

Discovery of a Hunting Sword within the Forest of the Peak.

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IN June, 1900, in constructing the new line of the Midland Railway in Furness Vale, where the new and the old lines diverge, was found :—

An Iron or Steel Hunting Sword, with heavy mushroom-shaped pommel, the remains of one of the quillons springing towards the pommel for the Knuckle-bow, the grip wanting, the tongue tapering from $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in breadth. The blade, 16 inches long, slightly tapering from $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide and single edged. The length of the whole is 21 inches, and it bears evidence of having been buried in its sheath, for the grain of its wooden lining and the impression of its upper ferrule are distinctly corroded into the blade.

Viscount Dillon, President of the Society of Antiquaries, has kindly given me the following information: "It is clear that the turned up end of the quillon is part of a knuckle-bow and, as Hewitt has shown in *Archæological Journal*, xix., p. 310, the Knuckle-bow, or finger guard, does not appear before the fourth quarter of the fifteenth century. But the small depth at which it was found and the existence of remains of the wooden lining of the sheath, both seem to me to indicate that a somewhat later date must be assigned to it."

Mr. Joseph Brassington, who presented the relic to me, noticed that, when found, it was lying amongst some bones. Were these the bones of its owner, or of the deer which he, some sixteenth century hunter in the then Royal Forest of the Peak, had slain? Or was it merely such a case, as Pepys records in his famous diary: "This day my cousin Thomas dropped his hanger, and it was lost"?