

III.

NOTICE OF THE DISCOVERY OF STONE COFFINS, AT CARNOUSTIE,
FORFARSHIRE. By ROBERT DICKSON, Esq., SURGEON, CARNOUSTIE,
F.S.A. Scot.

Extensive drainage operations in the village of Carnoustie, Forfarshire, have recently brought to light several interesting memorials of the past. The cuttings are from 7 to 5 feet deep and about 2 feet wide, and are in the middle of the streets. On Friday last (March 15, 1878), while excavating in Dundee Street, three stone coffins with human remains were discovered all within a distance of 50 feet. They were lying east and west, and the skeletons within had their feet to the east. The cists were about 5 feet 9 inches in length, formed of very rude slabs of sandstone, the tops

being of somewhat larger pieces than the sides, but there were no stone bottoms to any. The long bones in two cists were in tolerable preservation, as also portions of the skulls, jaws, and teeth. Two of the disinterments were made under my supervision, and I retained the best of the bones. One of the thigh bones is 18 inches long. The westmost cist contained a younger and smaller skeleton than the others—perhaps a female—and it was lying with its face downwards. The skull was perfectly entire when first exposed, but broke into fragments in the attempt to remove it. It was only one foot from the surface of the road, and like the others was imbedded in sand and shingle—the general character of the upper layer of the soil in the neighbourhood. The other cists were about 18 inches below the surface. A few weeks ago another cist with bones enclosed was found not far from those to which I have particularly referred; and I recollect seeing another exposed about twenty-three years ago, when the foundation of one of the houses at the Cross was being cleared. It is likely, therefore, that this particular locality is pretty thickly sown with human remains. In 1810, when a sandy mound was removed to make way for the erection of a small place of worship, not above 400 yards from the Cross, about 30 cists containing human remains were found, and at different times since then, in founding houses in the low part of the village, single cists have been exposed. In one a gold bracelet is said to have been got, and given to the then owner of the soil, the late George Kinloch, Esq. In the cists recently discovered no vessels or implements were seen.

The village of Carnoustie occupies the ground on which Boece states that Malcolm II. fought and defeated the Danish invaders under their general Camus. Our worthy historian is nowhere so minute as in his narrative of this engagement, describing the situation with all the vigour of an eye-witness. Although no written confirmation of Boece's assertions exists, yet he may have been giving what was likely a tradition in the district of which he was a native, and with which he was personally familiar. The tradition regarding the burn of Lochty having run three days with blood is well known; but while the numbers of ancient burials in the vicinity might be adduced in favour of the tradition, it is significant that no weapons of any kind have been found. The larger portion of the village (west of the Cross) has yet to be drained, and I will take care that

any further discoveries brought to light during the progress of operations will be at once made known to me.

MONDAY, 13th May 1878.

PROFESSOR JOHN DUNS, D.D., in the Chair.

A Ballot having been taken, the following Gentlemen were duly elected Fellows :—

JAMES BIRRELL, Esq., Uttershill, Penicuik.

JAMES FERGUSSON, Esq., D.C.L., 20 Langham Place, London.

WILLIAM MACGILLIVRAY, Esq., W.S.

JOHN H. J. STEWART, Esq., Slodahill, Lockerbie.

The following Donations to the Museum and Library were exhibited, and thanks voted to the Donors, viz :—

(1.) By Mrs JOHN STUART.

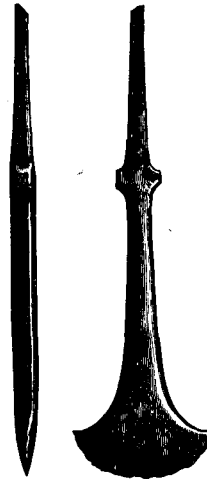
Twelve large drawings of Sculptured Stones and Crosses, viz : The Forres Stone, the Dunfallandy Stone, two of the Meikle Stones, and two Irish Crosses.

Also five Diagrams of the Symbols on the Scottish Sculptured Stones.

(2.) By Mr P. COLLIER, 20 Randolph Crescent.

Oval-shaped Spear-head-like Implement of Reddish Flint, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in breadth, found at Forglen, Banffshire.

Implement of Bronze of peculiar form, $4\frac{7}{8}$ inches in length, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch in width across the cutting face. Implements of this form are rare in Scotland, and this is the only specimen in the Museum. It is unfortunate that no record has been preserved of where it was found.



Bronze Implement (locality unknown).

- (3.) By GEORGE WALPOLE, Esq., through R. W. COCHRAN-PATRICK, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

Collection of Flint Chips and Flakes from the neighbourhood of Helouan, Egypt. These are found mostly in the neighbourhood of the sulphur springs in that locality. "In all cases," says Mr Walpole, "the flints are found lying on the surface of the desert sand, the wind having left them bare by blowing the finer particles away, and in many cases the sun has chipped or broken pieces out of the manufactured flints. Most of the specimens are small. The largest I know of as having been found was a javelin head. I found along with it a lot of the saws. I have given my best specimens and some of the cores to the Royal Irish Academy." It is to be regretted that specimens of these new forms of perfect implements from such an interesting locality have not accompanied the chips and flakes now presented by Mr Walpole, as an opportunity would thus have been afforded for engraving a representative set of Egyptian flint implements from the originals.

- (4.) By WILLIAM FORBES of Medwyn, Esq., *Foreign Secretary*.

Brass Matrix of a Seal, with the figure of the Virgin and Child, and inscribed "S. FABRICE ECCLESIE METENSIS." (See the subsequent Communication by Mr Forbes.)

- (5.) By JOHN HENDERSON, Esq., Keeper of the Phrenological Museum.

Ball of Clay Ironstone, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches diameter, having four circular projecting discs. It was found, Mr Henderson states, in or near the Water of Leith a good many years ago, and is the only specimen of the kind known to have been found in the district.

- (6.) By HUGH GORDON LUMSDEN, Esq. of Auchindoir and Clova, F.S.A. Scot.

Toaster or Baking Stone of Sandstone, with the date 1786, from Clova. In general form this implement resembles the one figured in the "Proceedings," vol. xi. p. 351, except that it is not ornamented, and bears the date on the projecting part at the bottom.

- (7.) By the Trustees of the late JAMES WILLIAM FLEMING, F.R.C.S.E.,
Edinburgh, Surgeon-Major, 4th Dragoon Guards.

War Medals, viz. :—Algiers; Jellalabad; Chilianwalla; South Africa; Baltic; Lucknow; and Belgian Medal to British Volunteers, 1866, in silver; Fairfax Medal, in silver; Good Conduct; Admiral Howe; Victory of the Nile; and Captain Cook, in bronze.

- (8.) By Rev. J. O. HALDANE, Minister of Kingoldrum,

Three Sculptured Stones from Kingoldrum, Forfarshire. Two of these are small, upright, cross slabs or head-stones, about 2 feet high and 15 inches broad. One of them bears a cross on one side and symbols on the other. The second has on one side a cross; the other has been defaced. The third is a fragment, with a very rude representation of the Crucifixion. These three stones are figured in the late Dr Stuart's "Sculptured Stones of Scotland," vol. i. plates 49, 89, and 93.

- (9.) By Rev. WILLIAM FRASER, M.A., Minister of Blairgowrie.

Small "Incense Cup" Urn, and fragment of the large Urn in which it was found at Blairgowrie. (See the subsequent Communication by Mr Fraser.)

- (10.) By JAMES CHISHOLM, Esq., F.S.A. Scot.

Three Ancient Dagger or Dirk Blades, and Skull Cap of Sheet-iron, with lozenge-shaped openings cut out in rows between the straps of which it is composed.

- (11.) By EIRIKR MAGNUSSEN, the Author.

On a Runic Calendar, found in Lapland in 1866. 8vo. Cambridge, 1878.

The following Communications were read :—