

NOTE OF A MASSIVE BRONZE ARMLET FOUND IN IRELAND. BY JOHN ALEXANDER SMITH, M.D., SEC. S.A. SCOT.

In my paper on these bronze armlets (see page 325) I stated that, with the exception of one specimen discovered in Ireland, all the other armlets had been found in Scotland. Through the courtesy and kindness of Major R. J. MacEniry, of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, I am now

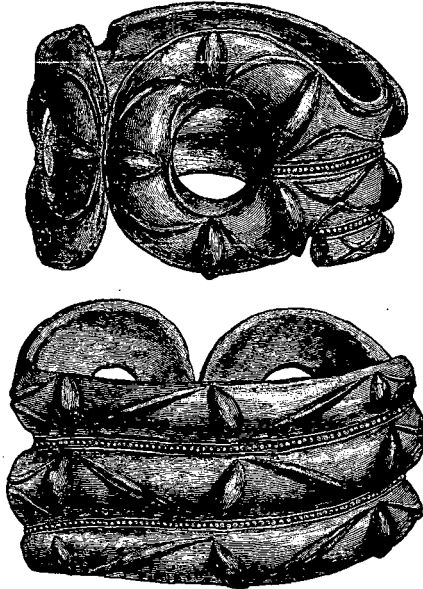


Fig. 31. Bronze Armlet found near Newry, County Down, Ireland.

able to give full details of the armlet found in Ireland, and I have also to thank him for the annexed excellent drawings (fig. 31), which show the details of its ornamentation better than any description. This armlet is therefore of much interest; it was found some years ago near Newry, County Down, by a man while digging into a bank of earth; it was then acquired, in 1866, by a gentleman residing near Newry, who disposed of

it to the Irish Academy in 1875. It is similar in character to the armlets found in Scotland, and belongs to my second variety, the "spiral or folded pattern" of these armlets (the plan of it being similar to that figured on page 337). The rounded bands or bars of the armlet are ornamented, as usual, with transverse projecting ornaments, alternating with the projecting oblique ornaments. The oblique ornaments being single, except on the bars near their termination, towards the oval openings, where they are double. In the grooves between the different projecting bands or bars forming the armlet there is a delicately wrought double fillet enclosing a minute bead-like ornamentation. The circular openings at each of the extremities of the armlet show no remains of the enamelled plates which are found in some of these armlets; only on one of them is the remains of a bezel, which had doubtless been for holding an enamelled plate.

It measures 5 inches in its greatest diameter and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height. Its greatest internal diameter is $4\frac{5}{8}$ inches; its least internal diameter, $3\frac{5}{8}$ inches; the external diameters of its circular ends are respectively $3\frac{3}{8}$ and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; measurement across the middle of the back, $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches; the diameter of apertures, $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch. Its weight is 42 ounces avoirdupois. The armlet is wonderfully perfect, of excellent workmanship, and a great portion of it is now covered by a fine dark green patina.

Whether this fine armlet is of native Irish manufacture, or, as all the others yet known have been found in Scotland, whether it also is simply a Scottish armlet taken over to our Celtic friends of the sister Isle, I cannot tell. The latter, is perhaps, shall I say, the most likely explanation of its presence in Ireland.

Major MacEniry also informs me that there is in the museum of the Academy a plain true spiral bronze armlet found in Ireland. It measures $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches in height and $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches in greatest breadth at one extremity. It seems, however, to be formed of a simple bar of bronze, without any of the peculiar serpent-like or zoomorphic ornamentation on its surface.