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MARCH, 1858.

ON THE REMAINS OF ANCIENT STONE-BUILT FORTRESSES AND HABITATIONS OCCURRING TO THE WEST OF DINGLE, COUNTY KERRY.

THE earliest vestiges, which are still in existence, of any dwellings of the inhabitants of Ireland consist generally of a simple circular mound of earth, surrounded by one or more fosses and earthen ramparts; but they are for the most part so defaced by time, that archæologists have passed them by as undeserving of attention. When, however, we find stone buildings of an equally remote period occurring in groups, surrounded by a massive circular wall, as if intended for warlike defences, and in detached houses comprising one, two, or three apartments more or less circular in plan, and all evincing considerable skill and ingenuity in their designs, the investigation of them is attended with no little interest; for it may throw some light on the social condition of a race, who occupied Ireland at a period so remote that scarcely a trace of their arts has been preserved to us, and even their specific name as a people has not been rescued from oblivion.

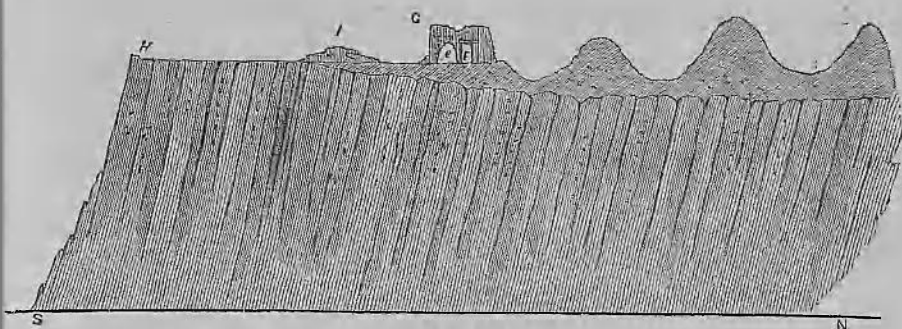
It was my good fortune, in the summer of 1856, while engaged on the Geological Survey of Ireland in the Dingle promontory, to meet with an extensive group of such buildings. They are known as Cahers and Cloghauns,¹ and had till then escaped the notice both of tourists and antiquaries. These buildings, amounting probably to seventy or eighty in number, are in the parishes of Ventry, Ballinvogher, and Dunquin, and occupy, in groups as well as singly,

¹ *Caher*, signifies a circular wall of dry masonry, as well as a fort or stone house of large size. *Cloghaun*, as here used, means a hut or house formed of

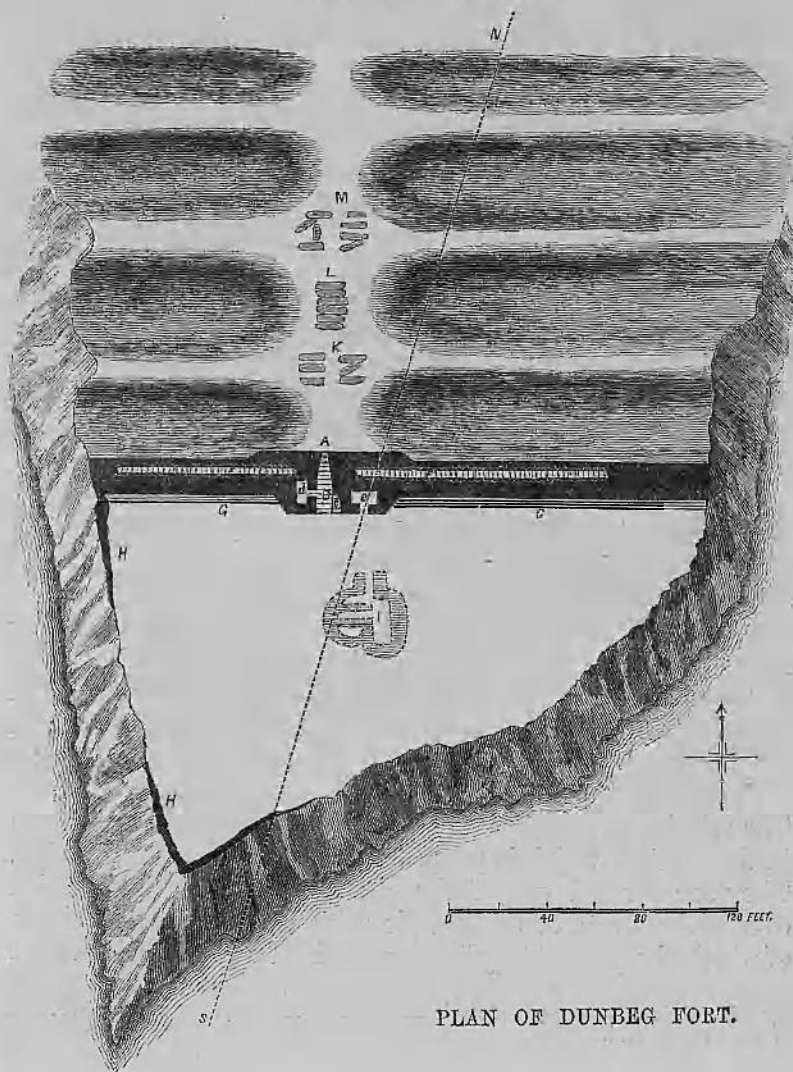
dry masonry, with the room or rooms dome-shaped, having each stone overlapping the other, and terminating in a single stone.

the narrow and gently sloping plateau, which extends along the southern base of Mount Eagle, from Dunbeg fort or Caher on the east, to the village of Coumeenoolle on the west, a distance of three miles. (See Plate I.) An ancient bridle-path, still in use, winds along the slope of the hill near the northern limit, and was the original road which led to them. They occur principally in the townland of Fahan : hence the collection of buildings which I am about to describe, may with propriety be called the ancient Irish city of Fahan. Proceeding west from the coast-guard station at Ventry along the bridle-road just alluded to, at a short distance south-east of Fahan village, we arrive at a group of small Cloghauns, or beehive-shaped huts, which appear to have served as an outpost, to guard the place on that side from any hostile surprise ; and close to them, nearer to the sea, are two groups of standing stones called Gallauns, which mark the eastern limit of the city.

The Caher or fort of Dunbeg, which protected the city of Fahan on the east, is the first of these ancient structures which requires a detailed description. By reference to the map, it will be seen that it lies due south of the present village of Fahan on the sea coast. This remarkable fort (a plan of which is given on the opposite page) has been formed by separating the extreme point of an angular headland from the main shore by a massive stone-wall, constructed without cement, from 15 to 25 feet in thickness, and extending 200 feet in length from cliff to cliff. This wall is pierced near its middle by a passage (B), which is flagged overhead, the doorway to which is at present 3 feet 6 inches high, 2 feet wide at top, and 3 feet at its present base, having a lintel of 7 feet in length ; as the passage recedes from the doorway it widens to 8 feet, and becomes arched overhead ; to the right hand, and constructed in the thickness of the wall, is a rectangular room (d)—perhaps a guard-room—measuring about 10 feet by 6 feet, and communicating with the passage by means of a low square opening, opposite to which, in the passage, is a broad bench-like seat (c) ; a second guard-room (e), similar to the one just described, has been constructed in the thickness of the wall, on the left hand of the main entrance, but unconnected with it, the access to this being from the area of the fort, through a low square opening.



Scale 80 ft. to 1 in.
Section of Dunbeg Fort on line N. S.

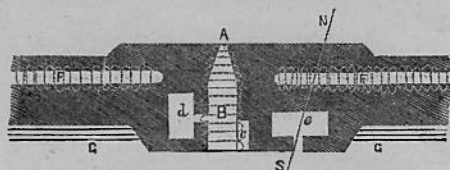


PLAN OF DUNBEG FORT.

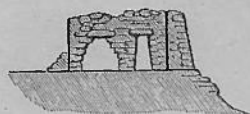
The Caher wall, on the exterior face at each side of the entrance doorway, has been strengthened by an additional layer of masonry about 4 feet in depth and 30 feet in length, which bears, however, the appearance of an after-thought, as the face of the original wall is clearly distinguishable behind the outer work. (See Plate II.)

In the thickness of the wall at each side of the entrance doorway (A), are long narrow passages, (F F) formerly covered in, the uses of which are not apparent, as no original means of access to them are visible; similar passages are not uncommon in stone forts, Cashels, or Cahers.² The interior face of the wall of Dunbeg recedes by a succession of steps, which doubtless led to a parapet on the top.

The details of the curious entrance will be better understood from the following plan and section, which are on a larger scale :—



PLAN OF ENTRANCE, DUNBEG.



SECTION OF WALL ON LINE N S.

Scale 40 ft. to 1 in.

- A. Main doorway.
- B. Passage through wall.
- c. Raised bench or seat.

- d. Guard chamber.
- F F. Covered passages in thickness of wall.
- g c. Wall diminishing by steps.

As a further means of defence a series of three earthen mounds, with intervening fosses, have been thrown up outside this wall, having a pathway through them, leading in a direct line to the main entrance; at each point where this cuts the mounds evidence remains to show that it passed through a stone gateway or passage (K and M), flagged overhead, and probably equal in length to the thickness of the mound; in the passage leading across the second fosse from the fort, an underground chamber (L), flagged overhead, was constructed. The relative proportions of the mounds and fosses are shown in the section, which is taken between N and S in the plan. They are formed out of the drift clay and gravel which overlie the strata of dull purple grits, sandstones, and slates, of which the promontory is composed. In the interior of the

² Vide Ordnance Survey. Memoir on the city of Derry. Dr. Petries' account of the Grinaun Hill.



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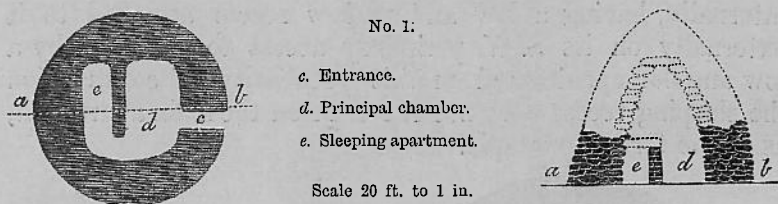
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WALL OF DUNBEG FORT (LOOKING SOUTH.)

Caher are the remains of several Cloghauns (1), the plans of which cannot now be traced with certainty; and on the west side are portions of a wall (H), along the edge of the cliff, which is about 90 feet above the level of the sea.

From the extreme eastern and western limits of the external fortifications just described, two walls extend up the flank of Mount Eagle, nearly parallel to each other, thus separating the town from the adjoining country to the east, and enclosing a plot of ground now called "Park a doona."

I shall next describe the most remarkable of the Cahers and Cloghauns in the city of Fahan, noticing each in succession as they would be reached in going westwards from Dunbeg to Sleah Head.³



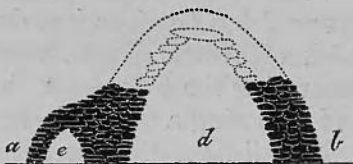
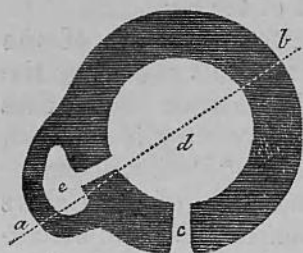
No. 1. A simple circular Cloghaun, about 11 feet in diameter internally, and 19 feet externally. It is constructed, as are all the buildings yet to be noticed, of roughly quarried blocks and flags of the greenish gray or brownish purple grits and sandstones of the district, the stones being laid dry or without cement of any kind. When a Cloghaun is perfect each stone is placed so as to overlap the one below as the wall rises, till the chamber is completed in a dome-shaped form, a single stone closing the top. In Wales, where such buildings as these occur on the mountains in good preservation, the apex stone is omitted, or else largely perforated to allow of the escape of smoke and to admit light.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that this is the earliest as well as simplest form of the arch or dome, and is the method adopted by the early Egyptians to construct their dome-shaped chambers as well as arches in the pyramids. The entrance to this Cloghaun faces the east, and a

³ The following wood-cuts, in addition to a plan of the building, show a section of the walls; the black portions being those now remaining, and the outlines indicating the probable form of the buildings when complete.

portion of the chamber has been divided off to form a sleeping apartment, covered overhead with flags.

No. 2.



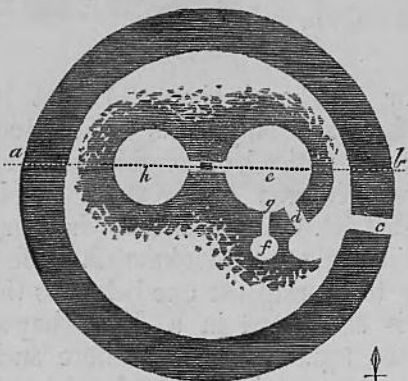
Scale 20 ft. to 1 in.

c. Entrance to Cloghaun.

d. Chamber.

e. Sleeping apartment.

No. 2. This is a circular Cloghaun, 15 feet in diameter internally, having a low and narrow recess attached to it externally on its S. W. periphery, access to which is by a low angular opening; from this peculiarity of construction the sleeping recess does not encroach on the main apartment, as in the former example.



No. 3.

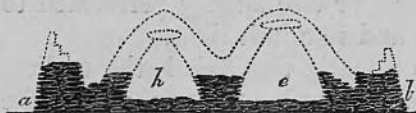
c. Entrance to Caher.

d. Entrance to the Cloghauns.

e. Principal apartment.

f. Small chamber, communicating with the principal room by the passage (g).

h. Inner chamber, with passage leading to the outer.

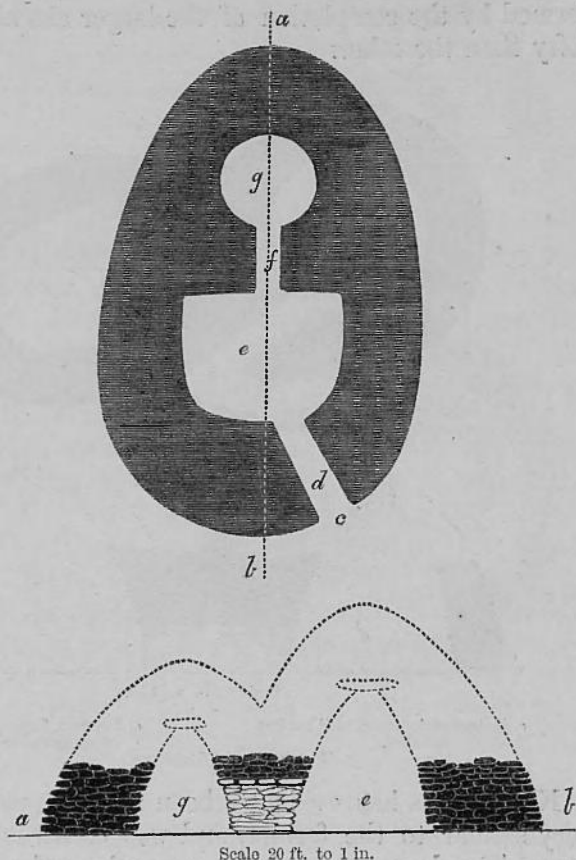


Scale 40 ft. to 1 in.

No. 3. This building is a Caher about 75 feet in diameter, consisting of a circular stone-wall 8 feet thick, the exterior of which inclines from the base upwards and appears to have terminated in a parapet; the doorway through this wall faces the east, and is 4 feet wide, with sloping sides, but

the lintel wanting. In the interior area of the Caher are the foundations of several circular chambers, that nearest the entrance (*e*) is 17 feet in diameter internally, having had its door facing the south-east; on entering this chamber a narrow passage a little to the left leads due south into a small circular apartment (*f*); a second passage leads westwards from the principal chamber into an inner one, also circular, and 16 feet in diameter. The whole of this Caher, with its enclosed Cloghauns, is very massive in its construction.

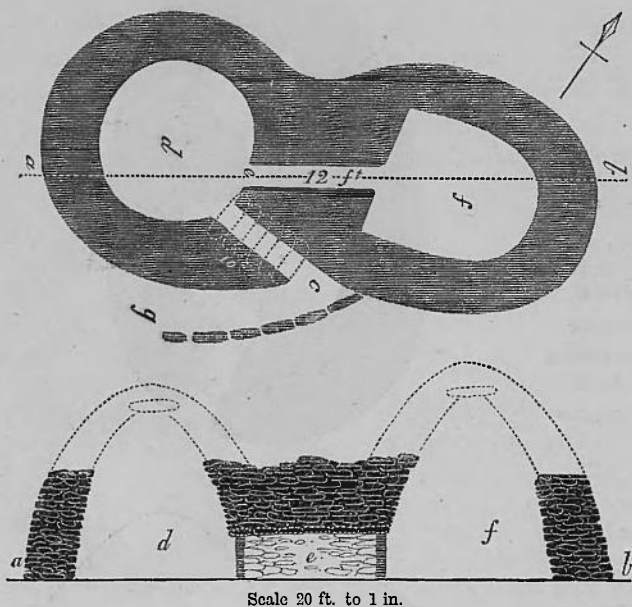
- No. 4.
- c.* Entrance doorway and passage (*d*).
 - e.* First chamber.
 - f.* Passage between the chambers.
 - g.* Inner chamber.



No. 4. This is a most singular double Cloghaun, remarkable for the great thickness of its walls in proportion to the size of the two enclosed chambers. In plan it is oval; the doorway faces the south-east, where the wall is 11 feet in thickness, and the passage from it is constructed obliquely

to the longest axis of the building ; it leads to the first or ante-chamber, which measures 16 feet by 13 feet, being semi-circular at its southern and rectangular at its northern end. In the middle of the north side of this chamber, a narrow passage leads to the second or inner apartment, which is circular, and about 10 feet in diameter. As in the former examples, little more than the foundations of this remarkable building remains. It would be interesting to know how it was completed externally ; from its plan I am led to suppose it terminated in a double cone-shaped roof, that formed by the completion of the larger chamber being more lofty than the other.

No. 5.



c. Entrance doorway, still perfect.

d. Outer chamber.

g. Row of upright flagstones.

e. Passage, flagged overhead.

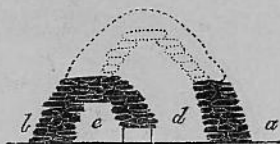
f. Inner chamber.

No. 5. This has evidently been a double-roofed Cloghaun very similar to the former, and was constructed with much care. The doorway faces the east where the wall is 10 feet thick, and, as in the former example, the entrance passage is oblique to the longest axis of the building ; it leads into a circular chamber 16 feet in diameter ; where, close to the entrance on the right hand a narrow passage, flagged over and 12 feet long, leads from the first to the inner or second

apartment, which in plan is rectangular at its western and semicircular at its eastern extremity, and 16 feet long by about 14 feet wide. Exterior to the main doorway is a row of upright flag-stones, placed so as to follow the contour of the Cloghaun at about 3 feet distance from it; these may have been portions of the side wall of a covered passage leading to it.



No. 6.

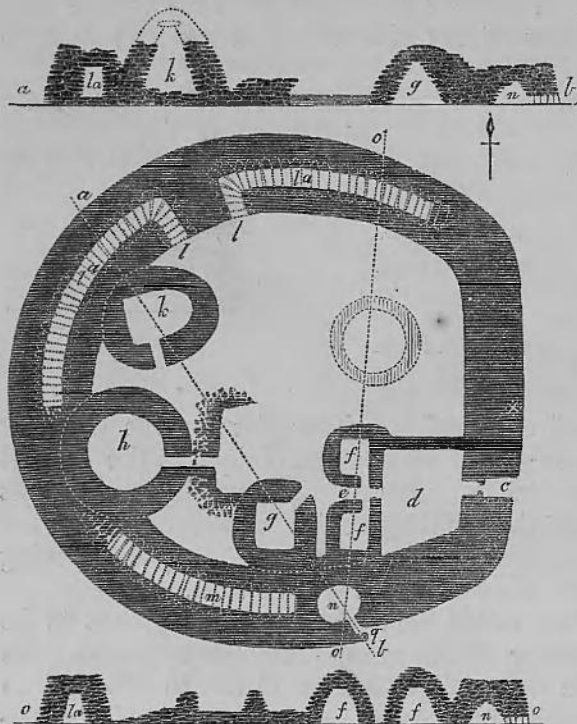
d. Main chamber.*c.* Sleeping recess.

Scale 20 ft. to 1 in.

No. 6. A small elliptical Cloghaun, having the doorway facing the south-east, and its passage oblique to the longest axis of the hut. In the interior a stone diaphragm has been constructed, thus arching off a small portion of the chamber to form a sleeping apartment; a low square opening directly facing the main entrance leads into it.

No. 7. The fort called Cahernamactirech appears to be the principal building of this group. Its name signifies "the stone fort of the wolves." It is from 95 feet to 105 feet in diameter, and consists of a massive and almost circular stone-wall, varying in thickness from 11 to 18 feet. The entrance passage through the wall (*c*), which is here 11 feet thick, faces the east, and is most singular in its construction; externally it measures 5 feet in width, narrowing midway to less than 4 feet internally. Here several stones project vertically from the walls of the passage at each side, forming a rest, against which a moveable door could be placed, so as to resist any force applied from without. I am not aware that, amongst similar buildings in Ireland, Scotland, or Wales, another example exists of a main door-way thus constructed. The entrance passage leads into a small court-yard, about 19 feet from east to west, and 20 feet from north to south; opposite is a narrow passage, formed and protected at each side by what may have been small guard-houses; both of these are still perfect, measuring 6 feet 6 inches square internally,

and rising into a lofty dome-shaped roof. On the left hand, and close to the southern guard-house, but detached from it, is a Cloghaun (*g*), measuring 12 feet square internally. Having passed this building, the central area of the fort is reached.



Scale 40 ft. to 1 in.

CAHERNAMACTIREGH.

No. 7.

- " Point of sight for view in Plate III.
- c. Entrance doorway.
- d. Court-yard.
- e. Narrow passage leading to interior of the Fort.
- r. Guard-houses.
- g. Cloghaun.
- h. Principal Cloghaun.
- i. Passage leading to it.
- k. Cloghaun.
- l. Entrances to covered passages *l*, *l*^a.
- m. Covered passage.
- n. Watch-house.
- q. Entrance to watch-house.

On the left, attached to the Caher wall, is the principal house or Cloghaun (*h*), constructed with unusual care, its doorway being formed internally of large upright flag-stones, supporting a flat lintel, and the passage leading to it flagged above. The following wood-cut gives a view of the inner side of this doorway. In the interior of the Cloghaun, to the right of the door, is a small square recess, about 4 feet above the present level of the floor. The Cloghaun marked *h* on the plan of this Caher, lies directly north of the one last described, and is much ruder in its construction. Its doorway is unique in construction, one side projecting from, while the other is level with, the external surface of the building.

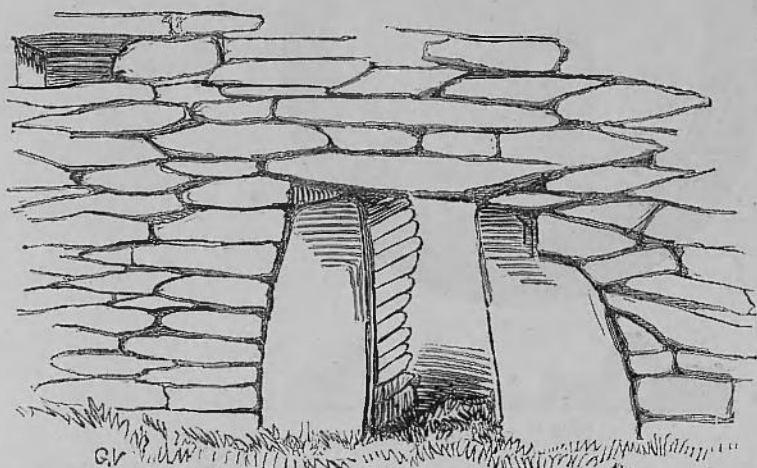
Several other buildings of the beehive type were scattered



Mal. Exp. Ark. Centre St. Hillman

over the remaining area of Cahernamactirech ; but they are now mere heaps of stones.

The circular and massive wall which encloses the buildings I have just described, measures 18 feet in thickness on the west and north ; two narrow passages (*l^a*), flagged overhead, have been constructed in its thickness,—one having its entrance close to the north of the Cloghaun marked *k*, and running southerly for the distance of about 40 feet ; the other with its entrance close to the first, passes easterly in the wall for the distance of probably 30 feet, and then



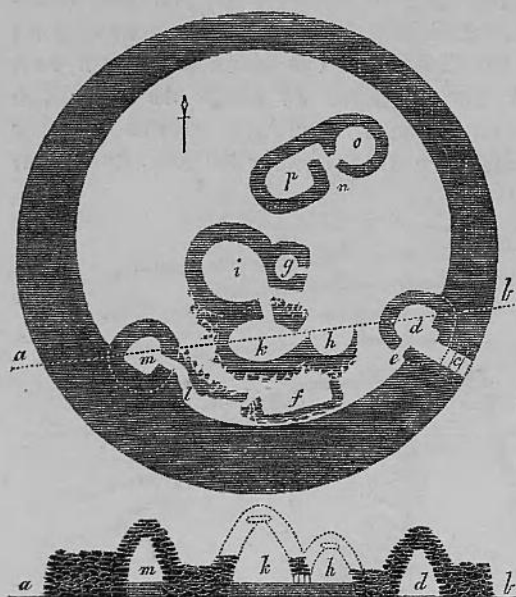
Interior of the Doorway of the Cloghaun *k*, Cahernamactirech.

becomes obliterated, the roof having fallen in ; a third such passage (*m*), of the same proportions and construction as the others, is in the wall at the south periphery, the entrance to which is not distinguishable.

South of the main doorway of the Caher, and constructed in the thickness of the wall, is a small circular guard-house, or watch-house (*n*), access to which is from the exterior of the Fort by a low and angular passage ; that this chamber was intended for a watch-house is most evident, and from it is obtained a commanding view of Dingle Bay, Valentia Island, and the range of the Iveragh mountains ; in this watch-house, constructed in the Caher wall, we have another feature quite unique in buildings of this age and type.

No. 8. This is a massive circular Caher, with an external diameter of about 100 feet ; the wall measures from 10 feet to 14 feet in thickness, the thicker portions being to the

south-west ; the doorway is still perfect, flat-topped, 4 feet 6 inches wide at the base, and 3 feet 9 inches at the top ; the passage from this door is nearly perfect, flagged overhead, and leads directly into a guard-chamber, measuring 8 feet



No. 8.

- c. Entrance doorway, still partly flagged overhead.
- d. Guard-chamber.
- e. Passage to area of Fort.
- f. Remains of a chamber.
- g. Dog-house, attached to Cloghaun i.
- k. Cloghaun, communicating with apartments i and h.
- l. Passage leading to Cloghaun m.
- o and p. Double Cloghaun.

6 inches square internally, and dome-shaped overhead ; from this chamber, which is a unique feature in buildings of this class, a narrow doorway leads into the interior area of the Fort : 50 feet west from this guard-chamber and abutting against the Caher wall, is the Cloghaun marked *m* in the plan ; it is in the most perfect state of preservation, and its doorway, though narrow, is unusually high, fully 6 feet (see Plate IV. fig. 2). In the central area of this Caher is a group of Cloghauns ; that marked *i* on the plan, has attached to it externally, on its eastern side, a small low oval-shaped chamber (*g*), with an unusually small entrance, which faces the east—this, I believe, was intended for a kennel or dog-house. From this Cloghaun is a narrow passage leading south into a second chamber marked *k* on the plan, from which a third passage, running east, leads to a third circular chamber marked *h* on the plan ; here the ruined condition of the building prevents us from ascertaining further its plan.

North of the group of buildings just described is a double



CLOGHAUN N^o 12.
INTERIOR VIEW.



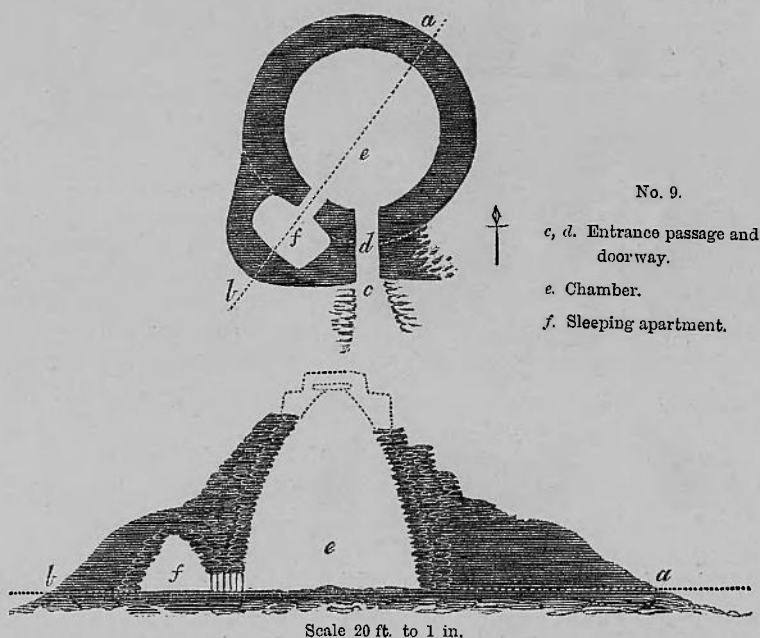
G. F. Kell lith

Kell, Bro^s Lith, Castle St. Holborn

CLOGHAUN N^o 8.

Cloghaun, of a most singular ground-plan, having a common passage (*n*) to the two chambers *o* and *p*.

No. 9. A circular Cloghaun, 18 feet in diameter, formed in an excavation on the east brow of the steep glen, close to the village of Glen-fahan. That portion of the masonry, which is above the level of the surrounding ground, appears, on the east side, to have been constructed in a series of small

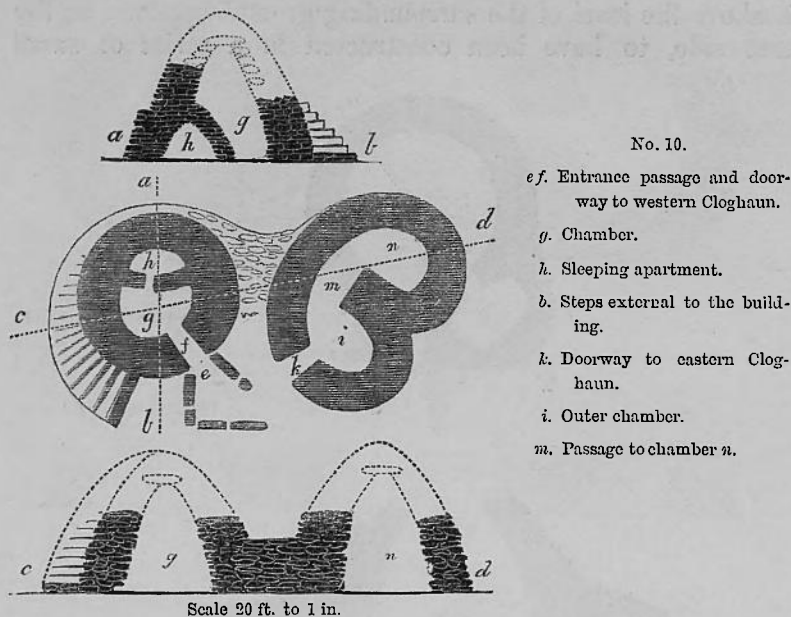


terraces, which lessened in diameter as they rose to form the conical roof; the door which faces the south is 6 feet 6 inches in height, and a trench to it was excavated in the surrounding earth. On the south-west side of the Cloghaun a small sleeping apartment with its usual low narrow entrance was constructed in the earth.

No. 10. A unique double Cloghaun. The two chambers, though quite distinct at the height of a few feet above the foundations, are included in the same ground plan—they lie east and west of each other. That to the west is circular, having its doorway facing the south-east; a portion of its interior (*h*) is partitioned off to form a sleeping chamber, in which respect it resembles Cloghaun No. 6. That to the east has two chambers enclosed under the same roof, connected

by a low passage close to the north wall, and with its doorway facing the south-west.

Outside the more western of these Cloghauns, are the remains of a broad flight of steps, which probably led to the

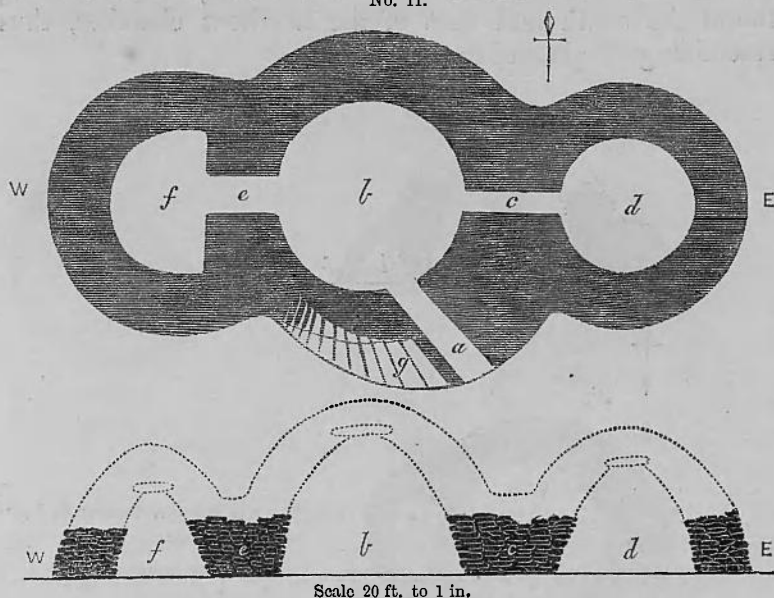


summit of the house, from which an extensive prospect could be obtained.

No. 11. This building is the most singular of any I have yet described. It is called Caher-fada-an-doruis, or the "Long Fort of the Doors." Externally its longest axis is 74 feet from east to west, and the shortest 32 feet from north to south, the walls averaging 5 feet in thickness. Internally it consists of three distinct chambers, ranged in a line from east to west, and connected by straight passages 8 feet in length; the central chamber is circular, measuring about 18 feet in diameter, to this the entrance passage leads, traversing the wall on the S.E. side obliquely to the longest axis of the building; the eastern chamber is also circular, but only 13 feet in diameter, while that to the west is semicircular, measuring 10 feet by 14 feet. The wall to the east of the main entrance is 10 feet thick, while on the west side it is but 5 feet, the increase of thickness being caused by a

flight of steps, which appear to have led to the western side of the roof of the central chamber. There can be but little

No. 11.



Caher-fada-an-doruis. (The Long Fort of the Doors.)

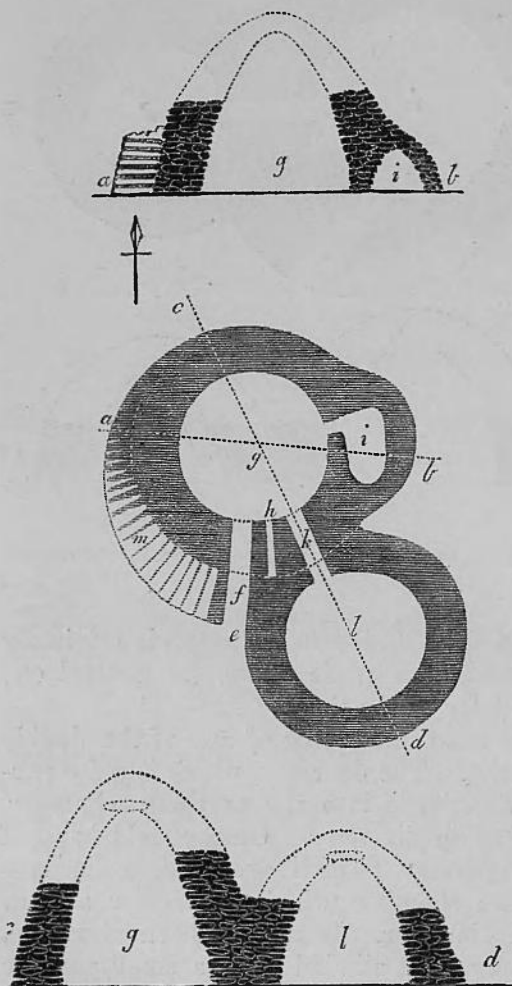
a. Entrance passage and doorway.
b. Central chamber.
c. Passage leading to chamber *d*.

e. Passage leading to chamber *f*.
g. Steps external to the building.

doubt that in external form Caher-fada-an-doruis originally presented the appearance of a triple dome, the central one being much the most lofty of the three.

No. 12. This is the most interesting of any of the double Cloghauns of the district. The doorway, which is quite perfect, faces the south and leads into the northern chamber, which measures 16 feet in diameter. On the right hand of the main entrance a passage, flagged overhead, leads into the second or southern chamber, which is circular also in plan, and 14 feet in diameter. In the northern Cloghaun, between the two passages just alluded to, is a small angular loop or window, elevated almost 6 feet from the present floor and facing due south (See Plate IV. fig. 1); this is the only example of a window in all the structures which constitute the city of Fahan, possibly owing to the better preservation of this Cloghaun, though many that are quite perfect have not this feature. On the east side of the

northern chamber a low narrow opening gives access to an oval-shaped sleeping recess. A broad flight of steps has been constructed on the exterior of the Cloghaun, extending round the south and west of the northern chamber, thus resembling Cloghaun No. 10.



No. 12.

e, f. Entrance doorway and passage.

g. First apartment.

h. Window loop.

i. Sleeping recess.

k. Passage to inner chamber.

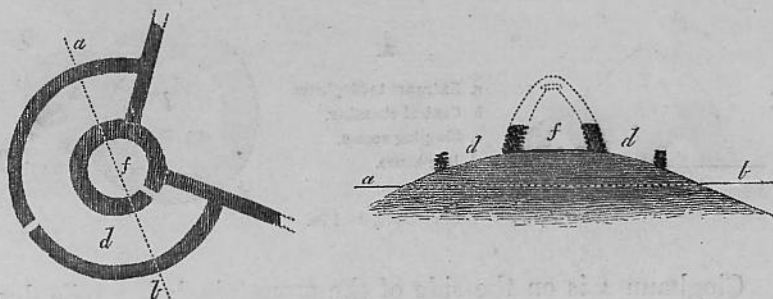
m. External steps.

Scale 20 ft. to 1 in.

No. 13. In plan this building is circular, 14 feet in diameter, with the doorway facing the east; it is remarkable as forming the angle of an ancient boundary wall, into which it is incorporated. At the distance of about 11 feet from

this hut, and surrounding it on all sides, except that to the north-east, is a stone wall, having a doorway through it on the west. This is the only example in the district of a Cloghaun having been protected and partially enclosed in this manner.

No. 13.



Scale 20 ft. to 1 in.

f. Cloghaun. d. Space between Cloghaun and outer wall.

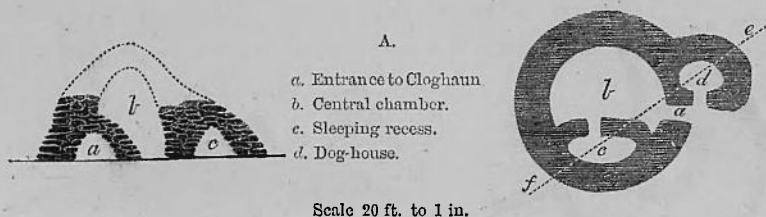
All the Cloghauns which extend from that marked 13 on the map to Slea Head, and thence towards the village of Coumeenooles, are simple circular buildings, and need no further notice than to record the fact of their existence.

Here I would remark, that it has hitherto been supposed that beehive houses, or Cloghauns, circular in plan, are more ancient than those which are rectangular. Now, from the foregoing descriptions, it is evident that the circular buildings are contemporaneous with the rectangular, or square; indeed, in an example described presently, the Cloghaun consists of a rectangular and a circular chamber connected by a passage.

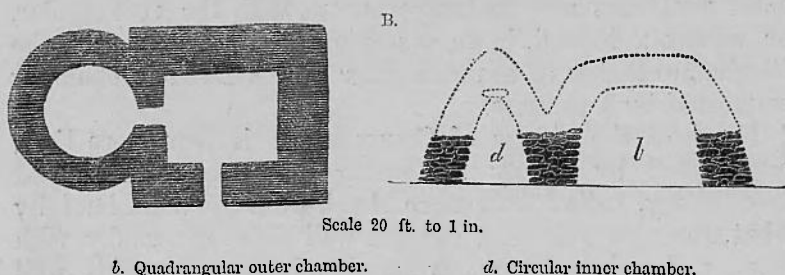
North of the village of Coumeenooles is Dunmore Fort, constructed by simply separating the grassy hill-shaped promontory, called Dunmore Head, from the main land by what was once a massive earthen wall faced externally with stone, and a deep fosse now nearly obliterated. This wall extended in a north and south direction, from Dunquin Bay to Coumeenooles Bay, a distance of 1300 feet.

Although but thirteen examples of Cahers and Cloghauns have been given from the group of ruins which I have called the ancient city of Fahan, they have been selected as the most characteristic and perfect.

Before I bring this interesting and hitherto slighted branch of Irish archæology to a close, I wish to direct attention to a few buildings of a class similar to those I have described, though they occur in a different locality, as they supply us with additional information on the subject under consideration.



Cloghaun A is on the side of the mountain, half a mile due north of the old church of Kilmalkedar, between Smerwick harbour and Dingle. In plan it is circular, 12 feet in diameter. The doorway faces the east; adjoining this doorway, on the north-east, and forming as it were an excrescence on the exterior of the circular wall, is what may have been a dog-house, with a low square entrance facing the doorway of the hut; in the interior of the hut itself a portion of it has been separated, to form a sleeping chamber, which has as usual a low narrow entrance to it. I instance this Cloghaun to show that a sleeping-chamber and a dog-house are two distinct features in Cloghaun architecture.

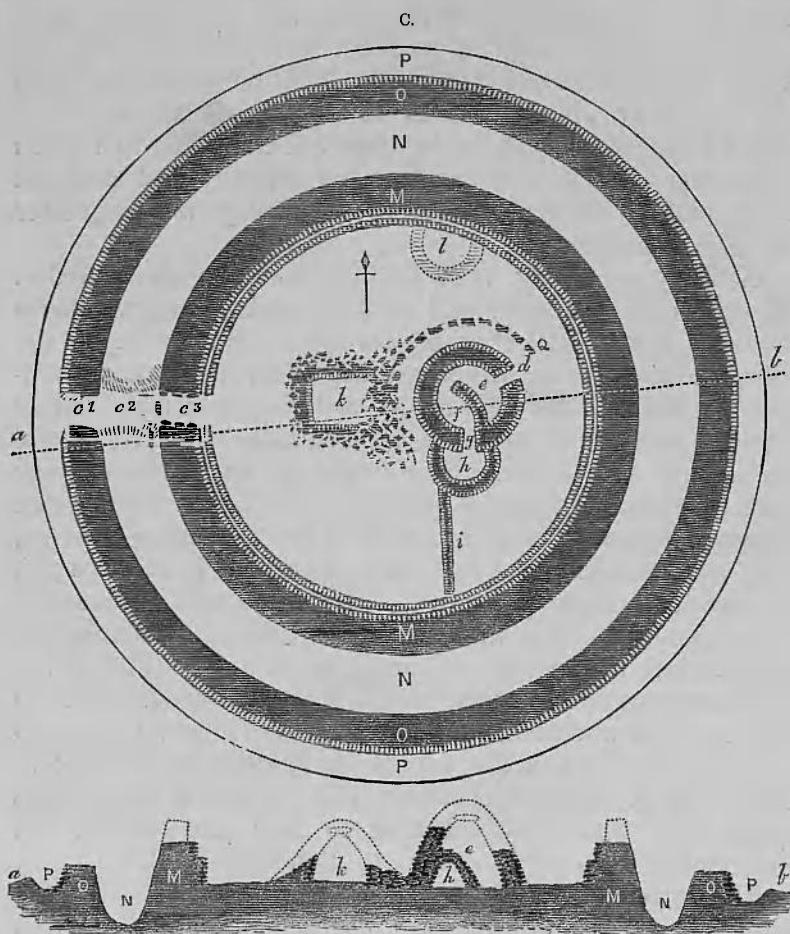


Cloghaun B. This building occurs in the townland of Ballinloghig, on the north bank of the Feohanagh River, and in plan is quite unique. It consists of two chambers (*b* and *d*), which lie north-east and south-west of each other; the former being circular and the latter rectangular in plan, having a

narrow connecting passage between them. The doorway, which is in the rectangular chamber, faces the north-west; both these apartments were doubtless enclosed under one roof, but that which is circular in the plan was probably dome-shaped, while the other was gabled. Traces of walls quite as ancient as this Cloghaun are still to be observed extending in various directions from it, showing that the occupier had enclosed tracts of land either for the purpose of tillage or the greater security of cattle.

c. This interesting relic I have named a *Rath caher*. It occurs in the townland of Ballyheabought, two miles north of Dingle, and close to the main road leading to the village of Ballybrack; and is without doubt the most remarkable of the ancient *rath cahers* or forts, constructed partly of earth and partly of stone, which I have observed in the south-west of Ireland. It consists of an inner circular earthen rampart, from 12 to 14 feet thick, and 100 feet in internal diameter, carefully faced on the interior with stone, and having a narrow platform averaging 3 feet above the present level of the inner area, constructed around its entire circumference. This rampart is surrounded by a fosse, 25 feet in width at the top, and on the south side fully 20 feet in depth, measured from the summit of the rampart. Outside this fosse is a second wall of defence, 10 feet thick, also of earth, but faced on the exterior with large flag-stones; in removing the earth to construct this mound, a second but small fosse was made external to all; the ground was then gently escarped in every direction from the fort.

The entrance passage to this magnificent fortification (c) faces the west, and, crossing both mounds and fosses in a direct line, cuts through the inner mound; large flag-stones lie scattered about, and are doubtless the remains of a massive stone doorway, which was constructed in the rampart. In the inner circular area are the remains of some massive Cloghauns. The principal one is well preserved, and measures 18 feet in internal diameter, having its doorway facing the north-east: a portion of it towards the south, has been carefully separated, to form a sleeping-chamber (f); at the extreme end of which and leading due south is a low narrow passage (g), giving access to a lunette-shaped apartment (h), constructed on the exterior of the main wall of the Cloghaun and on its southern periphery.



Scale 50 ft. to 1 in.

c¹, c², c³. Entrance passage to area of Fort.

d. Entrance to principal Cloghaun.

e. Chamber.

f. Sleeping apartment.

g. Passage to inner chamber *h*.

i. Wall.

k. Cloghaun.

l. Ruins of Cloghaun.

m. Inner circular rampart, platformed, and faced on the interior with stone.

n. Deep fosse.

o. Outer earthen rampart, faced on the exterior with stone.

p. Shallow fosse.

q. Row of upright flag-stones.

The interior of the fort is partly divided off by a wall (i), which connects the group of Cloghauns with the rampart.

Other buildings once occupied the middle of the area of the rath, but unfortunately they are now completely in ruins.

Within 5 feet of the principal Cloghaun, and on its northern periphery, is a row of upright flag-stones (q), continuous for the distance of 25 feet, but for what purpose they were thus placed it is impossible to say.

In the Rath-caher, as I have termed it, which I have just described, the connection between stone buildings of the true Cloghaun type and the circular earth rampart and fosse is clearly exhibited. And this is not the only example of its kind in the district north of Dingle; another fortification of the same class occurs on the bank of a small stream south of the village of Tiduff, on the west slope of Mount Brandon. Have we in this blending of stone and earth architecture, the indication of a period when one style of architecture, if I may so express myself, was giving place to the other? it would indeed appear so, for in many parts of Ireland they exist in distinct classes. The ancient structures on Tara Hill are all of earth; are we to suppose that the difference in construction depended on the materials which were most readily procurable on the spot? Many examples could be adduced to show that this theory, though at first sight plausible, is not conclusive; it may, therefore, be asked, have we in early Irish architecture an age of stone and an age of earth?

That the Fahan buildings are of remote antiquity is beyond a doubt; indeed, the learned Dr. Petrie, in his *Inquiry into the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland*, p. 128, attributes the erection of the circular Cloghaun to the Firbolg and Tuatha-de-Danan tribes, who inhabited this country long prior to the introduction of Christianity. The secluded locality where these buildings exist, their solid and massive character, the rocky nature of the district which has been sparingly brought under tillage by the clearing away of surface stones, for which these Cloghauns and Cahers formed ready receptacles, adding to their bulk but preserving their ground plans, have tended to secure to us these examples of early architecture.

It is worthy of remark, that the inhabitants of the western portion of the Dingle district, still construct and use small beehive-shaped huts, not as places of residence, but for the purpose of housing lambs if on a mountain, and for pigs, poultry, and store-rooms if in a village; in the former case they somewhat resemble the ancient buildings, though much smaller and ruder in their construction, a fact which will always enable the observer to distinguish between the two; in the latter, they may be described as churn-shaped, and constructed with mud as cement: excellent examples of this kind of modern Cloghauns are to be seen at the groups of farm-houses to the west of the village of Smerwick.

In conclusion I would remark, that the architectural remains of any ancient people enable us to form a clearer notion of their social condition, than could any other evidence short of a written description.⁴ Thus it is with the ancient buildings I have described; the people who erected them were simple in their habits, yet lived in a state of constant watchfulness and mistrust, if not of absolute warfare, with their immediate neighbours; they acknowledged, doubtless, a chief, and practised warlike habits; they were not nomadic, but on the contrary given to remaining permanently settled in a locality which they carefully selected as best adapted to their state of society, their wants, and their security; it was a place therefore to which they would cling with the utmost tenacity, and of which nothing but force of arms could dispossess them; hence it is natural to infer that they were tillers of the soil, and were possessed of flocks and herds; dogs they certainly domesticated, and probably employed them in the chase. They constructed fortifications and houses of various shapes and sizes adapted to their wants and tastes. As the stones in

⁴ The Rev. Charles Graves, D.D., informed me during the meeting of the British Association in Dublin, in 1857, that he was acquainted with a Welsh poem of undoubted antiquity and authenticity, wherein was given a description of the earliest stone houses erected in Wales. It was stated that in the time of Caractacus, the Welsh cut down all their great forests in order to render their country less tenable to the invading

Romans, and as they had hitherto constructed their houses of wood, when this timber failed them they adopted the Irish form of stone houses, that of the beehive, constructed of dry masonry; a mode of building hitherto unknown in Wales. This interesting record fixes the date of the Welsh Cloghauns, and affords us strong evidence of the antiquity of that form of house in Ireland.

their buildings are laid without cement, they have been selected with care and fitted together with the greatest nicety ; but as no attempt at ornamentation can be detected in any of their buildings, and none of the stones bear the marks of dressing, it is not likely that they were acquainted with the use of metal implements for that purpose. I have mentioned that I found but one small window-loop amongst the Fahan buildings, and it must have been more a spy-hole than a window to afford light, and not a trace of a fireplace or chimney can be detected ; perhaps the fire was lighted in the centre of the Cloghaun, and the smoke made its exit through the apex of the hut, when it was left uncovered for the purpose.

The smallness of the sleeping-chambers and of the entrances leading into them is very remarkable ; indeed, this addition to the Cloghaun is a singular feature in the habits of the people who used them. Taking both into account, we may suppose that the attainment of warmth by animal heat was the chief object they had in view in their construction ; if so, it at once lowers them to the scale of the Esquimaux, whose circular *Inglœ* or stone huts closely resemble the smaller and more insignificant of our Cloghauns ; indeed, the resemblance may go even yet further, for it is likely that in many instances there were long covered stone passages conducting to the door of the Cloghaun, similar in design to the long, low, and straight stone passages, covered with sods, which lead into the winter *Inglœ*. When we consider what an important addition to our comfort is a chamber set apart for sleeping in, no matter how small it may be, we are surprised to find that so few of the Cloghauns have this important addition to them ; it is sufficient, however, to know that such was sometimes required, and we may regard this fact as evincing some degree of refinement in a people whose habits must have been most rude and simple.

I trust that this notice of the buildings on the west of the Dingle Promontory, and of the probable social position of their inhabitants, may be sufficient to call the attention of archæologists to these interesting remains. My object in preparing it has been to place upon record, in a plain and simple manner, the present condition of a class of antiquities

of which a better example is probably not to be met with in Western Europe, and which in a few years may cease to exist.⁵

GEO. V. DU NOYER, M. R. I. A.

51, STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN,
17th August, 1857.

⁵ In reply to some remarks which have reached me relative to the beehive houses of the County Kerry and other districts, especially in the west of Ireland, I feel called upon to state distinctly that, until I examined and sketched the Fahan buildings in the summer of 1856,

they had lain unknown to, or at least undescribed by any tourist or antiquary; even that acute observer and recorder of so many of the prehistoric relics of the Dingle promontory, the late lamented Mr. Hitchcock, passed them by without examination.