



On Sepulchral Remains at Rathdown, Co. Wicklow

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definite shapes ; but, sometimes, though very rarely, about their houses may be seen vessels made at idle moments and not for use, evidently copied from European forms. The rarity of these imitative attempts may be illustrated by the fact that, among very many hundreds of vessels of genuine Indian shape, I have not met with more than half-a-dozen imitated by Indians, at their own instigation, from European shapes.

Thus the stone hatchet, the rock-pictured ship, and these exceptional pieces of pottery, alike show the power of Indians to adapt their methods of art to the production of European forms ; and the rare occurrence of such examples illustrates the rarity of the exercise of this power.

Explanation of Plate XXXVI.*

Figs. 1 to 7 represent seven stone implements from British Guiana, brought to this country by Mr. Everard F. Im Thurn, and described in detail in the foregoing paper. All the figures are drawn to one-half linear scale.

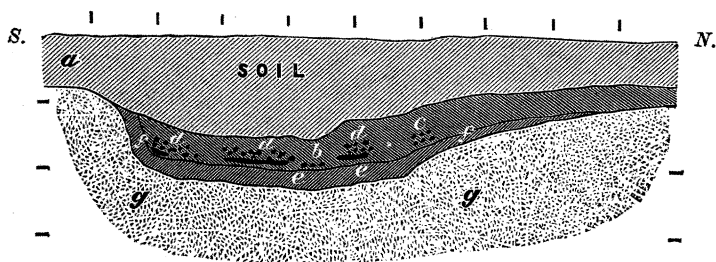
On SEPULCHRAL REMAINS at RATHDOWN, CO. WICKLOW.

By GERRARD A. KINAHAN, Esq.

(A Paper read before the Institute on June 14th, 1881.)

WHILE examining the drift composing the cliffs to the north of Greystones, I observed that some of the fine sand in some places appeared to have been burnt or baked ; the exposures having been caused by falls of the cliff after the severe frosts of January, 1881. On closer examination it occurred to me that they might be the remains of some prehistoric interments, as in one of them there were fragments of burnt bones and stones, also some rude pottery.

As represented in the accompanying section the surface of the ground is quite level ; and probably has been tilled for ages, although for some years back lying idle. The soil is from 9 to 12 inches deep, overlying gravel and in places fine sand. Where these remains occur in the townland of Rathdown, the subsoil is a fine yellow sand, and in it there is a hollow.



SECTION SHOWING POSITION OF THE SEPULCHRAL REMAINS.

a Soil. *b* Black earth with burnt stones. *c* Charcoal. *d* Fragments of urns.
e Fragments of bones. *f* Baked sand. *g* Fine sand.

The hollow as seen in section on the face of the cliff is 7 feet long, its termination being well marked to the south, while to the north it gradually tails out. The bottom of this hollow is bounded by fine sand which is baked for a depth of about 3 inches; resting on this is a layer of black earth, about 6 inches thick, containing fragments of burnt bones, charcoal, and rude pottery; the pottery evidently resting *above* the bones, which formed a layer about 2 inches thick; above and surrounding the pottery, in many cases resting on fragments of it, were numerous angular burnt stones, generally small, but nothing like a flag was observed. From the position of these, it may be suggested that originally they covered the urns, and that the breaking up of the latter was due to their superincumbent weight. The urns seemed to be two in number, that to the south being red, most pieces of it occurring between the 2 and 3 feet vertical lines, the other was less burnt, and was certainly inverted, although fewer fragments of it were obtained. The bones, in very small fragments, were all outside the urns. Such remains as could be collected were submitted to Dr. Frazer, M.R.I.A., who has favoured me with the following remarks:—

“There are fragments of burned bones much acted on by fire, and curled from the heat, but apparently only parts of one skeleton, and even this fragmentary. A few of the bones can be recognised; thus there is a small fragment of the frontal bone, a few fragments probably of the thigh bone, and also some of the tibia and fibula, and there is a fragment of the lower end of the radius; from the latter bone it would be probably fair to conclude the person was an adult, and from the narrow edge of the tibial fragments the bone was probably platycnemic.

“The urns are made of rough clay, with fragments of mica perceptible, and the workmanship agrees in all respects with

many already described. You will find a good account of such in Schlieman's work on 'Troy,' p. 219.

"There appear to be fragments of two urns; so I would conclude from slight differences in the slopes of two pieces, but I have so few of the fragments and parts that I have not been able very satisfactorily to reconstruct the urns."

About 10 yards north of this interment there was another small hollow in the drift, the bottom of which was also baked, but no remains of any kind were obtained from it, except a few small fragments of charcoal; probably the greater portion had been carried away with the denudation of the cliff.

JANUARY 10TH, 1882.

MAJOR-GENERAL PITT RIVERS, *President, in the Chair.*

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The following presents were announced, and thanks voted to the respective donors:—

FOR THE LIBRARY.

From the Rev. C. VOYSEY.—Remarks on the Aborigines of the Andaman Islands. By Ed. Salisbury Brander, M.B.

From Professor AGASSIZ.—Annual Report of the Curator of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, 1880–1881.

From the AUTHOR.—Nuovi Studi Craniologici sulla Nuova Guinea. By Paolo Mantegazza.

From the ASSOCIATION.—Journal of the Royal Historical and Archæological Association of Ireland, April, 1881.

From the ACADEMY.—Die Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien: Sitzungsberichte philos-histor. Classe, 1880. 97 Band, Hefte 1, 2, 3, 1881; 98 Band, Hefte 1, 2.

Sitzungsberichte math.-naturw. Classe, I. Abthlg. 1880: Nos. 8-10, 1881, Nos. 2, 3, 4. II. Abthlg. 1880, Nos. 8-10; 1881, Nos. 1-4. III. Abthlg., 1880, Nos. 8-10; 1881, Nos. 1 and 2.

——— Almanach, 1881.

From the ACADEMY.—Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei, Vol. VI, fas. 2.

From the SOCIETY.—Journal of the Society of Arts, Nos. 1517-1520.

——— Journal of the Royal Geological Society of Ireland, Vol. XVI, Part 1.