

## IX.

## NOTICE OF A PISCINA IN CAVERS HOUSE, ROXBURGHSHIRE.

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About fifteen years ago it was found necessary to carry out extensive repairs and alterations in Cavers House. Amongst other alterations was the removal of a long arched vault running the entire length of the house east and west, close along the south wall, which is the oldest part of the house, the east and west walls being 14 feet thick and the south 8 feet, besides being pierced by two arrow slits. The vault was in many ways similar in construction to those which may still be seen in "Queen Mary's house" at Jedburgh and at Ferniehurst. It was certainly constructed at a date subsequent to the building of the original house, and probably as a support to the building above. The arch might have been built from underneath, as the keystones were small, badly shaped, and apparently only kept in position by means of the cementing mortar.

The removal of this vault disclosed the piscina described in this notice and shown in fig. 1. It was embedded in the south wall, close to the south-east angle of the house, and to all appearance was in its original position.

It is constructed of eight pieces of freestone, rough and still exhibiting the marks of the tools. In height it is about 40 inches, and 20 inches in greatest breadth.

It was originally ornamented on the outside by a plain circular moulding, which was most unfortunately chiselled off by an ignorant workman, to make it flush with the wall.

The interior of the niche is arranged with the basin on the left-hand side—the right-hand side (facing the piscina) being left as a table or shelf.

The base, which projects about 3 inches from the wall, in two segments of a circle, finishes off downwards, representing practically two cones, with the bases upwards and touching each other.

These cones are ornamented by two deep rounded grooves, and are finished off downwards by plain and simple knots, the ends of which



Fig. 1. Piscina in Cavers House.

meet. The knot on the left-hand side is larger and lower than that on the right.