

## II.

NOTICES OF VARIOUS STONE CIRCLES IN THE PARISHES OF CAIRNEY, MONYMUSK, AND TOUGH, ABERDEENSHIRE; AND OF INVERKEITHNY, BANFFSHIRE. BY JOHN STUART, ESQ., ADVOCATE, ABERDEEN.

## PARISH OF CAIRNEY.

On the south-east slope and near the summit of the Hill of Mill Leith, in this parish, are the remains of an extensive Druidical circle. On approaching it there is first a dyke of stones surrounding the whole, having an opening through it to the south or south-east. Between this dyke and an inner one stood the stones of which the circle was formed—three or four of them only now remaining. A large stone, which had been supported on other three, but has now fallen, lies partly on the ground, and is opposite to the opening to the south or south-east. It is 12 feet long, 6 feet deep, and 14 inches broad. In the centre of the circle was a flat stone, which is now removed. The surface presented a barren, moor-like appearance, while the interior of the circle was of a rich green colour, which induced the Rev. Mr Cowie, the minister of the parish, to dig downwards, when he found a layer of charcoal and bones of animals.

## MONYMUSK.

On a moor somewhat sloping to the north-east, about a quarter of a mile north-east of the Tillyfourie Toll-bar, are the remains of a large circle of upright stones, several of them yet standing, but most of them thrown down on the ground. Its dimensions are, generally speaking, as follows:—Within the exterior circle of stones, which is about 46 feet distant, there is a circular mound of small stones, about 15 feet in breadth, guarded by large flat stones set endwise; and inclosing an open space 9 feet in diameter, forming the centre of the circle, which is hollowed out and free from stones of any kind. There are the vestiges of a dyke, external to the whole, running from a stone on the north-west in a northerly direction about 100 yards—then, turning to the west about 15 or 20 yards, it arrives at a small cairn or circle with some flat stones round its outer base. From this the dyke runs to the south, and afterwards to the east, on which side it appears to rejoin the circle almost opposite to its centre. There are also vestiges of a dyke striking off to the east; and on this moor, as well as on another separated from the first by a slight ravine, are a large number of small tumuli. The stones composing the circle are very large, and the “Altar Stone” on the south side is remarkable for its great size.

## PARISH OF TOUGH.

On a hill to the south of Manse of Tough is a large Druidical circle called "The Auld Kirk of Tough." There are here the same appearances of a dyke and tumuli, as at Tillyfourie or Monymusk.

## INVERKEITHNY, BANFFSHIRE.

On the summit of the Hill of Balnoon, or rather on its neck towards the east, there was till lately a lofty upright stone called "The Conwath" or "Conway Stone," and by some "The Charter Stone." It was surrounded by a slight ditch. It has been said that funerals coming from the west end of the parish were accompanied to this stone by the females of the family, and that the funeral here rested for a time, and the females returned (the stone being in sight of the churchyard). My informant (the minister of the parish) states, that a cairn on the hill of Auchinhamper was used for a similar purpose by funerals coming from the east end of the parish. On visiting the stone, however, I found that the churchyard was not visible from that spot.

The old name of the parish was Conveth.