

to for an explanation of the structure of coral reefs are proximate, relatively well known, and continuous in their action.

The author expressed his indebtedness to all his colleagues, to Professor Geikie, to the Hydrographer and officers of the hydrographic department, and in a special manner to Sir Wyville Thomson, under whose direction and advice all the observations had been conducted.

BUSINESS.

The following candidates were balloted for, and declared duly elected Fellows of the Society:—Major-General Bayly, R.E. ; Mr W. J. Sollas, M.A. ; and Mr Henry Drummond, F.G.S.

Monday, 19th April 1880.

SIR WYVILLE THOMSON, Vice-President, in the Chair.

The following Communications were read :—

1. Rock-Weathering, as illustrated in Edinburgh Churchyards.

By Professor Geikie, F.R.S. (Plate XVI.)

Comparatively little has yet been done in the way of precise measurement of the rate at which the exposed surfaces of different kinds of rock are removed in the processes of weathering. A few years ago, some experiments were instituted by Professor Pfaff of Erlangen to obtain more definite information on this subject. He exposed to ordinary atmospheric influences carefully measured and weighed pieces of Solenhofen limestone, syenite, granite (both rough and polished), and bone. At the end of three years he found that the loss from the limestone was equivalent to the removal of a uniform layer 0·04 mm. in thickness from its general surface. The stone had become quite dull and earthy, while on parts of its surface fine cracks and incipient exfoliation had appeared.* The time during which the observations were continued was, however, too brief to allow any general deductions to be drawn from them as to the real average rate of disintegration. Professor Pfaff relates that during the period a severe hail storm broke one of the plates of stone. An exceptionally powerful cause of this nature might make

* Allgemeine Geologie als exacte Wissenschaft, p. 317.

the loss during a short interval considerably greater than the true average of a longer period.

It occurred to me recently that data of at least a provisional value might be obtained from an examination of tombstones freely exposed to the air in graveyards, in cases where their dates remained still legible or might be otherwise ascertained. I have accordingly paid attention to the older burial-grounds in Edinburgh, and have gathered together some facts which have, perhaps, sufficient interest and novelty to be communicated to the Society.

At the outset it is of course obvious that in seeking for data bearing on the general question of rock-weathering, we must admit the kind and amount of such weathering visible in a town to be in some measure different from what is normal in nature. So far as the disintegration of rock-surfaces is effected by mineral acids, for example, there must be a good deal more of such chemical change where sulphuric acid is copiously evolved into the atmosphere from thousands of chimneys than in the pure air of country districts. In these respects we may regard the disintegration in towns as an exaggeration of the normal rate. Still, the difference between town and country may be less than might be supposed. Surfaces of stone are apt to get begrimed with dust and smoke, and the crust of organic and inorganic matter deposited upon them may in no small measure protect them from the greater chemical activity of the more acid town rain. In regard to the effect of daily or seasonal changes of temperature, on the other hand, any difference between town and country may not impossibly be on the side of the town. Owing, probably, to the influence of smoke in retarding radiation, thermometers placed in open spaces in town commonly mark an extreme nocturnal temperature not quite so low as those similarly placed in the suburbs, while they show a maximum day temperature not quite so high.

The illustrations of rock-weathering presented by city graveyards are necessarily limited to the few kinds of rock employed for monumental purposes. In this district the materials used are of three kinds:—1st, Calcareous, including marbles and limestones; 2d, sandstones and flagstones; 3d, granites.

I. CALCAREOUS.—With extremely rare exceptions, the calcareous tombstones in our graveyards are constructed of ordinary white

saccharoid Italian marble. I have also observed a pink Italian shell-marble, and a finely fossiliferous limestone, containing fragments of shells, foraminifera, &c.

In a few cases the white marble has been employed by itself as a monolith in the shape of an obelisk, urn, or other device; but most commonly it occurs in slabs which have been tightly fixed in a framework of sandstone. These slabs, from less than 1 to fully 2 inches thick, are generally placed vertically; in one or two examples they have been inserted in large horizontal sandstone slabs or "through-stanes." The form into which it has been cut, and the position in which it has been erected, have had considerable influence on the weathering of the stone.

A specimen of the common white marble employed for monumental purposes was obtained from one of the marble-works of the city, and examined microscopically. It presented the well-known granular character of true saccharoid marble, consisting of rounded granules of clear transparent calcite, averaging about $\frac{1}{100}$ th of an inch in diameter (fig. 1, A). Each granule has its own system of

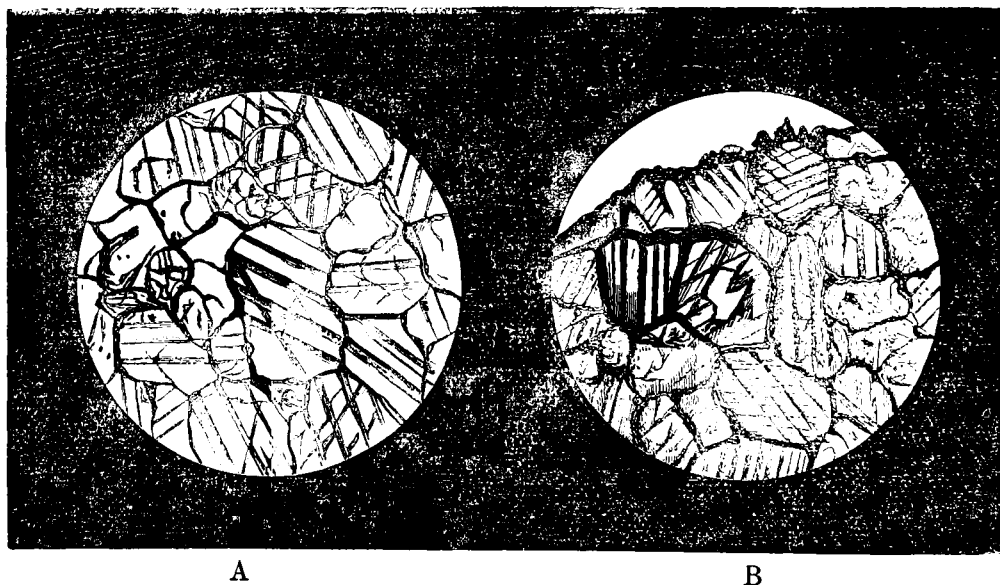


Fig. 1.—Microscopic structure of white marble employed in Edinburgh tombstones. A, Structure of the fresh marble. B, Structure of the marble after standing eighty-seven years. The black edge is the crust of sulphate of lime and town dust which descends along rifts and cleavage planes.

twin lamellations, and not infrequently gives interference colours. The fundamental rhombohedral cleavage is everywhere well de-

veloped. Not a trace exists of any amorphous granular matrix or base holding the crystalline grains together. These seem moulded into each other, but have evidently no extraordinary cohesion. A small fragment placed in dilute acid was entirely dissolved. There can be no doubt that this marble must be very nearly pure carbonate of lime.

The process of weathering in the case of this white marble presents three phases sometimes to be observed on the same slab,—viz., superficial solution, internal disintegration, and curvature with fracture.

(1.) *Superficial Solution* is effected by the carbonic acid, and partly by the sulphuric acid of town-rain. When the marble is first erected it possesses a well-polished surface, capable of affording a distinct reflection of objects placed in front of it. Exposure for not more than a year or two to our prevalent westerly rains suffices to remove this polish, and to give the surface a rough granular character. The granules which have been cut across or bruised in the cutting and polishing process are first attacked and removed in solution, or drop out of the stone. An obelisk in Greyfriars' Churchyard, erected in memory of a lady who died in 1864, has so rough and granular a surface that it might readily be taken for a sandstone. So loosely are the grains held together that a slight motion of the finger will rub them off. In the course of solution and removal, the internal structure of the marble begins to reveal itself. Its harder nests and veinings of calcite and other minerals project above the surrounding surface, and may be traced as prominent ribs and excrescences running across the faint or illegible inscriptions. On the other hand, some portions of the marble are more rapidly removed than others. Irregular channels, dependent partly on the direction given to trickling rain by the form of the monumental carving, but chiefly on original differences in the internal structure of the stone, are gradually hollowed out. In this way the former artificial surface of the marble disappears, and is changed into one that rather recalls the bare bleached rocks of some mountain side.

The rate at which the transformation takes place seems to depend primarily on the extent to which the marble is exposed to rain. Slabs which have been placed facing to north-east, and with a sufficiently projecting architrave to keep off much of the rainfall, retain

their inscriptions legible for a century or longer. But even in these cases the progress of internal disintegration is distinctly visible. Where the marble has been less screened from rain, the rapidity of waste has been sometimes very marked. A good illustration is supplied by the tablet on the south side of Greyfriars' Churchyard, erected in memory of G—— G——, who died in 1785.* This monument had become so far decayed as to require restoration in 1803. It is now and has been for some years for the most part utterly illegible. The marble has been dissolved away over the centre of the slab to a depth of about a quarter of an inch. Yet this monument is by no means in an exposed situation. It faces eastward in a rather sheltered corner, where, however, the wind eddies in such a way as to throw the rain against the part of the stone which has been most corroded.

In the majority of cases superficial solution has been retarded by the formation of a peculiar grey or begrimed crust, to be immediately described. The marble employed here for monumental slabs appears to be peculiarly liable to the development of this crust. Another kind of white marble, sometimes employed for sculptured ornaments on tombstones, dissolves without crust. It is snowy white, and more translucent than the ordinary marble. So far as the few weathered specimens I have seen enable me to judge, it appears to be either Carrara marble, or one of the strongly saccharoid, somewhat translucent, varieties employed instead of it. This stone, however, though it forms no crust, suffers marked superficial solution. But it escapes the internal disintegration, which, so far as I have observed, is always an accompaniment of the crust. Yet the few examples of it I have met with hardly suffice for any comparison between the varieties.

(2.) *Internal Disintegration.*—Many of the marble monuments in our older churchyards are covered with a dirty crust, beneath which the stone is found on examination to be merely a loose crumbling sand. This crust seems to form chiefly where superficial solution is feeble. It may be observed to crack into a polygonal network, the individual polygons occasionally curling up so as to reveal the yellowish white crumbling material underneath. It also rises in

* For obvious reasons I withhold the names carved on the tombstones referred to in this communication.

blisters which, when they break, expose the interior to rapid disintegration.

So long as this begrimed film lasts unbroken, the smooth face of the marble slab remains with apparently little modification. The inscription may be perfectly legible. The moment the crust is broken up, however, the decay of the stone is rapid. For we then see that the cohesion of the individual crystalline granules of the marble has already been destroyed, and that the merest touch causes them to crumble into a loose sand.

It appears, therefore, that two changes take place in upright marble slabs freely exposed to rain in our burial-grounds—a superficial, more or less firm crust is formed, and the cohesion of the particles beneath is destroyed.

The crust varies in colour from a dirty grey to a deep brown black, and in thickness from that of writing paper up to sometimes at least a millimetre. One of the most characteristic examples of it was obtained from an utterly decayed tomb (erected in the year 1792) on the east side of Canongate Churchyard. No one would suppose that the pieces of flat dark stone lying there on the sandstone plinth were once portions of white marble. Yet a mere touch suffices to break the black crust, and the stone at once crumbles to powder. Nevertheless the two opposite faces of the original polished slab have been preserved, and I even found the sharply chiselled socket-hole of one of the retaining nails. The specimen was carefully removed, and soaked in a solution of gum, so as to preserve it from disintegration. On submitting the crust of this marble to microscopic investigation I found it to consist of particles of coal, grains of quartz-sand, angular pieces of broken glass, fragments of red brick or tile, and organic fibres. This miscellaneous collection of town dust was held together by some amorphous cement, which was not dissolved by hydrochloric acid. At my request my friend Mr B. N. Peach tested it with soda on charcoal, and at once obtained a strong sulphur reaction. There can be little doubt that it is mainly sulphate of lime. The crust which forms upon our marble tombstones is thus a product of the reaction of the sulphuric acid of the town-rain upon the carbonate of lime. A pellicle of amorphous gypsum is deposited upon the marble, and encloses the particles of dust which give the characteristic sooty aspect to the stone. This pellicle, of

course, when once formed, is comparatively little affected by the chemical activity of rain-water. Hence the conservation of the even surface of the marble. It is liable, however, to be cracked by an internal expansion of the stone, to which I shall immediately refer, and also to rise in small blisters, and, as I have said, its rupture leads at once to the rapid disintegration of the stone.

The cause of this disintegration is the next point for consideration. Chemical examination revealed the presence of a slight amount of sulphate in the heart of the crumbling marble; but the quantity appeared to me to be too small seriously to affect the cohesion of the stone. I submitted to microscopic examination a portion of a crumbling urn of white marble in Canongate Churchyard. The tomb bears a perfectly fresh date of 1792 cut in sandstone over the top; but the marble portions are crumbling into sand, though the structure faces the east, and is protected from vertical rain by arching mason-work. A small portion of the marble retaining its crust was boiled in Canada balsam, and was then sliced at a right angle to its original polished surface. By this means a section of the crumbled marble was obtained, which could be compared with one of the perfectly fresh stone (see fig. B). From the dark outer amorphous crust, with its carbonaceous and other miscellaneous particles, fine rifts could be seen passing down between the separated calcite granules, which in many cases were quite isolated. The black crust descends into these rifts, and likewise passes along the cleavage planes of the granules. Towards the outer surface of the stone, immediately beneath the crust, the fissures are chiefly filled with a yellowish structureless substance, which gave a feeble glimmering reaction with polarised light, and enclosed minute amorphous aggregates like portions of the crust. It probably consists chiefly of sulphate of lime. But the most remarkable feature in the slide was the way in which the calcite granules had been corroded. Seen with reflected light they resembled those surfaces of spar which have been placed in weak hydrochloric acid to lay bare enclosed crystals of zeolites. The solution had taken place partly along the outer surfaces, so as to produce the fine passages or rifts, and partly along the cleavage. Deep cavities, defined by intersecting cleavage planes, appeared to descend into the heart of some of the granules. In no case did I observe any white pellicle such as might indicate a re-deposit of

lime from the dissolved carbonate. Except for the veinings of probable sulphate just referred to, the lime, when once dissolved, had apparently been wholly removed in solution. There was further to be observed a certain dirtiness, so to speak, which at the first glance distinguished the section of crumbled marble from the fresh stone. This was due partly to corrosion, but chiefly to the introduction of particles of soot and dust, which could be traced among the interstices and cleavage lamellæ of the crystalline granules for some distance back from the crust.

It may be inferred, therefore, that the disintegration of the marble is mainly due to the action of carbonic acid in the permeating rain-water, whereby the component crystalline granules of the stone are partially dissolved and their mutual adhesion is destroyed. This process goes on in all exposures and with every variety in the thickness of the outer crust. It is distinctly traceable in tombstones that have not been erected for more than twenty years. In these which have been standing for a century it is, save in exceptionally sheltered positions, so far advanced that a very slight pressure suffices to crumble the stone into powder. But with this internal disintegration we have to take into consideration the third phase of weathering to which I have alluded. In the upright marble slabs it is the union of the two kinds of decay which leads to so rapid an effacement of the monuments.

(3.) *Curvature and Fracture.*—This most remarkable phase of rock-weathering is only to be observed in the slabs of marble which have been firmly inserted into a solid framework of sandstone, and placed in an erect or horizontal position. It consists in the bulging out of the marble accompanied with a series of fractures. This change cannot be explained as mere sagging by gravitation, for it usually appears as a swelling up of the centre of the slab, which continues until the large blister-like expansion is disrupted. Nor is it by any means exceptional; it occurs, as a rule, on all the older upright marble tablets, and is only found to be wanting in those cases where the marble has evidently not been fitted tightly into its sandstone frame. Wherever there has been little or no room for expansion, protuberance of the marble may be observed. Successive stages may be seen from the first gentle uprise to an unsightly swelling of the whole stone. This change is accompanied by fracture of the

marble. The rents in some cases proceed from the margin inwards, more particularly from the upper and under edges of the stone, pointing unmistakably to an increase in volume as the cause of fracture. In other cases the rents appear in the central part of the swelling where the tension from curvature has been greatest.

Some exceedingly interesting examples of this singular process of weathering are to be seen in Greyfriars' Churchyard. On the south wall, in the enclosure of a well-known county family, there is an oblong upright marble slab (Pl. XVI., A, measuring $30\frac{1}{4}$ inches in height, by $22\frac{3}{8}$ inches in breadth and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in thickness, and facing west. The last inscription on it bears the date 1838, at which time, of course, it was no doubt still smooth and upright. Since then, however, it has escaped from its fastenings on either side, though still held firmly at the top and bottom. It consequently projects from the wall like a well-filled sail. The axis of curvature is, of course, parallel to the upper and lower margins, and the amount of deviation from the original vertical line is fully $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, so that the hand and arm can be inserted between the curved marble and the perfectly vertical and undisturbed wall to which it was fixed. At the lower end of the slab a minor curvature to the extent of $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch is observable, coincident with the longer axis of the stone. In both cases the direction of the bending has been determined by the position of the enclosing solid frame of sandstone which resisted the internal expansion of the marble. Freed from its fastenings at either side the stone had assumed a simple wave-like curve. But the tension has become so great that a series of rents has appeared along the crest of the fold. One of these has a breadth of $\frac{1}{16}$ th of an inch at its opening.* Not only has the slab been ruptured, but its crust has likewise yielded to the strain, and has broken up into a network of cracks, and some of the isolated portions are beginning to curl up at the edges, exposing the crumbling decayed marble below. I should add that such has been the expansive force of the marble that the part of the sandstone block in the upper part of the frame, exposed to the direct pressure, has begun to exfoliate, though elsewhere the stone is quite sound.

* It is a further curious fact that the slab measures $\frac{1}{2}$ inch more in breadth across the centre, where it has had room to expand, than at the top, where it has been tightly jammed between the sandstone slabs.

More advanced stages of curvature and fracture may be noticed on many other tombstones in the same burying-place. One of the most conspicuous of these has a peculiar interest from the fact that it occurs on the tablet erected to the memory of one of the most illustrious dead whose dust lies within the precincts of the Greyfriars—the great Joseph Black. He died in 1799. In the centre of the sumptuous tomb raised over his grave is inserted a large upright slab of white marble, which, facing south, is protected from the weather partly by heavy overhanging masonry and partly by a high stone wall immediately to the west. On this slab a Latin inscription records with pious reverence the genius and achievements of the discoverer of carbonic acid and latent heat; and adds, that his friends wished to mark his resting-place by the marble whilst it should last. Less than eighty years, however, have sufficed to render the inscription already partly illegible. The stone, still firmly held all round its margin, has bulged out considerably in the centre, and on the blister-like expansion has been rent by numerous cracks which run, on the whole, in the direction of the length of the stone.

A further stage of decay is exhibited by a remarkable tomb on the west wall of the Greyfriars' Churchyard (Pl. XVI., B). The marble slab, bearing a now almost wholly effaced inscription, on which the date 1779 can be seen, is still held tightly within its enclosing frame of sandstone slabs, which are firmly built into the wall. But it has swollen out into a ghastly protuberance in the centre, and is, moreover, seamed with rents which strike inwards from the margins. In this and in some other examples the marble seems to have undergone most change on the top of the swelling, partly from the system of fine fissures by which it is broken up, and partly from more direct and effective access of rain. Eventually the cohesion of the stone at that part is destroyed, and the crumbling marble falls out, leaving a hole in the middle of the slab. When this takes place disintegration proceeds rapidly. Three years ago I sketched a tomb in this stage on the east wall of Canongate Churchyard (Pl. XVI., C). In a recent visit to the place I found that the whole of the marble had since fallen out.

The first cause that naturally suggests itself in explanation of the remarkable change in the structure of a substance, usually regarded as so inelastic, is the action of frost. White statuary marble is

naturally porous. It is rendered still more so by that internal solution which I have described. The marble tombstones in our graveyards are, therefore, capable of imbibing a relatively large amount of moisture. When this interstitial water is frozen, its expansive force, as it passes into the solid state, must increase the isolation of the granules and augment the dimensions of a marble block. I am inclined to believe that this must be the principal cause of the change. Whatever may be the nature of the process it is evidently one which acts from within the marble itself. Microscopic examination fails to discover any chemical transformation which would account for the expansion. Dr Angus Smith has pointed out that in towns the mortar of walls may be observed to swell up and lose cohesion from a conversion of its lime into the condition of sulphate. I have already mentioned that sulphate does exist within the substance of the marble, but that its quantity, so far as I have observed, is too small to be taken into account in this question. The expansive power is exerted in such a way as not sensibly to affect the internal structure and composition of the stone. And this I imagine is most probably the work of frost.

The results of my observations among our burial-grounds show that, save in exceptionally sheltered situations, slabs of marble, exposed to the weather in such a climate and atmosphere as that of Edinburgh, are entirely destroyed in less than a century. Where this destruction takes place by simple comparatively rapid superficial solution and removal of the stone, the rate of lowering of the surface amounts sometimes to about a third of an inch (or roughly 9 millimetres) in a century. Where it is effected by internal displacement, a curvature of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, with abundant rents, a partial effacement of the inscription, and a reduction of the marble to a pulverulent condition, may be produced in about forty years, and a total disruption and effacement of the stone within one hundred. It is evident that white marble is here utterly unsuited for out of door use, and that its employment for really fine works of art which are meant to stand in the open air in such a climate ought to be strenuously resisted. Of course I am now referring, not to the durability of marble generally, but to its behaviour in a large town with a moist climate and plenty of coal-smoke.

II. SANDSTONES AND FLAGSTONES.—These, being the common

building materials of the country, are of most frequent occurrence as monumental stones. Where properly selected they are remarkably durable. By far the best varieties are those which consist of a nearly pure fine siliceous sand, with little or no iron or lime, and without trace of bedding structure. Some of our sandstones contain 98 per cent. of silica. A good illustration of their power of resisting the weather is supplied by Alexander Henderson's tomb in Greyfriars' Churchyard. He died in 1646, and a few years afterwards the present tombstone, in the form of a solid square block of free-stone, was erected at his grave. It was ordered to be defaced in 1662 by command of the Scottish Parliament, but after 1688 it was repaired. Certain bullet marks upon the stone are pointed out as those of the soldiery sent to execute the order. Be this as it may, the original chisel marks on the polished surface of the stone are still perfectly distinct, and the inscribed lettering remains quite sharp. Two hundred years have effected hardly any change upon the stone, save that on the west and north sides, which are those most exposed to wind and rain, the surface is somewhat roughened, and the internal fine parallel jointing begins to show itself.

Three obvious causes of decay in arenaceous rocks may be traced among our monuments. In the first place, the presence of a soluble or easily removable matrix in which the sand grains are embedded. The most common kinds of matrix are clay, carbonates of lime and iron, and the anhydrous and hydrous peroxides of iron. The presence of the iron reveals itself by its yellow, brown, or red colour. So rapid is disintegration from this cause that the sharply incised date of a monument erected in Greyfriars' Church to an officer who died only in 1863 is no longer legible. At least $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch of surface has here been removed from a portion of the slab in 16 years, or at the rate of about three quarters of an inch in a century.

In the second place, where a sandstone is marked by distinct laminae of stratification, it is nearly certain to split up along these lines under the action of the weather, if the surface of the bedding planes is directly exposed. This is well known to builders, who are quite aware of the importance of "laying a stone on its bed." Examples may be observed in our churchyards where sandstones of this character have been used for pilasters and ornamental work and

where the stone, set on its edge, has peeled off in successive layers. In flagstones, which are merely thinly bedded sandstones, this minute lamination is often fatal to durability. These stones, from the large size in which slabs of them can be obtained, and from the ease with which they can be worked, form a tempting material for monumental inscriptions. The melancholy result of trusting to their permanence is strikingly shown by a tombstone at the end of the south burying-ground in Greyfriars' Churchyard. The date inscribed on it is 1841, and the lettering that remains is as sharp as if cut only recently. The stone weathers very little by surface disintegration. It is a laminated flagstone set on edge, and large portions have scaled off, leaving a rough, raw surface where the inscription once ran. In this instance a thickness of about $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of an inch has been removed in forty years.

In the third place, where a sandstone contains concretionary masses of different composition or texture from the main portion of the stone, these are apt to weather at a different rate. Sometimes they resist destruction better than the surrounding sandstone so as to be left as permanent excrescences. More commonly they present less resistance, and are therefore hollowed out into irregular and often exceedingly fantastic shapes. Examples of this kind of weathering abound in our neighbourhood. Perhaps the most curious to which a date can be assigned are to be found in the two sandstone pillars, which until recently flanked the tomb of Principal Carstares in Greyfriars' Churchyard. They were erected some time after the year 1715. Each of them is formed of a single block of stone about 8 feet long. Exposure to the air for about 150 years has allowed the original differences of texture or composition to make their influence apparent. Each column is hollowed out for almost its entire length on the exposed side into a trough 4 to 6 inches deep and 6 to 8 inches broad. As they lean against the wall, beneath the new pillars which have supplanted them, they suggest some rude form of canoe rather than portions of a sepulchral monument.

Where concretions are of a pyritous kind their decomposition gives rise to sulphuric acid, some of which combines with the iron and gives rise to dark stains upon the corroded surface of the stone. Some of the sandstones of the district, full of such impurities, ought never to be employed for architectural purposes. Every

block of stone in which they occur should be unhesitatingly condemned. Want of attention to this obvious rule has led to the unsightly disfigurement of public buildings.

III. GRANITES.—In Professor Pfaff's experiments, to which I have already referred, he employed plates of syenite and granite, both rough and polished. He found that they had all lost slightly in weight at the end of a year. The annual rate of loss was estimated by him as equal to 0·0076 mm. from the unpolished, and 0·0085 from the polished granite. That a polished surface of granite should weather more rapidly than a rough one is perhaps hardly what might have been expected. The same observer remarks, that though the polished surface of syenite was still bright at the end of not more than three years, it was less so than at first; and in particular, that some figures indicating the date, which he had written on it with a diamond, had become entirely effaced. Granite has been employed for too short a time as a monumental stone in our cemeteries to afford any ready means of measuring even approximately its rate of weathering. Traces of decay in some of its felspar crystals may be detected, yet in no case that I have seen is the decay of a polished granite surface sensibly apparent after exposure for fifteen or twenty years. That the polish will disappear, and that the surface will gradually roughen as the individual component crystals are more or less easily attacked by the weather, is of course sufficiently evident. Even the most durable granite will probably be far surpassed in permanence by the best of our siliceous sandstones. But as yet the data do not exist for making any satisfactory comparison between them.

[Note added 21st May 1880. Since the preceding paper was written, I have had an opportunity of examining the condition of the monumental stones in the graveyards of a number of towns and villages in the north-east of Scotland, where the population is sparse and where comparatively little coal-smoke passes into the atmosphere. The marble tablets last longer there than in Edinburgh, but show everywhere indications of decay. They appear to be quite free from the black or grey sulphate-crust. They suffer chiefly from superficial erosion, but I observed a few cases of curvature and fracture. As a contrast to the universal decay of the marble tombstones, reference may be made to the remarkable durability of the clay-slate which has been employed for monumental purposes

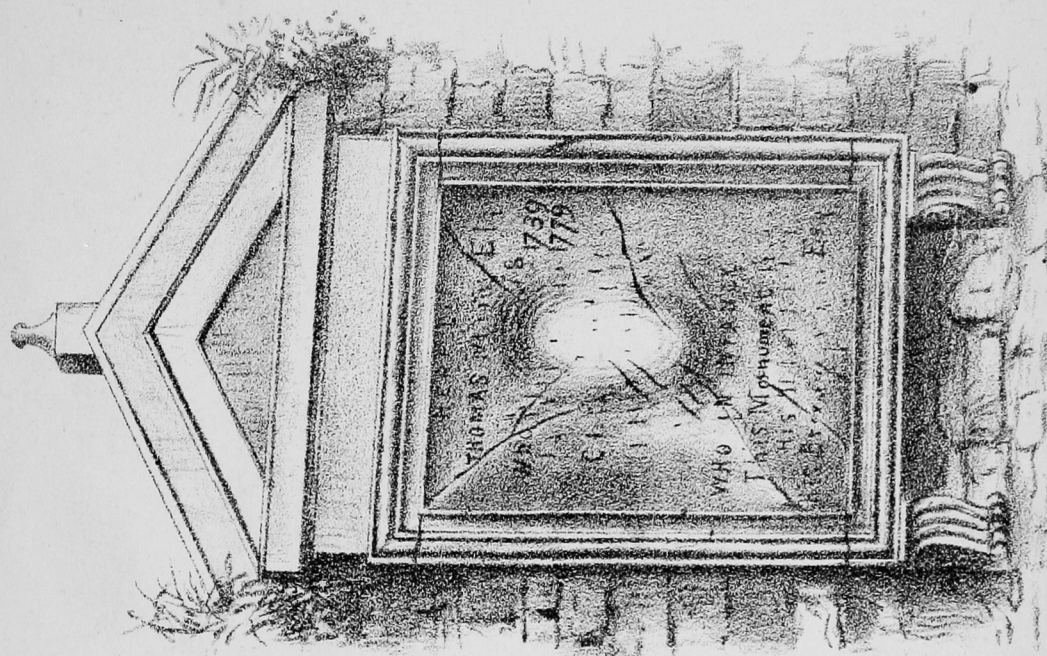
in Aberdeenshire. It is a fine-grained, rather soft rock, containing scattered cubes of pyrites, and capable of being readily dressed into thin smooth slabs. A tombstone of this material, erected in the old burying-ground at Peterhead, sometime between 1785 and 1790, retains its lettering as sharp and smooth as if only recently incised. Yet the stone is soft enough to be easily cut with the knife. The cubes of pyrites have resisted weathering so well, that a mere thin film of brown hydrous peroxide conceals the brassy undecomposed sulphide from view. The slate is slightly stained yellow round each cube or kernel of pyrites, but its general smooth surface is not affected. The lapse of nearly a century has produced scarcely any change upon this stone, while neighbouring tablets of white marble, 100 to 150 years old, present rough granular surfaces and half-effaced though still legible inscriptions.]

2. On a Realised Sulphurous Acid Steam-Pressure Thermometer, and on a Sulphurous Acid Steam-Pressure Differential Thermometer. By Sir William Thomson.

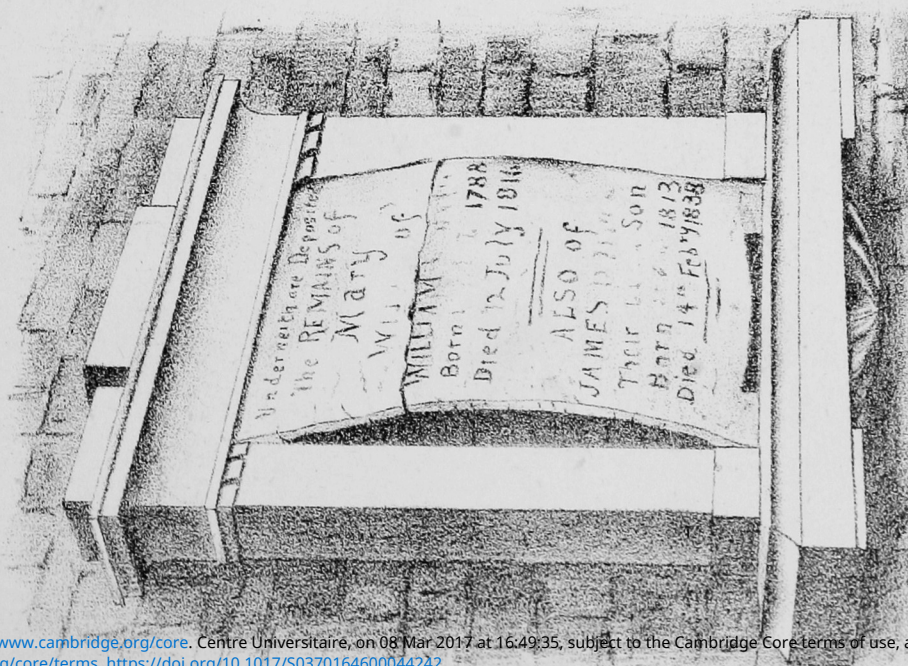
A sulphurous acid steam-pressure thermometer, on the plan described in my communication on the subject to the Royal Society of March 1, has been actually constructed, with range up to 25° C., but not yet in a permanent form. The slight trials I have been able to make with it give promise that, in respect to sensibility and convenience for practical use, it will most satisfactorily fulfil all expectations, and have given some experience in respect to the overcoming of difficulties of construction, from which the following instructions are suggested as likely to be useful to any one who may desire to make such an instrument :—

(1.) The sulphurous acid steam thermometer might more properly be called a cryometer than a thermometer, because it is not very convenient, except for measuring temperatures lower than the atmospheric temperature at the place and time of observation ; for, it must be remarked, that the thermometric substance, that is to say, the infinitesimal layer of liquid and steam of sulphurous acid at the interface between the two in the bulb in the annexed drawing (fig. 1), must be at a lower temperature than any other part of the space of bulb and tube between it and the mercury

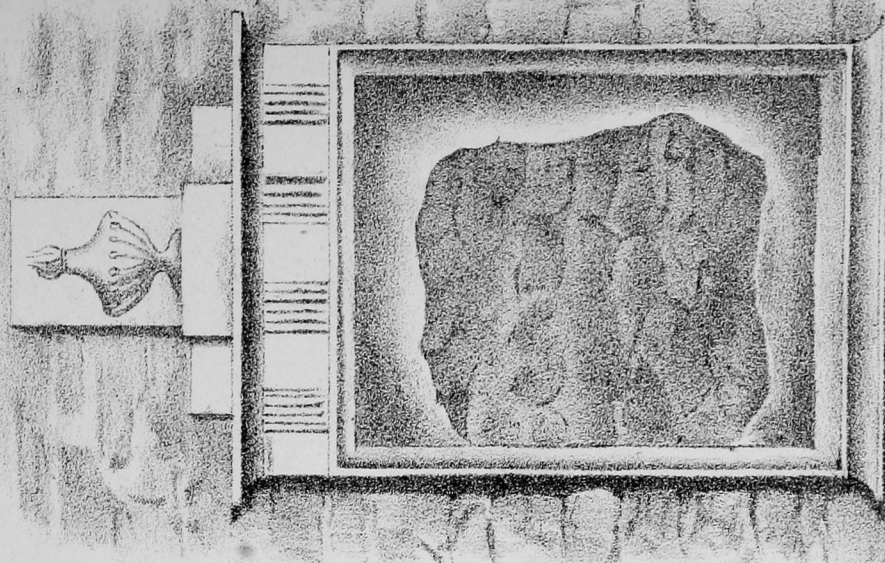
To illustrate Prof. Geikie's Paper on Rock-Weathering



B



A



C