

engraved in Hutchins's Dorset, iii. 278. Tenbury, Gloucestershire,—cross-legged effigy in mailed armour, 4 ft. long, represented as holding a heart. Ayot St. Lawrence, Herts,—effigy 2 ft. 3 in. long, supposed to have held a heart between the hands, now broken. Bottesford, Leicestershire—effigy 22 in. long, Nichols, ii. 23. Dartington, Devon,—an ecclesiastic, 2 ft. 8 in. long. Other instances may be found at Little Easton, Essex (Gough), Cobberly, Gloucestershire, Anstey, Herts., and Long Wittenham, Berks. An interesting little effigy of white marble, now preserved in the abbey church of St. Denis, near Paris, represents Blanche d'Artois, grand-daughter of Louis VIII., who espoused, in 1269, Henry, king of Navarre, and, after his death, Edmond, earl of Lancaster, brother of Edward I. She died A.D. 1302, and was buried in Paris: her heart being deposited in the choir of the conventual church of the Minoresses at Nogent l'Artault, in Champagne, founded by her. On the destruction of that establishment, the effigy, which measures about 2 ft. in length, was preserved, and subsequently placed amongst the royal memorials at St. Denis.

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ANCIENT CHESS-MEN,

WITH SOME REMARKS ON THEIR VALUE AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF
MEDIEVAL COSTUME.

It may merit observation, that the chief interest in the careful examination of objects of mediæval date, fabricated even for the most trivial and homely purposes, appears to consist in their conformity to certain established conventional models of form or ornamentation, at each successive period. The singular truth with which their decorative accessories are invariably designed, as regards the costume of the times, the usual forms of letter employed for inscriptions, or similar details, stamp the antiquities of that age, inferior as they may be in comparison with the graceful proportion and chaste design of classical remains, with an attractive character, pleasing even to the eye of the inexperienced observer.

Productions of the highest class of antique art attract our admiration on account of their ideal beauty, and the combination of imaginative conception with perfect mechanical skill

which they display : medieval antiquities, deficient, very frequently, in their artificial workmanship as in elegance of design, arrest our notice because they bear an impress of reality ; because in each the practised eye may trace some evidence of the habitual feelings of our forefathers, of the train of their thought, of their superstitious weaknesses, or their devotion to high and noble purposes.

At a period when, in default of a standing mercenary force, the safety of a kingdom lay in the military spirit which pervaded all the higher classes of the community, the strains of poetry and the fictions of romance aroused them to warlike deeds ; the very light of heaven penetrated into their chambers, tinged with the colouring of some tale of prowess or chivalry portrayed on the glass in their casements ; their household utensils, or the objects of their pastime, bore the impress of the spirit of an age of chivalrous enterprise. The toys of childhood seemed devised in order to instil that military ardour which should become the dominant principle of riper years ; and even in the seclusion of domestic life the arras on the walls, the decorative accessories of the banqueting table or the bower, served to keep ever in view the more stirring attractions of the tournament and warlike emprise. With this design, indeed, were the brilliant passages of arms in times of peace designed : even the quinten, the diversion of the lower orders, bore the head of the Saracen, the object of most inveterate antipathy ; so that even village sports were subservient to the purpose of keeping ever on the alert the spirit of valorous resolution, which has raised England to her position as a nation.

Strutt has given representations of a very singular toy, of German fabrication, about the time of Henry VII. It is a small brazen knight equipped for the joust, so contrived as to fall back from the saddle when struck by a blow on the *salade* or shoulder-shield. These diminutive combatants were mounted upon a platform with wheels, and violently drawn together by a string^a. An interesting illustration of such pastime occurs amongst the fine woodcuts by Burghmair, in the *Weiss Kunig*, representing the education of Maximilian I. ; two children are there portrayed eagerly pushing their miniature horsemen one against the other. Still more curious, however, are some ancient chess-men, which have been preserved in

^a Sports and Pastimes, p 112. pl. xiii.

various collections. To the remarkable discovery of a large number in the Isle of Lewis, in 1832, now deposited in the British Museum, we owe the highly curious remarks by Sir Frederic Madden, not less valuable in regard to the ancient history of the game, than as illustrative of peculiarities of costume during the twelfth century, of which few examples are elsewhere to be discovered^b. The rich museum of northern antiquities at Copenhagen contains numerous pieces of similar character; they appear to have been chiefly fabricated in Iceland, and the material is not ivory, but the tusk of the walrus. In the cabinet of antiquities in the Bibliothèque Royale at Paris, there are a few chess-men of the same period, and of one of these, a warder, or rook, Mr. Shaw has given a representation in his *Dresses and Decorations*. In the same museum may be seen a portion of the "jeu d'eschets," presented by Charlemagne to the abbey of St. Denis, and inscribed with Cufic characters^c.



Chessman, in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

Two chess-knights and a warder, hitherto undescribed, of great curiosity as examples of military costume, have been preserved in our own country. The most ancient is a warder, formed of the tusk of the walrus; (?) it was presented to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by Lord Macdonald, and formed part

^b See the accurate representations of these singular pieces in the *Archæologia*, xxiv. 203.

^c See Willemin's plate, in his valuable *Monumens inédits*; Doublet, *Hist. de l'Abbaye de St. Denis*.

of an assemblage of remarkable objects of antiquity, liberally communicated by the Council of that Society for exhibition at the recent Annual Meeting of the Institute at York^d. It is of somewhat later date than the Lewis chess-men, and appears to have been carved towards the close of the twelfth, or early in the thirteenth century. The warder is represented in like manner as those Icelandic specimens, with sword drawn, and the shield on the arm. On either side of the piece is an armed figure, emerging from intertwined foliage of remarkable design; these warriors are clad apparently in mail, the rings being expressed by a conventional mode of representation, namely, by rows of deep punctures, with intervening parallel lines. The shield of one of them exhibits a bearing, bendy of two colours, the diapering of the alternate bends being expressed by punctures, and there is a broad bordure, which may be noticed also on several of the pieces found in the Hebrides. The other shield presents a fleur de lys dimidiated, on a field diapered with fretté lines. It may be doubtful whether these were properly armorial bearings, but it deserves notice that one of the Lewis knights has a shield party per pale, the sinister side being fretté. Both shields in the piece here represented have this singularity of form, that their points are cut bluntly off, instead of being prolonged to an acute apex, as usual at the period. There is no appearance of plate-armour; the head is protected by the coiffe de mailles, and the legs by chausses of the like armour. This curious warder measures in height three inches and five-eighths.

In the Ashmolean Museum another interesting example is preserved; a chess-knight, formed likewise as it is supposed of the tooth of the sea-horse, and it is in no slight degree curious as an illustration of military costume. It presents the characteristic features of the earlier part of the reign of Henry III., or possibly the close of the times of King John. On either side of the piece is seen a mounted knight, the intervening spaces being filled up with foliage; one of the warriors wields a sword, whilst the other holds a lance, looking backwards with a singular gesture of apprehension. The most striking feature of their costume is the large cylindrical

^d The thanks of the archæologists there assembled are specially due to Mr. Turnbull, the accomplished Secretary of the Society, for his kind mediation in obtaining

this valuable accession to the museum formed at York, conveyed thither by his own hands on the late occasion.



Chessman. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

h  aume, having a transverse *ocularium*, or *  illi  re*, and a longitudinal rib by which it is strengthened, forming a cross on the face of this singular head-piece. This kind of helm is of rare occurrence in monumental sculpture; examples are supplied by a cross-legged effigy at Whitworth, Durham, and another at Walcheren, near Stevenage, Herts.* It occurs in the sculptures on the west front of Wells cathedral, erected by Bishop Joceline, about A.D. 1225, and amongst the curious sculptures of the mural arcade at Worcester, in the south aisles of the choir, built early in the same century. The h  aume which appears on the great seals of Henry III. and Edward I. is of similar cylindrical form, but the lower portion protecting the face is barred. The mailed armour of the chess-knight is represented in the conventional mode usually employed in the earlier sepulchral effigies, by parallel rows of rings set in alternate directions; the surcoat is long, forming large folds, and some appearances of mixed armour, either of gamboised work, or jacked leather, may be traced upon the legs^f.

* A good representation of this has been given by the late talented artist, Mr. Hollis, in his *Monumental Effigies*.

^f One of the knights, brandishing a sword, seems to have a *genouilliere* formed of a rigid material, the thigh being protect-

ed by some defence formed in longitudinal ribs, possibly of quilted work. Compare the effigy of Robert de Vere, 1221, Hatfield Broad Oak, Essex, and the figure at Whitworth, both given by Stothard.

A chess-knight, of a later period, carved in ivory, and highly interesting as a representation of the armour for man and horse, in use during the reign of Edward III., has been kindly communicated by the Rev. John Eagles. This little figure is remarkable in various details of costume, which are defined with remarkable precision: it is probably of Flemish workmanship, the legs of the horse have been broken off, but in the annexed representation Mr. Jewitt has given them as restored. The knight is armed in a visored basinet, with a camail, and a hauberk with long sleeves; his legs are protected by plate or cuir-bouilli, he wears rowelled spurs; on his arm is a small shield, of uncommon form at so early a period, the upper end being recurved to give greater freedom of movement, and the *enarmes* by which it



Chessman, in the possession of the Rev. John Eagles

is appended to the arms are plainly shewn^g. The arçons of the saddle are so high as to render the seat singularly secure; the body of his charger is wholly covered by mail, the head alone being protected by a testière of plate, a piece of horse-armour of which the collection at Warwick castle supplies an unique example^h. The horse bears over the mail a curious caparison formed in detached portions, or lambels; these are deeply indented along their lower edge. This kind of skeleton-housings is of very uncommon occurrence, and scarcely less singular is the absence of the surcoat, at the period when mixed defences of mail and plate became commonly adopted. It is not improbable that the heavy charger, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was frequently protected by a covering of mail, which is concealed in representations by the flowing armorial caparisons. It is occasionally visible, as on the seals of Philippe le Hardi, and Jean Sans Peur, dukes of Burgundy, which, although of later date than the little figure under consideration, exhibit a precisely similar fashion as regards the equipment of the horseⁱ. The "*couverture de fer*," indeed, for the horse is mentioned in documents of the period, such as the will of the Earl Warren, A.D. 1347, and the *ordonnance* of Philippe le Bel, for musters against the war with Flanders, A.D. 1303. Wace, in the *Roman du Rou*, describes a warrior mounted on a steed "*tot covert de fer*," and trappings of mail are mentioned repeatedly in *Syr Gawayne*, and other early English romances. They appear also amongst the remarkable subjects copied by Stothard from the walls of the painted chamber, at Westminster, and so ably illustrated by the late Mr. Rokewode^k, who attributed those curious works of art to the reign of Henry III.

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^g A very curious contemporary example of this kind of shield was supplied by the effigy of one of the Hilary's, formerly in Walsall church, Staffordshire, now in the gardens of Mr. Foster, in that town.

^h It is said to have belonged to Earl

Guy. See Grose's *Ancient Armour*, p. xvii. pl. 42.

ⁱ *Tresor de Glyptique*, *Sceaux des grands Feudataires*, pl. xiv.

^k *Vetusta Monumenta*, vol. vi. pl. 26—39.