Your Hall, Dumfries April 6 16 1844 Stometing The fifth and last meeting of the operation of the session washeldhere at 8 oc p. M. The fifth and last meeting of the winter Thirty four members were present and orlylchrist presided. Therewas exhibited by the Chairman afine specimen of Traphie Granite; by articles exhibited mr. Davidson a stone celt found in Mabil Moss: by Defrierson aspecimen of the flying byard and a skin of an extra large Coel (anguila acutirostrio). W. Halliday, College St, Maxwelltown, and the Rev. J. a. Campbell, Froqueer Manse were elected Ordinary Members. It was unanismously agreed that the Field Meetings for the enewing Runmer chould he held as follows: - May 5th, the Glenstills and Colochan; June 2 " amisfield, July 7th, halbeattie and Colvend; August 4th New = : abbey; Sept ! Drynerson Museum Hornhell. Mesers Geboon and Moodie were appointed to cooperate with the Secretary in making the necessary arrangements for these meetings. W. Tringson

Wilmipson read a most elaborate paper on the Great Gramed of Thiseh "giving W. Impson on) afull description of that wonderful Pyr. of Shizeh" structure and Stating the news held me relation boits prorpose and uses by Professor Prazzi Drugth and other eminent authorities. Mr. Starke read a paper on The Ougarlane" in which he described it Me Sugar Cane" manner of growth, the various Rosto in Cultivation, and the process of manufacture nito Sugar and Rum -The Secretary read a paper drawing attention to the disappearance of hylark W. Service on "the Searcity of Skylark's (in the immediate occinity of Dumfries Dryrierson nextread a hibuto lotte memory of Racky a brown Coalmondi, for the last sixyears Tribute to memory & an immake of the Museum at Horubile of lacky but which diele on the 24 rellimo On the motion of Mr. Rutherford a vote of thanks was cordially passed Votes thanks to the Hagretrates for their kindness in magistrates (granting the use of the Four Hall for

the Meeting.
The meeting then adjourned at alate hour. Ifflish hist Thulund

Tield Meetings for 18 1/ the following reports nere purmished by the Lecretary (MMR. Service) to the Dumfries Chandard" and are here pasked in so so to five the result of the meetings "a clear and concess form. Robert Service

May 5th 1844

ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

The Dumfriesshire and Galloway Antiquarian and Natural History Society held its first field meeting for the season on Saturday last, the place selected for a visit being the farm of Collochan, where the great breeding place of the blackheaded gull is situated. The party, consisting of about sixteen members of the Society, drove out to near the head of the Glen, from whence, under the guidance of Mr Rutherford, vice-president, they were conducted down the right bank to the Glen Mills—the botanists of the party searching for plants, and the geologists examining the physical features of this beautiful and romantic glen with great interest. Mr Rutherford pointed out a rock which salmon were unable to surmount when ascending the stream, and stated as a fact, that might throw some light on the vexed question whether pars were the young of the salmon, that no pars were ever found above that rock. Proceeding up the left bank, the ruins of an old castle (or chapel), known as Killochan Castle, were next inspected. It is situated on a position of great natural strength, the remains of what appears to have been a ditch is quite visible on three sides, and the fourth is formed by the almost precipitous sides of the glen. The field below Collockan farm house, where drainage operations are being carried on, was next examined. At a depth of a few feet below the surface there appeared to be an extensive deposit of pure "Boulder Clay" and large quantities of this were thrown out in forming the drains. Almost all the stones bear the peculiar striæ denoting the grinding action of the ice during the great Ice Age. A short walk further and the Gull Loch was reached, the Gulls resenting the intrusion on their parental cares by loud screaming and abusive (bird) language. It was certainly a pretty sight, so many thousands of these pretty birds all on the

wing together while their incessant cries harmonised well with the rugged nature of the surroundings. On walking round the loch the nests were seen in great abundance, built of coarse grasses and placed a few inches above the surface of the water. Hundreds of nests were seen with eggs in the space of a few yards square. Dr Gilchrist, in a few remarks stated that the loch was without doubt formed by a glacier which had descended from the surrounding hills, till filling up the hollow of which the loch was the centre, it had flowed off in the direction of the Glen Mills. Turning homewards, on coming over the hill a magnificent prospect broke on the view, the whole valley of Lower Nithsdale with the town of Dumfries in the centre, the Wamphray hills with their snowclad summits gleaming in the rays of the afternoon sun, and away to the south part of the Solway Firth, the whole, seen through an atmosphere of singular clearness and purity, forming a picture of surpassing beauty and one which will not fade easily from the memory of those who were present. Leaving the brow of the hill with great reluctance the old quarry above Cluny was next visited, and here the direction of the Silurian strata was well seen, and on some parts the action of the waves of ancient seas was very clearly marked. Many specimens were here secured by the geologists present. The botanists and entomologists of the party were unsuccessful in securing any but common specimens. The long continued cold and drought of this spring have retarded the growth of even the common wild flowers-the yellow primrose, some violets, and a few other common plants are almost the only ones yet in bloom, and as a natural sequence insects were also scarce. A large number of that pretty little fern, the moonwort, were however secured in its usual habitat an old pasture field, this being almost the only "find" of note.

May 5 # 1877

beeling at amispield June 20 1877

June 2 1877

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY. FIELD MEETING.

The second field meeting of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Scientific, Antiquarian, and Natural History Society was held on Saturday last at Amisfield, when there was a large attendance of members, accompanied by a few friends. Leaving Dumfries by the 1.45 train, the party was met at Amisfield Station by Mr Jackson, who conducted them to the mansion house, the botanists securing specimens on the way of the pretty yellow moneywort, the purple vetchling, and the hedge fumiwort, the purple vectoring, and the nearest inner tory. On reaching the entrance gate, a magnificent weeping elm attracted much attention; its long trailing branches would have precluded all entrance had they not been trained to stout poles so as to form a beautiful arch of living green. The lower side of the avenue is just now all aglow with spring flowers—the blue wood hyacinth, the yel-low primose, and the crimson day because form-ing bright masses of colour. Passing round the mansion house, Mr Jackson pointed out some re-mains of arches which are probably traces of an older building, with which the present residence has been incorporated. The old Tower was then inspected, Mr Jackson pointing out the more interesting features of this ancient building. Several of the lower floors are still in use and seem fitted to stand for many years to come, but the upper ones with the exception of the great oaken rafters, are all gone. A narrow spiral stair of stone leads up to the highest part of the Tower, an oblong apartment, loop-holed on all sides, and in which a watchman was constantly kept "in the brave days of old" to give notice of approaching danger, or of signals from the beacon fires on distant hills. Several of the more adventurous and less corpulent members of the party ascended to this apartment and enjoyed the grand outlook. A few pieces of furniture still remain; part of a table at which James the V., "the guidman of Ballangeich," is said to have dined, and some other remnants were pointed out. The circumstances connected with the visit of the King to Amisfield Tower are of a peculiarly interesting nature. Before visiting Dumfriesshire for the purpose of quieting the continual strife among the border clans, and effectually checking the bands of incursive Englishmen, the King listened to the pitiful tale of a poor widow from Lochmaben, who had walked all the way to Stirling to claim redress from his Majesty. poor petitioner's only son and two cows had been carried off by a band of marauding Englishmen, and on applying to Sir John Charteris of Amisfield for redress he treated her appeal with callous indifference and contempt, remarking that he had something else to do than look after her paltry concerns. On arriving in the district the King proceeded to Amisfield Tower, disguised, and en-

deavoured to gain admittance to his lordship as the bearer of a message of great importance. Sir John, however, was at dinner, and could not be disturbed, and it was only when told that the Euglish had crossed the border in great force, induced by a few silver groats, that the porter dared to interrupt his master, and only then to be awarded with a curse for his untimely intrusion.

The King afterwards announced himself as the Guidman of Ballangeich, and the crest-fallen and penitent lord, realising too late the rank of the messenger, prayed for pardon on bended knees. The King wrothfully reminded him of his cruel treatment of the widow, informing him that he must repay her loss tenfold, "and as for the poor woman's son, unless he is ransomed within ten days, you shall die for it on the gallows." A murderous looking steel crossbow, which had probably done some execution in its day, was also examined. A visit was next made to the camp, which is situated about a hundred yards from the Tower. It is believed to be the work of the Romans. It is nearly square, and a wide ditch still environs it on three sides, and what seems to have been a gate or entrance is visible on the north-east and west side, while the fourth or south side is occupied by a range of farm buildings. These have apparently been built of material from some ancient building, as parts of armorial bearings, figures, and inscriptions, were noticed here and there. The party was next conducted to the garden, and no better evidence of the wealth of antiquarian relics about Amisfield could be given than the fact that the garden door was kept open by an ancient quern placed against it. In the well-kept hothouses, a good collection of rare exotic ferns was of much interest to botanists, while a species of saxifrage growing with great luxuriance, beneath the stag-ing caused a hot discussion as to what was its proper name. Trained along the sashes in the conservatory were some "Marechal Niel" roses, loaded with their large and deliciously fragrant flowers, notwithstanding the late ungenial spring. Attention was next directed to the nesting boxes for small birds, which had been placed at intervals along the garden walls. One of them was occupied by a black-headed tit (Parus Major), which resented the intrusion on its privacy by a furious display of hissing and peck-ing and striking with its wings. Boxes for the starlings are also placed on tall poles and on all the windows of the old tower. As a result of the accommodation and protection afforded them, the small birds do a great amount of good, and the gardener stated that no caterpillars or other in ect enemies ever troubled him. It would be well were Mr Jackson's example more generally followed; we would then hear less of the failure of so many garden crops through the attacks of insects.

Entering the mansion house the party was entertained by Mr Jackson to an excellent cold collation, and after it had been discussed, Mr Jackson handed round some very valuable relies of Burns. The first was the original MS. of "Wat ye wha's in yon toun," written in his exciseman's note book, of the same pattern as is still used. There were also some entries of grocer's stock-in trade, which the poet had taken down on the same day in which this song was written. The next was the poet's own copy of the Edinburgh edition, and this was examined with a reverential interest. Almost every page was occupied with notes and corrections in his own handwriting, the names of persons mentioned in the poems, which had been left blank, being all filled in. Mr Jackson also exhibited a fine mahogany model of the sarcophagus in the

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Great Pyramid of Ghizeh, and stated that according to the measurement of this model, which was guaranteed to be correct, Professor Prazzi Smyth's theory that the sarcophagus was a measure of capacity was found to be disproved.

Some business was then transacted, it being resolved by a large majority to continue holding the

field meetings on Saturday.

The Secretary brought under the notice of the Society a pamphlet he had received, containing woodcuts and descriptions of the insects destructive to agricultural crops. It is proposed to have reports of the ravages of these insects sent to a Central Committee in London from all parts of the country; and with this end in view, blank forms, with instructions for filling up, have been distributed with the pamphlet to entomologists throughout Britain. When these reports have been all sent in again, it is hoped they will form a basis for some practicable measures being adopted to have some of these insect pests, such as the turnip fly and the wireworm, "stamped out." It was agreed to have as full a report as possible sent

by the Society from this district.

Mr M'Ilwraith of the Courier then proposed that the thanks of the Society be passed to Mr Jackson for the very handsome way in which he had entertained them, a motion which was enthusiastically rendered. A brief visit to the large camp on the summit of Barrshill still remained to complete the programme for the day, so, under the guidance of Mr Jackson's gardener, the party set off and reached the hill top to find the rain descending in drenching showers. Under these circumstances the examination of the camp was made as brief as possible. Some doubt was expressed as to its makers, and it may perhaps have been occupied successively by Britons, Romans, and Norsemen. However it is in a very complete state of preservation, is of very large extent, quite circular, encompassed with two deep and wide trenches. It must have been a place of great strength and importance in the days when "might was right." Much regret was expressed at the state of the weather, as the greater part of Dumfriesshire and Galloway can be seen from the camp on a clear day.

7 July

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY. FIELD MEETING.

The July field meeting of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society was held at Colvend on Saturday last. The parish of Colvend has long been famous for its scenery and its rich and varied flora, many plants being found there that are not met with elsewhere in Scotland. A large party left Domfries by the 8.32 A.M. train for Dalbeattie, from whence a bus conveyed them to Colvend Manse, where they were met by the Rev. Mr Fraser. A visit was first made to Mr Fraser's garden, which is just now in full beauty. For hardy plants the manse garden is probably unequalled in Galloway; from all parts of the world the choicest gems of flora have been gathered together, and are here growing with a healthy luxuriance, which bespeaks the knowledge possessed by their owner of their requirements. grand Aranearia imbricata attracted general interest from being in fruit, upwards of thirty fine cones growing on it, a most unusual circumstance in this country. There are also a number of splendid plants of the golden rayed lily of Japan (Lilium auratum), many of them from five to six feet in height, and just coming into bloom. The Lithospermum prostratum with masses of bright blue flowers, and the rare blue columbine (Aquilegia glandulosa) were also greatly admired. A number of plants of a rare white hyacinth (Hyacinthus candicans), whose spike of flowers is said to be about three feet long, and which was discovered in South Africa some few years ago, were also pointed out. Mr Fraser had raised the plant from seed, and is probably the first who has done so in Britain. The fernery was also a great treat. Some of our rarest native ferns are growing here in dense masses, and the very pictures of health. The rare Woodsia itvensis, the mountain fern, the adder's tongue fern, the holly fern, and that rarity the Lastrea recurva (only found on the mountain of Arran), were among the smaller species; while the royal fern, Osmunda regalis, was here also, growing with a luxuriance which might have hidgrowing whom a dixurance which might have hidden Osmund kinaself. The legend is, that Osmund, a Saxon King, on being hard pressed by his enemies, hid himself in a brake of this fern, which ever after bore the appellation of royal. Certain it is, however, that in these days of fern hunters the Osmunda is not found wild in quantity sufficient to hide a man. Leaving the garden, the party entered the manse, where refreshments were served, after which Mr Rutherford, vice-president, proposed a vote of thanks to Mr and Mrs Fraser for their kindness, which was very heartily responded to.

The party then proceeded to Douglas Hall, where, leaving the 'bus, a general scramble along the shore and the rocks began. The samphire was noticed high up on the cliffs, out of all reach, but stones were thrown up, and a few pieces brought down. This plant is in some places an article of trade, being gathered by men slung over the cliffs with ropes, and, owing to the dangerous nature of the occupation, high prices are got for it. It is

used as a salad.

On the sands from whence the tide was rapidly

receding the geologists were greatly interested in noting the rippling action of the waves, and the Colvered leeting conf-

marks made by a recent slight shower. Precisely similarly marked are some of the permian and silurian rocks, and from the same causes as above noted operating when these rocks were still in a soft state. Perhaps after the lapse of ages the now soft sands of the Solway will be quarried out still marked with the ways action, the raindrops, the worm tracks, and the footsteps of the party who traversed them on Saturday will be referred to as those of pre-historic man! Proceeding past the stake nots from which the fishermen were taking the fish left by the previous tide, the cliffs were all explored for plants, and very soon vasculums and pockets were cranimed with rarities

The rock rose, the sea pink, sea campion, ragged robin, rock saxifrage and cranesbill were growing in boundless profusion, addraing the rocks with gorgeous masses of colour. Many ferns also were secured; the sea spleenwort was of course got plentifully, but although careful search was made the royal fern was not found and is now supposed to be extinct in Colvend. At Port O'Warren the rare sea radish was found and further on the exceedingly rare Astragalus glyciphylus. On the top of Castlehill some fine specimens of the stately mullein, Verbascum thapsus, were gathered; and near to Rockeliffe no less than four species of rosss—Hosa canina, R. rutiginosa (often contounded with the last), R. spinossissima, and R. pimpernelifolia.

The birds observed during the walk were numerous. Among them, however, the peregrine falcon was absent. This noble bird had an eyrie near

Port O'Warren, but of late years they are supposed to have been all destroyed. The preservation of game has led to a serious disturbance of the balance of nature by the almost total destruction of so-called enemies, and allowing others to increase to an extent prejudicial to many interests.

We may instance the enormous flocks of wood pigeons which now make a living on the farmer's crops, and the vast swarms of field mice which which are so destructive to young plantations and upland pastures. From an agricultural point of view birds of prey are not only quite harmless, but absolutely necessary for keeping other but absolutely necessary to be being from increasing out of all propertion to their place in nature. A breeding place of the herring gull was very interesting but a nearer acquaintance with their nests and eggs was impossible as these are placed high on precipitous rocks, quite out of reach of ordinary nest-hunters. Several pairs of the lesser black backed gull were also seen nesting with their white winged congeners. Wheatears, stonechats, and whinchats were also numerous, and a pair of the ring ouzel were seen. A nest of the lesser whitethroat was found near Port Ling. The day being so bright and hot insects were abundant. A specimen of the clouded yellow butterfly was secured after a prolonged chase: other two were seen, but owing to their amazing swiftness on the wing could not be captured. The sudden apparition of this

butterfly all over the kingdom, from Land's End to Perthshire, has greatly astonished entomologists and puzzled them to account for it. Its usual time of appearance is late in autumn, and then only at intervals of many years, and generally no further north than a few of the southern counties of England. Among other Lepidoptera the little artaxerxes butterfly, the blues, and the little

Colvered leeting conto

July 7 1877

haolin

heath were gambolling about in merry groups, and dancing hither and thither, like a winged jewel, was the burnet hawk moth, clad in a vest of brilliant green and crimson. The following are the names of the beetles found by Mr Lennon, Crichton Institution, during the day:—Elater balteatus, Altrous rhombiros, Dashillus carvinus, Cistela murina Otiorhynchus sulcatus, Otiorhynchus ovatus, Ernobius abritus, Trachyphlocus scabriculus, Lerna puncticollis.

After a short halt at Rockcliffe, the return

journey, was commenced, and not a few members of the party were, glad to find themselves seated, the rough scramble among the rocks and up the more accessible cliffs having resulted in many a hard tumble and a plentiful crop of abraded and contused wounds. Indeed a member of the scholastic professions was beard to matter that he doubted it ever he would be able to sit down again. A visit was made in passing to see the granite quarries of Oldlands, but as the workmen had left, a vein of Caoline which has been recently discovered there could not be seen. However, Dr Gheirist very kindly pointed out the chief features of the rocks, which have been all rounded and curved on the surface, from the ice action during the great ice age. The Society lies under deep obligations to Dr Gilchrist for the way in which he explains everything of interest met with at these field meetings. A peculiar looking stone, the pame of a plant, or the history of an old ruin are all equally well known to Dr Gilchrist; indeed his remarks are a continual lecture, full of information, given in the plainest language, and in a manner by which all who hear may be profited. Arrived at Dalbeattie, there was just time before the train was due to see through the granite polishing works of Messrs Shearer, Smith, & Co., and the appliances for polishing and cutting the huge blocks were matters of great interest.

The party returned to Dumfries by the 6.30 P.M. train, thoroughly satisfied with the day's proceedings. The weather was all that could be desired

for such a meeting.

Meeting at Criffe Hewalbey aug 4 1877

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

PIELD DAY.

The August field meeting of the Dumfries and

Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society was held on Saturday last, when a large party visited the picturesque mountain of Criffel. The ascent was made from the farm of Ardwall, up, perhaps, the steepest part, but the shortest path to the top. For some time the day was very bright and hot, but latterly clouds obscured the sun and rendered the ascent less arduous, but even then the perspiration was profuse enough. After about an hour and a half of climbing the summit was reached by the foremost of the party, followed at short intervals by the remainder as their strength permitted. A keen appetite had been produced by the pure mountain air and the vigorous, exercise, so that luncheon was heartily partaken of. Loud. Criffel leeting, Conta

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lamentations were heard from one gentleman, however, who had lost his wallet altogether, but his immediate wants were supplied by his companions. A thorough search for insects and plants was made on the top, and it was very successful, nearly thirty species of Coleopetra, or Beetles, being found under the stones, many of them very rare. Butterflies and Moths were however very scarce owing to the cold wind blowing across the summit. The Brown Fritillary, the Little Heath, the Ringlet, and other common butterflies were numerous; and among moths, the little Crambidæ was most abundant as they always are in a damp summer, when of course other species are drowned out. A few specimens of the Mountain Carpet Moth were captured near the summit, and also a few of the less common Noctuæ. Mr Lennox of the Crichton Institution dredged the little pools on the top for Water Beetles, and was very successful in capturing a large number of these curious insects.

Before descending a short rest was taken, and the party had now time to look on the vast expanse of sea and land spread out before them. Looking like a mere speck, the town of Dumfries was seen away to the north, and a long line of silvery white showed where the Nith flowed for many a mile. To the eastward the town of Annan was distinguished by its canopy of smoke hanging above it, and down the English coast were many a town and hamlet similarly crowned. The Solway Firth lay without a ruffle on its broad bosom, dotted here and there with large fleets of fishing boats. Towards the west the view was still more striking, the more picturesque points being wellknown to the most of those present. The coast of Colvend was of especial interest from having been the scene of the July field meeting of the Society, and several of the points were distinctly recognised. Nearly the whole of the Galloway coast, and all the higher mountains of the range known as the Southern Highlands were in the prospect; on the southern herizon the outlines of the Isle of Man could be made out, but the day was not bright enough for a clear view of it.

A descent was now made on the western side of Criffe', into the deep Glen formed by the Glen Burn. Several' deep ravines were passed on the way, apparently formed by the little streams which are now harmless enough, but in winter are raging torrents. In one place the stream sinks into the hillside, and reappears again a few hundred yards further down. In this way a subterancean passage is made which gradually widens, until after some heavy rainfall, or when the snow melts, the whole of the mass of rocks and soil is burst open altogether and a ravine formed. Following the course of the Glen Burn many rare specimens were picked up. Some of the rare bronate crystals were found in a mass of siehite. A curiosity in the literary way was also noticed, but was allowed to remain nailed up. However, the following is a literal copy of it: "Notice any person found, fishing on the glen burn will be prosecuted without a written permission from "cc. On arrival at Newabey the beautiful old ruins of Sweetheart Abbey were inspected, and some fine plants gathered within the old walls.

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Criffel Meeting Contz

Mr Gooden furnishes us with the following list of plants which he gathered during the day on ascending and descending Criffel: Narthecium ossifragum, Drosera anglica, Rhyncospora alba, Erica cinerea, Erica tetralix, Galium saxatile, Thymus serpyllum, Tormentil officinalis, Polygalla vulgaris, Pinguicula vulgaris, Juncus articulatus, Euphrasia officinalis, Hydrocotyle vulgaris, Pim-pinella saxifraga, Narduus stricta, Eleocharis pauciflora, Pedicularis palustris, Eriophorum vaginatum (at the top), Vaccinium myrtillis, Orchis maculata, Gentiana campestris, Myrica gale.
Collected at Sweetheart Abbey: Polygonum

aviculare, Ethusa cynapium, Jasione montana, Stachys Betonica, Stachys sylvatica, Teucrium scorodonia, Geranium molle, Conium maculatum,

Polygonum Bistorta.

The names of the beetles collected by Mr Lennon are as follows :- Notiophilus palustris, N. substriatus, N. rufipes, Carabus violaceus (the beautiful violet coloured tiger beetle), Leistus rufescens, Calathus piceus, Pterostichus cepidus, P. vitreus, Harpalus ruficornis, Patrolus assimilis, Trechus socalis, Hydroporus tristis, H. neglestus, H. umbrosus, Colymbetes bistriatus, Agalbus paludosus, A. nitidus, Philhydrus nigricans, Helophorus dorsalis, Quedius Cavigatus, Laptacinus batychurs, Malthodus marginatus, Corymbitus cupreus, and Donacia comari, besides a number of commoner species.

The party reached Dumfries again in the evening about 7 o'clock, a little fatigued but highly

pleased with their exploration of Criffel.

The next meeting takes place at Thornhill to examine Dr Grierson's celebrated Museum, when there will probably be a numerous attendance.

Meeting at Thornhill

12 Sept. 1877

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

FIELD MEETING.

On Saturday last the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society held its concluding field meeting for the summer session, when a large party visited Thornhill and several places of interest in that vicinity. Proceeding to the Museum, they were welcomed by Dr Grierson, and shewn over the grounds, where are gathered together a vast assemblage of rare and curious plants, many of which are quite unique, most accomplished botanists having failed to name them. "Mount Ararat" stands in the west portion of the garden, and a winding pathway leads to the regions of perpetual snow-an effect produced by layers of white quartz rocks. At various heights are growing the special groups of plants peculiar to a mountain region, and the whole gives a very good idea of Alpine botany. Various old querns, crosses, and urns, are placed here and there throughout the grounds, and have a very strange effect. An old elm stump was pointed out as having a curious history. For more than four hundred years the tree grew in the bed of the Marr burn; the stream had gradually undermined

Thornhill Meeting Con "

and hollowed out the stem till, after a night of storm and flood, the tree was uprooted and overturned. It was taken to a woodyard, where it was cut up, and the stump lay there for upwards of a year. It was ultimately taken to the Museum, and now from the base of the old stump a number of young branches have grown, and apparently mean to flourish. A number of colonies of the humble bee (Bombus muscorum) were of great interest; the nests are built of very small pieces of dried grass, and contain each a few cells of brood and honey. They are among the grass on the lawn, and were first noticed when it was cut, and have since been the subject of daily observation by the worthy doctor. Within the Museum itself a whole day might have been profitably spent, but a hurried glance was all that could be spared. The numerous slabs of stone, bearing the prints of animals and birds which existed perhaps millions of years ago were of a peculiar interest for the geological members of the party, while others had birds, animals, reptiles, and insects of our own times, each in their own department, to examine. A live specimen of the Death's Head Hauk Moth, captured at Newabbey a few days ago, was shown. On being irritated it emitted a shrill squeak-a sound which has caused great discussion among naturalists, and the nature of which is not yet satisfactorily ascertained. Dr Grierson has the subject under investigation, and no doubt we shall hear the result ere long. After a few hours had been spent examining the wonderful collection of subjects in every branch of natural history and art which are here contained, the party proceeded to Eccles House, the residence of Dr Sharpe, who very kindly showed the visitors his famous collection of beetles.

It numbers more than 100,000 specimens, of about 20,000 species or distinct kinds. They are contained in boxes of a pattern known as book-boxes, and are arranged on shelves round the sides of a large room, much in the same way as the books and shelves of a library. A small ivory label on each shows the name of the family or genus to which the insects belong, and reference is thus easily made to any particular species which may be under study. The collection of British Beetles is almost complete, very few of our native species remaining to be added. Compared with the foreign ones, with their brilliant armour of green, golden, purple, or crimson, they are an insignificant looking lot; however, what they want in size and colour is amply compensated for by their anatomical structure. Some of the small species, which were almost invisible, were pointed out by Dr Sharpe, as being more beautifully organized, so far as mere anatomy is concerned, than the highest mammalia, than even man himself. Many of the

exotic species are of great value, and in the beetle market would fetch almost as much as jewellery, to which in beauty, colouring, and delicacy of form and structure, they are no mean rivals. The strange uncouth forms, sharp horn-like appendages, for offence and defence, hooked and spiny limbs, are very wonderful, and quite justify the poet's remark, that here

"Nature wantons as in her prime, And plays at will her virgin fancies."

The party after looking over numerous boxes

and their wonderous contents, getting a pretty fair idea of the great assemblage of insects known as Coleoptera, went to see some of the grand old trees, which are so profusely scattered around the mansion house of Eccles. Prominent among them stands a noble beech, which might accommodate a regiment under its wide spreading branches. Its circumference round the top of the branches is 110 yards. Its trunk at 3 feet from the ground measures 211 feet. A circle of branches each of the size of ordinary trees spring from the main stem at from 4 to 7 feet from the ground, with an average girth of 7 feet. Owing to the number of branches which proceed from the trunk the number of cubic feet of timber must be enormous, but of this it is to be regretted no calculation was made. Another tree that at once commands notice is a walaut, now sadly riven by many a winter's storm, but enough of it remains in health and vigour to make it one of the largest of its kind. Dr Sharpe stated that he had seen very few to equal this one in size, even in Spain its native country.

On the right of the avenue a very fine Roman camp was visited. It is of the usual square form, and the ditch or fosse is in a very good state of preservation. It is worthy of remark that contrary to the case in regard to other Roman Camps in the district, no relics of its founders have been found near this one. A short walk further brought the party to Nith Bridge, where Dr Grierson told the story of its erection. It appears that about one hundred years ago the Nith was here crossed by a ferry boat, and it seems that it was a dangerous one from there being a cross erected a short distance off, which still remains protected by an iron railing. These crosses were in olden times always erected at places of difficulty and danger-mountain passes and fords. Well, at that time a party returning from Dalgarnock Fair, then one of the most important in the district, found the Nith in full flood but determined to cross at all hazards. The party numbered six, and just as they moved off a tall man in black clothes stepped into the boat which was shortly swamped and all its occupants drowned. The bodies were all recovered except that of the tall, black personage, who was universally supposed to have been the evil one. This sad accident roused the district to the necessity of getting a bridge built and a subscription being set on foot the present structure was soon erected. This story was of peculiar interest from one of Saturday's party being nephew to one of the party in the boat.

On again reaching the Museum, the party were entertained to tea, after which the Rev. Mr Dodds proposed a vote of thanks to Dr Grierson for the intellectual and material comforts he had provided them with during the day, a motion which was

very heartily accorded.

The party returned to Dumfries about seven o'clock in the evening very highly gratified with the pleasure and information they had acquired at this meeting, one of the most profitable the society has held during the past year.

the gale of 14" Oct.

Committee

leefing

to recommend that the Society beformed

nito Sections, each section tolookafter the interests of its own particular branch

of study under the direction or leadership of a competent manufer who would at

the end of the year give in a Report of

Committee Meeting

the work of his department. He following arrangement was recommended as a suitable ond .- Antiquities, Wilfower Anderson; Astronomy, Mr. Mc Fadgan; Botany, W. Gooden; Chemistry, Mr. Davidson; Entomology, Messer Lennon & Service; Geology, Or Silchrist; Microscopy, W. Rutherford; Ornithology, Mr. Mastings; Psychology, Mr. Hart; Toology, Or Grierson.

Ahhaias

Session 1877.78

The annual General Meeting commencing

I venty one Gembers were present and

or Elchrist presided.

The Minutes of the last writer meeting held on 4th apl. and of Committee Meeting

held on 21 Heft were read and approved of. He Rev. J. Fraser, Colvend and Mr. Brown

Geddes Place, Maxwelltown were elected Ordinary Members.

Mr. F. W. Grierson exhibited a heautiful

annual General Heeping

Minutes road {

New Members {

annual Meeting Serpent skin from India measuring almost a 9 feet in length. The species was not known. The Chairman exhibited a fewfine pieces of Rock Salt from the Cheshire Mines, also some Marl from Carlingwork Loch. In the unavoidable absence of Mr. lloodie, Treasurer's Report Treasurer, the Lean read that gentleman's annual Report, which showed that the funds (were in a satisfactory condition as there was a balance of \$1-8-9 in favour of the Society. The Chairman read a most interesting. account of the principal Teological Jeatures of the places where the Field Meetings of the past summer were held. The Secretary read his annual Report of the Society's work which was manmorely adopted on the motion of Mr. Beattle. Mr. Beattie gave notice that he would more at next meeting that not more than notice of Motion one paper be read at each meeting". The election of Office Beavers for another Jession was then proceeded with. Or eilehrist, President; W. Rutherford, Vice President; for 1877.78 [and Mr. Service, Secretary; were unanimously

Office Bearers (réclected, m. moodie resigned the office of for 1877.78 à treasurer Mr D.B. Hart being appointed mhis place. The following were elected members of Committee - Messrs. Anderson, Gibson, Macfadzean, Frierrow, Scott,

Adamson, Maxwell and Beattie.

The recommendations of the Committee Committees agreed to at their meeting on 21 Sept. Were recommendations then considered. It was agreed that the proposed printing of a portion of the Society. Proceedings and Fransactions for the use of members and for exchange with kindred

meantime. It was agreed that the bociety should be formed into beetins each to be under the charge of competent members who would promote the interests of their particular branch of thedy as for as possible and at the end of the

Societies should not be carried out in the

of then department, The following arrangement was agreed to: - Autigute, mollover anderson; astronomy, we muchastern;

Session que ni a Report of the work

Botany, Me Lorden ythe Grierson; Chemistry,

annual Meeting } Mi Wavidson; Entomology Messrs. Lennon und Gernee; 5/10/77 Geology, Or Gilchrist; Microscopy, M. Rutherford; Bruthology, M. Hastings, Psychology, W. Hart. and zoology, Or grierson. The Meeting then adjourned. Mulmue November 2 2 1847 Jown Hall Second leting The second meeting of the Session was held here at 8 00 P.M. 7/11/77 Iwenty sise mombers were present and &. Elchrist occupied the Chair. Messro. Joseph Scoth High It and James Lew Members Nouston Gren Grean St, were elected Ordinary Members. The Chaviman exclubited some pieces of of Calcareous Spar from Cuban Cares clay nodules, a Californian broken, and a besutiful Exclibits Ohmese siek Reel; Mr. Glover autorson a plan of the Sedelia of functuden Abbey; his Service a specimin of Sphinic Convolvuli, and a specimen of aromia mosehata caught at moniaire on

30 Teft. last being the first recorded Scotlish specimen: "W. Hogy also sent a specimen Exchibits of a Molluse that he had found among Barcelona nuts on the preceding day. The species was unknown to those present. Millutherford read apaper on the delephone, ging a lucid description, The Telephone with the aid of deagrams of the construction principles and moder working of this remarkable ustrument. Mr. Service read a paper on the appearance of Colean Educa in the South of Scotland during 1877" illustrates by aseries of 19" execumens captured in the district . The Insect had been absent for 16 years past in the locality The Mesting then adjourned Sowie Kall, Dumfries 7 h Dec. 18.77 The third meeting of the Tession was Third Meeting heldhere at 8 00 PM. Breichrich 7/12/77 presided, and there were 37 members

present. The minutes of meeting held on 2 w tow. minutes of last leeting were read and approved of. The Chairman exhibited anumber of Eschibits kare and valuable & Brystals, andsome Isle of Wight Pebbles. Mr. W. G. Gibson a section 1 of the trunk of a tree fern (peobably Dicksonia antarchica) which had been cast on the Shore near Eleveaple. The trunk neasured 6 feet in length and nearly I foot in diameter M. J. W. Greerson aseries of Fossils from the Lumestone and a coin of Tholenny 1st of Egypt Mi Lennon one of the boxes distributed last Summer for the use of their official by the German Government, containing models of the Ova, Larval, Pupae and imagnes of the. Colorado Votato Beetle (Dorphora decembra) aspecimen of the insect itself was also shown. It was stated that the molliese sent Name of Shell to the previous meeting by the Hogg had been ascertained from enguing at the British Museum to be the Helix macularia of Mille - anatice of the Canary Slands, Spain and the north of africa,

Messys. Paterson, Clotheer, Autton Charles House Suclave, Chemist; Jas Eikson, Back of Scotland, Will tentlembers morr Chamist were duly elected Ordinary Ordinary Members. M. Hastie, Subcurator Museum of the Society of Scottish autegrances, Edinburgh and fow llembers on f. W. Lancaster, Burningham were elected Corresponding Corresponding Members. Mishaw read apaper on Lessous from the English hances of animals and Hands' Lessons from the showing how most of the names of our English tames of domestie animals had been preserved animalsand almost unchanged in many languages Plants since they had their origin with the aryan people who at aremote period whatited the highlands of Western all . The name of a great number of Plants and annuals were also explained and their history quen Mr. Hover Auderson read some takes on Luchden abben with special reference Soit tokes on briefuden present condition". After a glance at the abbey's history, descriptions neveguen of its more prominent Weekitecheral features allusion living also made to the passage which John on Linder is said by pradition to have communicated with the Castle of Dumpries, In concluding In Anderson condemned in strong terms the present suscemly state of the recens and wiged the desirability of having something done at once to tarrest the progress of destruction. a long and animated discussion followed but eventually on the motion of Mr. fas. Thomson a Committee was appointmentof appointed to ascertain the feelings of the Committee to wige proprietor Capt. Mascwell in the matter and Capet. Mascwell to report to nest neeting. The following Entlemen preserve Lineluden to form the Committee - Drylchrish Mesers. Starke, McDonall, Glover Auderson, Service Gibson Thomson and Kutherford. The meeting then adjourned at a late A. While Town Hall, Dunfres 4th fan. 1878 The Fourth Meeting of the present session Fourth Making 4/1/78 washeld here at 8. oe when 26 members were present, Or Gilchrist presiding. The minutes glast meeting were read and approved of.

Nembers 2

Means . Leonge Robb, English Master of the academy; John Calland, Stigh It; Andrew Donald Sedde Hannah field; James Matthewson, Dalheattie; Malcolm Mch. Harper, Cartle Douglas, and Charles Black, Airligated. Land were douby proposed and duly elected Ordinary Members.

Eschibits

The following articles were exhibited. The Picto-I graph a new instrument for copying pectures from Mr. W. G. Sibson; aspecimen of the short Jailed Held Vole and the Water Hail (Rallus acquations) from Dr Tristes, 24 specimens of Plants in bloom, to show the mildres of the winks, from Mr. Service - the following are their names Primeose, Common Jellow, Migmonette, Garrya elliptica, Unosotio arvensis, arbutus unedo, Polganthus, Nepapila, Berberio Darwini, Mahonia agrifolium Lamuim maculatum, h. ampleaceaule, Erysimin Sp. Wallflower, alsine media, Senecio velgaris Bellis perennis, Alopecurus pratersis, Laurustinas Charlock, dilac Primrose, Cowelip, Viola trecolor onacima, Viola odoraka and Clubrichia. purpurea. False Cets lye sems from India by or Gilchrist, a pair of Telephones from in Authorford. The following report was submitted.

from the Committee appointed at last meeting. Your Committee have to report that they held a meeting this evening at 7.30 - Present or Elehrish Mesers. Starke, Rutherford, Service, anderson and Thomson. Or Eilebrich stated that the following letter had been sent to bapt Maxwell and that we answer had been yet received. Capt. Mascuell, Sir at the last oncetning of the antiquarian society of of. a paper narread by one of its members on the History and architecture of Lucludew Abbey. Is present misatisfactory condition was referred to and a general wish was ese pressed that some eleps 'should be taken to protect it from further decay and ? preserve it as an interesting and mobileties monument of the past. For that purpose a Committee was chosen to arguine and report and as a first step the Chairman and Seey were appointed to communicate with yourself as Proprietor We beg to ask you therefore whether you approve of the object in view and if so whether you have any suggestions to make asto how it should be effected. We are Sir your very bruly (signed) & Filchrist Chairman R. Service, Leay

Committees Report ?" As there has been no refly to that letter your "Committee propose to send another letter to Capt Macuell" as it is possible the former letter may have been mislaid

On the motion of Mr. In Ellwraith seconded by

mr. Rart the report was adopted.

Whatherford seconded by m. f. Glover Audorson moved that m. McDonall and Mr. Sharke be requested to wait on bapt Maxwell, a course which would be more likely to lead to a good result. This motion was also agreed to.

a letter from Dor. Thomson, Satelawbridge was read stating that he would be unable to be present, but sending the paper he had.

intimated.

Report adopted

Cetter from

m. Thomson

Mr. D. B. Nant then food Mr. Thomson's paper on a new Glacial Deposit near Thornhell"
New Glacial Deposit occurs in Dy. chine and if Mr. Thomson's views are correct a most

if Mr. Thomson's views are correct a most important discovery has been made. The deposit in question was laid base while the cutting of a new branch Railway between Thomshile and Gatelaubridge was being proceeded with, and lies under 15 feet of the ordinary Boulder Clay

and so hard was it that dynamite had to be used in working through it. Mr. Lerince read apaper giving an account of a Hollouse Pest" which had appeared in the district a few years ago and had since spread with great rapidity. The uisect the nearly uruged alegrodes " was also chown. Drylohrist then gave an address on Clouds relustrated by a number of beautiful diagrams. Cloud nomenclature, formation and the various cloud phenomena, such as down misto te nere the described and reference being made to the various deagrams the lecture was a very instructive one. The meeting then adjourned Aphlinie Town Hall Feb 1 at 1878 the fifth meeting of this cession was held here at 8 00 pell. Twenty seven members were present, or Elchrist occupying the Chair Fifth neeting Session 1877-78

Rev. W. Graham Maxwell town, M. Teo. Umstrong, Corberry Cottage; and Mr. fas Hogg Saughtree were duly elected Ordinary Ventos The Chairman excludited a number of Lare mineralo, including Returninous Shales from Brazil, Carbonate of Vickel, Carbonated Cobalt and others, and come specimens of Elibet Lichens from the torthop Scotland. Wif. G. anderson excludited a number of measured drawings of the windows of Lincluden abbey as they appeared when perfect. Mr of W. Greerson excludited a preserved head of an albahoss and an Emus Egg. M. Tervice regresched other brought under the notice of the society the moreon appearance of large numbers of Bullfurkes in the district Bullfuches } during the last two years which were proving very destructive to the fruit trees. Dr Sharp remarked that the same thing had happened at Eccles, these hird had been very scarce for many years but had now met with commonly. W. Elson Wake that amuchen of Bullfriches nests had been seen in the grounds of the C. R. J.

in the summer of 1877 for the first time. a letter was read from bor Thomson, fake law bridge with reference to the paper read for Mr. for Thomson's him at Cast meeting. The glacial origin of the deposit in question was reaffirmed and letter further proofs and arguments advanced in support of that statement. The Deputation appointed to meet with Cafet. Maseuell of Terregles, to urge the desirability of having something done to Lincluden abbey from its present state of run and decay presented the following Report. troqueer Holm 1 t Feb. 1878 the Deputation appointed by the Society, consisting of mr., mc Donall myself Report from had an interview with Capt. Mascwell of Turegles Deputation to on the 16th retimo regarding the present condition Capt. Maxwell of kindleden abben. Capt. Maxwell soplained in the first instance that he had delayed answering the letter addressed to him by the Society outto subject because he found that to do all he considered vecessary for the protection of the prison would in addition to escarations for the purpose of . opening up the old foundations of the edifice

Report from (subail agreat amount of money and he ded Deputation to not fell certain from the terms of the letter how Capt Manuell fare the Society expected him to proceed in their expenditure. Lesepressed my opinion that

the more rergent remedy required was one to present further desecration and destruction of the ruins by daily wanton mischief on the part of roughs and also means to present Cattle from entering the chancel. To meet these exiles Esuggested that agateshould be placed at the entrance of the chancel and anotice put up requesting visitors to report to him as Propuetor all such wantomisischeef as night come under their observation. Capt. Mixuellmentroned that he has at present 20 cottage on the grounds where the key of a locked gate might be kept but I stated that in my opinion agake although not locked but mifely factened with notice to visitors to close it after them would go a great may to remedy! the evels in question and Lam happy to inform the Society that Capt. Mascivell agreed to carry out these suggestions. It Il Dowald made some valuable remarks with a view to have

Report from extended repairs and Capt Maxwell Deputation to assured the deputation he buly wished it Capt, Mascwell was in his power atonce to do all that was necessary. The Deputation thanked Capt. Masewell for his courtesy in meeting it and Sotated that the Society would Yell sure be gratified at this and especially with the ready manner in which . he had adopted its suggestions. (Signed) J. Gebrow Marke The touchy received the report with much pleasure and satisfaction and on the motion of m. Rutherford the foregoing has ordered to be engroused in the minutes M. J. Glover Anderson secondedby M. fas. Thomson proposed that the thank of the morning be awarded to Messer. Mc Dowall and Stacke for their troubly in the matter and that the Vok of thanks to Lincluden Committee be continued till the Deputation end of the Session - Unanimouslyagreed to. Mr. James Thomson reconded by Dr Sharp proposed that a section a farour from tdillow in favour the tociety in favour of Sir John hubbock! of his hubbocks & ancient Monuments Protection Bill be ancient M. Bill

Seletion in Sprepared and forwarded to Miloel U.P. favourty bit for presentation to the House of Commons. hubbooks Bill Ofter a short discussion this was manimously agreed to. We ferrior being mable to attend the meeting, M. berice read that gentlemans paper on the rarer Coleophera of the Wistrich" in which The Karer Coles pos were enumerated to species of Beetles of the district & of local or specific rarety and the localities and other particulars of capture. Dr Sharf made some remarks ou the Ecographical Distribution of annuals with special reference to Mhennou's paper. Or Sharp on and which were so much appreciated Geographical that Or Sharf nas requested to continue Distributioner the subject on a future occasion. Unimal The elleting then adjourned. Mulerilo Jour Hall, Sumfries March 1st 1878 The 6th meeting of the Session was heldhere at 8 o'c DM. Thirty five 6 meeting

Members nere present. Or Elebrick 6 Meeding presiding. The minutes of last meeting were read and approved. Messis. Sewart and Wall Godon, Martine new Members J. H. Maxwell, Castle Douglas; and William Copland, tithedale mills nere duly elected Ordinary Members. W. Starforth architect, Eduburgh was elected a Corresponding Clamber. W. Lennon exhibited a curious fewd Exclibits Case made of agrican lahogany and said to be nearly 300 years old. W. adamson exclubited a enall Stone Celt found in James It a few weeks emcerchen making excavations for new building M. Jackson excludited two Cargo Aungarian Silver Comis of the 16" Century. Mr. J. G. anderson showed the first Vol. of the Dumpries Weekly Magazine of date, 1773 - Junterest asbeing the first Rewspaper published in Dringries - W. anderson pouled out the anotice of the death of a Centenarian . Elizabeth famisson who died at CoShogle

near Drumlaning on 10th May 1773 aged 110 years

What andhow to send from

Or Guierson delivered along and interesting Ecture on "what and how to send from Distant Lando". He first stated that traducalisto might be divided mito from distinct classes - Field Distant Lands" and Cabinet Saturalisto, and that he would mainly direct attention to what might be done by the former in foreign countries. The best methods of collecting, preserving, packing and formarding specimens of Minerals, Fossils, Clants Leed animals Bones, Bird Shuis andlegs, Reptiles Frshes, Molluscal and Insects, were then detailed. It was also recommended to send home when procurable specimens of elustrative of the manners and Customo of the Natures such as Meapons, Dress, Ornaments, Objects Allowly and superstition, Untiquarian remains

were to be noted, sepulcheal Caus and Jumuli being mentioned as specially worthy of exploration. Some remarks

were also made on the various modes of arrangements of national Kistory Specimos

in Museums, and in concluding or.

Dr Guerson Guerson urged all who might it in on Meal and their power to send such to the Thornhell how to send or other hocal bouseums in preference to from distant sending them so any of the large tational fands" museums where they already had enough and moreover could bry what they needed. The leadure was illustrated by a number of specimens from various parts of the World. of which one of the edible nests of a species of Snallow from Sumatra, a huniming bird and Nest from Demerara, and a curious Wasp's Nest (Polistes morio Reaumin) also from Wemerara were the most remarkable. The pleasant instructive and humberous lecture was listened to with great nuterest and at it close on the notion of for D. D. Hard avoke Thanks was enthusiastically rendered to orgrierson. The needing then separated at a catchown. It Milling