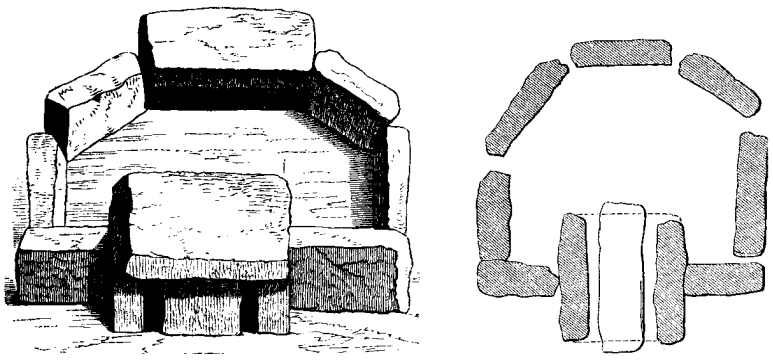
CHAPTER IV.

MINOR ENGLISH ANTIQUITIES.

AYLESFORD.

The detailed examination of these groups at Avebury and Stonehenge will probably be deemed sufficient to establish at least a prima facie case in favour of the hypothesis that these monuments were sepulchral - that at least some of them marked battle-fields, and lastly, that their antiquity was not altogether prehistoric. If this is so, it will not be necessary to repeat the same evidence in treating of those monuments or groups we are about to describe. Incidentally the latter will, if I am not mistaken, afford many confirmations of those propositions, but it will not be necessary to insist or enlarge on them to the same extent as has been done in the previous pages.

Among the remaining groups of stones in England land, one of the most important is-or rather was-that in front of Aylesford in Kent. The best known member of this group is that known as Kit's Cotty - or Coity-house, which has, however, been so often drawn and described that it is hardly necessary to do much more than refer to it here. It is a dolmen, composed of four stones, three upright; the two side stones being about 8 feet square and 2 in thickness, the third somewhat smaller; these form three sides of a chamber, the fourth side being - and apparently always having been-left open. These three support a cap stone measuring 11 feet by 8 feet. If we can trust Stukeley's drawing, (Iter Curiosum,' pl. xxxiii,) it was an external dolmen standing on the end of a low long barrow. At the other end of the mound lay an obelisk, since removed, but in Stukeley's time it was said to mark "the general's grave." The mound has since been levelled by the plough, but the whole forms an arrangement so common both in England and in Scandinavia, that I am inclined to place faith in the drawing. So little, however, hinges on it here that it is not worth while insisting on it, but a trench across the site of the barrow might lead to interesting results. Nearly due south of Kit's Cotty-house, at the distance of about 500 yards, is another monument of the same class, popularly known as the Countless Stones, but so ruined-apparently by searchers after treasure that its plan cannot now be made out. In Stukeley's time, however, it was more perfect, and as his pencil is always more to be trusted than his pen, it may be worth while to reproduce his drawings, (Iter Curiosurn p. xxxii.) for the arrangement of the stones was peculiar, but may have analogies elsewhere.



27. Countless Stones, Aylesford. From a drawing by Stukeley.

Between these two a third dolmen is said to have existed within the memory of man, but no trace of it is now to be found. In the rear of these groups, nearer the village, there exists, or existed, a line of great stones, extending from a place called Spring Farm, in a north-easterly direction, for a distance of three-quarters of a mile, to another spot known as Hale Farm, (When I was there four years ago I was fortunate enough to find an old man, a stonemason, who had been employed in his youth in utilizing these stones. He went over the ground with me, and pointed out the position of those he remembered.) passing through Tollington, where the greater number of the stones are now found. In front of the line near the centre at Tollington lie two obelisks, known to the country people as the coffin-stones - probably from their shape. They are 12 feet long by 4 to 6 broad, and about 2 or 3 feet thick. (It is extremely difficult to be precise about the dimensions. One is wholly buried in the earth, and its dimensions can only be obtained by probing; the other is half buried.) They appear to be partially hewn, or at least shaped, so as to resemble one another.

Besides these stones, which are all on the right bank of the river, there are several groups at or near Addington, about five miles to the westward of Aylesford. Two of these in the park at Addington have long been known to antiquaries, having been described and figured in the 'Archaeologia' in 1773. (Archaeologia,'ii. 1773, p. 107.) The first is a small circle, about 11 feet in diameter, the six stones comprising, it being 19 feet high, 7 wide, and 2 in thickness. Near it is the larger one of oval form, measuring 50 paces by 42 paces. The stones are generally smaller than those of the other circle. The other groups or detached stones are described by Mr. Wright, (Wanderings of an Antiquary;, London, 1854, P. 175 *et seqq.*) who went over the ground with that excellent and venerable antiquary the Rev. L. B. Larking. They seem to have adopted the common opinion that an avenue of such stones existed all the way from Addington to Aylesford, but it seems to me that there is no sufficient evidence to justify this conclusion. Many of the stones seem natural boulders, and in no place is any alignment distinctly perceptible.

In addition to these, Mr. Wright found, and attempted to excavate some smaller monuments of a sepulchral character, near Kit's Cotty House, but situated on the brow of the hill immediately above it. These "consist generally of groups of stones buried partly on the ridge of the hill, but evidently forming, or having formed, small sepulchral chambers." "Each group," he adds, 'is generally surrounded by a circle of stones." (*loc cit.* 175.)

There only now remains the question, why were all these stones placed here, and by whom? Mr. Wright is far too sober and too well-informed an antiquary to repeat the usual nonsense about such monuments having been Druid temples or altars. The conclusion at which he arrives (p. 183) is that Kit's Cotty-house, and the cemetery around it, with that in the parish of Addington, together formed the grand necropolis of the Belgian settlers in this part of the island. Against this it must be observed that the Belgians erected no such monuments in their own country, Gallia Belgica being exactly that part of France in which no stone monuments are found, and it is very unlikely that the Belgians should have done here what they did not do at home. But another objection is, that the theory is wholly gratuitous, no shadow of tradition, no analogy, and no reason being adduced to show why it should be so, and, to say the least of it, it is most unlikely. If a straight line were drawn from the mouth of the Humber to the head of Southampton Water, this is the only group of this class of monuments to the eastward of the line, and what possible reason can we have for supposing that the princes or people of that vast district chose this place, and this only, for their necropolis? Had it been some vast plain like Salisbury, or some gloomy valley, or the site of some ancient sacred city, the choice might have been intelligible, but a more unromantic, unlikely spot than the valley of the Medway could hardly have been chosen. It is neither central nor accessible, and neither history nor tradition lends any countenance to the suggestion

Suppose, on the other hand, we assume that these erections are a record of the battle which, according to the Saxon chronicle, (Mon. Hist. Brit.' p. 299.) was fought on this spot between Vortigern and Hengist and Horsa, in the year 455, and in which Catigren was slain on the side of the British, and the redoubted Horsa fell on that of the Saxons. This at least has the merit of accounting for all we see-the line of stones at Tollington is just such a position as the British army would take up, to cover the ford at Aylesford against an enemy advancing from Thanet. The two obelisks in front would represent the position of the two chiefs; Kit's Cotty-house would become the tomb of Catigren, which tradition always represented it to be; the circles at Addington would become the graves of chiefs who were wounded in the battle, and taken to the rear and buried with due honours, at or near the spot where they died; and lastly the tumulus at Horstead would also in accordance with ancient tradition be the grave of Horsa.

So much depends on this last determination, that last year through the kindness of Colonel Fisher, R,E., the assistance of a party of sappers was procured from Chatham, and the mound was thoroughly explored. It was found that a cremation (it is presumed of a human body) had taken place on the natural surface of the ground, and that a tumulus had been raised over it. The chalk was dug down to some depth and found quite undisturbed, but no ornament or implement was found anywhere. At first this seemed disappointing; but on Mr. Godfrey Faussett, who was present at the digging, referring to certain passages in 'Beowulf,' it appears to be exactly what should have been expected. The poem, in the first place, is about the best authority we could have, inasmuch as, according to Kemble, "it gave accounts of exploits not far removed, in point of time, from the crossing of Hengist and Horsa into Britain, and the poem was probably brought hither by some of those Anglo-Saxons, who, in 495, accompanied Cerdic and Cyneric." ('Beowulf: an Anglo-Saxon Poem translated by J. W. Kemble, 1835, preface, p. xix.) After Hengist's conflict with Fin, the body was burnt (1. 2232-2251); but after Beowulf's death not only cremation is mentioned, but a splendid mound is raised over the spot where the funeral pile stood, "ad on Eorthen" (1. 6266), on the surface of the ground. At Beowulf's funeral, vases, and arms, and jewels of all kinds, were thrown upon the pile and burnt with him; and no wonder, considering the wealth just rescued from the guardianship of the "Wurm " by the victorious hero. Poor Horsa died defeated, and all his friends could expect would be to be allowed to bury him under a flag of truce, with such rites as would ensure his proper reception in the next world. Had they attempted to bury any treasures with him, they probably would have been appropriated by the victorious Brits.

Bede's expression that Horsa's tomb was situated in "orientation talibus partibus Cantiae," (Mon. Hist. Brit. P.121.) has more than once been quoted to disprove this identification. But what did Bede mean by "eastern parts"? May it not have been that in his day the Medway divided Kent into east and west? Or he may have spoken without sufficient local knowledge. But that Horsa fell at Aylesford, is as well authenticated as any fact in that age: he most probably was buried near the battle-field; and the village where the mound is situated has probably ever since been called Horstead, as it is at this day.

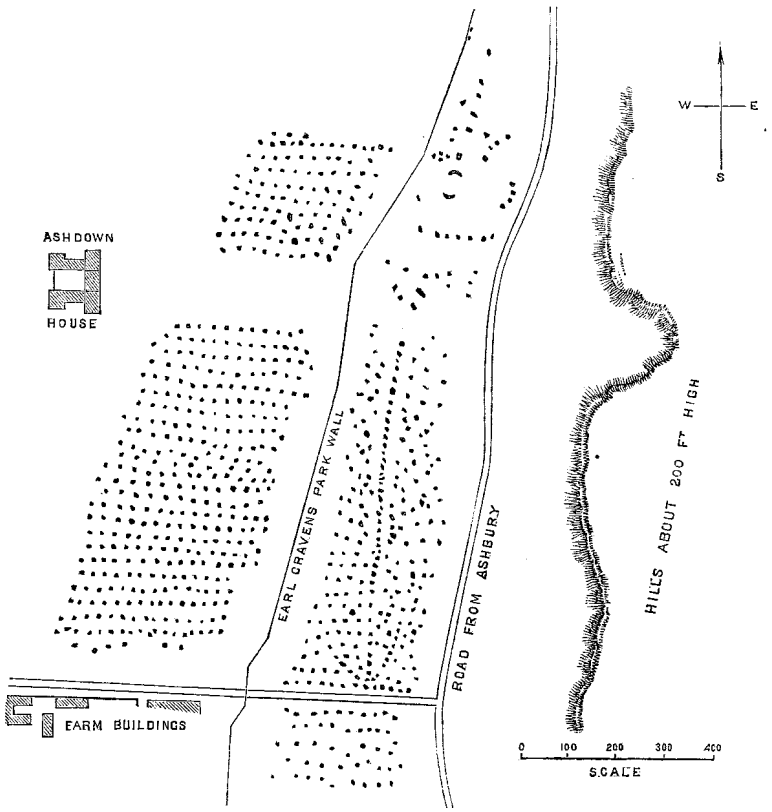
All this, it appears to me, makes so strong a case, that I cannot help thinking it might be accepted till, at least, something is advanced against it. At present I am not aware of any argument to the contrary that seems to me entitled to any serious consideration. No flint, or bronze, or iron implement of any sort, so far as I know, have been found on the spot - this may be only because they have not been looked for; but as the case at present stands, the Danish system cannot be pleaded for or against this view.

The real difficulty to be feared in obtaining acceptance of this explanation of the stone at Aylesford, is its extreme simplicity. After all that has been written about the unfathomable mystery and the primaeval antiquity of this class of monuments, to be told that these are merely the memorials of a battle fought on the spot in the year 455, is too terribly prosaic to be tolerated, nor ought it perhaps to be accepted if it stood alone. If, however, it proves to be only one of many instances, the ultimate admission of the above views can hardly be doubtful.

ASHDOWN.

In the neighbourhood of Uffington, in Berkshire, there are three monuments, two at least of which still merit a local habitation and a name in our history. One of these is the celebrated white horse, which gives its name to the vale, and the scouring of which is still used by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood on the occasion of a triennial festival and games, which have been so graphically described by Mr. Thomas Hughes.

The second is a cromlech, known as Wayland Smith's Cave, and immortalized by the use made of it by Sir Walter Scott in the novel of 'Kenilworth' The third is as remarkable as either, but still wants its poet. The annexed woodcut will give a fair idea of its nature and extent. (This woodcut is copied literally from one by Mr. Lewis published in the 'Norwich Volume of the International Prehistoric Congress,' and the figures and facts I am about to quote are mostly taken from the paper that accompanied it. The inferences, however, are widely different.) It does not pretend to be minutely accurate, and this in the present instance is fortunately of no great consequence. All the stones are overthrown:



28. The Sarsen Stones at Ashdown. From a drawing by A. L. Lewis, Esq.

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some lie flat on the ground, some on their edges, and it is only the smallest that can be said to be standing. The consequence is, that we cannot feel sure that we know exactly where any of

them stood, nor whether they were arranged in lines, like those at Carnac; nor if so, in how many rows, or whether they always had the confused appearance they now present. They are spread over an area of about 1600 feet north and south, and of half that distance east and west. The gap in the centre was made purposely to clear the view in front of the house when it was built, and many of the stones it is feared were employed in the erection. They are the same Sarsens as are used at Avebury and Stonehenge, and the largest are about 10 feet long from 6 to 9 wide, and from 3 to 4 feet high (in their present recumbent position); but there are few so large as this, the majority being from 2 to 4 feet in length and breadth, and from 1 to 3 high. (Norwich Volume of the International Pi Prehistoric Congress,' p. 37.)

No one has yet attempted to give any explanation of the monument beyond repeating the usual Druidical formulae. To me it appears almost incontestable that it is a memorial of the battle fought here between the Saxons and the Danes in the year 871. From Asser we learn that the Pagans, advancing from Reading, occupied the higher ground. It is sometimes supposed that Uffington Castle was thrown up by them on the occasion, which is by no means impossible. Advancing eastward, they then attacked the Christians under Alfred, who occupied the lower ground. This, and the ill-timed fit of devotion on his brother's part, nearly lost the Christians the day; but Alfred's skill and intrepidity prevailed, and the victory was complete. (Asser, it, 'Men. Hist. Brit.' p. 476.) This being so, nothing appears more probable than that the victorious army, either by themselves or with the assistance of the peasantry, should have collected together the Sarsens in the neighbourhood, and have arranged them as Alfred and his army stood, when he first received the shock of the Pagans. It seems also probable that he would have engraved the emblem of the white horse on the side of the hill where the Pagans had encamped the night before the battle, and where probably the fight ended on the following day.

The question whether Weyland Smith's Cave belongs to the same group, or to an earlier date, is not so easily settled. My impression is that it is older. It is a three-chambered dolmen almost, identical in plan with Petrie's No. 27, Carrowmore, to be described in the next chapter, but with this difference, that whereas the circle of stones in the Irish example contained thirty-six or thirty-seven stones, and was 60 feet in diameter, this one contained probably only twenty-eight, and was only 50 feet in diameter. This and the fact of the one consisting of Sarsens - the other of granite blocks-account so completely for all the difference between them, that I cannot believe that so great a lapse of time as eight centuries could have taken place between the erection of the two. I fancy it must have been erected for the entombment of a local hero in the early centuries of the Christian era; but of this we will be better able to judge when we are further advanced in our survey of similar monuments.

ROLLRIGHT.

At Rollright, between Chipping Norton and Long Compton, in Oxfordshire, there is a circle, which, from what has been written about it, has assumed an importance in the antiquarian world, which is certainly not due either to its dimensions or to any traditions that attach to it. Every antiquary, from Camden down to Bathurst Deane, has thought it necessary to say something about this splendid temple of the Druid priesthood, so that the traveller, when he visits it, is sure to be dreadfully disappointed. It is an ordinary 100-foot circle, the entrance to which is apparently from the south opposite to the five largest stones, which are placed in juxtaposition on the north, the tallest in the centre being about 5 feet in height. The others average about 3 or 4 feet, but are uneven in height and irregularly spaced, but with a tendency to form groups of threes, which is a peculiarity observable in some similar circles on Dartmoor.

Across the road, at a distance of about 50 yards, stands a single obeliscal stone, about 10 feet high, on a mound which appears to be artificial. If it is so, however, it was raised with the materials taken out of a pit, which still exists on one side, and not from a ditch surrounding it, as is usual in such cases. In another direction, about a quarter of a mile from the circle, stands a dolmen which is the finest feature in the group. The cap stone, which has fallen, measures 8 feet by 9, and is of considerable thickness; and three of the supporting stones are 7, 8, and 10 feet in height respectively.

This circle appears to have been examined by Ralph Sheldon, but without results. (Stukeley, 'Avebury,' p. 12; Borlase, p. 210.) The mound, so far as is known, is yet untouched, and the dolmen could not now be explored without causing its complete ruin; I presume no one will contest its being sepulchral. It would be difficult now to bring to the test of experiment the question whether the circle is so or not, as some forty or fifty years ago, it and the plot round it were planted with larch trees, whose roots have spread over the surface and could with difficulty be now got rid of. This is to be regretted, as from its isolated position the group affords an excellent opportunity of testing the usual theories regarding these monuments. If it was a temple, it gives us a very low idea of the religious state of our ancestors, that for a district of from twenty to thirty miles' radius they should have possessed only one single small enclosure, surrounded by a low imperfect wall, 3 or 4 feet high. If any other had ever existed, traces of it must have been found, or why has this one remained so complete, for not one stone apparently is missing. It is also strange that, as in other instances, it should be situated on the highest and bleakest part of the surrounding country. It is, in fact, not only the unlikeliest form, but the most inconvenient site for a temple. It also gives us a very low idea of their civilization. The circle at Rollright is a sort of monument that the boys of any of our larger schools could set up in a week, supposing the stones to be found lying about, at no great distance, which there is little doubt was the case when it was erected. The dolmen might require a little contrivance to get the cap stone hoisted; but there is nothing that the villagers in the neighbourhood could not now complete in a few days, if so inclined, and certainly nothing that a victorious army, of say even 1000 men, could Dot complete between sunrise and sunset in a summer's day. Even if the sepulchral character of the group is admitted, it can hardly be the burying ground of a chief, or clan, or family. In that case, instead of one dolmen there must have been several, smaller it may be, but in succession. The chief must have had ancestors, or successors, or relations, and they would not be content that one, and one only of their family should possess an honoured tomb, and that they themselves should rest in undistinguished graves. As in other cases, unless we are prepared to admit that it marks the site of a battle, I know of nothing that will explain the situation and the form of the group; nor do I see why we should reject Camden's explanation of the circumstances under which it was erected: "These would, I verily think, to have been the monument of some victory, and haply erected by Rollo the Dane, who afterwards conquered Normandy." "In what time he with the Danes troubled England with depredations we read that the Danes joined battle with the English thereby at Hock Norton, a place for no one thing more famous in old time than for the woful slaughter of the English on that foughten field, under the reign of King Edward the Elder." (Camden, 'Britannia,' i. p. 285. See also Charleton's 'Stonehenge restored to the Danes,' p. .36.) This last, however, is apparently a mistake, for it was Eadward (901-923) who was really the contemporary of Rollo. He was also the contemporary of Gorm the Old, of Denmark, of whose tumulus and Pagan habits we shall bear hereafter.

This again will appear a very prosaic anti-climax to those who are nursed on ideas of the hoar antiquity and wondrous magnificence of such monuments as Ashdown and Rollright. A visit to them is sufficient to dispel one part of that illusion, and a little common-sense applied to

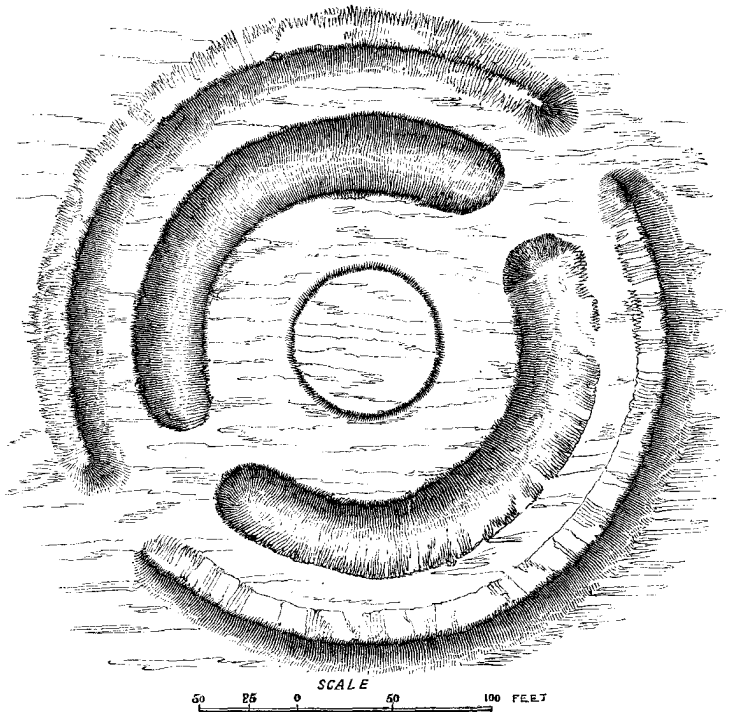
the other will probably show that the more moderate view meets perfectly all the real exigencies of the case.

PENRITH.

In the neighbourhood of Penrith in Cumberland there is a group, or perhaps it should be said there are three groups of monuments, of considerable importance from their form and size, but deficient in interest from the absence of any tradition to account for their being where we find them. They extend in a nearly straight line from Little Salkeld on the north to Shap on the south, a distance of fourteen miles as the crow flies, Penrith lying a little to the westward of the line, and nearer to its northern than its southern extremity.

About half a mile from the first named village is the circle known popularly as Long Meg and her Daughters, sixty-eight in number, if each stone represents one. It is about 330 feet (100 metres) in diameter, but does not form a perfect circle. The stones are unhewn boulders, and very few of them are now erect. Outside the circle stands Long Meg herself, of a different class of stone from the others, about 12 feet high, and apparently hewn, or at all events shaped, to some extent. (On this stone Sir Gardiner Wilkin son traced one of those circles of con centric rings which are so common on stones in the north of England. I did not see it myself but assuming it to be true - which I have no doubt it is-it will not help us much till we know when and by whom these circles were engraved.) Inside the circle, Camden reports " the existence of two cairns of stone, under which they say are dead bodies buried; and indeed it is probable enough," he adds, " that it has been a monument erected in honour of some victory." (Brit.' p. 1021.) No trace of these cairns now remains, nor am I aware that the centre has ever been dug into with a view of looking for interments. My impression, however, is that the principal interment was outside, and that Long Meg marks either the head or the foot of the chief's grave.

Close to Penrith is another circle called Mayborough, of about the same dimensions - 100 metres - as that at Little Salkeld, but of a very different construction. The vallum or enclosure is entirely composed of small water-worn stones taken from the beds of the Eamount or Eden rivers. The stones are wonderfully uniform in size, and just about what any man could carry without inconvenience. This enclosure mound is now so mined that it is extremely difficult to guess what were its dimensions. It may have been from 15 feet to 20 feet high, and twice that in breadth at its base. The same cause makes it difficult to determine the dimensions of the internal area. The floor of the circle I calculated as 290 feet from the foot of one slope to the foot of the opposite one, and consequently the whole as from 320 feet to 340 feet (Pennant in his text calls the diameter 88 yards, but the scale attached. to his plan makes it 110 yards nearly.) from crest to crest; but these dimensions must be taken as only approximative till a more careful survey is made than it was in my power to execute. Near, but not quite in the centre, stands a single splendid monolith ; it may be 12 feet in height, but is more than twice the bulk of Long Meg. In Pennant's time there were four stones still standing in the centre, of which this was one, and probably there may originally have been several more forming a small circle in the centre. (Tour in Scotland, 1772,' pl. xxxvii. p. 276.) In his day also he learned that there were four stones - two pairs - standing in a gap in the vallum looking like the commencement of an avenue. The place, however, is too near Penrith, and stone is there too valuable to allow of such things escaping, so that nothing now remains which would enable us to restore this monument with certainty.



29. Sketch Plan of King Arthur's Round Table, with the side, obliterated by the road, restored.

Close by this is a third circle known as Arthur's Round Table. It consists, or consisted, of a vallum of earth, as near as can be made out, 300 feet from crest to crest; but about one-third of the circle being cut away to form a road, it is not easy to speak with certainty. Inside the rampart is a broad berm then a ditch, and in the centre a plateau about 170 feet in diameter, slightly raised in the centre. No stone is visible on the surface, though the rampart when broken into shows that it is principally composed of them. There is now only one entrance through the rampart and across the ditch, but as both entrances existed in Pennant's time (1772), and are figured in his plan of the monument, I have not hesitated to restore the second accordingly. (Near Lochmaben, in Annandale, a circle exists, or existed, called Wood Castle, which, in so far as the plan and dimensions are concerned, is identical with this. It is figured in General Roy's ' Military Antiquities of the Romans,' pl. viii. I would not hesitate ill quoting it as a monument of this class, but for the view which I distrust excessively, but which makes it look like a fortification. As I have no means of verifying the facts, I can only draw attention to them.) The distance between Mayborough and King Arthur's Round Table is about 110 yards, and at about the same distance from the last-named monument, a third circle existed in Pennant's time. It seems, however, to have been in his day at least only a circular ditch, and has now entirely disappeared.

Owing to their more ruined state, the remains at Shap are more difficult to describe. They were, however, visited by Stukeley in 1725, but he complains it rained all the time that he was there, and rain on a bleak exposed moor like Shap is singularly inimical to antiquarian pursuits. (Iter Boreale,' p. 42.) The remains were also described by Camden, ('Brit.,' Gough edit. iii. p. 401.) but not apparently from personal observation, and others have described them since, but the destruction has been so rapid, the village being almost entirely built out of them, that it is now extremely difficult to ascertain what they really were. All, however, are agreed that the principal monument was an alignment, according to some of a double row of stones, of which others can only trace a single row. So far as I could make out on the spot, it commenced near a spot called the Thunder-stone, in the north, where there are seven large stones in a field; six are arranged as a double row; the seventh seems to commence a single line, from this all the way to a place at the southern extremity of the village, called Karl Lofts, single stones may be

traced at intervals, in apparently a perfectly straight; line and still beyond this, at a farmyard called Brackenbyr, Mr. Simpson fancied he could, in 1859, trace the remains of a circle 400 feet in diameter, with a large obelisk in the centre. ('Archaeological Journal,' xviii. p. 29.) I confess I was not so fortunate in 1869, and I also differ from him as to the position of the stone row. He seems to fancy, from the description of Stukeley, that it was situated to the southward of Karl Lofts, though he could not detect any traces of it. 'My impression is that it commenced with the circle at Brackenbyr, immediately south of Karl Lofts, and proceeded in a north-westerly direction for nearly a mile and a half to the Thunder-stone, as before mentioned. Rather more than half a mile due south of Brackenbyr stands a portion of what was once a very fine circle. It was partially destroyed by the railway, but seems to have been a hundredfoot circle, and to have stood considerably in advance of the line of the avenue, in the same relative position to the stone row as the circle at Merivale Bridge (woodcut No. 12), or as Stonehenge to its cursus (woodcut No. 26), whether we assume that it was continued in this direction, or terminated as above indicated. In front of the circle is a noble tumulus, called Kemp How, in which the body of a man of gigantic stature is said to have been found. (Ibid., xviii. p. 37.)

According to the popular tradition the stone avenue originally extended to Muir Divock, a distance of rather more than five miles, to which it certainly points. Though this is most improbable, it is not wholly without reason, as on Muir Divock there are five or six circles of stone and several tumuli. The circles have most of them been opened recently, and in all instances were found to contain cists or other evidence of interments. (I am not aware. that any account of these diggings has been published. The facts I ascertained on the spot.) Immediately over the Muir stands a commanding hill, 1747 feet high, marked on the Ordnance Survey as Arthur's Pike. Besides these, on the hill behind Shap, to the eastward, are several stone circles, some single, some double, but none are of any great size, or composed of stones of very large dimensions. The whole aspect of the country is that of a district used as- a burying-place to an extent far beyond anything that the usual inhabitants of the locality could have required, for a bleaker and more ungenial spot is Dot inhabited in any part of these islands.

So far as I know, no credible tradition attaches to these monuments so as to connect them with any historical or local incident. We are, therefore, left almost wholly to their intrinsic forms, or to analogies, to determine either their history or their purposes.

No one will now probably be found seriously to maintain that the long stone row at Shap was a temple either of the Druids or of any one else. At least if these ancient People thought a single or even a double row of widely-spaced stones, stretching to a mile and a half across a bleak moor, was a proper form for a place to worship in, they must have been differently constituted from ourselves. Unless they possessed the tails, or at least the long-pointed ears with which Darwin endows our ancestors, they would have adopted some form of temple more nearly similar to those used in all other countries of the world. Nor was it a tomb. Not only have no sepulchral remains been found here, but nowhere else has any trace of such a purpose been found connected with such alignments. Even however, if it is contended that it is sepulchral, it certainly was not the burying-place of the hamlet of Shap, or of its neighbourhood, for a more miserable spot for habitation does not exist in England, and it cannot be that Shap, like Avebury, should require the most magnificent cemeteries in the island, while nothing of the sort exists near the great centres of population. Had the country been as thickly inhabited as China, we might fancy the people seeking waste uncultivable spots in which to bury their dead, but even at the present day Woking is the only cemetery that has been selected on this principle in England, and at any previous time to which we can look back, the idea appears too absurd to be entertained for a moment.

If, therefore, the alignment at Shap was sepulchral, it must have been the burying-place of those that fell in some battle on the spot; this in fact brings us to the only suggestion I am aware of that seems at all tenable: that it marks a 'battle-field like those on Dartmoor *(ante,* p. 54), and others we shall meet with hereafter.

Excavations have proved that all the smaller circles which abound in the neighbourhood are graves, and if those from 60 feet to 100 feet in diameter are so, all analogy must lead us to the inference that the 100-metre circles are so also. Direct proof has not, however, yet been obtained of this, but that may arise first from the difficulty of excavating so large an area; or it may be that the bodies were buried outside the circle, as at Hakpen *(ante,* p. 76), or at the foot of the stones, as at Crichie *(ante,* p. 75) or in those circles which have no erect stones in a similar position - at the toe of the inner slope of the rampart - and these are just the places where they have not been looked for. Meanwhile the cairns in the inside of the circle of Long Meg's Daughters seem to favour this view of their sepulchral purpose. But if sepulchres, certainly they were not family or princely tombs. If that was their destination they would not be found only in two or three groups in the wildest and most remote parts of the country, but in far greater numbers, and nearer those places where men most do congregate. We are in fact driven to Camden's suggestion, that they may have been made to celebrate some victory; but, if so, what victory? It looks like riding a hobby very hard to make the same suggestion as was made with regard to Avebury, but I confess I know no other that can be brought forward with so much plausibility as that of considering them to be memorials of Arthur's campaigns against the Saxon invaders.

The first objection that will naturally be raised to this hypothesis is, that Ring Arthur was a myth, and never fought any battles at all. It was not necessary to examine this when speaking of Ayebury. All that was then required was to know if Waden Hill was Badon Hill. If it was the site of that famous battle, there was no further enquiry necessary. Arthur, and lie only, commanded there; and if we admit the fact of the battle being fought we admit at the same time the existence of him who commanded there. But with regard to the other eleven battles mentioned by Nennius (Here, again, I quote from the copy in the 4 Mon, Hist. Brit.' p. 47 et *seqq.,* to which it will not be necessary to refer every time the name is mentioned.) the case is not so clear, and according to the present fashionable school of historical criticism it is thought reasonable to reject the whole as a myth, because the evidence is not such as would stand examination in a court of law, and also because the story as it now stands is so mixed up with incredible fables as to throw discredit on the whole. It is very much easier to heap ridicule on the silly miracles which Merlin is said by mediaeval minstrels to have performed, and to laugh at the marvellous exploits of Arthur and the Knights of his Round Table, than to attempt to glean the few facts which their wild poetry has left unobscured. But if any one will attempt the same process with one of the many 'Lhystoires du noble et vaillant roy Alexandre le grand,' he will find exactly the same difficulties. Aristotle and his master have been rendered quite as fabulous persons as Merlin and Arthur, and the miracles of the one and the feats of the other are equally marvellous. In Alexander's case we fortunately have Arrian and Curtius, and others, who give us the truth with regard to him; but Arthur had no contemporary history, and, instead of living in a highly civilized state that continued for ages after him, he was the last brilliant light of his age and race, and after him all was gloom for centuries. It was not till after a long eclipse that his name was seized upon in a poetical - and an uncritical age as a peg for bards whereupon to hang their wild imaginings.

This is not the place to examine so large a question. It will be sufficient to state what I believe to be the main facts. Those who do not admit them need not read further. Arthur, it seems to me, was born the prince of one of the smaller states in the West of England, probably

Cornwall, and after the death of Ambrosius, in or about the year 508, took up the struggle the latter had carried on with varying success against the hordes of Saxons and others who were gradually pushing the Bryts out of England. My impression is, that even before" the Romans left, Jutes, Angles, and Danes had not only traded with, but had settled, both on the Saxonicum littus of Kent, and on the coast of Yorkshire, Northumberland, and the Lothians; and that during the century that elapsed between the departure of the Romans and the time of Arthur, they were gradually pushing the British population -behind the range of hills which extends from Carlisle to Derby and forms the back-bone of England. It -was in the plains behind this range and further south that all Arthur's battles seem to have been fought. With Cumberland, Wales, and Cornwall behind him, he was not only sure of support from the native population in his rear, but had a secure retreat in case of adverse fortune overtaking him. In all this range of country I do not know any spot so favourable strategically for a defender of his country to take up as the high land about Shap, or the open country extending from thence to Salkeld. The ridges at Shap protected his right against an enemy advancing by Lancaster, the Caledonian Forest and a very rugged country covered his left, arid in front there was only a wild inhospitable tract by which the invader from the opposite coast could advance against him, while by a single day's march to his rear he was among the inaccessible mountains and lakes of Cumberland.

I am afraid to lay much stress on the fact of one of the circles at Penrith and the hill opposite Shap bearing Arthur's name, because in the last few years we have seen two hard-headed soberminded Scotchmen proving, to their own satisfaction, that Arthur was born north of the Twecd - that all his battles were fought and all his exploits performed ill the northern portion of the island. Even Ganora - the faithless Guinevere - if not a Scotchwoman, was at all events buried in Miegle churchyard under a stone, which some pious descendant sculptured some centuries later. (Stuart Glennie, 'King Arthur.' 1867. L. W. Skene. 'Ancient Books of Wales,'i. 52 et seqq.) Even here, however, I fancy I can perceive a difference between the two cases. In the middle ages the Scotch had historians like Boece and Fordun, who recorded such fables for the edification of their countrymen, and with proper patriotism were willing that their country should have as large a share of the world's greatness or great men as they could well appropriate. They were followed by an educated class throughout the country, who were actuated by the same motives, and did exactly what Stukeley and his followers did with English monuments. They found Druids who had no temples, and remains which they supposed to be temples with no priests; so, putting the two together, they made what they fancied was a perfect whole out of two incongruous halves. So the Scotch, having a rich repertory of fables on the one hand, and on the. other having hills without names and sculptured stones without owners, joined the two together, and went on repeating in the same manner their inventions till, from dire reiteration, they took the likeness of fact.

The case was, if I mistake not, very different in Cumberland. The boors of that land had no literature-no learning, and none of that ardent patriotism which enabled the Scotch poets and pedants to manufacture a quasi history for themselves out of other people's doings. It is difficult to fancy the inhabitants of Cumberland troubling themselves with Arthur and his affairs, and wishing to apply his name to their hills or antiquities, unless some ancient tradition had made it probable, and, "valeat quantum," these names may therefore be considered as suggesting a real connexion between the place and the man.

Owing to the extreme brevity of the record in Nennius,' there are few things about which greater discrepancy of opinion exists even among the believers in Arthur than the localities of his battles. Taking them in the order in which they are mentioned, the first is said to have been fought on the river Glem of Glein, which the editors of the 'Monumenta Historica

Britannica' suggest may be a river of that name in Northumberland. The river indicated is so small a brook that it is difficult to fancy its name should be attached to so important an event.

If we must so far north, I would rather feel inclined to place it at Wood Castle, near Lochmaben in Dumfriesshire where there is a circular enclosure identical in plan and dimensions with King Arthur's Round Table at Penrith. (' Mon. Hist. Brit ' p. 73. General Roy's 4 Mil. Ant. of the Romans,' pl. viii.) Strategically, it is a much more likely spot than the exposed east Coast of Northumberland; but, except the plan of Wood Castle, I know of no authority for placing this battle-field in Annandale.

There is no indication where the second, third, or fourth battles were fought; but for the fifth we have this important designation that it was fought "super aliud flumen quod vocatur Duglas vel Dubglas quod est in regione Linuis," or in another MS. Linnuis. A marginal note suggests Lindesay, in Lincolnshire, but for no other reason apparently than from the first three letters being the same in both. There is a River Duglas flowing past Wigan, in Lancashire, which Whittaker, in his 'History of Manchester,' boldly adopts as the place indicated, and others have been inclined to accept his determination. After going carefully over the ground, I confess no spot appears to me more unlikely for a great battle than the banks of this river, nor does any local evidence of their having been so now remain. One cannot but feel that if Arthur ever allowed himself to be pushed into such a corner, with nothing but the sea behind him to retreat upon, he certainly was not the general that made so successful a stand against the Saxons. I am much more inclined to believe that Linnuis is only a barbarous latinization of Linn, which in Gaelic and Irish means sea or lake. In Welsh it is Lyn, and in Anglo-Saxon Lin, and if this is so, "In regione Linnuis " may mean " In the Lake Country."

The name of the river does not appear to me at all an insuperable difficulty. All the rivers about Penrith, the Lowther, the Eamount, and the Eden, have names that it were certainly given to them by the Saxons, but they must have had Celtic names before they came; and Dubh as an adjective is dark or black, and Glas, green or grey, is used as a substantive to denote the sea, in Irish. Such an epithet would apply admirably to the Lowther; and if it could be identified with the river mentioned by Nennius, our difficulties would be at an end. These speculations, however, must of course be taken for what they are worth. There is, so far as known, no authority for the name Duglas or Dubhglas being applied to the Lowther or Eden.

The sixth battle was on a river called Bassas. It has been suggested that this means the Bass Rock in the Frith of Forth; but it need hardly be objected that a rock is not a river, and there is an extreme improbability that Arthur ever saw the Lothians. In Derbyshire there is a Bas Lowe (Bateman, 'Ten Years' Diggings' p 87) in a neighbourhood where, as we shall presently see, there is reason to believe Arthur fought one or more of his battles, but I am not aware of any river so called in that neighbourhood.

The seventh war was in Silva Calidonis, "id est Cat Coit Celidon." The Cat in the last name is evidently Cat or Cath, a battle," which we frequently meet with, and shall again in describing these matters. Coit, only so far as the dictionaries tell us, means coracle, and would seem to indicate a struggle in boats. The Caledonian Forest, is what will really determine the locality. Generally it is understood to be the forest that extended from Penrith to Carlisle; and, if so, any one of our Penrith circles might be assumed to mark the site of the seventh battle. Most probably in that case it would be the Salkeld circle, or it might be one known as the Grey Yawds near Cumrew, about eight or nine miles further north. (I have not seen this circle myself though I made a long journey on purpose. It is said to consist of eighty-eight stones, and one larger than the rest, standing outside the circle, at a distance of about five yards, or exactly as Long Meg stands with reference to her daughters.)

The eighth battle was in Castello Guinnion, or Guin, which, from the sound of the name, can hardly escape being in Wales or the Welsh border, unless indeed we assume that these Welsh appellations were common to the whole country before the Saxons re-named many of the places. In that case we have nothing to guide us as to where the battle was fought.

The ninth battle was "in Urbe Legionis;" this may be either Chester or Caerleon in South Wales. It most probably was the latter, as in another MS it is added "quae Britannice Karlium dicitur," or Cair lin in another.

The tenth war was on the shores of a river which was called Ribroit. Though this is spelt in various MSS. Tribruit, Trathreuroit, and Trattreuroit, it seems impossible to identify it. But it must have been a large river, or the expression 'in littore' would hardly have been used.

The eleventh battle "fuit in Monte quod dicitur Agned Cathregonnon;" and in different MSS. this is spelt Cathregomion, Cabregonnon, Catbregonnion, and in one it is added "in Somersetshire quem nos Cathbregion appellamus." No such name seems now to be known in that country; but as we shall presently, I hope, see reason for believing the spot is probably that now known as Stanton Drew.

The twelfth battle was that of Mount Badon, the position of which, as we have already pointed out, may almost certainly be fixed in the immediate neighbourhood of Avebury.

All this is indistinct enough, it must be confessed, and much of it depends on nominal similarities, which are never very satisfactory; still the general impression it leaves seems worthy of acceptance. It would lead us to think that Arthur commenced his struggles with the invaders in the north of England, probably in the time of Ambrosius, and fought his way southwards, till after twelve campaigns, or twelve battles, he reached his crowning victory at Badon Hill, which gave him peace for the rest of his days. At all events, with respect to the first seven battles, there stems no reason why we should not appropriate any of them except perhaps the first - to our Cumberland circles. The proof of whether or not it is reasonable to do so will of course depend on the case we can make out for the other circles we have to examine, and on the general interdependence which the whole series can be shown to have on one another.

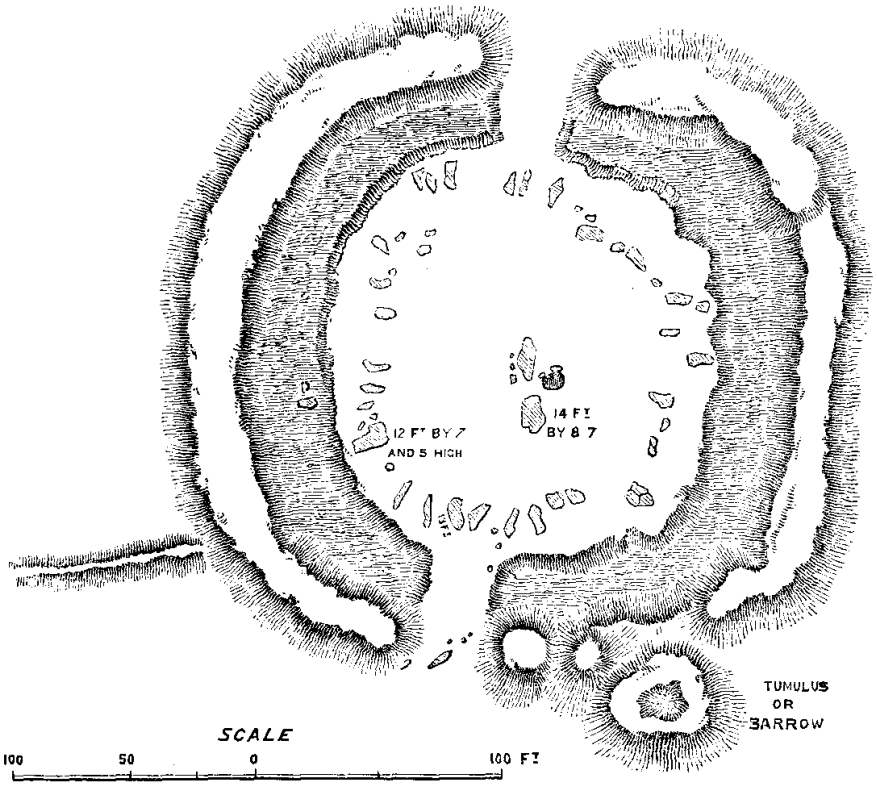
At present it may be allowed to stand on an hypothesis, which certainly has the merit of explaining the facts as now known; but the probability or disproof of which must depend on the facts and arguments to be adduced hereafter.

DERBYSHIRE.

The next group of monuments with which we have to deal is perhaps as interesting as any of those hitherto described. As before mentioned, when speaking of the labours of William and Thomas Bateman, the north-western portion of the county is crowded with barrows, but none apparently of so ancient a character as those excavated by Canon Greenwell in Yorkshire, and most of them containing objects of so miscellaneous a character as to defy systematic classification. As these, however, hardly belong to the subject of which we are now treating, it is not necessary to say more about them at present; and the less so, that the group which falls directly in with our line of research is well defined as to locality, and probably also as to age.

The principal monument of this group is well-known to antiquaries as Arbe or Arbor Low, (First described in the 'Archaeologia,' vol. viii. p. 131 *et seqq.,* by the Rev, 8. Pegge, ill 1783.) and is situated about nine miles south by east from Buxton, and by a curious coincidence is placed in the same relative position to the Roman Road as Avebury. So much is this the case that in the Ordnance Survey - barring the scale - the one might be mistaken for the other if exit out front the neighbouring objects. Minning Low, however, which is the pendant of Silbury Hill in this group, is four miles off, though still in the line of the Roman road, instead of only one mile, as in the Wiltshire example. Besides, there is a most interesting Saxon Low at Benty Grange, about one mile from Arbor Low. Gib Hill, Kens Low, Ringham Low, End Low, Lean Low, and probably altogether ten or twelve important mounds covering a space five miles in one direction, by one and a half to two miles across.

Arbor Low consists of a circular platform, 167 feet in diameter, surrounded by a ditch 18 feet broad at bottom, the earth taken from which has been used to form a rampart about 15 feet to 18 feet high, and measuring about 820 feet in circumference on the top.



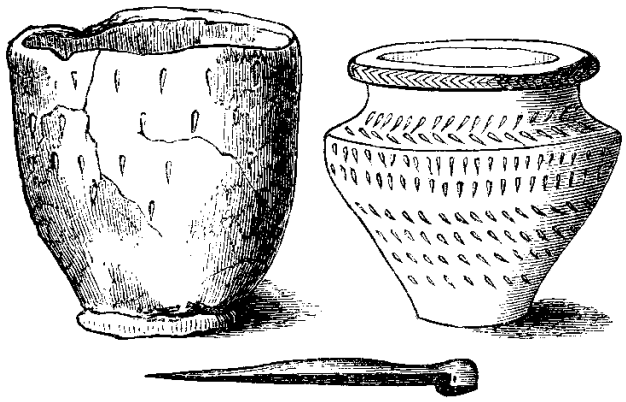
30. Arbor Low. From a drawing by Sir Gardner Wilkinson.

(These dimensions as well as the plan are taken from Sir Gardner Wilkinson's paper in the ' Journal of the Archaeological Association,' xvi. P. 116, and may consequently be thoroughly depended upon.) The first thing that strikes us on looking at the plan (woodcut No. 30) is that, in design and general dimensions, the monument is identical with that called "Arthur's Round Table," at Penrith. The one difference is that, in this instance, the section of the ditch, and consequently that of the rampart, have been increased at the expense of the berm; but the arrangements of both are the same, and so are the internal and external dimensions. At Arbor Low there are two entrances across the ditch, as there was in the Cumberland and Dumfriesshire examples. As mentioned above, only one is now visible there, the other having been obliterated by the road, but the two circles are in other respects so similar as to leave very little doubt as to their true features.

The Derbyshire example, however, possesses, in addition to its earthworks, a circle of stones on its inner platform, originally probably forty or fifty in number; but all now prostrate,

except perhaps some of the smallest, which, being nearly cubical, may still be in situ. In the centre of the platform, also, are several very large stones, which evidently formed part of a central dolmen.

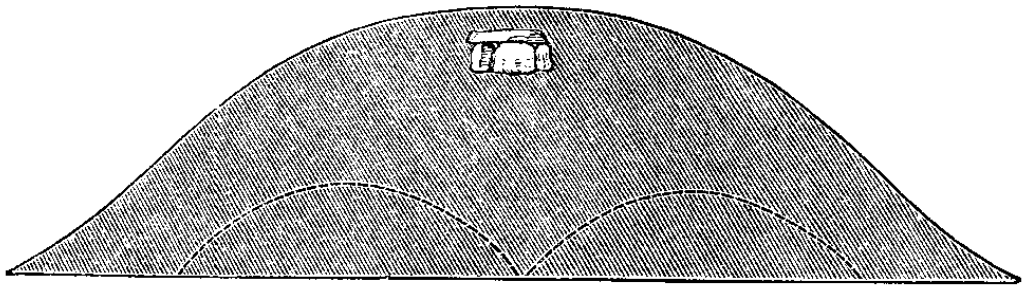
There is another very interesting addition at Arbor Low, which is wanting at Penrith, this is a tumulus attached unsymmetrically to the outer vallum. This was, after repeated attempts, at last successfully excavated by the Messrs. Bateman, and found to contain a cist of rather irregular shape, in which were found among other things two vases (Bateman, 'Vestiges,' p. 65). one of singularly elegant shape, the other less so, In themselves these objects are not sufficient to determine the age of the barrow, but they suffice to show that it was not very early. One great point of interest in this discovery is its position with reference to the circle. It is identical with that of Long Meg with reference to her daughters, and perhaps sonic of the stones outside Avebury, supposed to be the commencement of the avenue, may mark the principal places of interment.



31. Vases and Bronze Pin found in Arbor Low.

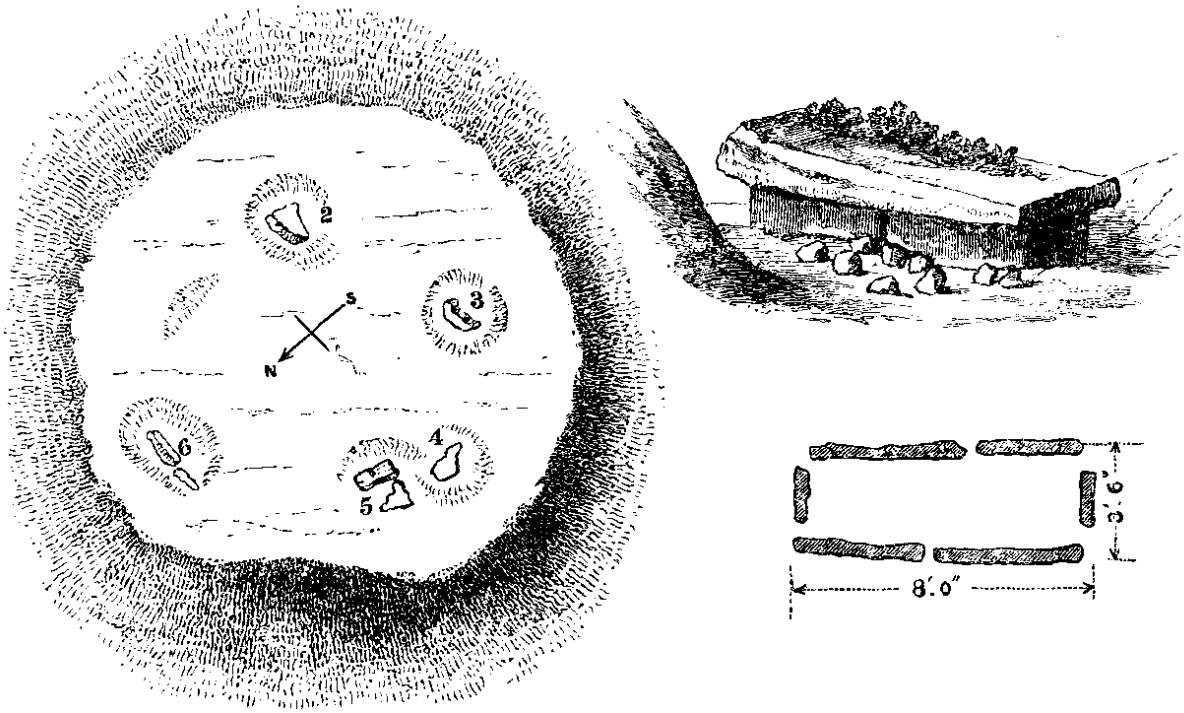
Attached to Arbor Low, at a distance of about 250 yards, is another tumulus, called Gib Hill, apparently about 70 to 80 feet in diameter. (These dimensions are taken from Sir Gardner Wilkinson's plan. The Batemans, with all their merits, are singularly careless in quoting dimensions.) It was carefully excavated by Mr. T. Bateman in 1818; but after tunnelling through and through it in every direction on the ground level and finding nothing, he was surprised at finding, on removing the timber which supported his galleries, that the side of the hill fell in, and disclosed the cist very near the summit. The whole fell down, and the stones composing the cist were removed and re-erected in the garden of Lumberdale House. It consisted of four massive blocks of limestone forming the sides of a chamber, 2 feet by 2 feet 6 inches, and covered by one 4 feet square. The cap stone was not more than 18 inches below the turf By the sudden fall of the side a very pretty vase was crushed, the fragments mingling with the burnt bones it contained; but though restored, unfortunately no representation has been given. The only other articles found in this tumulus were "a battered celt of basaltic stone, a dart or javelin-point of flint, and a small iron fibula, which had been enriched with precious stones." (Ante, p. 11.)

(Ante, p. 11.)



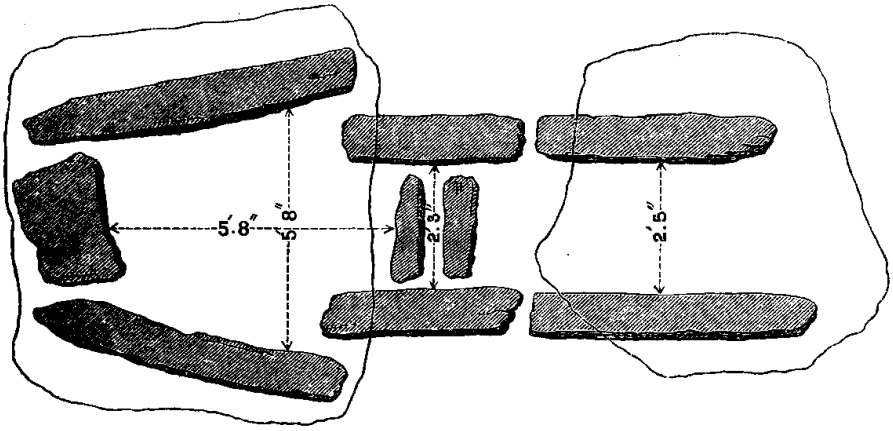
32. Section of Gib Hill. No scale.

Though Gib Hill is interesting as the first of the high-level dolmens which we have met with in this country, Minning Low is a still more striking example of that class which we hinted at before as common in Aveyron *(ante,* woodcut No. 8), and which we shall meet with frequently as we proceed. When it first attracted the attention of antiquaries in 1786, Minning Low seems to have been a straight-lined truncated cone, about 300 feet in diameter, and the platform on its summit measured 80 feet across. (Douglas, 'Nenia Brittanica,' p. 168, pl. xxxv.)



33. Summit of Minning Low, as it appeared in 1786. From Douglas.

Its height could not be ascertained. (If we, knew its height we might guess its age. If it was 65 feet high, its angle must be 30 degrees, and its age probably the same as that of Silbury Hill. If 100 feet, and its angle above 40 degrees, it must have been older.) It was even then planted over with trees, so that these dimensions, except the breadth of the platform, are hardly to be depended upon, and since then the whole mound has been so dug into and ruined, that they cannot now be verified. On the platform, at the top in 1786 there stood five kistvaens, each capable of containing one body; and, so far as can be made out from Douglas' plates and descriptions the cap stone of these was flush with the surface, or possibly, as at Gib Hill, they may have been a few inches below the surface, and, becoming exposed, may have been rifled as they were found; but this is hardly probable, because unless always exposed, it is not likely they would have been either looked for in such a situation, or found by accident. Below them - at what depth we are not told - a stone chamber, or rather three, chambers, were found by Mr. Bateman, apparently on the level of the ground on the south side of the Barrow. (' Ten Years' Diggings,' p.82) To use Mr. Bateman's own words ('Vestiges,' &c., p. 39): - on the summit of Minning Low Hill, as they now appear from the soil being removed from them, are two large cromlechs, exactly of the same construction as the well-known Kit's Cotty-house, near Maidstone, in Kent. In the cell near which the body



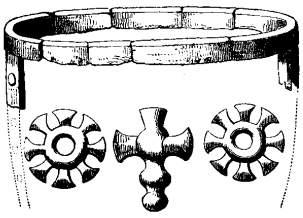
34. Plan of Chambers in Minning Low.

lay were found fragments of five urns, some animal bones, and six brass Roman coins, viz., one of Claudius Gothicus (270), two of Constantine the Great, two of Constantine, junior, and one of Valentinian. There is a striking analogy between this and the great Barrow at New Grange, described by Dr. Ledwich, of which a more complete investigation of Minning Low would probably furnish additional proofs - Mr. Bateman was not then aware that a coin of Valentinian had been found in the New Grange mound, ('Petrie's Life,' by Stokes, p. 234.) which is one similarity in addition.

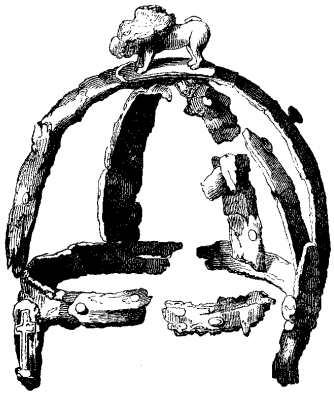
The fact of these coins being found here fixes a date beyond which it is impossible to carry back the age of this mound, but not the date below which it may have been erected. The coins found in British barrows seem almost always those of the last Emperors who held sway in Britain, and whose coins may have been preserved and to a certain extent kept in circulation after all direct connexion with Rome had ceased, and thus their rarity or antiquity may have made them suitable for sepulchral deposits. No coin of Augustus or any of the earlier Emperors was ever found in or on any of these rude tumuli, which must certainly have been the case had any of them been pre-Roman.. This mound is consequently certainly subsequent to the first half of the fourth century, and how much more modern it may be remains to be determined.

Be this as it may, if Mr. Bateman's suggestion that this monument is a counterpart of Kit's Cotty-house is correct - and no one who is familiar with the two monuments will probably dispute it - this at once removes any improbability from the argument that the last-named may be the grave of Catigren. The one striking difference between the two is, that Kit's Cotty-house is an external free-standing dolmen, while Minning Low is buried in a tumulus. This, according to the views adopted in these pages, from the experience of other monuments, would lead to the inference that the Kentish example was the more modern of the two. It is not, however, worth while arguing that point here; for our present purpose it is sufficient to know that both are post-Roman, and probably not far distant in date.

Another barrow belonging to this group is at Benty Grange, about a mile from Arbor Low, which, though of a different character, may be connected with the others. One body only was buried in it, of which no trace, however, remained but the hair. (The complete disappearance of the body of this undoubted Saxon chief ought to make us cautious in ascribing remote antiquity to many comparatively fresh bodies we find elsewhere.) There was apparently little more than 2 feet of earth over it. The first thing found was a leather drinking-cup, ornamented in silver with stars and crosses. Two circular enamels were also there, adorned with that interlacing pattern found in the earliest AngloSaxon or Irish MSS. of the sixth or seventh centuries, or it may be a little earlier; a helmet also was found, formed of iron bars, with bronze and silver ornaments, and surmounted by



35. Fragment of Drinking Cup from Benty Grange.



36. Fragment of Helmet from Benty Grange.

what Mr. Bateman assures us was a perfectly distinct representation of a hog. He then quotes from Beowulf several passages, in which the poet describes: "The boar an ornament to the head, the helmet lofty in wars" (l. 4299) . . . "They seemed a boar's form to bear over their cheeks" (l. 604) . . . "At the pile was easy to be seen, the mail-shirt covered with gore, the hog of gold, the boar hard as iron" (l. 2213). As Beowulf lived, as shown above, probably in the fifth century, the poem may be taken as describing perfectly the costume of the warriors of his day; and nothing could answer more completely his description than, the contents of this tomb.

In Kenslow Barrow, between Minning Low and Arbor Low, were found a few implements of flint and bone; but on Clearing out the grave in the rock, which had been examined before in 1821, Mr. S. Bateman found some portions of the skeleton undisturbed, and with them a small neat bronze dagger, and. a little above these an iron knife of the shape and size usually deposited in Anglo-Saxon interments. (Bateman, 'Ten Years' Diggings,' p. 21.) Of course the theory of successive interments is called on to explain away these disturbing facts; but there seems nothing here to justify any other inference than that in this case all the deposits belonged to the same age. This, therefore, may be added to the examples quoted from the 'Vestiges,' to show how little the Danish system is really applicable to the class of monuments of which we are treating.

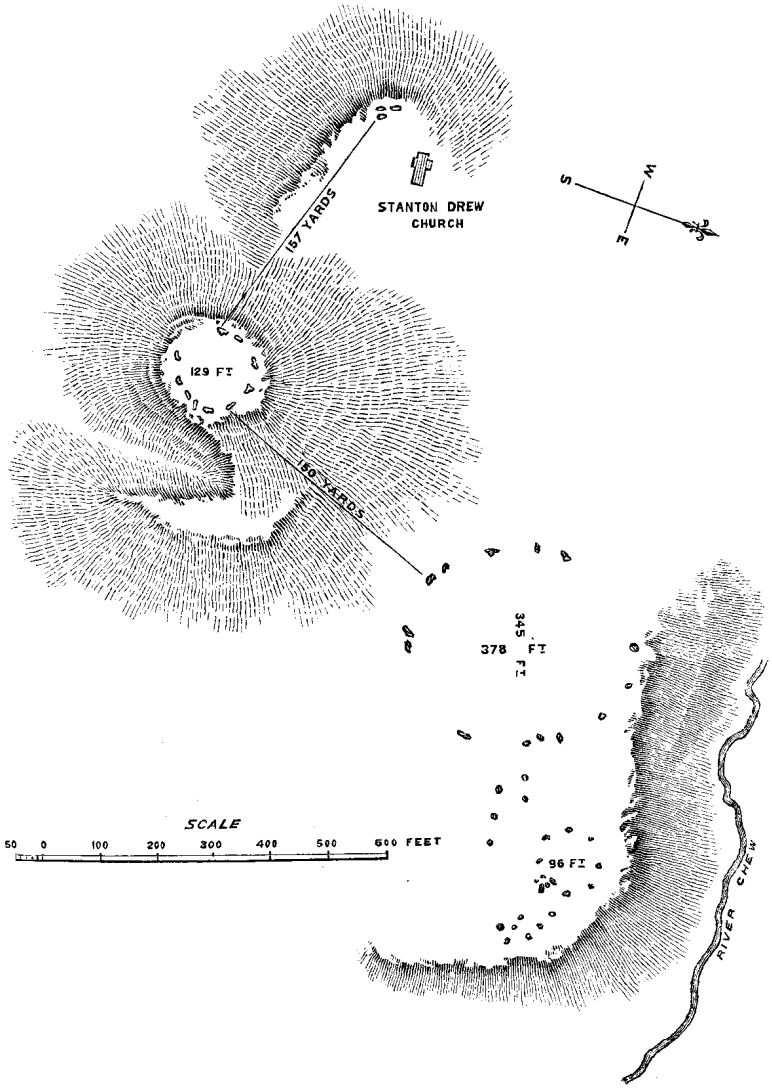
On Stanton Moor, four miles east from Kenslow, and about five miles from Arbor Low and Minning Low respectively, there are many monuments, both of earth and stone. which, though on a smaller scale, seem to belong to the same age as those just described. They seem to have been very much overlooked by the Batemans, but a very detailed account of them is given by Mr. Rooke in the sixth volume of the 'Archaeologia,' in 1780. One of them, called the Nine Ladies, has been given already (ante, p. 49) but westward of it stands or stood a stone, called the King Stone, at a distance of 34 yards, thus suggesting a similarity to the Salkeld circle. Half a mile west from this, nearer Arbor Low, is another group of nine stones, the tallest 17 feet in height, and 75 yards southward two stones of smaller dimensions; 200 yards from this an oval ring, the major axis of which measures 243 feet, the minor 156 feet. It has what Mr. Rooke calls a double ditch, a rampart outside the ditch as well as one inside; it is, in fact, a less-developed example of that form of which Arbor Low and Arthur's Round Table are finished examples. On the east side of the Moor were three tall isolated stones, which in Rooke's time the natives still called Cat Stones showing clearly that the tradition still remained of a battle fought there, but when or by whom no tradition lingers on the spot to enlighten us.

All these monuments and many more which it would be tedious and uninteresting to particularize, are contained within a circle, which may be described with a radius of about three miles, the centre being half way between Henty Grange and Stanton Moor. It would perhaps be too much to assert that they are all of one age; but there is certainly a very strong family likeness among them and they cannot differ much either in age or purpose. It may also perhaps be conceded that they are not the tombs or temples of the inhabitants of the moors on which they stand. The country where they are situated is a bleak inhospitable, tract, only not quite so bad as Shap, but hardly more able to support a large population, if left only to their own resources, than the Wiltshire Downs. These three localities could never consequently have been so much richer in this class of monuments than settlements in the more fertile parts of the island. Strangers must have erected them, and to determine who these strangers were, themselves.

Whatever may be determined on the point, one thing, I think, must and will be conceded, which is, that Arthur's Table at Penrith, Arbor Low, and Avebury, are monuments of the same age, and were dedicated to the same purposes. The first is a simple earthen monument, of a certain design and with certain dimensions; the second has the same design and, dimensions, with the addition of a circle of stones and dolmen in the centre; the third has all the features that the other two possess with the addition of increased dimensions, and the internal circles being doubled. But the internal ditch, the rampart, and the character of the circle and other features, are so like each other, and so unlike what are found elsewhere, that they must stand or fall together. If any one of these belonged to the age of Arthur, all three certainly did. If, on the other hand, any one of the three can be proved to belong to another age, the other two will hardly be able to maintain their position. The circles at Cumrew, Salkeld, and Mayborough, present so many points of similarity, that they, too, must probably be classed with these three, though there is not the same evidence to justify their being classed together. The stone avenue at Shap is also most probably the counterpart of that at Kennet; but the destruction of the circle at Brackenbyr, and the limited knowledge we have of it, prevent anything very definite being predicated regarding it.

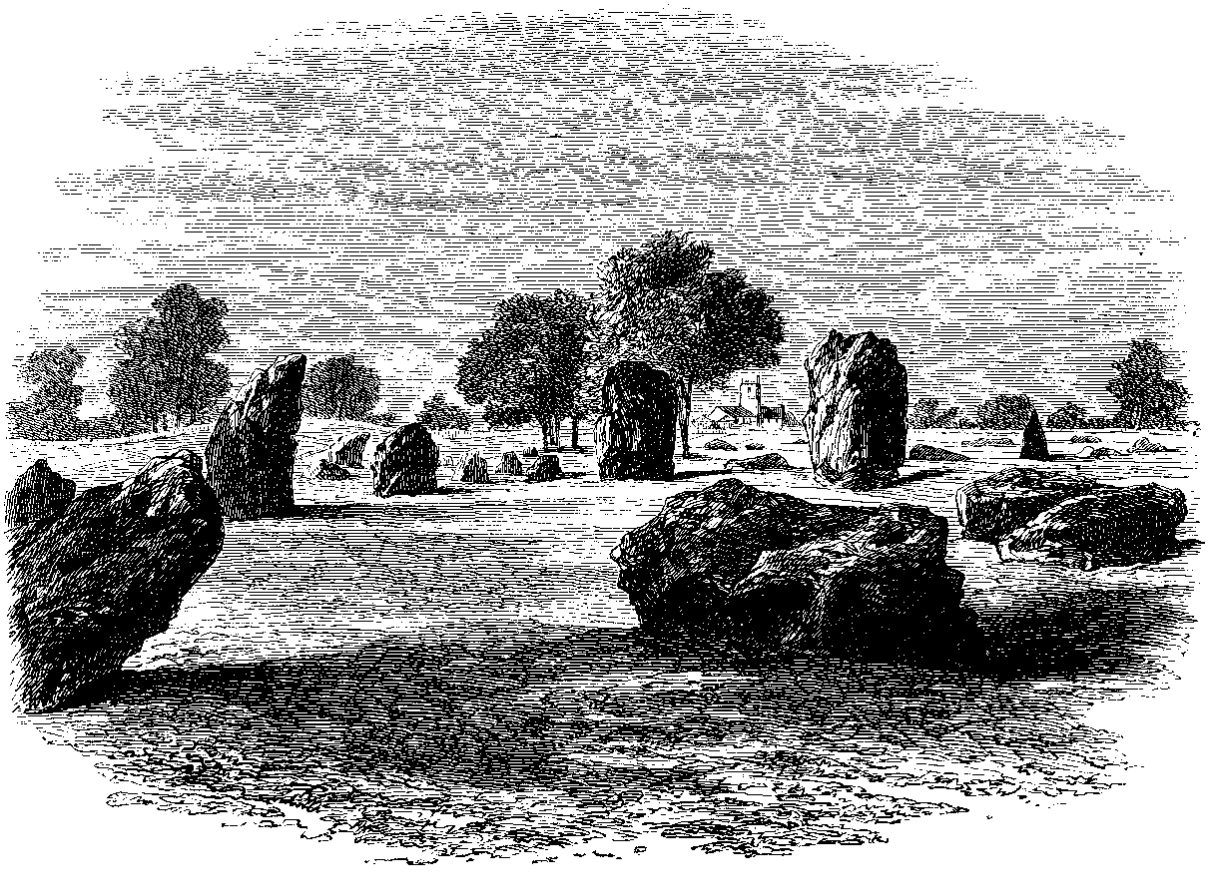
If we may consider Gib Hill as the analogue of Silbury Hill, its Place and position may throw some light on the mystery attaching to the latter. The relative distance's of these satellites to their primaries is nearly proportional to the diameter of the circles, and they both present the peculiarity that they have no interment in their base. The Archaeological Institute in 1849 did exactly what the Batemans had done before them. They tunnelled and explored the base of Gib Hill, and gave it up in despair, when an accident revealed to them the grave over their heads, within 18 inches of the surface. The antiquaries were not so fortunate at Silbury; but judging from the analogy of Gib Hill, and still more from that of Minning Low, the graves may be expected to be found arranged around the plateau on the summit, probably six or seven in number, and as probably within a few feet of the surface. There was none in the centre of the platform at Minning Low, though there was in the smaller tumulus of Gib Hill; and this may account for the Duke of Northumberland's ill-success when he dug into the hill in 1-776. Poor Stukeley was very much laughed at for prizing a very modern-looking iron bit, belonging to a bridle that was found on the top of the hill (In 1723 the workmen dug up the body of a great king buried there in the centre, a very little below the surface. The bones were extremely rotten, and, six weeks after, I came luckily to rescue a great curiosity which they took out there-an iron chain, as they called it. It was the bridle buried along with the monarch. There were deer horns and an iron knife, with a bone handle, too, all excessively rotten, taken up along with it." - Stukeley's ' Stonehenge and Avebury,' pp. 41-12. The bridle is figured, pl. xxxvi.) (woodcut No. 18); yet it may turn out to be the only real fact he brought away from the place. Nothing but an iron sword was found in the kistvaen, on the top of Minning Low, but it was nearly perfect; (Douglas, 'Nenia Brit.' P. 168.) why should not the bridle be found, for we know that horses were frequently buried with the warriors they had borne in battle?

Omitting Cornwall for the present, the circles at Stanton Drew form the only other group of any importance in England for which it remains to find a purpose and a name; and I confess I see no reason for separating them from those just named. There are so many points of similarity, that they can hardly be of an age far apart, and their purpose certainly is the same. If there is anything in the arguments adduced above, they must mark a battle--field. They are certainly not a family or a princely sepulchre still less a local cemetery, nor need it now be added, certainly not a temple.



37. Circles at Stanton Drew. From a plan by Sir R. C. Hoare.

Their arrangement will be understood from the annexed woodcut (No. 37). The group consists of one first-class circle or oval, 378 feet (?) by 345 feet - 100 metres; and two of the second class, one 96 feet, the other 129; and a dolmen near the church, at a distance of 1.57 yards from the last-named. (Nothing can exceed the effrontery with which Stukeley inserted curved avenues between these circles, so as to make the whole into a serpent form. Nothing of the kind exists, nor existed in 1826, when Mr. Croker made, for Sir E. C. Hoare, the survey from which the woodcut is copied, with Sir Gardner Wilkinson's corrections.)



38. View of the Circles at Stanton Drew. From a sketch by Percy Shelton, Esq.

Attached to the two principal circles are short straight avenues, pointing apparently to two stones very near to one another - the one at a distance of 300 feet from the large circle, the other at the distance of about 100 from the smaller one, or at distances relative to their diameters. There is also a very large stone, called the King Stone, by the roadside, but beyond the limits of the plan. This, with the stones to which the avenues point, are probably the analogues of the detached stone, known as Long Meg, at Salkeld, or the Ring Stone, which stands 180 feet from one of the circles at Avebury; perhaps also of the two which are assumed to be the commencement of the Beckhampton avenue at that place, or of the Friar's heel at Stonehenge, or of the King Stone at Stanton Moor In fact, all these circles seem to have detached stones standing at some little distance from them outside. It is there that I would look for the principal interments rather than in the circles themselves; but this is one of the questions that the spade, and the spade only, can decide. There is, however, also attached to the smaller of the two circles at Stanton Drew a heap of stones which is apparently the ruins of a dolmen, and these may mark the real place of interment, as does the tumulus attached to Arbor Low, which corresponds with them in position.

The only recorded tradition with regard to this monument at Stanton Drew represents Keyna, a holy virgin in the fifth century, the daughter apparently of a Welsh prince, obtaining a grant of the land on which the village of Keynsham now stands from the prince of the country. She was warned, however, of the insecurity of the gift, in consequence of the serpents of a deadly species that infested the place. She accepted the gift notwithstanding and by her prayers converted the serpents into the stones we now see there, (Archaeologia,' xxv. p. 189.) so at least Stukeley and Bathurst Dean assure us.

Such a tradition is only valuable as indicating the date that is popularly ascribed to the monument. In this instance the fifth century is suggested, which may be 50 or even 100 years earlier than I would be inclined to assign it to, but such data are of little consequence. The date is also shadowed forth in the incident related; for not only in Ireland, but in France, and frequently also in England, the early struggles of the first Christian missionaries are represented as victories over the snakes or snake worshippers. St. Hilda, for instance, at Whitby signalized the establishment of Christianity in the seventh century by converting the Yorkshire snakes into Ammonites' which are still found there in quantities, which in the eyes Of the peasantry are much more like stone snakes than the stones into which St. Keyna transformed her Somersetshire enemies.

Whatever the value of these and such like traditions, one seems quite certain, that every local tradition which has yet been quoted represents these monuments as erected subsequently to Roman times, and generally as belonging to that transitional age when Christianity was struggling with Paganism for the mastery. The common people are generally willing enough to amuse themselves with fables about giants and demigods, and to wander back into prehistoric times but with regard to these monuments they do not seem to have done so. I do not recollect a single tradition that ascribes any stone circle to the pre-Roman period.

If, however, I am correct in assuming that these great groups of circles belong to the Arthurian age, we have no difficulty in assigning to this one its proper place in the series of his battles. The ninth, as we have seen above, was probably fought at Caerleon on the Usk; which would seem to indicate that, at a certain point in his career, Arthur was forced back quite out of England into South Wales; but his return on that hypothesis is easily traced. The tenth battle was on the shore of some large river, which ought in consequence to be the Severn, though the name given in the text lends no countenance to this supposition; the eleventh was "In monte quod dicitur Agned in Somersetshire," which would answer perfectly, except in name; for Stanton Drew, in that case, would be in the direct line of advance to Badon Hill, where the twelfth and crowning victory was fought.

The name here, as throughout, creates the difficulty, but Stanton on the Stones, or Stone Town, is simply an epithet applied to all these groups by the Saxons at some period subsequent to that of which we are speaking, when the memory of their purpose was lost, or little cared for by those of a different race, and speaking. a different language, who had succeeded to the Bryts, who had erected them. Unless we assume that Stonehenge, Stanton Drew, the circles on Stanton Moor, and the stones at Stennis, and others, were erected by the Saxons themselves, they must originally have borne Celtic names, and it would be these names that Nennius would quote, and which consequently could not be those by which they are now known.

The expression "in monte" is singularly confirmatory of this determination, inasmuch as one of the remarkable features of the locality is the fortified bill known as Maes Knoll, which literally looks into Stanton Drew, and is the most remarkable feature seen from it, and a fight on its ridge is as probable an operation as any likely to be undertaken in this quarter. (What is the meaning of the word "Maes"? It is singular that the Maes How, in Orkney, should bear the same relative position to the Standing Stones of Stennis, in Orkney, that Maes Knoll does to the group of circles. I do not know of the name occurring anywhere else.According to the dictionaries, it merely means "plain" or "field." In Irish "Magh" pronounced "Moy;" but that can hardly be the meaning here.")

If the above were all the evidence that could be produced in support of the hypothesis that all these great circles belonged to the Arthurian age, it might be admitted to be sufficient to establish not a conclusion but a fair prima facie case. The reasonableness, however, of what

has been here advanced will, it is hoped, become more and more apparent as we proceed. Absolute mathematical or logical proof it is to be feared, in the present state of the evidence, is not available. Till attention is fairly turned to a certain definite line of argument, the experiments are not made, and the authorities are not read, which bear upon it, or if made or read are not understood; but when the arguments are examined with the earnest desire to prove or disprove them, new light springs lip from every quarter, and before long there may be grounds for a positive answer.

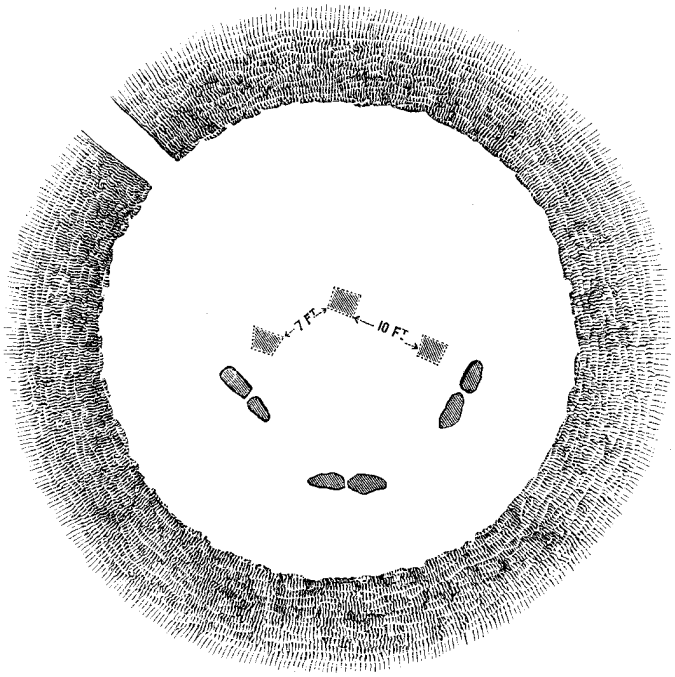
Meanwhile it may be well to point out, before going further, that this class of circles is peculiar to England. They do not exist in France or in Algeria. The Scandinavian circles are all very different, so too are the Irish. The one circle out of England that at all resembles them. is that at Stennis, or rather Brogar, in the Orkneys, which will be described in detail further on. There we have a great 100-metre circle, with a ditch (but no rampart), a smaller 100-foot circle, with a ruined dolmen in its stone circle, as at Stanton Drew, and we have the Maes Knoll for the Maes How. The Stennis group has also the detached stones, though it wants the rudimentary avenues, and some minor peculiarities, and it may be more modern, but it is very similar; whereas those in Cornwall and elsewhere are small and irregular, and totally wanting in the dignity belonging to those which we have ventured to call Arthurian.

The arguments adduced in the preceding pages will probably be deemed sufficient to make out a strong case to show that these great circles were erected, at all events, after the departure of the Romans, and if this is so, it confines the field for discussion within very narrow limits. Either they must have been erected by the Romanized Britons before they were so completely Christianized as to be entirely weaned from their Pagan habits, or they were the works of the Saxons or Danes. We shall be in a better position to judge how far it is likely that the latter were the authors, when we have examined the rude stone monuments of Scandinavia or Friesland, from which countries the Northmen descended on our shores. When this is done, we shall probably come to the conclusion that, as they erected Dolmens as burying-places for their dead, and Menhirs or Bauta Stones and circles in their battlefields, there is no improbability of their having done so also here. The question, however, is, did they erect these great 100-metre circles? These are unique, so far as I know; a class quite by themselves, and so similar, whether found in Cumberland or Derbyshire, or in Wilts or Somersetshire, that, with the probable exception of the Orkney group, they must be the work of one people, and also nearly of the same age. If, in fact, they do not mark the battle-fields to which I have attempted to ascribe them, they must mark something nearly approximating to them in date, and as nearly analogous in intention and purpose.

SMALLER CIRCLES.

It would be as tedious as unprofitable to attempt to enumerate all the smaller circles existing in various parts of England; but there are two or three which are curious in themselves, and interesting as illustrating the large circles of which we have just been treating. The first to be mentioned is one situated in Englewood Forest, near Rose -Hill, and therefore nearly equidistant from Cumrew, Salkeld, and Carlisle. Locally, therefore, it belongs to the Cumberland group, described above, and may do so in date also. It is a low platform, it can hardly be called a tumulus, as it is only 12 feet high. It is circular, and measures 63 feet across. On the platform stand, or at least stood in 1787, three bilithons, or groups of two tall

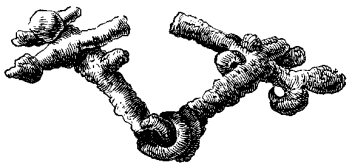
stories standing side by side, like those in the inner circle at Stonehenge. Mr. Rooke dug in front of one of these, with the intention of seeing how deep it was in the ground, but to his astonishment lie found a cist formed of six perfectly well fitted hewn stones, but measuring little more than 2 feet each way. In front of the other outside group he found a similar cist, but a little larger, 2 feet 10 inches by 2 feet 2 inches, and further removed from the central pair of



39. Rose Hill Tumulus. From the Archaeologia,' vol. x.

upright stones, and nearer the centre of the circle, a third cist, formed equally of hewn and well fitted stones. In all three of these were found human bones, fragments of skulls, teeth, &c., but no implements or ornaments of any sort, only under one head a metallic lump, with apparently particles of gold in it. Archaeologia,'x. pl. xi. P. 106.) This was sent to the Society of Antiquaries for examination, but with what result is not stated. (It probably may have been a piece of iron pyrites, and may have been used for striking a light.) According to the plan, it would appear as if there were originally six interments in the mound. In fact, that it was the counterpart of the top of Minning Low, with the addition of the pairs of obelisks. Mr. Rooke was, however, so much puzzled at finding Druids buried six feet below the floor of their own temple that he did not seek further. But if the mound still exists, it would be very interesting to know if any more cists exist in the mound, or any burial deeper down below them, as in the Derbyshire example. It might contain coins, and if so, would be interesting as another example of its date; but meanwhile its truncated conoidal form and arrangement of graves, and of trilithons, are sufficient to show that it was cotemporary with Minning Low and Stonehenge, or at all events not far from their date.

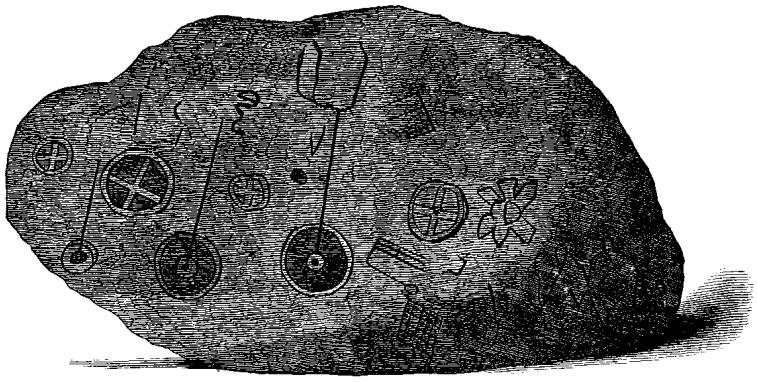
In the same paper in which Mr. Rooke describes the Rose Hill tumulus he gives an account of an excavation at a place called Aspatria, a little farther westward, and near St. Bees. They cleared away a barrow about 90 feet in diameter, and at 3 feet below the original surface of the ground found a cist in which lay the skeleton of a man of gigantic stature. As he lay extended, he measured 7 feet from the head to the ankle. His feet' were decayed and rotted off. At his side, near the shoulder-blade, was an iron sword 4 feet in length, the handle elegantly ornamented with inlaid silver flowers; a gold fibula or buckle was also found, with portions of the shield and his battle-axe. One of the most curious things found was the bit of a



40. Snaffle-Bit found at Aspatria.

snaffle-bridle, which is so modern-looking that it would not excite interest if seen on a stall in Seven Dials. The main interest resides in its similarity to that which Stukeley found at Silbury Hill (woodcut No. 18, p. 81). He cleaned and polished his one carefully. Mr. Rooke had his engraved with all the rust upon it, so, at first sight, they are not so similar as they are in reality. The fact of this one being found in an undoubted ancient grave, takes away all prima facie improbability from the suggested age of the other. From its form, Stukeley's appears to be the older of the two; but we have no chronometric scale for bridle-bits.

All these things make this grave look as if it were very modern; but on the outside of the stones forming the cist were engraved a variety of figures which are of interest as a means of comparison with the Irish and Danish engravings we shall meet with here after. They are not very artistically drawn, and are probably worse engraved; but it is easy to recognize the cross in the circle



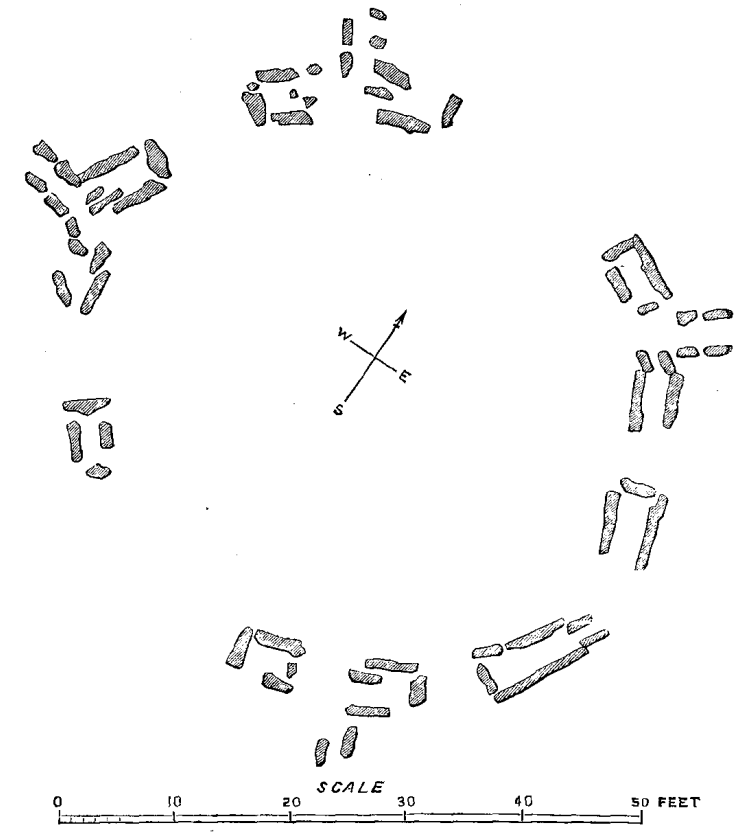
41. Side Stone, Aspatria Cist.

There are the concentric circles with dots in the centre and straight lines proceeding from them and other figures found on rocks and elsewhere, which antiquaries have hitherto been inclined to ascribe to a primaeval antiquity, but which this tomb would bring down at least to the Viking age-of which more hereafter.

The circle of cists on Mule Hill, in the Isle of Man, are interesting from another cause; for unfortunately they all have teen laid bare and rifled before any antiquary took cognisance of them, and we have consequently nothing by which their date can be even guessed at. Their interest lies in their arrangement, which is that of eight cists arranged in a circle, with, it would seem, others at right angles at certain intervals. ('Archaeologia Cambriensis,' third series vol. xii. p. 51. A fancy plan of the same circle appears in the same volume, but is utterly untrustworthy. It is reproduced by Waring, Mon.' &c.pl xli.) From simple inspection it is evident that these cists must at one time have been covered with earth. They are not dolmens, or anything that would do for self-standing monuments. If covered with earth, they would form a circular mound 45 feet in diameter

42. Mule Hill, View of Cists.

internally, 65 and feet across to the foot of the outer slope, and, as far as one example can go, would tend to prove that the circular vallum at Avebury and many other places was a place for



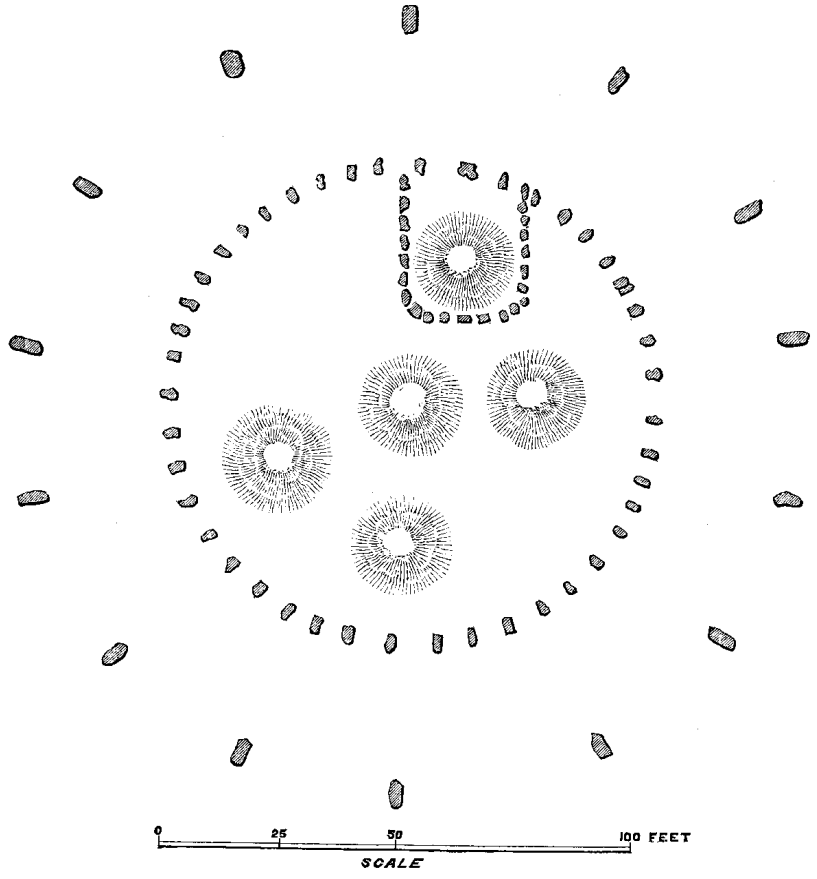
43. Circle of Cists at Mule Hill, Isle of Man.

the deposit of bodies. Except in the instance spoken of in describing the circle at Marden, I am not aware of bodies having been found in England under these ramparts; but they have not been sought for. Of one thing we way feel certain, that nothing is unique in these matters, and that what occurred once, occurred frequently, and will no doubt be found when looked for.
Another peculiarity of this circle is worth observing. There are two gaps or openings in the circle opposite one another, as at Arbor Low and Penrith. One must not rely too much on this'. as the gaps here may arise from the removal of cists ; but the coincidence is at least curious, and if we restored this monument in the sense just indicated, and could rely on that restoration, the secret of the vallum surrounding Avebury and other similar monuments would no longer be a mystery. To my mind it has not been so for many years past; but though I dare

not yet ask others to follow at once, I trust sufficient evidence has been accumulated in the preceding pages to render it probable that they were only continuous tumuli.

The circle or rather circles, on Burn Moor, near Wast Water, Cumberland, are described by Mr. Williams as consisting of a 100-foot circle, formed of forty-four stones, beyond which, at a distance of 25 feet is -,in outer circle of fourteen large stones. A niche or square enclosure on one side of the inner circle contains a cairn 25 feet in diameter, and within the circle are four others, irregularly spaced, and measuring 21 to 25 feet in diameter; each like the circle itself, surrounded by fourteen stones. These, on being opened, were found to contain a rude chamber formed of five stones, in which were found remains of burnt bones, horns of stags, and other animals.'(Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries,' iii. p. 225.)

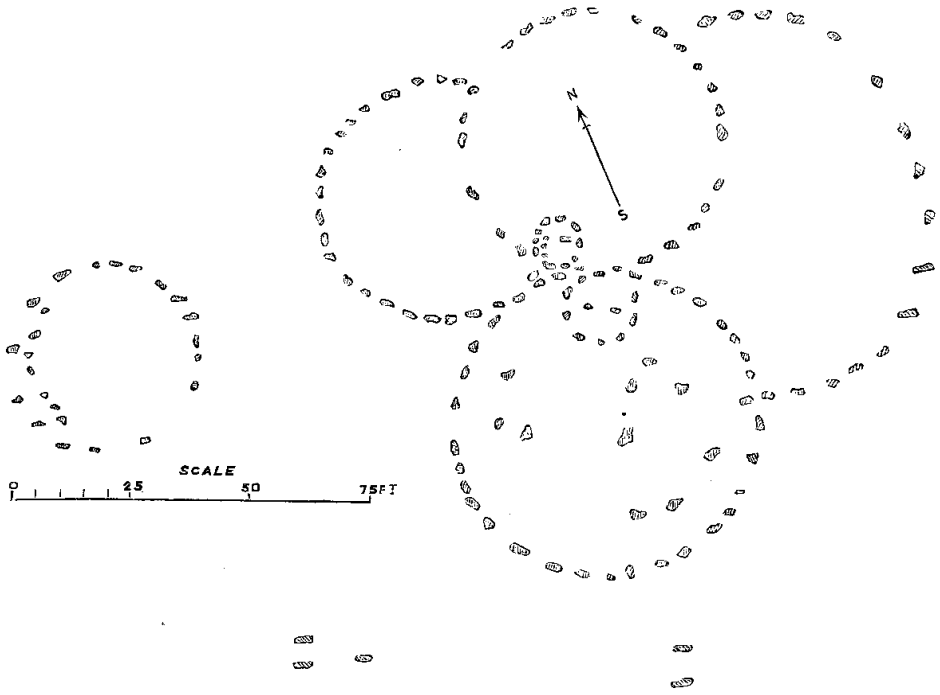
One point of interest in this monument is, that it explains the existence of a similar square enclosure on one side of a well-known 100-foot circle near Keswick. There is no sign of a cairn there 'low; it may have been removed, as those at Salkeld were, or it may be that the body was interred without this external indication; but that it lies, or lay, in this enclosure seems certain. The principal reason for referring to it here is that it is undoubtedly sepulchral. We shall find many examples equally so further on, but it is well, in the meanwhile, to illustrate one which certainly was neither a temple nor place of assembly, and which contains, besides, several peculiarities to which we shall have occasion to advert hereafter.



44. Circles on Burn Moor, Cumberland.

It seems almost equally clear that the Boscawen circles, with which we close our illustrations of English circles for the present, were neither Temples nor Things. It is very difficult to see how any one could fancy that anything so confused as the centre of these circles is, could be a temple, still less a place of assembly. But Borlase, though generally admitting the sepulchral

nature of the circles, maintains that this one was a temple, and describes the position of the serving Druids and all the Ceremonies down to the minutest particulars. The circles are small, the largest being only 7.5 feet in diameter, and the whole group only 200 feet across, neither are the stones by any means of imposing dimensions.



45. Boscawen Circles. From Borlase.

Another circumstance worthy of being noticed, is that there are detached stones in front of the principal circles. Interesting results might be obtained by excavating at their bases, as, for reasons above stated, it seems as if the principal interment might be found at their feet.

DOLMENS.

As stated above, England seems to be the native country of the great circles, no 100-metre circles having yet been found anywhere out of England, excepting, of course, that at Stennis. France, on the contrary, seems to be the native country of the dolmens. They exist there in numbers far beyond anything we can show, and of dimensions exceeding anything we can boast of. In England proper, when we have enumerated Hit's Cottyhouse, the dolmen in Clatford Bottom, Wayland Smith's Cave, that at Rollright, and one at Drewsteignton, in Devonshire, our list is nearly exhausted. There may be heaps of stones which seem dolmens, or something like them; and chambered tumuli, whose internal kistvaens, if exposed, might be entitled to rank with dolmens; but, taking the word in its broad sense. it is difficult to carry our list beyond the half-dozen.

In Cornwall the case is different. In the corner to the westward of Falmouth there are at least twice as many as in all England. In Wales, I think I could enumerate twice as many as in Cornwall; and in Anglesea (The Hon. W. C. Stanley enumerates by name twenty-four in Anglesea. Archaeologia Cambrensis,' fourth series, vol. i. p. 58.) there are certainly as many as in Cornwall, perhaps more ; and in the Isle of Man they are also numerous. It is difficult to be precise, as the same monument

is, sometimes at least, recorded under two names; but it is not an exaggeration to say that from fifty to sixty have been described, and most of them figured, as found in the West country, and I should not be surprised if an industrious statistician carried the number to 100, including of course, many that are now ruinous.

There are two points of view from which this geographical distribution of English dolmens may be regarded. The first and most obvious would be to consider that they were erected by the Britons after they were driven into the mountain fastnesses of the West, first by the Romans, and more completely afterwards by the Saxons. The other view would be that they are the work of a different race, who, we have every reason to believe, occupied the western country in the time of the Romans. Tacitus is particularly explicit on this point. He divides the inhabitants of the country into three classes. The red-haired Caledonians, resembling the Germans and inhabiting the north; the Silures, of dark complexion and curling hair, and whom he describes as living in that part of the, country which is opposite Spain, and he suggests that the ancient Iberians crossed over and occupied these regions; and he then adds: "Those nearest to Gaul are similar to the inhabitants of that country." (Tacitus, 1 Vita A Agricolae,' chap. v.) There is so much in the present aspect of the people of this country to confirm this general classification that there seems very little reason for doubting its general correctness; and as all these dolmens are found in the country of the Silures it may be argued that they belong to them. If lie had joined the Aquitanians to Iberians lie would probably have expressed more completely the whole facts of the case as we now know them.

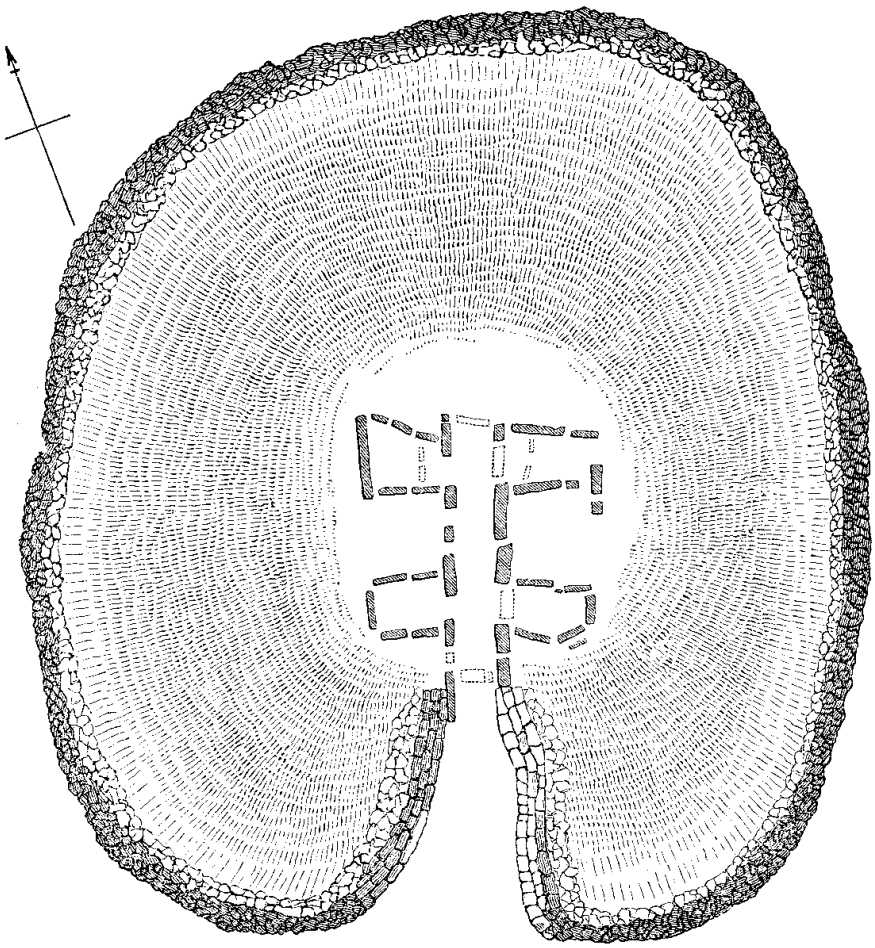
Admitting however; this ethnographic view of the case to the fullest possible extent-which I am prepared to do, it still leaves the question of date wholly unsettled. It would be answered if we dared to assume that the Silures were driven from the fertile parts of the valley of the 'Severn, which we have reason to suppose they occupied in Agricola's time, to the mountain fastnesses, and that it was then only that they began to repeat in stone what previously they had only erected in earth. If this could be established, we should get both an ethnographical and a chronological determination of no small value; but of this we shall, be better able to form an opinion after discussing the monuments of France.

Meanwhile there is one point bearing upon the subject to which it may be as well to draw attention. In Wales and Anglesea, which we may assume to have been the country of the Silures or that to which they were driven, there are no circles, but only dolmens. In Cornwall, where the blood was certainly more mixed, there are both circles and dolmens, and the same is the case at the other extremity of the western district in the Isle of Man.

If it is contended that, being nearer to Spain or Aquitaine than Wales, Cornwall must have been earliest and most exclusively inhabited by the dark race, the answer is, that though it may originally have been so, the races in Cornwall had been mixed with Celtic and other blood before the age of the stone monuments; while in the Isle of Man we shall probably see reason for believing that northern blood was infused into the veins of the people, at a very early age, when few, if any, monuments of this class existed, and certainly before all had been completed.

Even a cursory examination of these West Coast dolmens would, I think, be sufficient to prove to any one that the theory that all were originally covered with earthen mounds is utterly untenable. That such chambered graves as those at Uley in Gloucestershire, ('Somerset Archaeo. Soc. Proceedings,' viii. p. 51.) or Stoney Littleton in Somersetshire, ('Archaeologia,' xix. p. 43 et seqq.) were always intended to be so covered lip is clear enough. So was this one at Park. Cwn, in the peninsula of Gower, recently opened and described by Sir John Lubbock. ('Journal of the

Ethnological Society,' January, 1871, p. 416.) It is of the same type as Uley and Stoney Littleton, but has only four chambers arranged on each side of the



46. Park Cwn Tumulus. Scale 16 feet to 1 inch.

central passage. One of its most remarkable characteristics is the beautiful masonry of the retaining walls on each side of the funnel-shaped passage leading to the cells. These are so carefully built that it is evident that they were meant to be seen, and the entrance to be kept open. Indeed, unless we fancy it was the monument of some fight, which there seems no reason for supposing, it is evident it must have been kept open till forty deaths had occurred in the family of the chief to which it served as sepulchre, as at least that number of bodies were found in the chambers, but in a dreadfully confused - condition, as if the grave bad been rifled before, but no implements or trace of metal were left to indicate even approximately its age.

At Uley, in Gloucestershire, half way between Berkeley and Tetbury, there is a tumulus which, in its internal arrangement, is very similar to that last described. The entrance is of the same form, and there are four side-chambers; but those at Uley are grouped more artistically in the centre, instead of being separated by a passage, as at Park Cwn. Externally the differences are more apparent; the Gloucestershire example being oblong, or rather heart-shaped, while that in Gower is more circular in form. The Uley tumulus was first opened by a Mr. Baker, in 1821, but subsequently examined with great care by Dr. Thurnam; and a very careful account, resulting from his own observation compared with the records of Mr. Baker's, published by him in the Archaeological Journal. (Vol. xi. p. 315 et seqq.) The bodies in

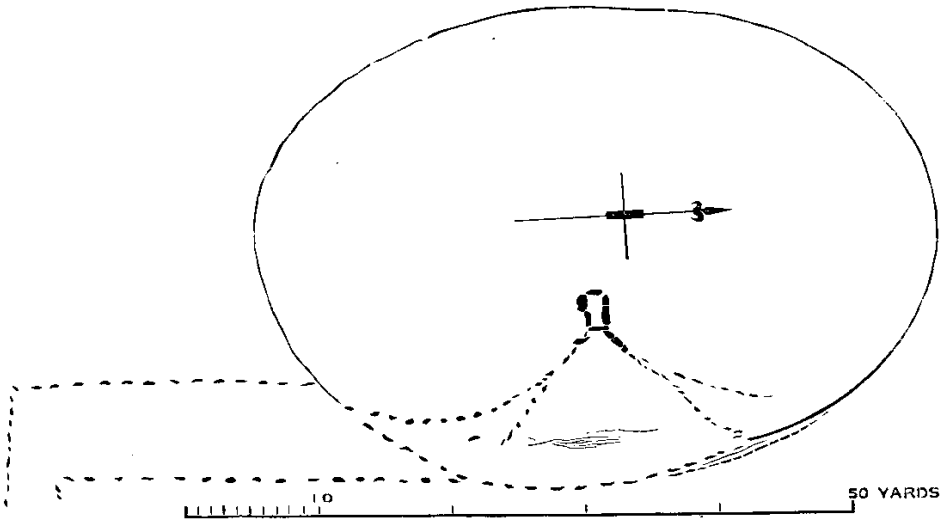
the chambers, which were numerous, had been disturbed and were lying in disorder, as at Park Cwn; but among them was found a vessel resembling a Roman lachrymatory, and some pottery which may have been either Romano-British or Mediaeval. There were also found some fragments of flint implements, apparently arrow-heads, and outside two stone axes-one of flint. Near the summit of the mound, exactly over the easternmost chamber, there had been another interment, and beside the skeleton were found three brass coins of the sons of Constantine the Great.

On this evidence, Dr. Thurnam, with the approval probably of every antiquary in England, comes to the conclusion that the original erection of the chambered tumulus belongs to the long prehistoric past; that the pottery, &c., were accidentally introduced; and that the coins belong to a secondary post-Roman interment. The only evidence for this being the presence of the flints above mentioned, and the assumptions based on them; they having become articles of faith with antiquaries which it is rank heresy to dispute. As I have already stated, till some one can show at what period flint ceased to be used in any particular locality, this evidence is worthless. With regard to the secondary interments, it appears to be inconceivable that, after the lapse of 500 or 600 years at least, and the civilizing influence of the Roman occupation, any one should choose the top of one of the mounds of the long-forgotten pagan savages for a burying place. If burying in barrows had been the fashion in Gloucestershire, as it was on the wolds of Yorkshire or the downs of Wiltshire, something might be said in favour of such an hypothesis if we could also assume that the races had been undisturbed in the interval. But there are hardly half-a-dozen tumuli in the whole county. They, like Uley, Rodmarton, ('Pro. Soc. Ant.,' second series 275, Thurnam, 217. xix. p. 43, 'Archaeologia,' xlii. 217.) Stoney Littleton, (Archaeologia xix. P 43) are all chambered tumuli of one class and apparently of one age. All too, it may be remarked, are close to Roman stations and surrounded by evidences of Roman occupation.

In the previous pages we have already met with several instances of summit interments, as at Gib Hill, Minning Low, &c., which are certainly not secondary, and we have reason to suspect that more will be found when looked for; and the finding of Roman coins on or near the top of tumuli is too frequent to be accidental, and occurs even in Ireland, where the Romans never went.

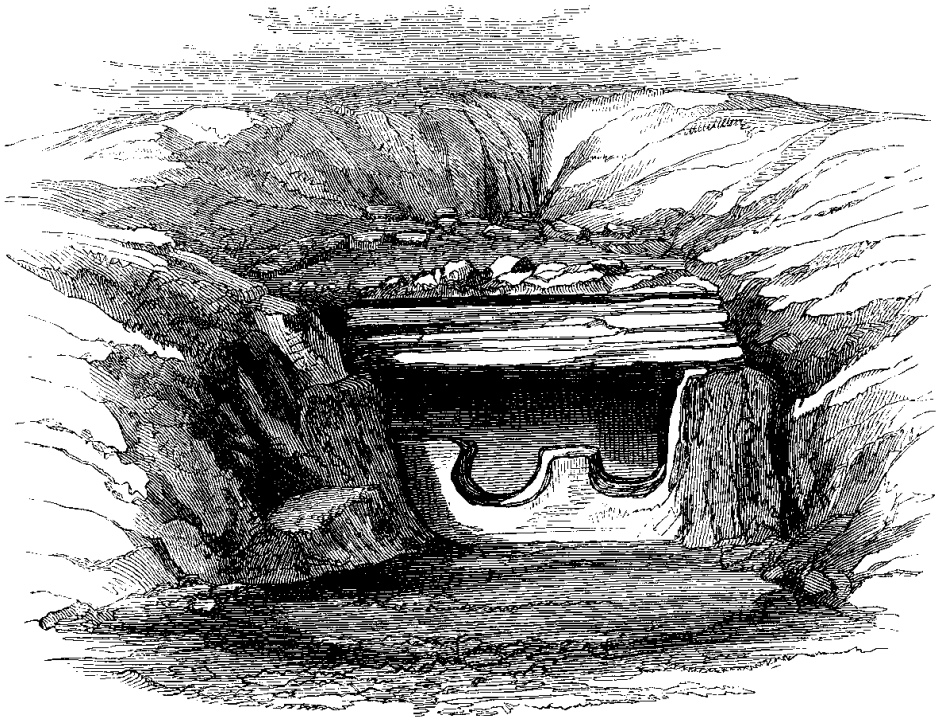
We shall have occasion to recur to this subject when speaking of the tomb of King Harald Hildetand at Lethra, and then propose to treat it more in detail; but meanwhile it seems clear that the evidence of the coins and the pottery must be allowed to outweigh that of the flints; and if this is so, not only Uley but all the chamber-tumuli in Gloucestershire or Somerset belong either to the Romano-British, or rather to the post-Roman period of British history.

Another and even more interesting example of this class has recently been brought to light by the Hon. W. 0. Stanley, at Plas Newydd, not far from the great dolmen represented on woodcut No. 50. (Archaeologia Cambrensis,' fourth vol. i. p. .51 et s*eqq*.) It is a chamber or cist, 3 feet 3 inches wide by about 7 feet Ion, and covered by two slabs. Before being disturbed, the supporting slabs must have formed nearly perfect walls, thus distinguishing the cist from those



47. Tumulus, Plas Newydd.

standing on widely-spaced legs. Its principal point of interest, however, is the widely-splayed avenue of stones leading up to it, showing that it was always intended to be visited; and still



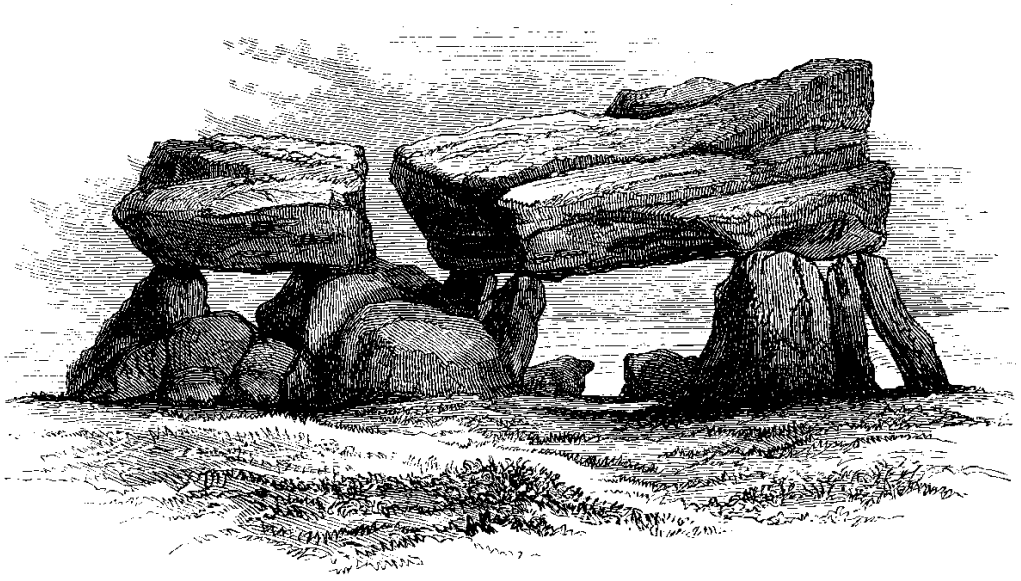
48. Entrance to Dolmen, in Tumulus, Plas Newydd.

more curious are the two holes that were pierced in the slab that closed the entrance. The upper part of this slab is now broken off, but so much remains that it is easy to see that they were originally circular and about 10 inches in diameter. Such holed stones are very frequent in Eastern dolmens, and are also common in Cornwall and elsewhere; (For Rodmarton, see 'Proceedings Soc. Ant.' 1. s. c.; for Cornish, see paper by M. Brash, 'Gent. Mag.,' 1864.) but what their purpose may have been has not yet been explained. Further on it may be attempted. At present it is the relation of this form of chambered tumuli to external dolmens that principally interests us.

Almost all the so-called dolmens in the Channel Islands are of this class. One has already been given (woodcut No. 11), and it may safely be asserted that all chambers which were wainscoted with slabs, so as to form nearly perfect walls, and all that had complicated

49. Dolmen at Pentre Ifan. From 'Archæologia Cambrensis.'

quasi-vaulted roofs were, or were intended to be, covered with mounds - more especially those that had covered passages leading to them. There is, however, a very wide distinction between these sepulchral chambers and such a monument as this at Pentre Ifan, in Pembrokeshire. (Archaeologia Cambrensis,' third series, xi. p. 284.) The top stone is so large that it is said five persons on horseback have found shelter under it from a shower of rain. Even allowing that the horses were only Welsh ponies, men do not raise such masses and poise them on their points for the sake of hiding them again. Besides that, the supports do not and could not form a chamber. The earth would have fallen in on all sides, and the connexion between the roof and the floor been cut off entirely, even before the whole was completed. Or, to take another example, that at Plas Newydd, on the shore of the Menai Strait. Here the cap stone is an

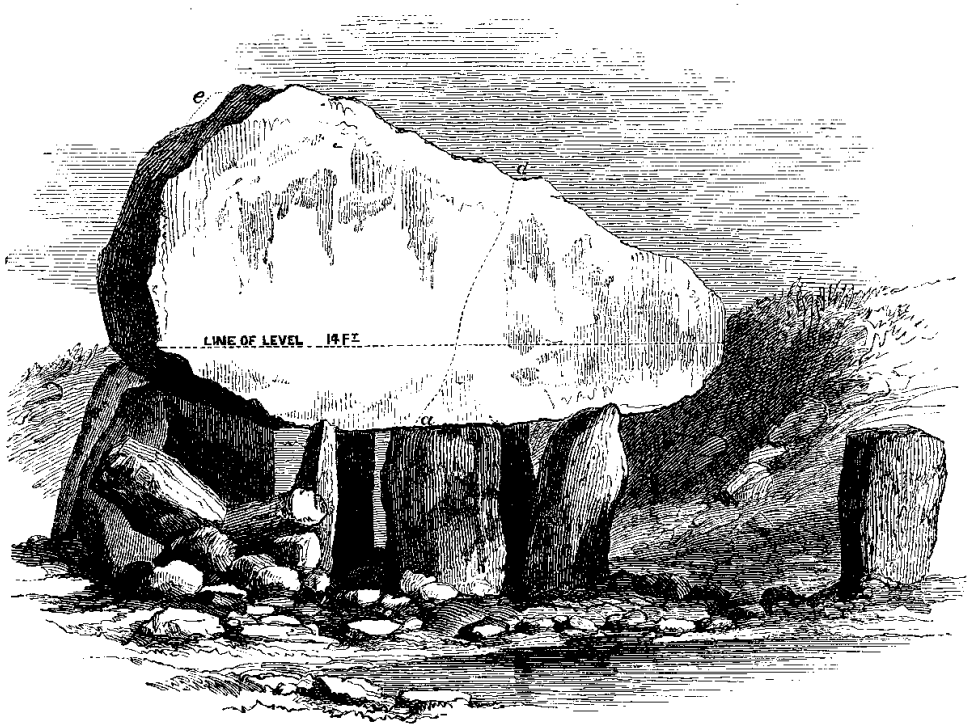


50. Dolmen at Plas Newydd. From 'Archæologia Cambrensis.'

enormous block, squared by art, supported on four stone legs, but with no pretence of forming a chamber. If the cap stone were merely intended as a rooting stone, one a third or fourth of its
weight would have been equally serviceable and equally effective in an architectural point of view, if buried. The mode of architectural expression which these Stone men best understood was the power of mass. At Stonehenge, at Avebury, and everywhere, as here, they sought to give dignity and expression by using the largest blocks they could transport or raise-and they were right; for, in spite of their rudeness, they impress us now; but had they buried them in mounds, they neither would have impressed us nor their contemporaries. As before mentioned, however, the great argument against the theory of their having been always covered up is the impossibility of accounting for the disappearance of the tumuli. If they had situated on fertile plains where the land was valuable for agricultural purposes, it might be assumed that a civilized people with highly cultivated antiquarian tastes might have been at the trouble and expense of removing the tumuli for the sake of the land, and of preserving 'g the dolmens for their historical value. But that the rude peasantry of Cornwall and Wales should have done this is inconceivable, more especially as by far the greater number of these monuments are situated on bleak moorlands of no agricultural value whatever. Still more inconceivable is it that they should have done it so neatly and so carefully that no trace of the mound can now be found either around the stones or in the neigh neighbourhood.

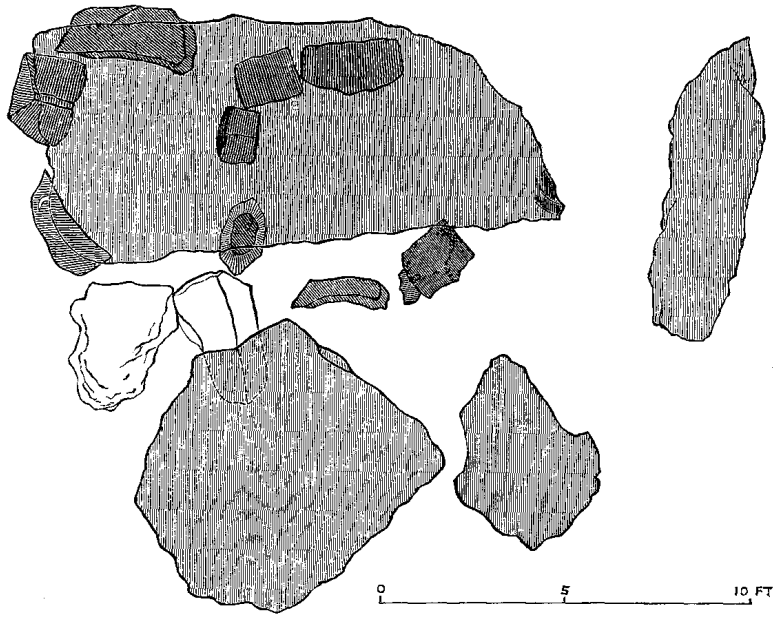
If any history were attached to these Western dolmens, or any remains had been found under them which would enable us to fix their dates, even approximately, or to arrange them in any intelligible sequence, it might be worth while recapitulating their names or illustrating their forms. Nothing of the sort, however, has yet been attempted; and apparently no materials exist from which any such series could be elaborated.

Only one dolmen in Wales, so far as I know, bears a name; but it is the illustrious one of King Arthur. The dolmen bearing his name is situated in the peninsula of Gower, on the northern



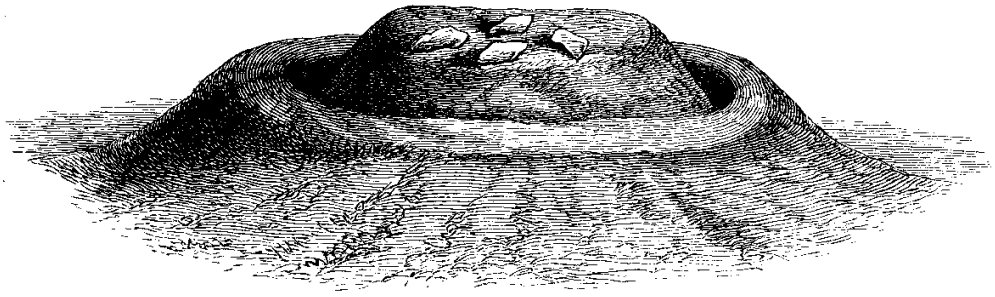
51. Arthur's Quoit, Gower. From a drawing by Sir Gardner Wilkinson.

slopes of the bleak Bryn Cefn, about ten miles west from Swansea. (The following particulars are taken from a paper by Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson, in the first volume, fourth series, of the 'Archaeologia Cambrensis.' 1870. It is not only the last, but the best description which I know, and, being from the pen of so accurate an observer, I have relied on it exclusively.) It forms the centre of a very extensive group of monuments - eighty cairns, at least, are still to be counted in an area less than half a mile in length, by a quarter of a mile in width. These are mostly small, 12 to 15 feet in diameter; one, 20 feet across, was opened by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, but proved to contain no interment. The largest is 68 feet in diameter, but has not been opened. About 350 feet from this is the dolmen. The cap stone is 14 feet 6 inches in length, 7 feet 5 inches in height, and 6 feet 8 inches in breadth even now, but a very large piece has been broken off,



52. Plan of Arthur's Quoit.

and now lies beside it, measuring upwards of 3 feet in thickness; and another piece seems to have been broken off on the other end, so that when complete it must have weighed between 35 and 40 tons. It rested originally on ten or eleven upright stones, two of which, however, have fallen, and only four now touch the cap stone. Sir Gardner is of opinion that it once was covered with a tumulus; but this appears very doubtful. The slight mound, backed up with large stones, that now surrounds it, with a diameter of 73 to 74 feet, seems an enclosure more like that of Hob Hurst's House (woodcut No. 53) than the remains of a tumulus, and till some further evidence is adduced, we must be allowed to doubt whether any cap-stone on legs was



53. Hob Hurst's House, on Baslow Moor, Derbyshire. From a drawing by Thomas Bateman.[1]

(Ten Years' Diggings,' p. 87.)

ever so treated. Sir Gardner traced, doubtfully, an avenue, of which, however, only five stones How remain, extending to about 500 feet in a direction that would have passed the dolmen on the north, as that at Shap did the circle at its front, or the lines at Merivale Bridge, the circle still found there; Sir Gardner also points out some small circular enclosures, which, from the analogy of those found on Dartmoor, he assumes to be hut-circles.

What, then, is this group of monuments? Sir Gardner assumes that it is a cemetery of the ancient Britons; but, if so, why are not other cemeteries found in the fertile valleys and plains in South Wales? Why did they choose one of the 'barest and bleakest hillsides, and one farthest removed from their habitations as a place in which to bury their dead? Why did they not, like the inhabitants of Salisbury Plain, disperse their graves pretty equally over an area of 30 miles by 10? Why crowd them into less than half-a-mile? Without reverting to my previous suggestion of a battle-field I do not see how these questions can be answered; and if so, I do not think we have far to go to look for its name? As hinted above, Arthur's eighth battle must have been fought in Wales. The Dame of the place is written Guin (Gwyn), Guinon, Guinnon, Gunnion, (Dare onesuggest Gower?) which certainly is Welsh; and when we find it immediately preceding the battle of Caerleon on the Usk, and the principal monument still bearing Arthur's name, we may fairly, I think, adopt the suggestion till, at least, a better is offered.

Be this as it may, I think all antiquaries will agree with Sir Gardner Wilkinson in assuming that this is the stone of Cetti mentioned in the Welsh triads. (Is this the same word as "Cotty," as applied to Kit's Cotty-house, in Kent? It looks very like it - Coity?) The 84th Triad' speaks of the Cor of Emmrys in Caer Caradawg (another name for Salisbury), and the 88th of the three mighty achievements of the Isle of Britain, the raising of the stone of Cetti, the building of the work of Emmrys and the heaping of the pile of Cyvragnon. (Herbert, 'Cyclops Christianus,' P. 35.) The work of Emmrys (Ambrosius) is generally admitted to be Stonehenge. If this is the stone of Cetti, which I see no reason for doubting, it only remains to identify the third. Most antiquaries suggest Silbury Hill; and, if I am correct in placing these three monuments so near one another in date, this seems also extremely probable, and so far as it goes, is a satisfactory confirmation of what has been advanced above from other sources.

From my ignorance of the Welsh language I am not in a position to say what amount of reliance should be placed in the evidence of these triads. But Herbert and other competent scholars consider it undoubted that Emmrys is Ambrosius, and the 'Work' referred to certainly Stonehenge. If this is so, it fixes its date beyond question, and as the other two are mentioned in the same breath it is probable they were not distant in date. All this may be, I believe certainly is so, but the circumstantial evidence adduced above seems to me so much clearer and so much more to be relied upon, that it derives very little additional force from the utterance of the Welsh bards. It is, however, no doubt satisfactory that their evidence coincides with everything that has been brought forward above, as bearing directly or indirectly on their acre or use.

Before proceeding, it may be as well to revert for one moment to Hob Hurst's House. It is quoted here to show how a tumulus, with a dolmen on the top of it, may be connected with a low rampart so as not to conceal it, exactly, I believe, as is the case with Arthur's Quoit. But the name of the place where it is situated may afford a hint which may lead to something hereafter. It will be recollected that Arthur's sixth battle was fought "super flumen quod vocatur Bassas." This mound is situated on "Bas" Moor the Low being merely the name of the mound itself. These nominal similarities are too treacherous to be relied upon; but the more the whole group is looked at the more does it appear that there are coincidences Of name, or form, or purpose, between those monuments here called Arthurian, which cannot all be

accidental. Individually they may not be able to resist hostile criticism, but in their cumulative form they appear to me to make up a very strong case indeed.

If any of the other dolmens in the West had even so good a title to a date as Arthur's Quoit, it might be possible to arrange them in a series; but as none have even traditional dates, all we can now do is to suggest that the dolmen at Plas Newydd (woodcut No. 50) is of about the same age as Arthur's Stone: perhaps something more modern, as it is more carefully squared; but this may arise from the one being a battle-stone, the other a peaceful sepulchre. In like manner it would seem that such an exaggerated form as Pentre Ifan (woodcut No. 49) is a "tour de force" of a still more modern date; and if we could get one certainly older than any of these, a tentative scheme could be constructed which might lead us to satisfactory results.

I by no means despair of being able eventually to construct such a scheme of classification, and, even before this Work is concluded, to make it tolerably clear that the thing is possible, and then it will only remain, if one or two fixed or probable dates can be ascertained, to bring the whole within the range of historical investigation.