

NOTES AND NEWS

The main entrance is familiar to all archaeologists, it is illustrated in Cartailhac's *Monuments primitifs des Iles baléares*, and in many text-books. It is regrettable that the whole fort should be threatened with destruction, for building purposes; and it is to be hoped that the endeavours to preserve it will succeed. To many, this fort and its gateway are typical of Balearic archaeology. It may be suggested that the free-standing towers represent the central citadel of forts such as Encinar, adapted to the needs of a settlement on lower ground.

IRISH MEGALITHS

A recent visit to New Grange, the most celebrated of Irish megalithic tombs, convinced one that it must have been constructed in the Bronze Age. There is presumptive evidence in support of this view, but one piece of direct evidence has hitherto been overlooked. The central burial-chamber is approached by a long passage, narrowest near the middle. This passage is flanked with upright stones, several of which are ornamented with sculptured designs. (See Coffey, *New Grange*, Dublin, 1912). Now the surface of one such (on the right hand as you go in, at the narrowest part) has been made smooth by chiselling *before* the ornament was applied; and the marks of the instrument used can still be seen very plainly. It was a chisel with an edge very slightly serrated or chipped, doubtless by use. The upright stone is of a soapy texture. I do not think that anything but a metal chisel could have done this. It would be interesting to know whether, in the Dublin Museum, there are any bronze chisels whose working edge agrees in width with these marks; and if so to what period of the Bronze Age the type belongs. It is difficult also to see how the elaborate and sometimes deep incisions on the stones of New Grange and kindred Irish monuments can have been made except with metal tools. Some of this ornament can be proved to have been sculptured before the stones were placed in their present position.

About 640 yards to the south-east of New Grange is a large round barrow standing in the centre of a circular earthen rampart. The diameter of this circle is 154 yards. Comparisons are suggested with the disc-barrows of Southern England and with the Giant's Ring in Antrim. The present example differs, however, from disc-barrows both in the size of the central mound, and in the absence of any visible ditch associated with the bank. The Giant's Ring has a stone burial-chamber at the centre. One of the four earthen rings near the Castle

ANTIQUITY

of Comfort, on Mendip, has three large flat mounds within it, but not placed in the centre. About two miles to the east of New Grange is another circular earthen enclosure, much higher and less symmetrical in outline. The longest diameter is about 165 yards. There is no sign of a ditch or central mound; but in both instances ploughing may well have obliterated such, if they existed.

Almost a mile to the north-east of New Grange is a long earthen mound, oriented east-north-east and west-south-west; it has the appearance of being a long barrow. In one place on the north side the mound has been dug into and an upright slab exposed. At the east end is a round barrow or cairn, with the remains of a small circle of stones revealed by digging. There is another round barrow not far from the west end. These smaller cairn-circles occur close to the larger chambered cairns on the ridge of Slieve-na-Calliagh (Lough Crewe). The stones forming the chambers and passages of these smaller cairn-circles are covered with decoration, like those of the large ones; and they belong presumably to the same period, the early or middle Bronze Age. In plan these Irish cairn-circles closely resemble those of the Scilly Isles and west Cornwall.

The photographs from which the annexed illustrations (see plate) have been made were taken by Mrs Keiller last April, and thanks are due to her for permission to reproduce them here. The upper one shows the detail of the spiral ornament on a stone at New Grange—one of the curb-stones of the mound—situated immediately opposite the entrance. The lower one is an admirable view of one of the smaller cairn-circles on Slieve-na-Calliagh, taken from the top of one of the biggest cairns of the New Grange type.

The Irish sculptured ornament of the Bronze Age has recently been studied by Professors Breuil and Macalister and Mr Miles Burkitt. The results are published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. xxxvi (1921); and by Mr Burkitt in *Ipek: Jahrbuch für prähistorische und Ethnographische Kunst*, 1926 (Klinkhardt und Biermann, Leipzig).

MONGOLIA

The American expedition which has found dinosaurs' eggs in the Gobi desert has also found abundant traces of human occupation, in the form of worked flints and ornaments of egg-shell. Full details naturally are not yet available, and criticism may be premature. But