

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICES OF RELICS RECENTLY OBTAINED  
BY THE HON. WILLIAM OWEN STANLEY, IN HIS RE-  
SEARCHES IN HOLYHEAD ISLAND.

SINCE the completion of excavations at Ty Mawr, and the adjacent sites of ancient occupation on Mr. Stanley's estates, near Holyhead, of which, through his liberal kindness towards the Archæological Institute, a record has been given in this Journal, several objects of considerable interest have been brought to light. Of these, including some relics of which no example had been previously found in Mr. Stanley's excavations, the following account may form an acceptable appendix to his memoirs. The numerous implements and appliances, however rude in fashion and of obscure purpose, are of no slight interest, as aiding our inquiries into the usages of daily life, and the measure of civilization, to which the occupants of Holyhead Mountain and the ancient settlements around its base had attained at a remote period.

I. Of the relics recently found may first be noticed a remarkable block of hard and ponderous stone (fig. 1), considered by Mr. Stanley to have been used as a whetstone for sharpening instruments or weapons; probably stone celts or other appliances of that description. The upper surface is concave; the hollow is shaped out with considerable regularity, and bears marks of frequent percussion, as shown in the woodcut, whilst around the forepart and edge there are grooves or angular nicks that may have been produced in some operation of sharpening tools and the like. It is remarkable that these grooves appear to take a direction radiating from a common central point. Some of them are very slight, scarcely to be noticed at first inspection; for instance the little nick on the right-hand edge, marked with a small cross in the woodcut. The dimensions of this remarkable block are about 11 in. in breadth, and 9 in. in thickness. The purposes for which it was in-



Fig. 1. Block of stone, singularly grooved, found in Holyhead Island.  
Breadth, 11 in. : thickness, 9 inches.

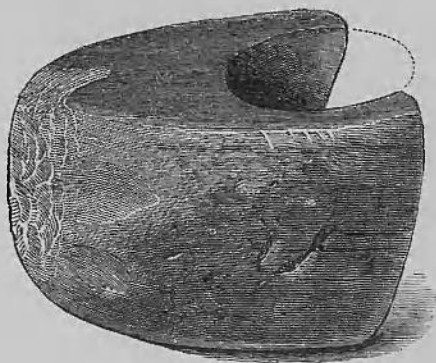


Fig. 2. Moiety of a hammer-head of stone, found in Holyhead Island.

tended are very obscure; the hollow surface apparently served in crushing or pounding some substance by aid of a roller or muller, and it has been conjectured that the pulverised product may have gradually fallen down through the marginal channels. No similar object has, however, hitherto been noticed that may assist our conclusions in regard to this ancient appliance.

II. With this relic Mr. Stanley brought before the Institute a stone tool of considerable interest. It is a hone, or sharpening stone of some hard material, about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in. in length, having on each of its sides a deep-cut groove, about 4 in. in length, caused, apparently, in sharpening some implement or weapon of metal, such as a spear-head, javelin, celt, and the like. It is likewise adapted for use as an ordinary whetstone or polisher, and is of a form worked with care, so as to be conveniently portable on a journey or in warlike expeditions. It may be noticed, moreover, that it appears to have served as a hand-hammer, each of the extremities bearing traces of much percussion. This curious implement possesses an additional interest as having been found at Ty Mawr, near the spot where a considerable deposit of spears, celts, and other objects of bronze were found in 1832, as related by Mr. Stanley in his memoir on ancient circular habitations excavated there in 1862.<sup>1</sup> In the course of his subsequent researches, in 1868, sharpening stones of various kinds were likewise found, and two of these have been figured in his second memoir on the ancient vestiges brought to light on his estates in Holyhead Island.<sup>2</sup>

Ancient mechanical appliances of this description have occurred in Ireland, but they are comparatively uncommon.<sup>3</sup> Small hones also, or burnishers, have repeatedly been found

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Journ. vol. xxiv. p. 253; *Archæologia Cambr.*, third series, vol. xiv. The whetstone above described was found in 1870; it has been figured in Mr. Stanley's Memoir on his more recent discoveries, *Arch. Journ.*, vol. xxvii. p. 160, pl. iii. fig. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. xxvi. p. 321, figs. 18, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Certain flat, oval, or round stones, sometimes regarded as missiles or sling-stones, are found in Ireland, having on each of the flat surfaces a groove, such as might be produced by sharpening a tool or weapon; for such uses, as Sir. W. Wilde suggests, they may have been occa-

sionally employed. *Catal. Mus. R. I. Acad.* 75, fig. 56; Description of the Tonymore Crannoge, p. 10, where the use of such objects as weapon-sharpeners is more distinctly stated. Similar grooved pebbles are noticed by Nilsson, *Primitive Inhabitants of Scandinavia*, edit. by Sir John Lubbock, p. 13, pl. 1, but they are considered to have been hammer-stones, grooved for facility of attachment to the belt, or the like, by a string. The intention, however, of these curious grooved pebbles does not appear to have been satisfactorily ascertained.

in excavations of British remains in Wiltshire, by the late Sir Richard Colt Hoare, and on other occasions. A few specimens of sharpening stones and polishers may be seen in the instructive Blackmore Museum at Salisbury.<sup>4</sup> In the examination of a Gaulish *oppidum* at Castel Coz, in Brittany, by M. Le Men, of Quimper, nineteen sharpening stones, length 2 to 10 in., were found. They are described as furrowed with lines produced by some sharp-pointed instrument.<sup>5</sup>

In connection with the curious sharpening stones discovered by Mr. Stanley, it may be desirable to invite attention to the repeated occurrence in North Wales, and amidst the heights of Snowdon, of rocks *in situ*, that bear grooved markings, traditionally regarded, in several instances, as produced by sharpening arrows, or some other weapons in early times. A very remarkable example was figured in the *Archæological Journal* in 1864, from a drawing, for which we were indebted to Mr. John Williams, of Beaumaris.<sup>6</sup> This relic existed, as Mr. Stanley informed us, in a district full of historical traditions, in one of the mountain passes near Aber, in Caernarvonshire, where the Welsh princes had anciently a residence. The rock known as "Carreg y Saethau"—the stone of arrows—has subsequently, through wanton mischief, been broken up and destroyed. Similar scorings, supposed to be of remote antiquity, and associated with popular traditions, exist on Penmaen Mawr, near Glanogwen, also, and elsewhere, and, as we learn from Mr. Elias Owen, there had even been a notion that some of these markings might present characters or possibly some kind of Oghams. Other examples have been noticed in Merionethshire, by Mr. Wynne, of Peniarth.<sup>7</sup> There can be little doubt that in every instance such incisions had been produced, as also on the stones found at Ty Mawr in Mr. Stanley's explorations, in whetting or polishing certain implements, whether of daily use or of warfare.

Whatever may have been the dim traditions of Cambrian

<sup>4</sup> See Mr. E. T. Stevens, *Flint Chips*, p. 99, where may be found references to notices of objects of this class.

<sup>5</sup> *Arch. Cambr.*, fourth series, vol. i. p. 296.

<sup>6</sup> *Arch. Journ.* vol. xxi. p. 170; a more detailed notice has been given by Mr. Elias Owen, who enumerates several incised stones of the same description in

Caernarvonshire, *Arch. Cambr.*, third series, vol. x. p. 315; see also vol. xiii. p. 103.

<sup>7</sup> *Arch. Cambr.*, third series, vol. ix. p. 332, where Mr. E. Owen has figured some of these markings. Certain scorings on rocks in this county had been regarded as occult inscriptions. *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 275; vol. ii. p. 72.

folklore, associated with relics such as the "Stone of Arrows" and the time-weathered incisions that they bear, we may doubtless trace to some furrowed rock of this description on the heights of Snowdon the origin of a picturesque fable chronicled by Giraldus—the Eagle of Eryri that, scenting slaughter from afar, was wont on every Friday to whet his beak whilst perched on the fatal stone that was almost riven in his impatience.<sup>8</sup>

III. The moiety of a hammer-head, or axe, perforated for the insertion of a handle, and of a type that had not previously occurred in Mr. Stanley's researches. (See woodcuts, fig. 2.) The hole for the haft was in this instance worked by boring perforations from the two opposite faces of the hammer, the difficulty of making them exactly opposite to each other being considerable. These objects, comparatively rare in England and in Wales, more common, however, in Ireland and Scotland, have been found on several occasions associated with bronze weapons; they may probably be ascribed to the period when the use of bronze became prevalent, or to the latter part of the so-called "Stone Age." The fragment here figured, found at Ty Mawr, measures  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. in length, and 2 in. in thickness; it is of quartz and well fashioned; in general form, when perfect, it probably resembled that found at Gelley Dywyll, co. Montgomery, or a specimen from the Thames, preserved in the British Museum.<sup>9</sup> The perforation gradually narrows towards the middle of the stone; the blunt end shows considerable traces of percussion.

A very good example of this type of hammer, sharpened or wedge-shaped at one of its extremities, and obtusely rounded at the other, was found in 1855 on the estates of Lord Newborough, near Glynllifon Castle, Caernarvonshire. It is of massive dimensions—length 10 in., breadth  $3\frac{1}{4}$  in., thickness  $3\frac{5}{8}$  in., diameter of the perforation  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. The material is a trap rock.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Gir. Cambr., Itin. Cambr., lib. ii. c. ix., Camden Anglica, etc. p. 872. "In eisdem montanis de Eryri aquila fabulosa frequentat, quæ qualibet quinta feria lapidi cuidam insidens fatali, ut interemptorum cadavere famem satiet, bellum eodem die fertur expectare; lapidemque predictum cui consuerit insidere, jam prope rostrum purgando pariter et exa-

cuendo perforasse." Edit. and transl. by Sir R. C. Hoare, vol. ii. p. 131.

<sup>9</sup> Franks, *Horæ Ferales*. p. 139, pl. iii. figs. 3, 4. The examples there noticed vary in length from  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches to nearly 8 inches. See also Lindenschmit, *Alterth. uns. heidn. Vorzeit*, heft viii. taf. 1.

<sup>1</sup> For a sketch of this specimen I am indebted to Mr. Wynne of Glynllifon,

IV. A flat, heart-shaped, sea-shore pebble, measuring about 5 in. in each direction. It had probably been selected on account of its peculiar form, which rendered it suitable for some mechanical or domestic uses. It was found in the cyttiau at Pen y Bonc. Compare relics of a like description found by Mr. Stanley in hut-circles in Holyhead Island, *Arch. Journ.*, vol. xxvi. p. 320, figs. 7, 8, 9; vol. xxvii. p. 161, pl. iv. fig. 4.

V. A rolled pebble of quartz, probably from the sea-shore; dimensions about 4 by 2 in. It bears traces of percussion and of friction on both of its sides, and may have served as a hand-hammer, or for some mechanical uses.

VI. Another pebble of irregularly ovoid form, of somewhat larger size than the last. These, with numerous other objects of stone, of rude forms, for the most part accidental but modified slightly in some instances by artificial means, are well deserving of examination, as aiding our researches into the usages and the degree of civilization that may have prevailed, at the period, amongst the occupants of Holyhead Mountain and the ancient settlements around its base.

VII. A rudely-fashioned disc of stone, measuring nearly 5 in. in diameter. It may have been used for some game, like quoits, or possibly should be regarded as a rough appliance of domestic use, such as a plate. Objects of this description have occurred in "Picts' Houses," and with other ancient remains, in Orkney and the northern parts of Scotland. In Ireland they have been found repeatedly in crannoges. Sir W. R. Wilde describes specimens in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy as varying from 3 to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in. in diameter, and averaging half an inch in thickness; these are carefully smoothed on the flat surface. Their precise use has not been determined.<sup>2</sup>

VIII. A flat oval stone, measuring nearly  $2\frac{3}{4}$  by  $2\frac{3}{8}$  in.; of some dark-colored material that has become singularly light, either by the action of fire or by long exposure to the

through the kindness of the Rev. W. Wynn Williams. A hammer of the same type, length 9 inches, stated to have been found in Anglesey, may be seen in the Museum of Practical Geology, Jermyn Street, London.

<sup>2</sup> *Catal. Mus. R. I. A.* pp. 96, 99. Three, of fine sandstone, or very fine grit, are

of circular form; one, likewise of sandstone, and bevelled towards the edge, is oval. See also Wilde's account of the Tonymore Crannoge, p. 10; and notices of examples from Orkney, in Dr. Traill's *Memoir, Proceedings Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. vii. p. 432.



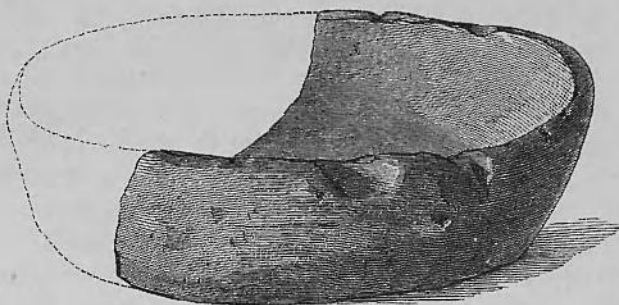


Fig. 3. Shallow saucer of stone.

Diameter, when perfect, about 5 in. ; thickness of the stone,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.



Fig. 4. Broken casting in yellow metal, found at Ty Mawr.

Length, 3 in. ; breadth, at the widest part, 2 in. : weight, 1 pound.

weather. It has doubtless been fashioned by the hand of man; it is perforated in the middle, the perforation measuring only half an inch in diameter, and is scarcely suited for insertion of a haft, being apparently adapted only to admit a cord or thong for suspension. The use of such perforated stones is uncertain: in some instances they were probably used as hammers, a purpose, however, for which the material of the specimen found by Mr. Stanley would be too soft and fragile.<sup>3</sup> They vary considerably in size, commencing with the circular "whorls," of which many examples have been collected in Mr. Stanley's researches. These have very commonly been supposed to be weights for the distaff; more probably they were used, in many instances, as buttons for fastening the garments of skins and the like. Perforated stones are of comparatively frequent occurrence in Ireland, and are regarded with a certain superstition; in some instances they are associated with traditions of the fairies, and supposed to be found only by persons in favour with them. The possessor of some such talisman is reputed to have the power of curing diseases by some liquid in which such a holed stone has been steeped.

IX. The moiety of a rudely-fashioned shallow saucer of stone (fig. 3), that measured, in its perfect state, about 5 in. in diameter; the average thickness of the stone is  $1\frac{1}{8}$  in. No object of this description had been previously found in the excavations in Holyhead Island, nor, so far as we are aware, in Wales. Such appliances, probably of domestic use, have occurred in "Picts' Houses," and ancient habitations in the Hebrides. A relic of similar form and dimensions, of compact limestone, is figured in Nilsson's "Stone Age in Scandinavia;" it had a very small ear or loop, suited for suspension, on one side; whether a corresponding ear was formed on the opposite side cannot be ascertained, a portion of the margin having been broken off. This vessel was found in a gravel-pit; it is therefore doubtful, as Nilsson observes, to what period it belongs.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Compare Nilsson, *Stone Age in Scandinavia*, edited by Sir John Lubbock, pl. i. fig. 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Primitive Inhabitants of Scandinavia, Stone Age*, edited by Sir John Lubbock,

p. 86, pl. x. fig. 210. See also shallow stands or saucers of smaller size found by Mr. Laing in Caithness: *Proceedings Soc. Ant. Scot.* vol. vii. p. 40, and *Antiquities from Orkney*, *ibid.* n. 218.



X. A singular very rough casting in yellow metal, here figured (fig. 4). It was found near Ty Mawr, not far from the spot where the celts, spears, and other objects of bronze were found in 1832. It has somewhat of the appearance of the upper part of a socketed and looped celt, but, in its present imperfect condition, much damaged also by decay, it is very difficult to form any probable conjecture in regard to the intention and use of this relic. It may have been merely the waste piece broken off in the operation of casting certain implements, the perfect form of which we are now unable to ascertain. This relic has, however, a certain value as proving the actual fabrication of objects of metal by the occupants of the ancient settlement on Holyhead Mountain. It will not be forgotten that a remarkable mould of hone-stone, for casting various weapons, had been found in Anglesey, and also that two moulds of bronze for casting palstaves were brought to light in the adjacent county of Caernarvon, near Bangor.

The weight of the rough fragment found at Ty Mawr is 1 lb. ; it measures nearly 3 in. in length, the breadth of the widest part is somewhat less than 2 in. The metal bears no trace of patina, and has the appearance of copper ; it had indeed been pronounced by a competent authority to be of that metal, so far as an opinion could be formed from color and the general condition. Probably the alloy may be unusually slight in proportion. Mr. Franks, however, who is very conversant with such matters, assures me that the surface presents the ordinary appearance of unpatinated Celtic bronze. I have not been able to obtain an analysis, which, considering the rare occurrence of ancient objects of copper, would be desirable. The Rev. W. Wynn Williams has described two palstaves found near Llanidan, Anglesey, of which one has a large per centage of copper ;<sup>5</sup> and the point of a spear found amongst the bronze relics at Glancych is stated to be of copper.<sup>6</sup>

XI. A portion of a mould of stone, for casting rudely ornamented metal discs of various sizes (fig. 5). This curious object was found at Pen y Bonc towards the close of last

<sup>5</sup> Figured in Arch. Cambr., third series, vol. iii. p. 283.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., vol. x. p. 229. Of copper relics in Ireland, of rare occurrence, see Wilde,

Catal. Mus. R. I. A. pp. 356, 360. See also Sir John Lubbock's Prehistoric Times, second edit. pp. 28, 57.

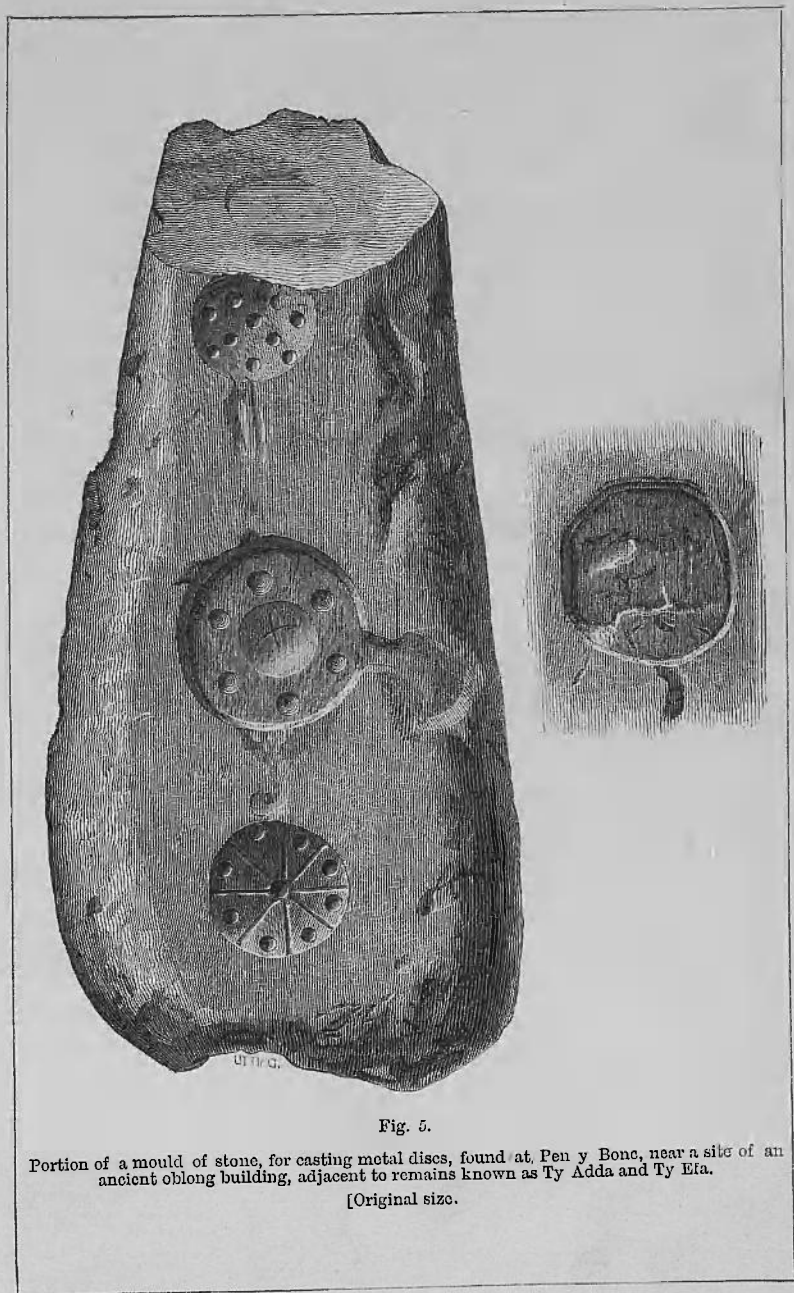


Fig. 5.

Portion of a mould of stone, for casting metal discs, found at Pen y Bone, near a site of an ancient oblong building, adjacent to remains known as Ty Adda and Ty Efa.

[Original size.]

year; it had been thrown out in the spring with the *debris* of the oblong building near the remains known as Ty Adda and Ty Efa, and was lately noticed when the crop of turnips was taken up. The remains brought to light on that site presented remarkable peculiarities. It was there, it will be remembered, that Mr. Stanley's careful excavations exposed to view a large hearth, with charcoal, scoria, &c., and a singular vitrified pipe of clay, also fragments of Samian and of other wares, believed to be Roman or Roman-British, as related in the memoir on the excavations in 1870.<sup>7</sup> There were also found in this building, as stated, two fire-places, a grinding stone, and the curious appliances believed to have been for grinding red pigment, relics of which no other examples have occurred in Mr. Stanley's researches.<sup>8</sup>

The occurrence of part of a stone mould in proximity to objects of Roman date, and within or near a building that, as suggested by relics indicating operations of some mechanical arts, may have served for a workshop at some remote period, doubtless claims special attention. The dimensions of the mould are accurately shown in the accompanying woodcut, of the same size as the original stone (fig. 5); the material is described by Mr. Stanley as a "peculiar dark brown clay slate, such as some of the spindle-wheels or buttons are made of; it cuts soft." The surface has been rubbed down, but it does not appear that the stone was, as had at first been imagined, the moiety of a mould, that fitted as in other instances to a counterpart, cavities being formed between the two surfaces, and the metal poured in through a little orifice or channel, when the moieties of the mould were fixed in juxtaposition. It may therefore be concluded that the molten metal may have been simply poured over the surface, placed horizontally, and thus producing discs convex on one side only, their reverses being plain and flat. On the other side of the stone a circle has been struck, possibly the rough commencement of another mould for discs of metal.

The interest and comparative rarity of ancient appliances

<sup>7</sup> Archæol. Journal, vol. xxvii. p. 151.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pl. v. p. 161. The discovery of objects connected with certain pigments (possibly body-paint) found in Orkney

has there been noticed. Of these some interesting notices have been subsequently given by Dr. Traill, Proceedings Soc. Antiq. Scot. vol. vii. pp. 433, 460.

connected with the mechanical arts have induced me to notice thus minutely the fashion of the relic from Pen y Bonc. It is to be regretted that it bears no distinctive indication of date, or of the class of objects, whether pre-Roman, Roman-British, or of some more recent period, to which it may be assigned. It may be scarcely needful to remark that stone moulds for celts, spear-heads, and the like, have repeatedly occurred in the British Islands; of the familiar use of such material at a remote period for casting objects of bronze, a remarkable evidence is supplied in the four-sided mould of hone-stone found in 1846 in the western parts of Anglesey.<sup>9</sup> A few moulds of stone for producing ornaments, and certain objects of undefined character, have likewise been described; amongst these it may suffice to mention a specimen in the Museum at Edinburgh, that would produce, amongst various objects, discs and oval plates of unknown use; also a mould at King William's College, Isle of Man, for casting flat discs (not convex as in the example from Pen y Bonc), and three pronged implements, the intention of which, and also the date of the relic, have not been ascertained.<sup>1</sup>

In the Museum of Antiquities at Caerleon,<sup>2</sup> described by Mr. J. E. Lee, there is the moiety of a stone mould found with Roman relics, and although in appearance not quite like Roman art, it has been regarded as probably Roman-British. It bears three matrices for casting wheel-shaped ornaments, also a fourth for objects of oblong fashion; the channels for pouring in the metal, and the holes for pins by which the two moieties were kept together in true juxtaposition are distinctly shown. This example measures about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches by 3 inches. Of a later age, probably, are two specimens brought before the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1863; of these, one found in a cairn near Whitby is formed with a circular cavity, in which a regular pattern radiates from the centre; on the other, the cavity,

<sup>9</sup> *Archæol. Journal*, vol. iii. p. 257. See also *Notices of Celts and of Celt-moulds in Wales*, *Arch. Cambr.*, third series, vol. ii. p. 126; and an enumeration of celt-moulds formed of stone and of metal, *Arch. Journ.* vol. xviii. p. 166.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, *Prehistoric Annals*, second edit., vol. i. p. 344. See also a singular

mould found in Aberdeenshire, *Proceedings Soc. Ant. Scot.* vol. iv. p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> *Isca Silurum*, an Illustrated Catalogue of the Museum at Caerleon, p. 71, pl. xxxvi. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, lib. 34, c. 8, as pointed out by Mr. C. W. King, alludes to the use of heated stones in Gaul for casting objects of metal, "*inter lapides candefactos funditur.*"

measuring an inch in diameter, presents a regal head in profile. It was found near Jedburgh.<sup>3</sup>

Stone moulds, unquestionably of mediæval date, have been noticed. In the *Archæologia*, vol. xiv. p. 275, pl. 48, an object of this description is figured that was found at Ashill, Norfolk, about 1798. It is now in the possession of the Rev. Samuel Lysons, F.S.A. The mould when complete was probably formed of three pieces, of which this was the central portion. It is worked with matrices for casting ring-brooches, probably of lead, with the angelical salutation *Ave Maria*.

Canon Greenwell has pointed out a certain resemblance between the convex discs that Mr. Stanley's mould would produce, and whorl-like objects of lead marked with radiating lines and intervening pellets, occasionally also with other rude ornaments. These metal relics, however, have invariably a central perforation of considerable size; their date and use have not been ascertained.<sup>4</sup> A flat perforated whorl of stone, bearing also radiating lines and pellets, was found near a sepulchral chamber at Carno, Montgomeryshire.<sup>5</sup>

XII. With the ancient relics above described, obtained by Mr. Stanley in his most recent researches in Holyhead Island, may be noticed also a remarkable object of stone that has lately come into his possession. It is a ponderous ovoid pebble, found near the residence of Mr. W. W. E. Wynne, at Peniarth, Merionethshire. It presents considerable symmetry of form; the surface is uniformly smooth, and the egg shape seems to be the result of art, not caused by rolling amongst other pebbles in a river-bed or the like. Mr. Wynne states that there is no stream in the neighbourhood of sufficient force and rapidity to have brought the stone to its present shapely form. It measures about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Ovoid stones, wrought apparently with much care, have occasionally been found in barrows, or accompanying early interments. The country around Peniarth presents many ancient vestiges, hill-fortresses, and other remains, but it does not appear that any burial-place or tradition of any ancient site

<sup>3</sup> Proceedings Soc. Ant. Scot., vol. v. p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> Examples are noticed and figured in the *Archæological Journal*; see vol. xvii. pp. 164, 267; vol. xix. p. 139. Leaden ob-

jects ornamented likewise with radiating lines and pellets have been found near Rome and also in Greece.

<sup>5</sup> Arch. Cambr., third series, vol. iii. p. 305.

could be connected with the discovery of the pebble in question, found some years since by Mr. Wynne himself. He has presented to myself a second, of smaller size, and of more oblate form : it measures rather more than 3 in. in length, by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. in breadth in one direction, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. in the other. The weight is 10 oz. An ovoid stone of larger dimensions than those found at Peniarth was brought a few years since for the inspection of the Institute by the late Mr. Minty, of Petersfield; it was obtained on Petersfield Heath, in Hampshire, near an ancient burial-place.<sup>6</sup> A dark-brown ponderous pebble, of singularly true egg-shaped form, dimensions 4 in. by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in., was shown to me by Mr. Ready. It had probably been shaped in some degree by friction ; weight 17 oz. It had been found near an ancient interment in Somersetshire, in the Isle of Athelney, the refuge of Alfred in his exile. According to a note attached to this relic it had been obtained "from the lower part of the grave at Athelney, near the kelt and . . . Dec. 1766." An Irish example, described as found in a cromlech called Leabher Caille (The Hag's Bed), near Glanworth, co. Cork, is in the possession of the Rev. James Beck, F.S.A. The original intention of such ovoid and spherical stones must be left for future consideration ; in some instances they may have served as corn-crushers, or for other domestic uses ; if appended to a haft by leathern thongs, they would supply a flail-weapon of formidable description. It is, however, very possible, especially when found with early interments, that they may have been associated with a certain superstitious veneration. In Scandinavia the *cultus* of spherical stones was retained, even to comparatively recent times, as stated in the very curious relation by Finn Magnusen, of the idolatrous observances that prevailed in remote mountain districts.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Arch. Journ., vol. xiii. p. 412.  
<sup>7</sup> Annaler for Nord. Oldk. 1838, p. 133 ;  
 Nilsson, Primitive Inhabitants of Scandi-

navia, Stone Age, edit. by Sir. John  
 Lubbock, p. 241.