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Nænia Cornubiæ.

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A DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SEPULCHRES AND FUNEREAL
CUSTOMS OF THE EARLY INHABITANTS OF
THE COUNTY OF CORNWALL.

"Sunt • • quorum non est recordatio, qui perierunt
quasi non exstitissent, et fuerunt quasi non fuissent, liberique
ipsorum post ipsos."

Eccles., cap. LI.

TRURO:
PRINTED BY J. R. NETHERTON,
LEMON STREET.

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F.S.A.



LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER.

TRURO: J. R. NETHERTON.

1872.

TO
JOHN JOPE ROGERS, Esq.,
OF PENROSE, IN THE COUNTY OF CORNWALL,
PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF CORNWALL
DURING THE YEARS 1868 AND 1869,
THE AUTHOR DEDICATES THIS LITTLE WORK;
AN INADEQUATE, THOUGH A GRATEFUL, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE
KIND INTEREST HE HAS ALWAYS TAKEN
IN THE PURSUITS OF A YOUNG ANTIQUARY.



Introductory Preface.



It is not without great deference that the Author presents his readers with the following notices of the Primitive Sepulchral Monuments of his native county.

Living in the midst of these remains, and possessing, through the kind courtesy of the landed proprietors, every facility for extending his researches to those tumuli previously unexplored, he has amused himself by collecting together the materials from which these pages are now compiled. But when comparing the small amount of inductive evi-

dence he has thus far been able to obtain, with the exhaustive compendium of facts brought by Mr. Bateman from the barrows of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, or with the extensive researches of Sir R. C. Hoare, and others who have devoted themselves to the task of solving the mystery of the burial mounds, each in his own district, he cannot but feel that his work, when he has done all, must be, at best, but brief and deficient. If, however, it will aid in the work of classifying the entire series of sepulchral remains, scattered throughout the British Isles, the first object will at least be gained; and, much more will this be the case, should the perusal of it lead others to follow in the track, and preserve from oblivion those relics of a "speechless past," which are daily falling a prey to the pickaxe or the plough.

In the minute and somewhat lengthy details which accompany some of the descriptions, the ordinary reader will find a considerable trial of his patience. But the Critic and the Antiquary will know how to pardon this fault, when they reflect that it is only by the accumulation and juxtaposition of such apparently worthless minutiae, that any one single *fact* can possibly be obtained, illustrative of

the rude funereal customs practised in what may fairly be called the darkest age.

Many causes have been at work in Cornwall to make the task of gaining any detailed accounts of barrows previously searched one of peculiar difficulty; and the student must rely chiefly on such observations as he can himself personally make in the case of the few that still seem untouched. Until the last few years, very few persons, even of the better class, dreamed of preserving their discoveries at all: much less did they deem them worthy of a written account. Thus it has happened that out of the many thousand barrows strewn over the wilder portions of the Duchy, more than one half have been opened, as a mere matter of curiosity, by persons leaving no record whatever of the result. In other cases, where urns have actually been preserved and deposited in one of the two local Museums, the descriptions accompanying them are totally insufficient, and in a few instances are even mislaid and lost. Added to all this, the recent reclamation of waste-lands, particularly in the Western district, and the ever-fluctuating mineral interests, which literally turn the surface of the country inside out for miles together, have combined to obliterate those traces of