

of the Indian tortoise" that conferred the gift of prophecy. His carefully drawn figure of this Donner-stein (which also passed for the "gros Kroten-stein," bigger toadstone), shows it to be only a fossil echinus of a more *oblate* form than the common sort. The regular toadstone, plentifully to be seen in mediæval rings, was, on the other hand, the small hollow hemisphere, the fossil tooth of an extinct fish, found in the greensand formation. In that age the Donner-stein was held to possess all the many virtues of the Toadstone, Belemnite, and Ovum Anguinum, in counter-acting poison, giving success in all enterprises, procuring sleep, and protection against danger of lightning. But the old physician, so much in advance of his times, cannot help winding up the list of its virtues with the hint, "Fides sæpe veritate major."

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES ON CELTS AND OTHER IMPLEMENTS USED  
AS TALISMANS OR VICTORY-STONES.

THE axe-heads and hammer-heads of stone, known to us by the general designation of celts, have, until recent explorations, been regarded as comparatively of rare occurrence amongst ancient relics obtained from Eastern lands and from some other continental countries. Our information, however, in regard to objects of this class has become greatly extended. Mr. James Yates brought before us, in a former volume of this Journal, examples of stone celts from Java; an interesting specimen obtained at Sardis is figured, vol. xv. p. 178, and some others were found by Mr. Layard at Nineveh. The occurrence of any ornament or inscription upon such objects is very rare, but, amongst numerous stone implements lately obtained in Greece, one is noticed by M. de Mortillet (*Matériaux pour l'Histoire primitive de l'Homme*, Jan. 1868, p. 9), of which he had received from Athens a drawing and an *estampage*; it is described as "une hache en pierre serpentineuse, sur une des faces de laquelle on a gravé trois personnages et une inscription en caractères Grecs. L'ancien outil a évidemment été, beaucoup plus tard, quand on a eu complètement oublié son usage primitif, transformé en talisman ou pierre cabalistique."

At the annual meeting of the Antiquaries of the North,

21 March, 1853, under the presidency of the late King of Denmark, several recent acquisitions were exhibited, obtained for his private collection at Frederiksborg. Amongst these there was an axe-head of stone (length about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches), perforated with a hole for the handle, and remarkable as bearing on one of its sides four Runic characters, that appear to have been cut upon the stone at some period more recent than the original use of the implement. It has been figured in the *Memoirs of the Society, 1850-1860*, p. 28 ; see also *Antiquarisk Tidsskrift, 1852-1854*, pp. 258-266. I am indebted to a friend well skilled in Runes and Scandinavian archæology, Dr. Charlton, secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle, for the following observations on this interesting relic.

“The first letter is L, and, if we accept the idea that these were Runes of Victory, it may stand for the initial of Loki ; the second is Th, and may stand for Thor ; the third O, for Odin ; the fourth, Belgthor, with a T above it, may refer to Belgthor’s friendship and alliance with Thor, and the T stands for Tyr. We may imagine the names of the Northern gods to have been cut on this stone axe to give it victory in battle, just as the old Germans and Saxons cut mystic Runes on their swords, a practice noticed by Haigh in his *Conquest of Britain by the Saxons*, p. 28, pl. 1, where he has figured amongst various examples of the *Futhorc*, or alphabet of Runic characters, one inlaid on a sword or knife found in the Thames, and now in the British Museum. At p. 51, *ibid.* pl. iii. fig. 20, he has cited also the Runic inscription on the silver pommel of a sword found at Gilton, Kent, formerly in the collection of the late Mr. Rolfe of Sandwich, and subsequently in the possession of Mr. Joseph Mayer. This relic is now in the precious museum bestowed by his generous encouragement of archæological science on the town of Liverpool. The interpretation given in the latter instance is as follows,—I eke victory to great deeds.<sup>3</sup>

“There was another explanation given of the characters on the Danish stone axe. It was read—LUTHR. o.—Ludr owns, namely, the weapon thus inscribed.”

<sup>3</sup> *Archæologia*, vol. xxxii., p. 321. A spear-head inscribed with Runes is noticed, *Journ. Brit. Arch. Ass.*, vol. xxiii., p. 387. There exist certain massive rings of metal inscribed with Runes, that may have

been, as some antiquaries suggest, appended to sword-hilts as charms. One of these rings, lately found at Carlisle, is in possession of Mr. Robert Ferguson, of Morton, near that city.

In the ancient Sagas, as remarked in Nilsson's *Primitive Inhabitants of Scandinavia* (translation by Sir John Lubbock, Bart, p. 214), mention occurs of amulets designated life-stones, victory-stones, &c., which warriors carried about with them in battle to secure victory. A curious relation is cited from one of the Sagas, that King Nidung, when about to engage in conflict, perceived that he had neglected to bring a precious heir-loom, a stone that possessed the virtue of ensuring victory. He offered the hand of his daughter, with a third part of his kingdom, to him who should bring this talisman before the fight commenced; and, having received it, he won the battle. In another narrative, the daughter of a Scanian warrior steals during his slumbers the stone that was hung on his neck, and gave it to her lover, who thus became the victor. Nilsson observes that stones are found in museums, for instance, a hammer-stone with a loop, that appear to have been worn thus as talismans in war.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to advert to certain axe-heads of stone, in their general form similar to those with which we are familiar as found in Europe; upon these implements are engraved rude designs, such as the human visage, &c. These objects, of which an example preserved in a museum at Douai has been much cited, may be "victory-stones" of an ancient and primitive people, but they are now generally recognised as of Carib origin, and not Euraopen.

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