

XIX.—*Observations on the Celtic Megaliths, and the contents of Celtic Tombs, chiefly as they remain in the Channel Islands, by* FREDERICK COLLINGS LUKIS, M.D. *In a Letter to the* VISCOUNT MAHON, *President.*

Read Feb. 24, March 3 and 10, 1853; and Jan. 26, 1854.

MY LORD,

FEW of the structural works of former years require more patient and careful investigation than those generally attributed to the Celtic People.

It is very remarkable that, while some classical writers have alluded to their religious rites and ceremonies, they scarcely notice the stone structures, and are silent on their sepulchres and modes of burying the dead.

The attention of the moderns has only recently been directed to them; yet, from their size and prominent situations, they constantly obtruded distinctly, though in vain, upon the path of every antiquary. We now pay the penalty of this inattention, in that so few remain for examination; and severely, in that perhaps all have been more or less ransacked without care or record, and injured by the hand of time.

It is also much to be regretted that of late years many individuals, tempted by an unprofitable cupidity or an ignorant curiosity, have frequently assisted in the destruction of the little that had escaped the general wreck, which otherwise had proved of immense interest to the archæologist: we may add to these the annihilating sway of modern agricultural and engineering operations.

After a laborious exploration of about forty of these sepulchres in the Channel Islands, and some in England and in France, I have found a very remarkable similarity pervading all, as though a definite architectural law had regulated their construction in these countries, and a precise plan had determined the mode of interment, according to the particular species of sepulchre.

It is evident that these structures were applied solely to this use; and, though a difference of opinion has been advanced, it is superfluous to insist further on so clear and palpable a fact. With reference to the popular appellation of "Druids' Altar," it may be said that the term has been applied to cromlechs and raised stones suppositively, in ignorance of their real nature; for a moment's

reflection on their utter inapplicability to sacrificial purposes would have dispelled the illusion. True, there is an imposing solemnity in these raised masses. How few but have loved to rest near the venerable grey "inclined stone," and cherished visions of the dimly remote age of their erection; and in these dreamy wanderings have summoned to the view a thousand busy scenes and ideal embodiments of the many tales we all have heard! Thus almost unwillingly impressed, it was not without an oft-accusing sense of sacrilege that we thrust the first spade beneath our often-visited "inclined stone," and during the steady progress of investigation we were often compelled to acknowledge that our day-dreams of barbarous sacrifice, and writhing victims and yelling multitudes, were now for ever to be dispelled. No place of religious human sacrifice was here; it was evident we stood where mourners once had wept—where the last offerings and offices of affection had been bestowed and performed on departed relatives and friends—where the survivors had bewailed the common lot of all humanity—when they saw deposited in peace the mortal remains we now so ruthlessly disturbed.

Before detailing the results of these examinations, it may not be unadvisable to make a few observations on Celtic Megaliths in general.

In order to reduce the subject to a definite form, I have drawn up the following chart, which includes, in outline, a synopsis of the whole. It embraces only the outward remaining evidences of the ingenuity of that people in the mighty structures which they contrived to erect, with mechanical appliances of, no doubt, the rudest and the most elementary of which we can venture to form any idea. The object and contents of these structures we shall treat of hereafter.

CELTIC MEGALITHS.¹

ON PLAINS MORE OR LESS EXTENSIVE. (CHIEFLY CEREMONIAL.)

I. MAENHIR . . .	{	VII. MONOLITH ²	A single erect raised stone.	
		VIII. ORTHOLITH*	{ A single row, or broad line of erect raised stones.	{ The stones in contact.
		IX. PARALLELITH	Double lines of ditto.	{ The stones standing apart.
		X. CYCLOLITH†	{ Circle of erect distinct stones. concentric. Ceremonial.	{ Ditto.

COMMONLY ON HILLS AND ELEVATED SITUATIONS. (ENTIRELY SEPULCHRAL.)

II. DEMI-DOLMEN . . .	A large stone partly supported on one or sometimes two erect, raised, smaller: the sides open.
III. DOLMEN ³	A large stone entirely supported on two, three, or four erect, raised, smaller: the sides open.
IV. CIST-VAEN . . .	{ One, rarely two, large stones supported on several smaller horizontal or erect, raised: the sides closed. } Simple.
V. CROMLECH	{ Successive Dolmens in contact, forming one common chamber, with the props erect, raised: the sides closed, excepting at entrance. } Compound.
VI. PERISTALITH ‡ . .	Stones usually erect and sometimes contiguous; arranged circularly, oval, square, &c., always surrounding Monolith, sepulchral chamber or grave. Sometimes concentric.

From numerous accounts which have reached us, we have every reason to conclude that the same structures are to be found in most parts of the world. Cromlechs, Cists, Cycloliths, Peristaliths, &c., exist in Asia, Africa, and North America, and indicate that the Cromlech-building-people were the branches of one original stock. That they took with them, in their migrations, the same ideas, and preserved the same customs, as those whom we designate the Celtæ. And we find, further, that their modes of interment, and the types of their stone implements, were in every respect identical. We may scarcely conclude that different tribes practised and preserved identical customs, though the fact is possible; yet, when we examine the records of the earliest migrating nations, and their lines of transit, we do not find so much identity, or so rigid an observance of their original customs, as we may trace among the various ramifications of the Celtic people. We are induced to retain and apply the term Celtic to all those structures which present the same characters, wheresoever and in whatever country they may be found. Some modern writers have shown that a migrating people, quitting the high lands of Central Asia, at a very early period, soon divided and subdivided, passing in radiating lines to various countries, and conveying the same customs, whether for ceremonial, sepulchral, or domestic purposes.

The stone works of which we treat were not intended for indiscriminate uses; it is quite demonstrable that the ceremonial were perfectly distinct from the sepulchral. These latter will form, however, the chief subjects of this memoir, for they are necessarily more abundant, and are the true epitome of mankind, in pointing to the omnipresence of mortality.

In the Channel Islands, as in many much larger districts, there is a total absence of any structures of a simply ceremonial character, and indeed of these latter there are comparatively extremely few remaining specimens in any country.

We shall examine them in the order in which we place them in the chart, commencing with the

MONOLITH.

The most elementary and perhaps in consequence the most widely-diffused and long-retained memorial is a large tall stone, raised, not uncommonly, on its smaller end in an upright position. It may remain alone as a solitary beacon or aid to memory; thus fulfilling often more than one office, and often also in more modern times applied to purposes widely differing from its original. Maenhirs occupy situations which seem to indicate their memorial character as marking some spot

of note, now long lost to memory ; or as guide-stones (corrupted by imitation into the modern milestones) across a country which then possessed no road-ways. The headstones on modern graves may be the last remaining traces of their monumental office ; and, where they have been deified into Termini, represent the sacredness of land-marks, and not to be removed with impunity. The story of the intended temple on the Tarpeian rock records their inviolability ; and as boundary stones they still faithfully perform their duty from ages immemorial. When a Maenhir is surrounded by a ring of smaller stones, it is nearly in every instance ceremonial. Sometimes more than one are thus inclosed by the same ring.

The term Maen-hir is sufficient to designate a "long-stone," but does not allude to its position, number, or intention. We shall apply the term generally to all "long-stones" which were never intended in their erect position to support others, and divide it into four classes, as in the chart.

There are several notable examples in the Channel Islands, varying to the height of twelve feet and of proportionate width. They invariably stand singly and are not surrounded. Round the base of one in Guernsey was a flat floor composed of broken fragments of granite and shingle in a matrix of hardened clay, extending nearly twelve feet on all sides round the erect stone. In the loose soil which covered this floor were fragments of coarse Celtic pottery in small quantity.

This Monolith is about ten feet in height. A certain respect has preserved these imposing masses, though no name nor record is attached to any. Hoar-stones, when used merely as guidestones, are in general less elevated than those which we conceive to be, from their situation, intended as memorial or ceremonial ; hoar-stones are properly, as their name signifies, simply boundary-stones.^a

ORTHOLITH.

Maenhirs are sometimes arranged in lines. They then are placed close together, rarely in immediate contact, and generally of small size, proceeding to and from cromlechs or graves. The lines are sometimes straight, or they are more or less undulating. In Guernsey two cromlechs possess them, from one of which they extend in two directions about one hundred yards. Their exact use is not evident. It may be taken as a general rule that these lines which we name "Ortholiths"

^a Compare Genesis xxviii. 18, 22, memorial ; xxxi. 51, 52, boundary ; and xxxv. 14, 20, which is monumental : Levit. xxvi. 1, Deut. xvi. 22, ceremonial ; Judges ix. 6. Absalom's pillar, 2 Sam. xviii. 18. Pillar of witness or agreement, Isaiah xix. 19 ; Exodus xxiv. 4 ; Deut. vii. 5, xii. 3 ; Jos. iv. 5, xv. 6, xviii. 17 ; xxiv. 26, 27 ; 1 Sam. vi. 14, 15, 18, vii. 12, xx. 19 ; Pr. xxiii. 10 ; Jer. ii. 27.

are in some way connected with places of sepulture, of which however they do not appear to constitute any very necessary appendage. They more usually occur at the western extremity of cromlechs. On l'Ile aux Moines, in the Morbihan, may be seen a very remarkable example, though its immediate connexion with the grave or cromlech is not now evident. The wonderful lines of stones commonly known as Carnac, in Britany, are considered as Parallelitha, but at many points the parallelism is interrupted, and they are so unlike the Paralleliths of England and other countries, that considerable doubt may be raised as to their similar adaptation. In fact, the close proximity of the numerous splendid cromlechs, &c. converting the whole country into a vast cemetery, give it a very close resemblance to the Ortholith.

PARALLELITH.

These double lines of stones are of various lengths, and are straight or waved. The term is a near approximation to the truth. These double lines are not always parallel, neither along their whole length nor at every part of it. Those of Abury and on Dartmoor are of considerable extent, and in the former are formed of immense stones. Individual specimens only describe determinate figures, which have been supposed to constitute the varieties of the Dracontic, or serpent-folds, and to have been erected for serpent-worship.^a

It certainly does require some straining of the imagination to discover therein the Ophite hierogram; yet, if we adopt this opinion, we are induced naturally to ask at once, "Why should so very great dissimilarity exist between the principal hierograms as distinguishes those of Abury and Carnac?" When so much time, thought, and labour have been expended, we undoubtedly have just reason to expect a positive and definite form, expressing one common intention. And further, it has been advanced by the advocates of the Dracontic theory that here the Celts worshipped.

We learn from other sources, however, that the Druids, who were Celtic priests, performed their mystic rights in sacred groves and in secret places. These characters do not apply to Abury, nor Dartmoor, nor to Carnac, nor indeed to any of the situations of Celtic structures.

There is no Parallelith in the Channel Islands; yet we do not hence infer that there were no forms nor ceremonies of a religious character, but we have reason to suppose these singular works were in a great measure constructed as places of

^a Archæologia: Observations on the Dracontia, by the Rev. John Bathurst Deane.

assembly or deliberation for the principal portion of the tribe or people, and therefore not required by a small insular community.

CYCLOLITH.

That of Abury has two Paralleliths connected with it; that of Stanton Drew seems never to have had any. We find the stones that form the circle standing apart, which is not always the case when the circular arrangement was to be applied to sepulchral uses, as we shall hereafter have occasion to remark, in another division of the subject. These immense circles must have been places of convocation, and were better adapted than Paralleliths for the purpose. Here the priests and warrior chiefs appeared in public, but what the ceremonies were it is impossible to determine, for we rarely find two Cycloliths alike, as, for instance, the two above mentioned. One of the Paralleliths of Abury leads to Clatford Bottom, where its extremity incloses a Dolmen. To those who would entertain the Dracontic opinion, this seems figurative of death residing in the head of the snake!

Smaller circles of sepulchral character usually accompany Cycloliths, as those near Stanton Drew, and the Ring of Brogar, near the Stennis circle.^a There are others in Great Britain, but none in the Channel Islands.

It is worthy of remark, that Monoliths are constantly placed in the immediate vicinity, and in most cases on the east of Cycloliths. There is rarely more than one, which is sometimes perforated in some conspicuous part. Rude, rough blocks, are generally set round the Cyclolith, at some distance from each other and from it; then, beyond these, we sometimes find a ditch, and a rampart encircling the whole. Rarely is this arrangement to be found about the Peristalith, to be described hereafter. Arbor Low, Derbyshire, is of this character.

These four divisions of erect stones are commonly on plains, and in this respect differ from the next division of our subject, which is entirely of a sepulchral character, and in most instances on hills and elevated places.

SEPULCHRES.

The most primitive form of Celtic grave is a simple trench of three or four feet in length, by one or two in width, and a few inches in depth, with occasionally a rude floor of flat stones or pebbles, on which the remains are laid, and covered with a layer of light clay, or, as invariably occurs in the Channel Islands, a layer of

^a See Prehistoric Annals of Scotland, by D. Wilson, Esq., p. 109, *et seq.*

three or four inches in thickness of limpet-shells only, the whole being concealed by a large, rude block of granite. Coarse pottery, clay and stone beads, flint arrow-points, and a few flakes, generally accompany the remains, which are usually completely reduced to an amorphous state from the slight protection thus afforded. In the island of Herm the deposits were however tolerably well preserved, being surrounded by a close, compact sand.

This stone is in other cases lifted at one end upon another smaller stone, and this arrangement constitutes what is known as the

DEMI-DOLMEN,

which from slight accidents is easily thrown down, and all traces of the original simple structure at once for ever lost. Still, however, on carefully examining the spot, some disturbance or depression of the surface-soil near the remaining support (supposing the fallen cap-stone to have disappeared) will indicate to the practised eye the former existence of the monumental structure.

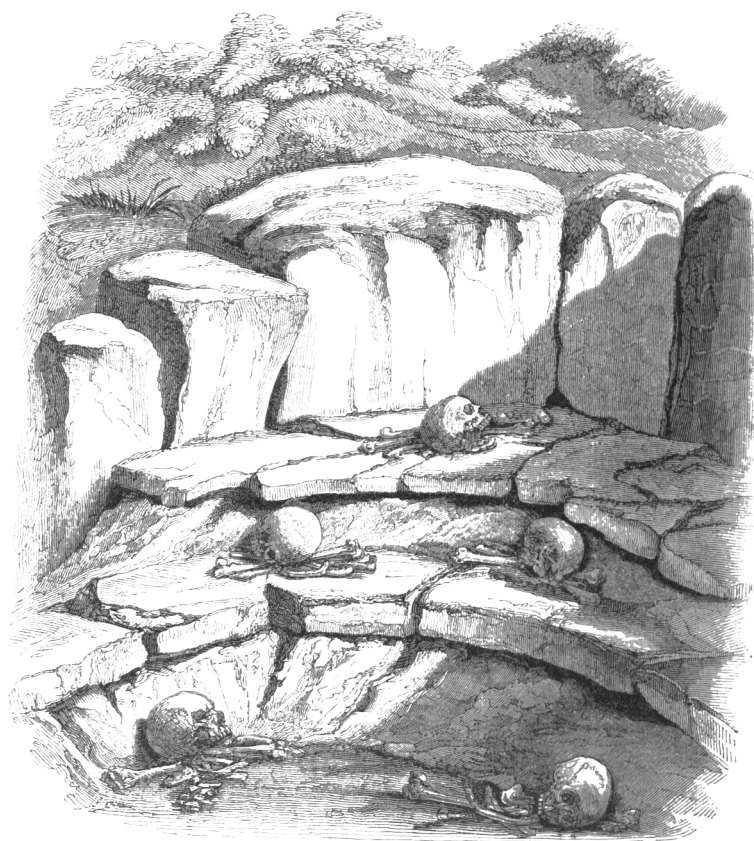
Few specimens are found in any country, in consequence undoubtedly of the above causes, and we are led to discover their former presence only from existing local names. One is still to be seen in Guernsey quite perfect, the raised or supported stone weighing several tons. From that specimen we have taken pottery; the human remains were entirely indiscernible. In France and elsewhere many are still remaining. There are several in Wales and Britany. The term is given by the French authors, and well defines the "Half-table-Stone."

DOLMEN.

This is a table-stone, that is to say, the top stone is entirely raised from the ground, on two or more supports or props, after the manner of a table. The number of props rarely exceeds four; the sides, therefore, are always more or less open between the props, and the capstone is in general very large. We lay stress upon the open condition of the sides, which serves to distinguish it from the next structure; and we repeat that the Dolmen consists of a large, somewhat flat stone, entirely supported on two or more upright single shafts, leaving free open spaces between these. By carefully considering these specific characters, we shall the better understand the varieties hereafter, which occur in later periods. There are many Dolmens in America, as well as in most parts of the Old World from Northern Europe to Southern Asia. The Channel Islands are now without them.

CISTS.

These are small inclosures of erect and recumbent supports in contact at the edges, covered by one or, rarely, two large flat stones. The shape of the inclosure frequently depends on that of the covering-stone. Cists may be found attached to the sides of Cromlechs, or be grouped together, or may be detached and at a distance from any other structure. The sides, which are entirely closed, may be of vertical props, always of single shafts, or horizontal recumbent supports, or be combined in the same specimen.



The mode of interment was invariably by first removing the capstone, and lowering the contents into the interior. Successive layers thus occur, and are separated by flat stones, as seen in our engraving. Two and three layers may thus be found in the same cist. The capstone was undoubtedly replaced after each interment. From the more perfect protection thus afforded the contents

these are usually well preserved. We have taken from them complete skeletons, and stone celts retaining the most beautiful polish. In a small cist in the island of Herm, were skulls only.

We now observe a new feature, intended to afford additional security and permanence to the structure, in a bank of earth heaped up against the supports outwardly, to within a few inches of the under surface of the capstone. This earth-work is the first indication of those lofty tumuli which were raised by politer nations of the world, and of the barrows of other incursive and nomadic tribes. We shall see how the raising of mounds has affected the laws of Celtic architecture, and introduced a debased order. While navigation was still in its infancy, and Celtic canoes of hollow trees were risked upon the waters and seas of Britain, the native population respected the resting-places of their departed countrymen, and, trusting confidently to this feeling, gave only slight protection to their tombs; but as warlike strangers succeeded in disturbing the peace of the community, they buried their dead more securely; and ultimately, as though in imitation of other nations, raised over these megalithic vaults, high mounds of earth intermixed with small stones and fragments.

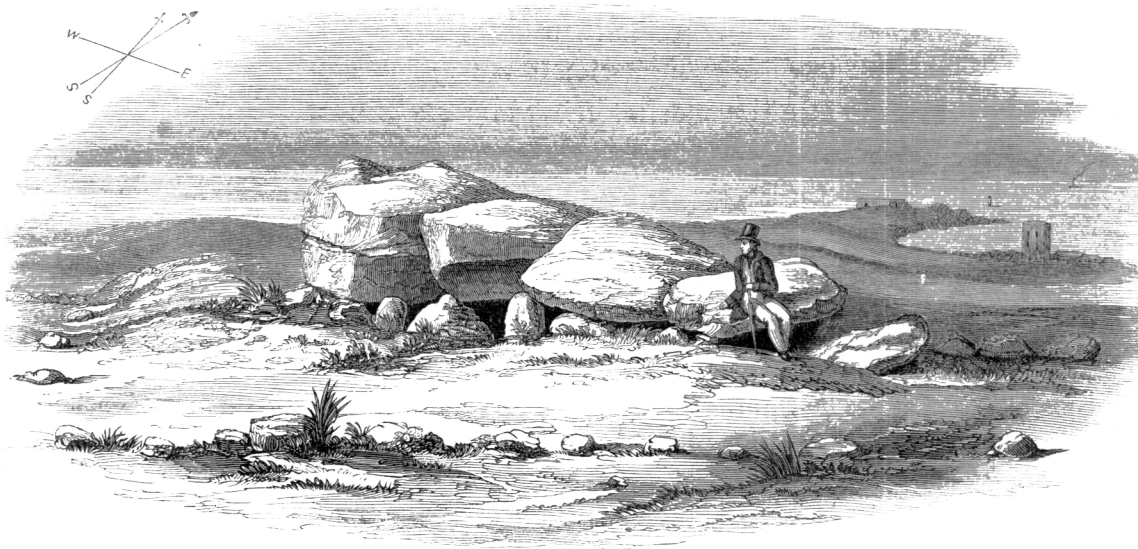
Cairns of stone alone, were the tributary and respectful offerings of all who passed the grave; every passer by threw on the heap his small contribution. As, however, these cairns are not to be found in all countries where megaliths abound, we have not included them in this division of our memoir.

We now pass on to those wonderful efforts of rude mechanical architecture well known by the general term

CROMLECH

—a name frequently applied to megalithic structures, without recognition of their specific characters. This indiscriminate nomenclature has been the source of much confusion: we therefore restrict the term to a vault formed of vertical single stones or shafts, in close lateral approximation or actual contact, supporting a roof of large transverse blocks, the flatter surface of which, as of the shafts, is turned towards the interior. The area is usually of a long triangular shape, having the apex directed always towards the east in those of the Channel Islands, and with few exceptions to this rule in other countries. In fact, so continually do we find this orientation in those Cromlechs which are not concealed beneath tumuli, that we believe it was intentional on the part of the builders. In large Cromlechs, it often occurs that the props, at least many of them, have their smaller extremity downwards. As the capstones lie transversely to the length of the structure, they,

therefore, individually lie lengthwise, from north to south. It would seem quite unnecessary to mention this, did we not observe the reverse, very usually, in the direction of the covering stones of Cists. These are slight and trivial facts, possibly, yet become interesting from their almost constant occurrence. They are thus placed, without exception, in these islands, which, with the orientation of Cromlechs, do not appear the results of accident. The eastern narrow portion of the Cromlech is sometimes found to be prolonged into a kind of avenue, and, this being the only entrance into the vault, rendered it necessary to creep into it in a stooping posture, or actually, in some cases, with difficulty on hands and knees. The size of this avenue is very rarely more than three feet in height by two in width. It is difficult to form an idea of the mode by which the dead were introduced, or even the urns to accompany them, some of which were eighteen inches in height; and we have taken more than one of this size from beneath Cromlechs in Guernsey and Britany. But the question receives some solution when we find that only the bones, burnt or not, were thus to be introduced. The western extremity was invariably, like the sides, at all points closed by large props supporting the top stone, which at this end is also always considerably the greatest.



This, as well as the easterly direction, may be seen in the accompanying view of the exterior of the Great Cromlech, situated on the summit of a hill, near the plain of l'Ancrese, Guernsey.

This large Cromlech is forty-five feet in length by fifteen wide, and nearly eight in height within the area at the western end, so that a tall man, while it was empty, might freely walk with his hat on beneath this stone: from this point it gradually contracts on all sides towards the eastern end. This space is covered by five larger and two smaller blocks of granite: the western is computed to weigh about thirty tons; it is nearly seventeen feet long, ten and a half wide, by four and a half in thickness. The second is sixteen feet long, the third again smaller, and so they gradually diminish to the seventh: they are not in contact. A very imperfect description of this Cromlech is given in the *Archæologia*, vol. xvii. p. 254, when it was first discovered. It was then most imperfectly explored, through a fear of its insecurity, which, however, was found to have been entertained without reason. It was left filled and partly buried beneath the drift sand of the neighbourhood till the year 1837, when, after considerable labour, it was emptied of its accumulated sand, and its primæval contents exposed. In this state the interior



presented the appearance seen in the engraving, which gives a very accurate view of the huge stones, the size of the vault, and the two layers on the floor consisting of human bones, urns of coarse red and black clay, stone and clay amulets and beads, bone pins, &c., the layers, like those of cists, being separated by flat fragments of granite: the lower stratum was laid on a rude pavement on the natural

soil. The remains were deposited in a singular manner: the unburnt bones occupied either end of the floor, the middle third being allotted to those which had been submitted to the action of fire; not a vestige of charcoal was to be detected with them. The urns in this part were of remarkably rude shape and material. But the bones of individual skeletons were heaped together confusedly, and each heap surrounded by a small ring of round flat pebbles: the urns were near or within the rings. Some heaps consisted, as it were, of parents' and childrens' ashes mingled together, for within the same ring of pebbles were the bones of individuals of all ages. In this Cromlech were found many more bones of very young children than in any other that has come under our notice. We may mention, that the human remains presented less appearance of decay in this Cromlech than in any other, which may account for this fact being observed. The lower stratum only contained the burnt bones, among which, likewise, a few of the boar, that is to say tusks only, were seen: whether these had been worn as trophies of the chase, and consigned to the fire with the hunter's dead body, may remain a speculation. Be it here remarked, once for all, that in no instance was the urn used to contain the ashes of the dead; it, no doubt, was filled at the time of sepulture with liquid or food of some kind, which was so universal a practice. Four flat discs from six to twelve inches in diameter and one in thickness, were found in this Cromlech, formed of the same ware as the urns, and doubtless served as lids to some, which have broad flat edges. As these lids are furnished with central handles, it is reasonable to infer that the urns were visited and replenished from time to time, for it must be recollected that the Cromlech was a hollow vault or catacomb. About one hundred and fifty urns were removed from this spot; some were quite entire, but many broken have been restored.

As time and ages elapsed, and, possibly, as all memory of the departed became lost, their remains were removed to make room for other. These so removed were placed in the intervals between the props, and were lost to sight; but further space being again required, a quantity of limpet-shells, amounting to many cart-loads, and a little yellow clay, were strewn upon the original deposit, and flat stones, as we have seen, were placed over all to form a new floor. When these floors and deposits occupied so much space as to prevent an easy ingress for further interments, the area was increased by additional side-props and capstones, placed always at the eastern side, where, the entrance being removed or enlarged, made the additional portion appear almost an integral part of the original structure.

Every Cromlech did not readily admit of this, and either a chamber or a cist

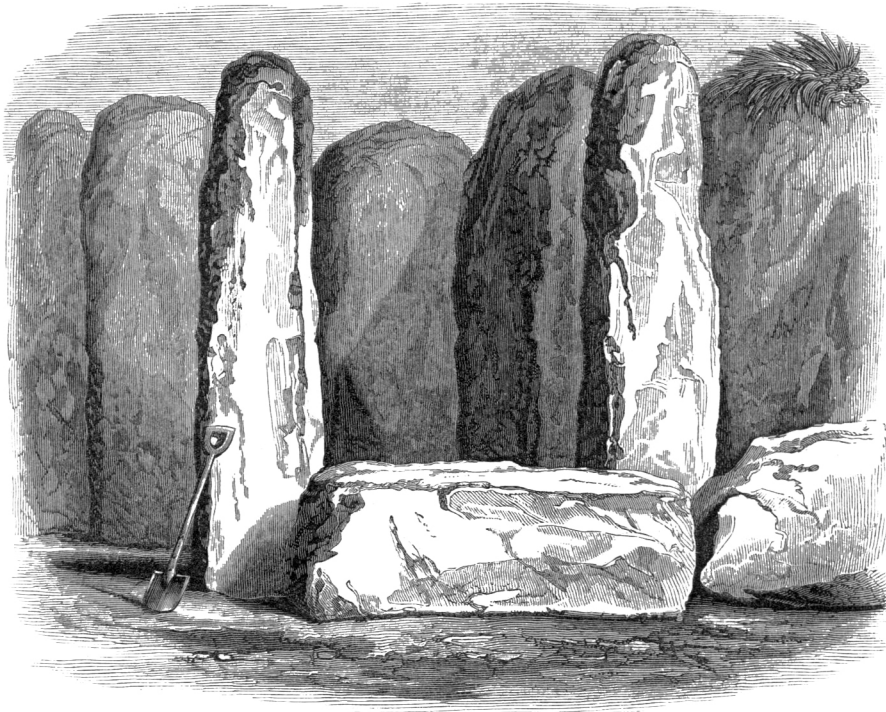
was attached to the side, or, where additions had been made, the cists were always placed in contact with the newer portion.

Three successive portions were added to the Cromlech called "Dehus," in Guernsey, and to these were laterally attached four separate cists. We have already seen the interior of one in our first illustration. The following represents a curious and unique form of interment in another.



Three flat small stones placed in a triangular manner inclosed a space containing broken bones of the fore part of the chest, with the clavicles and a vertebra (this last may subsequently have fallen among them by accident), and the whole was covered by a hemispherical, bowl-like urn inverted over them. This urn is again represented in p. 255. It would appear, that in this very unusual manner had been deposited the heart and contents of the chest, rudely removed with portions of the parietes. This was found at the lowest part of the cist, at the base of one of the props. Besides the chambers and cists intended to afford additional room, there are, not uncommonly, certain

recesses of large size communicating freely with the Cromlech, as the two, at least, which are opposite, in Weland Smith's Cave, several in Britany, &c., and as in a remarkable instance in St. Clement's parish in Jersey. This is on the south side; and the entrance from the main Cromlech is bounded by two remarkable pillars, at the bases of which a long transverse, somewhat rectangular, block extends from one to the other: see the Engraving. In all the examples of subsequent additions, a transverse block lies in this way, unless the division be otherwise evident. The two pillars appear to have been reduced by rough hammering to the same height, and probably supported a large capstone, which partly covered the recess.



In all the Cromlechs in which the animal remains were discernible, we have found the bones of fishes, especially the hard palate of the labrus, which fish is so readily caught from the rocks round the islands; also those of oxen, goats, and the boar. These were always found lying on the upper layer of remains, or had become intermixed with these by subsidence and disturbance at some remote period. Burnt granite querns were with the burnt bones.

Nothing was found within the urns, excepting the limpet-shells and yellow clay in which they had been embedded; in one very perfect urn, was a slight incrusta-

tion of a dark, resinous appearance, giving off when burnt dense smoke without smell, and leaving considerable earthy residuum : the quantity was insufficient to be further tested.

No metallic instrument nor ornament, with one exception, was discovered, nor even indications of the knowledge or use of metal. The exception was that of a kind of armlet of a highly decomposable alloy of copper, which was found with one of jet formed of a single piece. The former was a spring of nearly half an inch in thickness, the ends terminating in knobs of an oval, compressed form, somewhat more than an inch in the long diameter. The latter ornament was thin, an inch and a half in width, sufficiently large to slip over a female hand and arm ; the flat surface scored with chequered lines, much resembling the patterns on some of the urns, and perforated at four points with a depression in each to receive, apparently, a stone.

A singular interment in a small lateral cist on the north side of the Cromlech "Dehus," in Guernsey, consisted of two skeletons kneeling side by side, the face of one directed northward, and of the other southward. In this instance, the constant rule of osseous interment was departed from, as living or fresh bodies only could have assumed that attitude. The skulls were completely fractured, possibly only from decomposition, as they were nearer the surface, the other parts being deeper necessarily, in a bed of limpet shells introduced around them at the time of interment. As is usual in well-made cists, the shells and bones were comparatively perfect. The floor on which the skeletons knelt was formed of two small blocks of granite, and nothing else was found within the cist, which was just large enough to hold two such bodies, the heads of which must at first have been in contact with the capstone.

We have remarked above, that into the spaces between the lower ends of the props, bones and urns were inserted without order, as though they had been removed from their first resting-places on the floor. It is unnecessary to mention that no pebbles accompanied them.

From these secret hiding-places, which were only discovered by minute exploration, the most complete urns were taken ; the props affording them constant protection and relieving them of the pressure of the superincumbent substances.

Among the burnt bones within the great Cromlech at l'Ancrese, was one exhibiting an unreduced dislocation of the right elbow of long standing, and the consequent formation of "false-joint." The teeth were much worn, especially the molar, and showed that "dental operations" were not much in vogue. Caries was more frequent in the molars, and these teeth in several cases had evidently fallen

from the jaw, from natural efforts alone, after much protracted suffering and abscess. We have a fine specimen of a maxilla, showing the effects of a recent abscess on one side, and the sympathetic action dislodging, by a similar process, the corresponding tooth on the other. The alveolar processes were considerably involved in the disease.

Anchylosis of the phalanges of the toes was not unusual, which led to the inquiry as to the sandals worn, but it seemed rather that some, if not all, the instances arose from injury.

All cromlechs do not contain burnt bones, and, with this exception, invariably contain the same sepulchral indications. Excavators must be careful to separate the layers, removing first all recent and mediæval introductions, and to examine the exterior earth against the props, or that which is raised in some specimens high over the stone-work, for relics discarded by former treasure-seekers.

PERISTALITH.

This term is applicable to every megalithic arrangement intended to surround monoliths, tombs, or graves.

They have acquired some celebrity from the Cyclopean magnitude of some of their constituent stones, and from the name of "Bardic circles," sometimes attached to them.

The most ordinary shape of the Peristalith is circular or nearly so, but it may be square or a parallelogram. It is placed round the cromlech, invariably in the Channel Islands, but not so in Britany, where, indeed, it appears to be somewhat rare, compared with the numerous structures of all the former kinds; it there, however, occurs apart from them.

This form of sepulchre is widely diffused over the old world, and is also found in North America. Like the former it is more frequently seen on hills, sometimes surrounding the apex or inclining on the side. Several may occupy the same hill.

The place of the interment within the inclosure is not always in the centre, nor always marked by a stone; and from the large diameter of some of these circles it is difficult to find the exact spot. Some Peristaliths are double or concentric, or inclosed by the Cyclolith, and are then not always sepulchral. Two are seen within the circle of Avebury; but more usually they accompany the Cyclolith at short distances, as the two near Stanton Drew, and the Stennis Circle near the Ring of Brogar.

The diameter of the Peristalith very rarely exceeds one hundred feet; when surrounding the Cromlech, generally sixty feet; less than this of course for the single

Cist, with every intermediate measurement to that of only four feet. The stones may be erect or recumbent and on their edge, sometimes partly buried beneath a circular ring of raised earth common to all the stones of the same circle; and they may stand wide apart or be in actual contact. In large specimens an entrance is observable on the east, being an interruption in the periphery, where an avenue of parallel stones often conducts into it. This very constant orientation, as before remarked, cannot be considered as accidental.

Tumuli are sometimes raised within them, or two or more barrows may together occupy the area; but the previously respected spot has, in this case, merely been preferred to another by those who raised the barrow, possibly when all memory of its nature had long been forgotten. The barrows here have no other connection with the far more ancient Peristalith than those within the Cyclolith of Abury, those about Stonehenge, or any other part of the country; in fact they are the work of quite another people. On digging beneath them and their contents the primeval deposit will be found totally distinct and widely different from the cinerary urn and metallic and glass ornaments of the barrow above it. A similar and unquestionable act of trespass may be seen on the eastern surface of the rampart which encircles the ceremonial Peristalith of Arbor Low, on which spot a large tumulus was raised, evidently long subsequently to the use of the Celtic structure.

The Peristalith called the Roll-rich, in Oxfordshire, has all the stones in contact, some of which, having their smaller extremity downwards, only come into contact a short distance above the ground. Several have been broken. Its diameters at right angles are 100 feet and 103 feet. In that of Dance Maine, Cornwall, the stones are far apart; as likewise in Mitchell's Fold, Salop, and in the collections of these circles on Abdon Burf and on the neighbouring hills, &c. A portion of one remains visible on the plain of l'Ancresse, Guernsey, the stones of which are in contact. When surrounding the Dolmens, Cists, or Cromlechs, they may be likewise far asunder or in close contact. We may mention here that the additions to the east end of Cromlechs never exceed the limits of the Peristalith.

It is a remarkable fact that all those Peristaliths which surround Cromlechs in the Channel Islands are of the same diameter, that is, sixty feet; we have observed the same measurement exactly in examples in England.

The Peristalith occurs round Cromlechs that have no investing mound, as well as round tumuli inclosing large megalithic chambers; and two or three have been observed at different elevations on the same tumulus, serving to indicate successive sepulchral sections of it. In some of the smaller specimens a large flat stone is to be found lying within the area, beneath which are the human remains. Under

one of these large stones in the Island of Herm were dry sand, limpet shells, and ten adult skulls, five being disposed at either end in an accurately quincuncial order. Pottery and other relics are found in Peristaliths, the former usually much broken and decomposed.

The Cromlech called "Le Couperon," in Jersey, lies within a parallelogram, and this is the only instance in these islands.

A Peristalith in Alderney, now much destroyed, was of an oval form, one hundred feet in the long diameter ; the stones were rough polygonal masses, scarcely to be recognised as standing on end.

Before we pass to the next form of sepulchre, we must observe certain additions to Cromlechs not yet noticed ; these are little cells, and cistlike chambers within the area, which are, probably, the work of subsequent races, or of the last of the cromlech-builders. They rarely contain any pottery or relics, but are merely sufficiently large, with some exceptions, to hold the bones of a few skeletons. A singular congeries of these has recently been discovered in Alderney, which we shall describe hereafter.

It is proper to mention also, here, that the singularly engraved patterns which adorn the interior surfaces of several Cromlechs in Wales and Britany, can scarcely be attributed to the early times of cromlech-building, but rather to those when metallic instruments had been introduced. It is extremely difficult to understand the possibility of effecting the elaborate designs on the stones of Gavr' Innis, in the Morbihan, for example, without the use of at least copper tools, as were used in very early ages by the Egyptians in their granite quarries. The quartz props in that Cromlech are untouched, but nearly every other is elaborately scored with curved, concentric and other undulating lines, and even the frequent repetition of the stone celt. The same kind of tool as to size and intention in every respect was used in engraving the lines on the prop of a Cromlech near Dyffryn, Wales. These are precisely of the same form and width as those in the former. The prop of the Cromlech called Dol-ar-Marchant, near Loc-Maria-ker, is elegantly engraved on its inner surface and edges, and the under surface of the large capstone is depressed, with the exception of the pattern, thereby left in relievo. May not these indicate an advance in the arts of the period ? In all these instances the stones were engraved previously to the construction of the Cromlech, for the scored lines pass over the tops of the props at the points in contact with the capstones ; this ornament was, however, only completed after the erection of the whole structure, for in the instance of Gavr' Innis the smaller stones wedged into the spaces between the principal have the scored

work continued in like manner over their surfaces. These smaller stones are inserted between the principal in all tumular Cromlechs, in order to keep the ground from falling into the interior. Of all the stones in this very remarkable Cromlech, none attracts so much attention as the second on the western side, in which a deep cavity is sunk, divided along the edge by two equidistant pillars. These being convex, protrude from the stone, showing that every other part of it has been purposely depressed.

The engraved designs are, perhaps, less regular, but while they resemble are much more idiographic than the tattooing of the New Zealander. Some are like the herring-bone; others are concentric flowing curves, or inclose the very representation of the stone celt, sometimes repeated more than once on the same stone, or surrounded by a sort of halo or glory.

The transverse blocks, on the floor, which we now know mark the several additions, are likewise engraved, as is also the square block occupying the whole floor of the northern end.

The careful reader will remark a difference in the compass-bearings of this Cromlech. Its opening is southward (according to our own observation on the spot), and its long diameter consequently north and south—a variation which we shall find indicates a debased order in Celtic architecture, and accompanies it at all points from the east, by the southwards, to the west, until, in the last direction, the tumular structure has lost all the specific characters of the genuine Cromlech, and is in fact a new, but imperfect, imitation or order of Megalithic architecture. To this latter class belong the Wellow Cave, Somersetshire, and New Grange, Ireland, &c. These, we conceive, appertain to what we designate a pseudo-Celtic or transition period, and are the connecting links between the stone graves beneath barrows and the true Celtic period.

PSEUDO-CELTIC OR TRANSITION PERIOD.

We have already had a glimpse sufficiently clear to enable us to understand those positive changes in the Megalithic architecture which lead irresistibly to the conclusion that a period existed synchronously with, or following hard upon, the decline of the Druidical hierarchy, during which the recollections, as it were, of former laws and customs still influenced the public mind. And that these recollections were not easily extinguished we have evidence in those which we have seen continued in our own time, and still to be ignorantly practised by the common people, as in the burning of the Yule-log, the remnant of the sacrificial

feast of Iuul, on the 24th of December, and the gladsome return from the woods and groves on the 1st of May, laden with leafy boughs and with the green mistletoe. Is the mistletoe still danced under, simply for the pleasing penalty incurred? or hung at tavern doors with holly and ivy boughs without meaning? Many a maiden places the wish she has breathed into a lock of wool, with it upon the tall grey stone, and, leaping down, expects its certain fulfilment. Still, in some parts of France and other countries, do they leap, with noisy revelling, through a public fire, each person taking away with him a piece of charcoal, as a charm till the next anniversary of the ceremony; and edicts of Christian rulers have prohibited the bowing in religious exercise before stocks and stones. So places of former resort have been purposely selected for the site of churches to lead the people more directly to believe in the true God; and with like feeling, though different intention, do we consider the gigantic undertaking known as

STONEHENGE

to have been contemplated and erected. At the first view, the huge chiseled pillars absorb the whole of our attention: but these we believe to be a second structure, raised round a former Peristalith of sepulchral character. This is concentric, as those on Abdon Burf, &c., and was, doubtless, a place of note and frequent resort. The stones are of a species of granite, and are unhewn blocks, of the same nature as those we have alluded to in the former part of this memoir. Round these sepulchral rings rise the rectangular columns with mortise and tenon for security, but perfectly dissimilar to anything we have hitherto seen. Yet the circumvallation, and the outstanding Monolith guarding the eastern only avenue, give it a close analogy to the ceremonial Cyclolith of previous ages. It is evident, therefore, that this was the labour of two distinct periods.

The diameter of the Peristalith, within the trilithons, corresponds exactly with that of others elsewhere.

We term it the Cyclotrilith, and shall not further describe this noble effort of early mechanical genius and skill. The barrows in and about the circumvallation, are independent of Stonehenge, or the uses to which it was applied.

TUMULI

may contain a single somewhat squared chamber in each, or several which open into one common passage.

The sides of the chambers are formed rarely of single shafts, and never of these alone, but of recumbent blocks piled one upon another, after the manner of a

Cyclopean wall. No lime mortar was ever used. The ceiling is formed of transverse blocks and smaller stones, so placed as to support the tumulus, which is in some specimens raised to a great height. These ceilings are more uneven than those of cromlechs, and occasionally are arched, or conical, as that of the eastern extremity of that at New Grange, Ireland, built like those again still more recent, and which are known as "Picts' houses." The narrow avenue is, likewise, analogous. In the Wellow Cave, the chambers are placed at the sides of one common avenue, and, in the so-called "Temple" removed from the town heights in Jersey are open towards a circular area, round which they are situated. The whole arrangement is peristalithic, and the chambers, by their position, interrupt the circle of upright contiguous stones which is continued between them. The common entrance is a long, extremely narrow covered avenue.

Kits Cotty house, Kent, though associated in the Chart with the Dolmen, appears, were it not for the absence of tumulus, to be one of these chambers, being similarly constructed, and having only one side open; in which respect it differs from the Dolmen.

A dry wall of closely fitting stones secured the opening and prevented the intrusion of the tumulus, and at the same time facilitated the introduction of occasional interments. In Alderney there are some "*allées couvertes*" still closed in this manner at both ends.

The roofs of the chambers in the Wellow Cave are rarely, if at any point, in contact with the sides, which are formed of slabs lying on edge; smaller stones are placed on these, on which again the capstones rest.

It is extremely difficult to understand how the engravings in Gavr' Innis could be ornamental, or of what other use they could be, and the same may be said of those in the structure at New Grange, for the interior was at all times perfectly dark. In the former, except at the northern end, it is utterly impossible to stand upright, the extreme height there being five feet ten inches, and not likely to have been continually illuminated, though a very small lamp may have been kept burning as a perpetual fire in the hollow stone before mentioned. Even had this been the custom, how very little of the mysterious gloom had been dispelled, how little of the tedious labour of years had been revealed! And then, its limits were further contracted by its contents. At the northern end is a square chamber, over which the highest point of the tumulus is raised, which declines towards the south.

The covered avenues, "*allées couvertes*," of the French writers, before alluded to, lie northwards and southwards. Alderney contains several, and many have

been entirely destroyed. In the interior of one, explored this year (1853), a considerable surface of the floor had been previously cleared of the first deposits, which were thrown confusedly upon the undisturbed portion, the urns being broken and their fragments lying about in all directions. Upon the cleared floor were observed several cells, each about a foot square, and flat stones, placed on edge, forming the sides or septa of two contiguous cells, each covered by a similar flat thin sand-stone, somewhat larger, and these lids laid in an imbricated manner. Other flat similar stones, strewed about, suggested the former existence of more of these box-like cells. The contents consisted of a skull in each, with a few bones, all unburnt, the long bones frequently protruding between the lids and sides. No pottery nor a trace of relic was to be discovered, though fragments of numerous urns lay in the primeval deposit around. These cells occupied a space on one side of the interior, and were evidently the work of subsequent inhabitants of the island. This small island, which is the nearest of the cluster to the coast of France, being within a few miles of that near Cherbourg, has for successive ages been used as a burial-place, doubtless by many of the occupants of that part of the coast as well as its own. There appears to have been a large Celtic population, for their works are extensive and numerous; their stone celts and implements of all kinds exceed, comparatively with the size of the island, the number found in any other. Here, for a subsequent race, was an extensive factory of bronze war-like weapons; we have seen the crude metal and the castings. Stone graves and barrows still furnish beautiful and perfect specimens. Roman red ware, with elegant devices and makers' names, may be taken in some districts at every step, and, narrow as its limits are, it is nevertheless a wide field for the antiquary. There are no cairns of a sepulchral character in these islands, and the natural rocks alluded to in the Chart are too well known to require further comment.

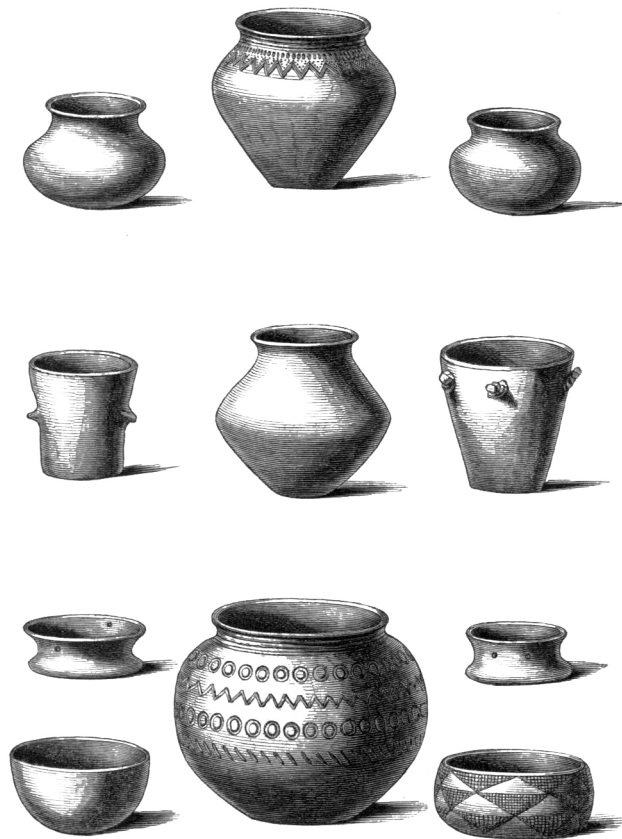
CELTIC URNS.

We present outlines of a few of such as were exhumed during the previously-mentioned explorations.

Of their forms there are four principal, viz. straight-sided, concave, convex, and bell-shaped. The two former are in general thick, coarse, and uneven; the convex are of a finer ware; and the bell-shaped by far the most elegant and well-finished and somewhat thinner than the convex. The patterns likewise follow the same order, and in the latter are the most minute. These seem made by impressions of twisted narrow thongs, and some appear to be filled with white encaustum.

The general colours are light brick red, yellow, and black. They have all been

submitted to the action of fire directly applied to the base, in the process of hardening and perfect baking. None were only sun-baked, which effect were impossible in these climes. The lower parts therefore are always the most reddened, and the upper margin generally black, proving that no oven was ever used in the process. The potter's wheel does not appear to have been known, but to some a certain amount of slow rotation, as might be given by one smooth flat stone upon another, is supposed to have been adopted: this is a point of much value in determining

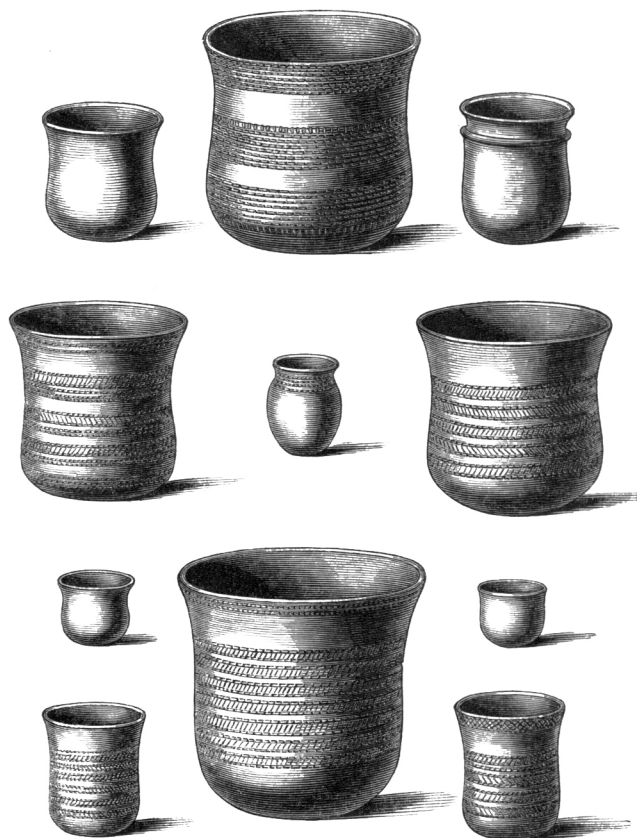


the period to which even a small fragment belongs. These urns were solely intended to contain food, presents, or libations in honour of the dead. Not one was glazed. Many are furnished with two or more knobs for handles and also for ornament. These knobs are sometimes perforated with one or more holes, in general vertical, for suspension by a thin string.

Their capacities vary between that of two fluid ounces to that of at least four

gallons. Some have flat bases, but many are rounded. Thirty of the latter were taken from one cist in Guernsey.

The patterns resemble those of urns of the same period in most countries, and the borders were impressed or engraved with some pointed instrument. This was performed after a certain amount of consistence had been obtained by drying in the sun-light, which alone may account for the sharpness of the edges, previous to their exposure to a slow fire, over which they were baked.



We say that similar urns are to be seen in many extensive museums, but certainly very far short of the numbers which all countries afford.

Their general aspect, also, differs from those usually designated as "British urns," yet they are placed indiscriminately together. The reason that so very few are collected being, clearly, that the contents of Celtic tombs are always much broken and decomposed, in fact, too much injured to stimulate any desire to

restore them. Those few we have seen in the museums of France are like our own in every respect, but are also few in number.

We have spent many hours, after often a fatiguing day's work with spade and sieve, in patiently re-adjusting the dried fragments so collected, and thoughts of former amusements returned, when, in younger days, we conquered the difficulties of the "dissected map."

Appended is a list of the ornaments worn by this very primitive people.

Personal Ornaments.

Bone	{ Rings, being transverse sections of cylindrical bones.
	{ Beads, of various forms.
	{ Pins.
Stone	{ Flat, perforated discs of ollaris, sometimes scored.
	{ Beads of the same.
	{ Broad, flat discs, five inches in diameter, with large perforation, of serpentine. ^a
Clay	{ Beads, plain and scored; some are two inches in diameter and one in thickness.
Jet	Bracelet.

Classification of Stone Implements.

Mullers or Rounded	{ Without lateral depressions.
Grindstones	{ With one or two depressions on each side.
	{ Flat, worn at an angle on one or both sides of the ends.
Long Stones	{ Cylindrical, rubbed, or fractured at one or both ends.
	{ Larger than the above, used as hammers, with marks or evidences of use on the sides of the larger end.
Grinding-troughs . .	Oval.
	{ With one or more surrounding grooves.
Weights	{ Perforated . { In the centre.
	{ At one or both extremities.
Hammer-head	{ Single . . . { Handle attached externally.
	{ Double . . . { Perforated to receive handle.
Adze-edge, or Point.	Celtic?

^a It is remarkable that those discs which we have seen in Normandy correspond precisely, in shape and size, with one taken fourteen feet below the surface, in a submarine forest on the coast of Guernsey. It is doubtful whether the metallic armlet, the only instance of metal, belongs to this period; and, with the jet bracelet, it must have been an importation.

Hatchet-head	{ Single }	Handle attached externally.
	{ Double . . . }	Perforated to receive handle.
Compound	{	Axe-hammer, occasionally very large, one side conic pointed.
	{	Axe-hatchet, one side conic pointed, curved, the other
	{	broad, flat, sharp. (Found in Guernsey, Jersey, and
	{	Sark.)
Stone Celts	{	Sides rough, rectangular. (Scandinavian type.)
	{	Somewhat constantly triangular. Sides smooth, rounded.
	{	(British and Gaulish type.)
Arrow and Spear	{	Flint. Quartz. Usually barbed on one or both sides.
Points	{	
Knife and saw, of flint.		
Flint flakes, in small quantity.		

I remain, my Lord,

Your Lordship's obliged and obedient Servant,

FREDERICK COLLINGS LUKIS, M.D.

Guernsey, 1853.