- Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
Vol. XVII. Part II. 8vo.—*From the Society.*
- Canadian Journal. March, 1860. 8vo.—*From the Canadian Institute.*
- Quarterly Journal of Chemical Society. No. 48.—*From the Society.*
- Appendix to Messrs Stevenson's Answer to Sir David Brewster's
Reply regarding Dioptric Lights. By D. and T. Stevenson.
—*From the Authors.*
- Comptes Rendus Hebdomadaires des Séances de l'Académie des
Sciences. Nos. 14 and 15.—*From the Academy.*
- Von der Bedeutung der Sanskritstudien für die griechische Phi-
lologie. Von Dr W. Christ. 4to.—*From the Royal Bava-
rian Academy.*
- Rede in der öffentlichen Sitzung der k. Akademie der Wissen-
schaften. Am 28. März 1860. Gehalten Von Justus
F. Von Liebig. 4to.—*From the same.*
- Proceedings of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of Lon-
don. Vol. III. No. 3. 1860. 8vo.—*From the Society.*
- Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London. Part 3. 1859.
8vo.—*From the Society.*
- Monthly Return of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. March, 1860.
—*From the Registrar-General.*

Monday, 30th April 1860.

PROFESSOR CHRISTISON, Vice-President, in the Chair.

The following Communications were read :—

1. Account of the Asafoetida Plants (*Narthex Asafoetida* (Falconer), which have recently flowered and fruited in the Edinburgh Botanic Garden. By Professor Balfour.

The author gave an account of the cultivation of plants of Asafoetida in the Edinburgh Botanic Garden since the year 1842, and of the flowering and fruiting of specimens in 1858 and 1859. He then described the characters of the plant (*Narthex Asafoetida* of

Falconer), and illustrated his communication by specimens of the plant, by photographs, and by drawings from the accurate pencil of Dr Greville.

2. On the Composition of the Glassy Surface of some Vitrified Forts. By Thomas Bloxam, F.C.S., Assistant Chemist to the Industrial Museum of Scotland.

The present paper was undertaken at the suggestion of the late Professor George Wilson, as forming an interesting inquiry, both to the antiquarian and the chemist, and as a sequel to the paper upon old Scotch glass, communicated by me to this Society some time since.

The investigation had for its object,—

1st, To ascertain the exact composition of the glassy surfaces of the various specimens.

2d, The composition of the rocks upon which the glass was formed.

3d, To account for the formation of such glass by the information afforded by the first two inquiries.

Vitrified forts, or sites, as some prefer to call them, are spaces of ground enclosed by a wall composed of pieces of rocks placed upon each other without mortar, and the surfaces of which are covered with a glassy matter. It is scarcely the province of the chemist to speculate as to the purpose for which these sites were erected, or the manner in which the vitrification was brought about: we will therefore proceed with the inquiries set forth at the commencement.

Of the many vitrified forts existing in Scotland, two of the best were selected for investigation—the one, “Duno’deer,” from Aberdeenshire, kindly forwarded by Mr Stuart of the Society of Antiquaries; the other, “Knockfarrel,” from Strathpeffer, Ross-shire, procured for me by my friend Dr M. Thomson.

Both these specimens exhibited vitrification in a marked degree. The specimen from Duno’deer presented two surfaces of a vitrified nature, the one being more porous in appearance than the other; separate portions of these surfaces were carefully broken off for analysis, and distinguished as upper and under surface, the under one being the more porous. The specimen was coated with moss in parts, but these were excluded from the quantity selected for analysis. The vitrified surfaces were spread over rocks of different