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16. Recent Excavations at Stonehenge.

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Belgium and India, and the absence already noted of neolithic types from pigmy flint sites, has led Mr. Pierpont to the inference that the pigmy flints are the work of a particular people; and all the evidence which I have got at Scunthorpe leads to the same supposition. I have endeavoured, however, to keep out the theoretic side of the question and to confine myself as far as possible to a plain statement of the facts as I have observed them.

R. A. GATTY.

Stonehenge.

Discussion.

Recent Excavations at Stonehenge. *Abstract of the Discussion of Mr. W. Gowland's Paper on Stonehenge* (MAN, 1902. 6) read at a **16**
Special Meeting of the Anthropological Institute, January 13th, 1902 (MAN, 1902. 24).

The discussion here summarised took place at a special meeting of the Anthropological Institute, of which the formal report will be found below (MAN, 1902. 24). The occasion was the delivery by Mr. W. Gowland, F.S.A., of a paper on *Recent Excavations at Stonehenge*, arising out of his Report to the Society of Antiquaries, of which an abstract will be found above (MAN, 1902. 6). After the reading of the paper:—

Mr. ARTHUR EVANS congratulated Mr. Gowland on the very complete and scientific record that he had preserved of the recent works on Stonehenge. For the first time they had before them the true "anatomy" of a part of the monument. At the same time he was unable to read the evidence quite in the same way as Mr. Gowland. Amongst all the stone implements discovered there was nothing distinctly neolithic. Mr. Gowland had laid stress on the absence of bronze implements as an argument for referring the date of the monument to at least the close of the Neolithic period. But under one of the sarsen slabs had been found traces of copper oxide, very probably left by a bronze implement. There was here an indication that the soil was not favourable to the preservation of that metal. On the other hand, a ground or polished implement or even a fragment of such must have been preserved. Mr. Evans himself (in a paper in the *Archæological Review*) had put forth the theory that the monument belonged to the late period of the Bronze Age. The low mound seemed to stand in a specially close relation to the latest class of the surrounding barrows belonging to that period. It was reasonable, moreover, to bring it into connection with the surrounding necropolis, and a characteristic "incense burner," like those of the barrows, has been found near one of the triliths. It was important to observe that Stonehenge was a very advanced representative of its class. Certain structural features, such as the mortices and tenons of the outer circle, even recalled the similar appliances of Greek temples like that of Segesta. Irish megalithic monuments of probably Bronze Age date did not show such advance, yet on the whole Ireland—that early "Eldorado"—was during that period ahead of this island in technical skill. As to the astronomical argument, applied to a rude stone monument it had very little force. Even in the case of Greek temples such deductions had led to errors of about 1,000 years. The religious connexions of Stonehenge were not a mere matter of conjecture, and sun worship was at most a secondary object in its structure. It was, in fact, one of a large series of primitive religious monuments that grew out of purely sepulchral architecture. The various features of the primitive chambered barrow—itsself the outgrowth of the mound hut, such as may still be seen in Lapland and elsewhere—were all traceable here. There was the entrance passage which in the case of various barrows could be seen in the act of growing into the free-standing, honorific avenue. There was the stone doorway represented by the trilith—a form found elsewhere standing by itself in a sepulchral relation. There were the supporting ring-stones of the mound become, as in the case of some barrows, a free-standing circle. The entrance passage of primitive huts, as seen, for instance, in the Lapp *gamme*, faced the rising sun for practical

reasons. The entrance of our early chambered barrows was oriented in the same way. The orientation of the avenue of Stonehenge sprang from the same sepulchral source. The evolution of every feature of the monument could be traced by successive links from these sepulchral elements, and although doubtless we had here a building no longer confined to the mere worship of human dead but diverted to the service of higher spiritual beings, it must be regarded as closely connected with a chthonic cult. The solar element, if it existed, was certainly of a subsidiary nature. Whether actual interment went on within the building was a secondary question, though the finding of the "flurible" might be thought to point that way.

Mr. A. L. LEWIS said: I am quite prepared to believe that the earthworks were made and a circle erected on the site of Stonehenge for purposes of sun worship or observation as long ago as 1800 B.C., but I am not equally prepared to admit that the ruin we know as Stonehenge is the original circle. I am still inclined to regard it as a much later reconstruction. I doubt whether there existed in this country nearly 4,000 years ago any people who could or would have cut the tenons and sockets on these stones and placed the lintels on the top of the uprights; and, if such a people did exist, I cannot understand why they left no other such remains behind them. We know of the remains of perhaps 200 circles, great and small, in the British Isles; but in most of them the stones are quite unshaped, nor is there in any of them an example of capstones, tenons, and sockets. It is only at Avebury that we find stones of greater cubic content and weight than the largest at Stonehenge, and even there we have no sign of any capstone; the existing remains at Stonehenge seem, therefore, to me to be a later development of the earlier circles. But if the existing Stonehenge were nearly the last of all the circles, and were erected 1800 B.C., how is it that it was never imitated, and that the bronze and iron-using people went on for nearly 2,000 years till the Roman conquest with this great structure before them, and left us practically nothing of their own? In Egypt the fourth dynasty pyramids were the finest, but pyramid building went on till the twelfth dynasty, a period of 1,500 years or more; but Stonehenge has no imitator, no follower. It is quite unique, and I cannot understand its remaining unimitated throughout the whole Bronze Age. If, however, the earthworks and a circle or circles of unshaped stones—sarsens or bluestones, or both—were erected 1800 B.C., and if long afterwards it were resolved to reconstruct the circles in a different fashion from any other, we might find the old unshaped blocks taken down and trimmed into shape, and others brought to the spot and shaped and added to them, and the whole re-erected on a new plan; and, finally, the chips and the stones used in making them swept into the holes in which the uprights were set, just as Mr. Gowland has described them to us; and the difficulties I have suggested would be removed. But, it is said, the stones were shaped with stone tools, and that must have been done before metal was introduced. Stone, however, was used side by side with metal in Egypt down to the eighteenth dynasty, and it seems to me very likely that the inhabitants of Salisbury Plain, having great numbers of these blocks to deal with, developed a way of doing it with rough stones, and adhered to it long after metal had come into general use, because stones were not only still easier to come by, but were more effective for the purpose than the early metal tools. Again, it is said, if metal were in use, some would have been dropped and found in digging. We have an account of metal being found in the middle of Stonehenge, and it is likely that mediæval explorers—of whom there may have been many—would have taken any metal they found, and left stones, especially such as those exhibited. Further, if metal-using people might have been expected to lose something on the spot, so might stone-using people; but, though well-shaped stone tools and weapons have not been uncommon in the barrows on the plain, none have yet been found in these diggings, and there is no proof as yet of the period of erection or re-erection. I venture to submit, therefore,

that the reconstruction hypothesis—though, of course, it is only a hypothesis—is by no means disproved, but does fit all facts known at present better than any other, besides having a semi-historical basis.

I hope Mr. Gowland will be able to superintend the setting up of the trilithon which fell in 1797, of the stones that fell last year, and perhaps some others ; and that in doing so he may obtain further evidence. I would also suggest that search be made for the holes in which the stones required to complete the south-western part of the outer circle stood, in order to ascertain whether it ever was completed, and that sections be cut across the ditches and trenches to ascertain their original depth and profile, and to see whether the silting up is as great as might be expected in the 3,700 years which are now supposed to have elapsed since they were made.

Mr. C. H. READ confessed that the view of the use and purpose of Stonehenge expressed by Mr. Evans was in accordance with the ideas he had himself always held, and that he preferred rather to wait for further evidence before changing them. With regard to the date of Stonehenge, he thought it more probable that the full evidence, when it became available, would show that bronze was known as a metal at the time ; but it was obviously bold, and perhaps unwise, for anyone at this stage to attempt any great precision in the matter. He thought, however, that the recent exploration of the circle at Arbor Low had a bearing on this point, for there a barrow of the early Bronze Age stood on the *vallum*. This barrow clearly does not form part of the plan of the greater monument, but intersects and interferes with the completeness of the *vallum*. It must, therefore, have either existed before Arbor Low was constructed or have been placed there afterwards. It can scarcely be contemporary. A consideration of the possibilities appeared to Mr. Read to point to the latter as being the more likely, and in that case the great circle would be earlier than the barrow. Thus, assuming an analogy between Stonehenge and Arbor Low, the evidence furnished by Arbor Low rather bore out Mr. Gowland's contention for the Neolithic period for the date of Stonehenge, than Mr. Evans' attribution to the end of the Bronze Age.

Mr. C. W. CUNNINGTON said that, while Mr. Gowland's paper taught us much hitherto unknown as to the manner in which the large trilithons were erected, and the quantities of chips of the stones proved more conclusively what was already known—*i.e.*, that the stones were trimmed on the spot—nevertheless these excavations were too limited in extent to justify a conclusion as to the date of the structure, for it was still quite possible that a find of bronze implements—and even Roman coins—at Stonehenge would completely upset the conclusions of Mr. Gowland as to its builders. He suggested that the stone “mauls” might have been used as rollers.

Mr. GOWLAND, in reply, said that his opinion that the date of Stonehenge should be referred to the latter part of the Neolithic or the early part of the Bronze Age—that transitional period when bronze was known, but had not passed into common practical use—was based on the total absence of any bronze implements in the excavations. The use of deer's horn picks for the very extensive excavations of the hard chalk rock around the base of the leaning-stone also gave, he thought, some support to this contention.

The incrustation on the piece of stone in excavation V. merely proved that bronze was known and did not prove that bronze tools were then in common use. It contained no oxide of copper, an indication that the soil was favourable for the preservation of the metal. Its amount and nature were such that it could only have been the result of contact with a very small piece, possibly an ornament, but not with a tool of bronze.

The low mounds mentioned by Mr. Evans are, it is self-evident, later than the *vallum*.

Mr. Evans' reasoning as to the structural features of Stonehenge and its evolution from a chambered tumulus is ingenious, but if the same reasoning be applied to several Greek and Egyptian temples they also must have had the same origin, a view which cannot be reasonably entertained.

Stonehenge and dolmens or the chamber of some tumuli are of megalithic structure and of east orientation, and that is all they have in common. And as regards the last, he held that it is in the highest degree probable, if not absolutely certain, that the orientation of the dolmens and chambered tumuli was based on the tenets of the prevailing religious cult, and hence followed the orientation of the temple of that cult, and that the orientation of the temple did not originate in that of the dolmen. As to that cult in the case of Stonehenge, it is impossible to disassociate it from some form of sun worship, adoration, or observation. The horseshoe arrangement of the trilithons and of the inner bluestones opening to the east and the direction of the avenue towards the rising sun at midsummer cannot, he thought, be regarded in any other light than as pointing to the sun as the chief and not a subsidiary element in the cult for which the monument was designed.

As regards its sepulchral character, only future excavations would enable him to say whether it has been used as a place for burial or not, and at what time it was so used. Until these excavations are made and we have definite evidence that the burial or burials, if any, were made at the time the structure was erected, he should continue to hold that it was a temple or sacred place dedicated to ceremonies in which the solar element was predominant. The mere finding of a "thurible" recorded by Inigo Jones was not evidence of any value as to the original use of the structure, as the conditions under which it was found are not stated. If it belonged to a burial it may have been one of much later date than Stonehenge itself. In this connection he might say that he had dug up a modern preserved meat tin at a considerably lower depth than the flint implements in the same excavation, but it occurred at the bottom of one of the rabbit burrows, of which there are many within the circles.

That the trilithon is by no means always a sepulchral structure there was abundant evidence in eastern Asia, especially in Japan, where its representative in wood is of very ancient date. There it has never been used except in connection with religious ceremonies, or to mark the direction of some point of veneration. As to the reconstruction of Stonehenge as suggested by Mr. Lewis, not a particle of evidence has been brought forward by him. He (Mr. Gowland) might say, however, that the chippings found in his excavations proved conclusively that the sarsens were not shaped near the structure, so that the stones of the trilithons and outer circle cannot have been taken down and trimmed as Mr. Lewis suggests. As regards the placing of the lintels on the uprights the operation was much easier than erecting the uprights themselves.

The absence of similar structures in imitation of Stonehenge is in favour of the view that it was a place or temple of special sanctity. Thus in Japan there is one great temple dedicated to the Sun Goddess, which is unique in its sacred character, so much so that every Japanese, not excluding the emperor, makes at least one pilgrimage to it during his life.

Then as to the metals to which Mr. Lewis alludes as having been discovered in the middle of Stonehenge, he found enumerated in the records iron armour and a barbed iron arrow-head. Now, no one could attribute these to the date of the erection of the monument. There is no record of any find of bronze.

As regards another point, he might say that the layers of the excavations in which the flint and stone tools were found were absolutely undisturbed ground and had not been dug down to before, these tools are hence not the refuse left by previous explorers. As to the use of stone implements in the Bronze Age he had fully stated in his paper that if the Bronze Age people had found such tools to be suitable for dressing the stone they would certainly have used them.

Mr. Cunningham's suggestion that the stone mauls were used as rollers is astounding; he cannot have looked at them carefully, or he would have seen that their flat sides precludes such use altogether. Finally, he (Mr. Gowland) might say that the date

1800-2000 B.C. is given in his paper only as an approximation based solely on his excavations and subject to revision from any data which his future diggings might yield. And as regards this approximate date, and the origin and purpose of Stonehenge, he should continue to hold the opinions he had expressed in his paper until they were disproved by future discoveries. No one would then be more ready than he to modify or relinquish them, as all he desired was to arrive at the truth and not to bolster up any pet theories.

Pacific : Ornament.

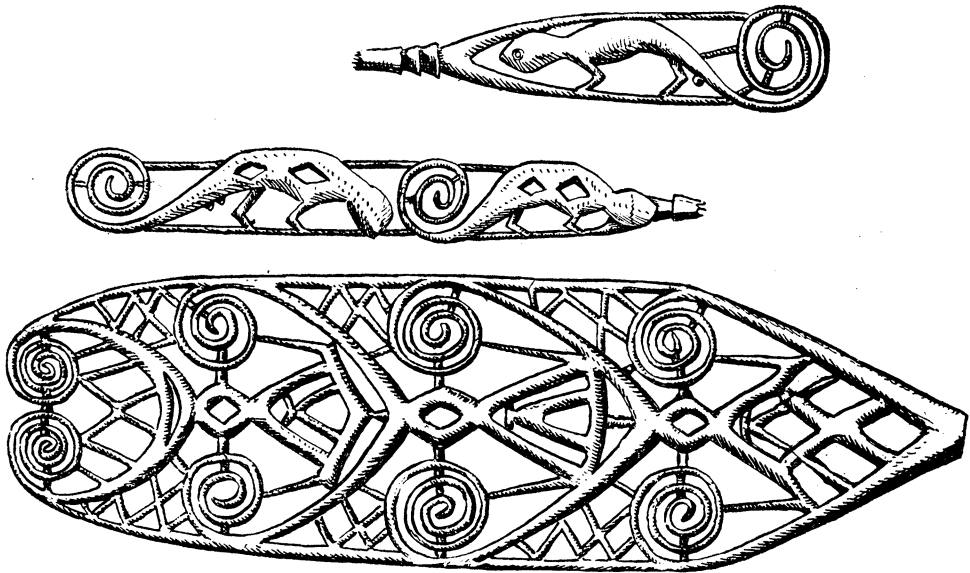
Edge-Partington.

Note on the Occurrence of Spiral Ornament in Micronesia.

17

By J. Edge-Partington.

Some two or three years ago a collection from the Admiralty group and the islands to the west was disposed of in London. I was fortunate in procuring three lime spatulas, reproduced herewith, which I think are worth noting on account of the spiral ornament contained in their elaborately-carved handles. For some time past the origin of this particular form of ornament has been occupying the attention of ethnologists, and several notes on the subject have already appeared (*Journ. Anthr. Inst.*, Vol. XXIX., p. 305; Vol. XXX. (*Miscellanea*, Nos. 40, 41); MAN, 1901. 55). I cannot, however, agree with Professor Haddon that the scroll pattern can be derived from the Frigate bird, whose long, straight tail-feathers could hardly suggest such a design. I still adhere



to the lizard or snake idea, and this has been confirmed by a note that I have just received as to the existence in New Zealand of *water-snakes* at all events. The figures above show how easily such a scroll as that, so commonly produced by Maori carvers, might have been derived from the coiled tail of a lizard. The spatulas in my possession are closely allied to those from the Anchorite Islands figured by Dr. F. Grabowsky in the *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, Vol. VII. (1894), Pl. XIV., Figs. 10, 14, and 15, but they are not so highly conventionalised. They tend to prove that the scrolls are not connected with the anthropomorphic design from which other examples figured by Dr. Grabowsky are derived, but to an independent motive of which the lizard is the original type.

J. EDGE-PARTINGTON.