried not deeper than two feet from the top."

(2nd) *Bronze Weapons*.—These are three in number. Though they belong to well-known types, a good deal might be said of them; but, without dwelling on the patterns on which they are severally modelled, or speculating on the nature of the hilts to which they had been attached, or characterising furrows and flutings, downright markings and diagonal indentations—minutiæ which have been repeated times innumerable—I have only to record that the flat celt is Scottish, the flanged form with transverse stop ridge is Irish, and the narrow, slender-looking, tapering spear is from the English Northern Border. They are each worthy of notice: the very simple but effective ornamentation on the specimen from Ireland is especially so.

II. *Historic Forms*.—(1st) *Ancient*: Baked Clay Lamps.—Two from Italy, four from Greece, two from Egypt, and two from Palestine. One of the Italian specimens is from Rome, the other from a rural district in Italy. The former—the *Lucerna simplex* of the Romans—has a massive appearance in shape and ornamentation; in the latter, the semi-circular handle is attached at each side to the body of the lamp, in line with which it opens behind it, giving a flat-like look to the vessel. Three of the four Greek specimens are from Corinth, the other is from Smyrna. The small form from Corinth is prettily shaped and simply ornamented. The figure of a wolf in relief lies across the circular top

of the oil-well. The large form has been made for hanging, but the suspending loop has been broken, otherwise the lamp is perfect. The term *Bilychnis* applied to it by the Romans shows that this lamp, with its two lights, was used by them as well as by the Greeks. The Egyptian specimens are very rude, and of the simplest make. They seem to have been formed of two bits of half-dried clay of the same size, being made hollow, then placed edge to edge, the line of contact obliterated by passing the hand over the damp surface, and a nozzle formed by a part being pressed between the forefinger and the thumb. Such lamps would be used by the lowest and poorest of the people. There is proof that those in use among the higher classes were of a more artistic kind, many of them glass. The Palestine specimens are small, simple in shape, and without ornament, made for the occasion.

The wide-mouthed vessel, the two small unguent vases, and the four '*Figurine*,' together with three of the lamps just referred to, were sent to me a good many years ago by a friend. Being in Corinth when some excavations were made, he was able to obtain these. The ornamentation on the unguent vases differs from that on any of those in the Museum. The *Figurine* are the heads of terra-cotta statuettes. The jug has a top-heavy appearance. Perhaps its chief interest lies in its inartistic shape. It is proof, I think, that every Greek artist did not ornament whatever he touched!

The only other forms to which I have to refer under this head are a 'Lachrymatory' from St Paul's Bay, Malta, a very small unguent vase marked "*Etruscan, found in a tomb*," and another unguent vase in a small basin marked "*Jerusalem*."

(2nd) *Historic—Recent*.—"At a time," says the Hon. W. Egerton, in the introduction to his *Handbook of Indian Arms*, "when the weapons of even the earliest and rudest races of mankind are engaging the attention of science, as illustrative of the life of prehistoric man, a greater share of attention than they have hitherto received may well be devoted to the arms of so large and important a portion of the globe as India." Under a feeling akin to this, I venture to submit some notes touching the weapons now on the table. The arms which figure most in our *Proceedings* are those of prehistoric forms in stone or in bronze;

and were it for no more than to give prominence to points of contrast, it is always worth while to set the prehistoric alongside of the historic and recent. In the following *Notes*, I had before me the method of the handbook ; but in the case of each weapon described, marks are referred to which are not given in it. There are differences, and the differences testify to the individuality of the makers. The shape and general features may be identical, while within these much room may be left for the exercise of the workman's taste and talent without interfering with specific form. I have no definite information as to the locality and distributive range of the specimens. They have come to me at different times in the course of the last dozen of years simply as Indian, but 'India' is a wide word. When locality is mentioned by me, no more is meant than that the specimen is very like one figured in the handbook whose locality is well known. In dealing with such specimens as are now before us, much depends on the student's point of view. "I had the option," says Mr Egerton, "of arranging the arms on an ethnological, a historical, or an artistic basis. I think identity of arms to a greater extent than identity of language or religion denotes identity of ethnical origin, and shows the influence of race in their ornament and character long after the traces of language have disappeared. I have therefore tried to arrange this collection as far as possible from an ethnological point of view." He sees that an arrangement on a historical basis would raise the difficulty of determining the date of the specimens, and that to arrange the weapons as a history of art would imply his accounting for the differences (I quote) "between the Turanian and Aryan civilisations." But he did not, at the time, anticipate that in the course of sixteen or seventeen years even the ethnological point of view would be crowded with controversies far more difficult to be dealt with than those associated with the historical or with the artistic basis. To show this change of point of view, I may refer to the volume, *Ethnology (Cambridge Series)*, 1896, in which one ethnical term is summarily discredited thus: "At present *Turanian* is the *shibboleth* of unscientific and inaccurate writers on ethnological subjects"! And in the same volume the difficult Aryan question is summed up very dogmatically also: "The Aryan peoples, it is said, must be regarded, not as a

single ethnical stock, but as an amalgam of many Caucasian and, no doubt, some Mongolic elements, leavened by an original xanthochroid strain, and endowed with a certain racial uniformity by the immense preponderance of the Caucasian physical characters." In fact, the ethnological basis, if critically considered, presents points of controversy quite as many and as formidable as either of the other two. In order to have grounds for inferences regarding origin and shape and ornament, so much speculative element has to be introduced as to render such inferences of very little value, except perhaps to prove the theorist's ingenuity. This has long been held by many to be true relative to prehistoric weapons, and has led to the question, "Is it equally true as to ancient and recent historic weapons?" The question is easily put, and the reason for it easily and briefly stated; but to take part in the inevitable discussions implied in the answer, I have at present neither time nor taste. These remarks, however, are made to indicate the kind of motive which led me to give a good deal of attention to the weapons of war now on the table,—weapons touching whose fitness for the dread work for which they were designed, the scientific skill in the treatment of the metals of which they are made, and the art-feeling in the beauty of their ornamentation, there can be no difference of opinion. I content myself by giving a very general description of each weapon:—

Dagger (*Katár*): Fluted blade, thickened at the point, straight guards, hilt transverse, length 12 inches, length of blade $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Sheath tipped with steel, inlaid with gold, covered with purple velvet, at top edged on one side with band of crimson velvet, edged on other side with filigree work. Inlaid gold on all the edges of the hilt in zigzag lines, with a tiny conventional leaf in each hollow of the zigzag. (*Gwalior*.)

Dagger (*Pittani Jamdáá*)—death-giver—an appropriate name, suggestive of the skilled handling of this magnificent weapon: Bright fluted blade, thinning towards keen point, enriched with gold where it meets the transverse hilt, the whole hilt being covered with gold decorations,—a royal-looking weapon. Sheath of strong brown leather. Length 19 in., length of blade 10 in. (*Vizianagram*.)

Dagger (*Peshkabz*): Watered blade of dark steel, pretty gold floral enrichment where it meets the hilt, inlaid with gold zigzag along the back, hilt jade. Sheath, embossed leather. Length 12 in., length of blade 8 in. (*Sind*.)

Dagger (*Peshkabz*): Watered blade, one narrow line of inlaid gold where it meets the hilt of ivory, which is enamelled with gold enrichment at its sides. Sheath, leather, covered with green velvet on back; narrow band of filigree; steel knob at point. Length $9\frac{1}{4}$ in., length of blade $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. (*Sind*.)

Dagger (*Peshkabz*): New, Indian make, highly polished, bright steel, hilt of stag-horn. (*Araungabad.*)

Sword (*Kukri*): Bright curved blade of highly polished steel, near the hilt a crescent ornament, and along the blade, near the back, oblong figures in line, the foremost terminating in a sword-like point at about a third of the length of the blade from the hilt. Sheath, strong black leather, with two pockets, in one of which a small knife. Length 19 in.; length of blade $14\frac{1}{2}$ in. Geometric figures near the hilt. (*Nepal.*)

Sword (*Kukri*): As in foregoing, but much smaller, figure along the blade a strongly marked groove instead of oblong ornaments. (*Nepal.*)

Sabre (*Tulwar*): Brightly burnished blade, hilt with knuckle-guard, blade damascened. Sheath, strong dark-coloured leather, with geometric marking, opening bound with crimson velvet, edged with gold filigree. Length 30 in., hilt 5 in., knuckle-guard 3 in. (*Rajputana.*)

Dagger (*Kris*): Blade undulating longitudinally, watered. Sheath, light-coloured, polished, hard wood, guard same, hilt effectively ornamented by simple straight lines, terminating in a bird-head-like process. Length 14 in., length of blade 9 in. (*Singapore.*)

The only other specimen to be noticed is a heftless axe of fine grained iron. This implement is in common use among some of the hill tribes, as the Santals and the Kols in Chota Nagpore, both as a weapon of war and an industrial implement. The bow, however, is the chief weapon of war among these tribes,—a fact suggestive of the weakness of ethnological theories touching the value of the study of the war-weapons of tribes, as the key either to their ethnical origin or their retarded civilisation. For very many generations these hill tribes have lived alongside of, and in touch with, neighbours noted for the beauty and efficiency of their weapons, without copying them. The explanation of the presence of two cultures existing in closest relations without one of them merging in the other, or even in any way mutual changes taking place, will not likely be found in the mere study of their weapons.

Under the head of 'Historic recent,' the cooking vessel, of Brazilian native pottery (fig. 1), remains to be briefly noticed. It is one of several, for which I am indebted to His Excellency R. H. Gunning, Esq., M.D., LL.D., of whose large liberality the Society has had much experience. The shape of the vessel is peculiar, and suggestive of the skill of the makers. The first look at the substance of which it is made suggested micaceous schist, ground into fine powder, mixed with a cement, and thus used as clay for the potter's wheel. We have fragments of very

early, if not prehistoric, fictile ware, which seem to warrant this suggestion. This, so far, would have put the Brazilian natives on the same level as the modern artists, not only in moulding or marring their products at pleasure, but in determining the ingredients of which they would consist. More likely, the vessel had been worked out of a comparatively soft stone. A note, however, from Dr Gunning, after the last sentence was written, settles the matter. He says,—“About the cooking vessels that you remind me of, they are made from soapstone, and are turned by small, simple machinery. Forty years ago there was no vehicular communication with the capital, Rio de Janeiro, and even then meats and vegetables had to be cooked in clay pans, or soapstone ones. Metal pots of iron or copper were too expensive for the poor, and

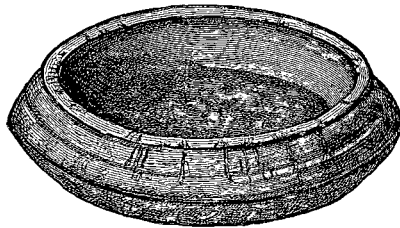


Fig. 1. Brazilian Cooking Vessel of steatite. ($\frac{1}{4}$ linear.)

hence the use of stone pots. Once the stone pans get seasoned, their cooking qualities are excellent.” To have been able to turn out a neat vessel from a bit of solid rock, better adapted for cooking purposes than the comparatively clumsy sun-dried clay pan, indicated a decided increase among the people, both of selective faculty and practical skill. In the measure of these we have a good gauge of stages of civilisation. Variety of resource, of expedient, may we not say, of art-feeling, in connection with such vessels, is proof of the growth of reflective power; in a word, of growth of elements which tend to, and find expression in, social improvement and family comfort. No doubt there is plenty of room for speculation here, because the better form may be no more than proof of the persistent abiding among a tribe of scattered examples, or the memory of the better forms once common among their ancestors. The

shape and substance of this vessel, but specially the former, might carry thought as far back as some of the food prepared in it. When and how did the Indian learn how to separate the starch from the poison in the tubers of the plant which give them the mandeoca—the bread of Brazil? The complex process of organic chemistry implied in this seems to warrant the inference that those by whom it was first used were not savages.

III. *Some Forms once common, but now becoming rare, and gradually passing out of sight.*—One cannot write the words without association, more solid than ideal, crowding the fancy. Flint “strike-lights,” tinder, tinder-boxes, spunks, and their use, not long ago, in dark, cold winter mornings when men had to be up either for brain-work or handicraft, are all brought into almost painful brightness by the sudden flash of the lucifer-match! In memory, these are the fragments, *τα κλάσματα* of ‘the unabiding,’ which are worth noting, were it for no more than as marks onward and upward of the march of improvement. The progress of the mechanical arts can at once be seen and appreciated by all, but the steps thereto, generally very many, often lie out of sight, and before they can be seen, they must be sought for. When found, the phases of progress take definite shape in a series of contrasts, which are far-reaching and suggestive. They occur in hundreds, which cannot, however, be made useful except in the concrete, and it falls to the antiquary to deal with them thus. Working from this point of view, generalisations touching progress—improvement, civilisation—are not only warranted, but they become prophecies of still farther advancements in like lines. Watching the unfoldings of improvement, the best, if not the only, way to get good out of them is to put them on record. Scattered facts regarding the form and use of articles once common in domestic and social life, but which have either disappeared or are disappearing, when brought together and understood, give us information as to the pursuits and habits of past generations more trustworthy, perhaps, than the history which looks chiefly at men in the mass, seldom dealing with aught save what are known as national or social phases of thought and habit.

To illustrate this group—“*Forms once common but now comparatively*

rare"—several examples may be given. In Fleming's *British Animals* (a very able contribution to the history of British Zoology, published in 1828), the following sentences occur in his description of the hedgehog (*Erinaceus Europæus*):—"It is sometimes persecuted, from the foolish belief that it climbs up trees and robs them of their fruit, or sucks cows and hurts their udders. *The skin of the hedgehog is sometimes fixed on the noses of calves or foals at weaning-time, to prevent them sucking, and to irritate the mother.*" The article referred to is the 'cròcach' of the Highlands, the 'calf's brax' of Fife, the 'cow's pap-guard' of other districts. In pastoral districts and in moorlands where there are great areas unfenced, or ill fenced, it was the habit to permit calves and their mothers to feed together in the open at the weaning-time. Of course, about the instincts in both cases there could be no doubt—the cow to give the milk, the calf to suck it. But the owner of the cow wanted the milk as well, and naturally he thought that after its weaning the young should be satisfied with grass. Without fencing off fields they could not be kept separate. The expedient to make the mother dread the very approach of her young was for their owner to fix an instrument on the calf's nose which would irritate or sharply pain the skin surrounding the source of the milk supply. The expedient was more than barbarous. Happily the practice is passing away. Steps in its historical decline can easily be got. Ask a man of seventy years of age if he had ever seen it? The answer would likely be—"Oh, it was quite common when I was a boy!" Another at forty would say—"Yes, often, when I was a boy;" and another at twenty would reply—"I have seen it when a boy, but I don't think it is much, if ever, used now." Of the specimens on the table, one is from the parish of Ardnurchan, the other from that of Aberdour, Fife. The *Cròcach* is a very formidable-looking object, and interesting as an excellent piece of hammer-work by a Gaelic village smith. It has a forbidding look, but its touch would not be so effective and painful as the touch of the Fife specimen.

As regards the 'Crusies' on the table, a good deal might be written touching their history—time, type, variations, and use; but Sir Arthur Mitchell's recent able, interesting, indeed exhaustive paper leaves little

to be said. I may, however, quote the note of the lady from whom I kindly received the Caithness *crusie* :—"I came across an old thing the other day, which perhaps you might care to have, so I take the liberty of forwarding it to you. I fancy it is older than the '*Goose neb*,' but what poor light must have sufficed people in those days, and yet they did a good deal of work by it. I thought of cleaning it, but am told not to do so,—to send it with the dust of at least fifty years upon it." It has been three or four years in my possession, and both because of the metal of which it is made and its shape it is worth notice.

There are other two 'non-abiding' and now comparatively rare patterns of articles once in common use, which, along with the native Brazilian dish, I have pleasure in presenting to the Museum. I refer to a door knocker, or *Tirling-pin*, and a wooden double candlestick. The former is still attached to wood which was part of a door of the house of Mary of Guise, mother of Queen Mary. The latter was, till recently, in use in a Highland village, but was given up by its owner, the district shoemaker, who had followed the fashion and taken to the paraffin lamp. The upright stand is in shape like a mason's mallet, with an elongated handle shaped as a screw. On this a horizontal beam with a corresponding screw is placed, fitting the beam, to be moved up or down at the will of the worker. At each end of the beam is a thick knob, into which two tin sockets are fixed for the candles. The mallet-like part is $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the bottom and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch where it meets the screw, the length of which is $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the cross-beam 11 inches. In the centre of the stand a piece of lead is neatly inserted, giving stability to the whole. The part bearing the sockets is ornamented in a simple but effective fashion. The candlestick is in every way creditable to the handicraft and taste of the joiner of the out-of-the-way Highland village where it was made.