

TUESDAY, APRIL 19TH, 1864.

DR. JAMES HUNT, PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

THE minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The number of Fellows elected since the last meeting was then read as follows:—

J. R. Brown, Esq.; Rev. W. H. Kemm; C. E. Mackintosh, Esq.; W. Jennings, Esq.; A. Robertson, Esq.; J. Mosheimer, Esq.; W. Gooch, Esq.; A. Hawkins, Esq.; W. Hardman, Esq.; J. Rae, Esq.; W. S. Jeffery, Esq.; E. F. Firby, Esq.; A. H. Hunt, Esq.; Major-General Le Grand Jacob; Rev. Dunbar J. Heath; A. Barton, Esq.; H. J. Adams, Esq.; Dadabhai Naoroji; E. J. Routh, Esq.; Prof. F. Hudson; Major W. E. Hay; K. R. H. Mackenzie, Esq.; J. Hillier, Esq.; H. Hudson, Esq.; H. F. Hall, Esq.; R. Haughton, Esq.; T. Harlin, Esq.; S. Messenger, Esq.; W. R. H. Kinlay, Esq.; W. Ewart, Esq.

The PRESIDENT observed that the foregoing list of thirty Fellows elected since the last meeting was the largest number elected within any similar period since the formation of the Society, and he hoped it was an earnest of more to come.

The following papers were then read:—

*On Skulls from Annabom, in the West African Seas.* By CAPT. R. F. BURTON, Her Majesty's Consul at Fernando Po, Vice-President of the Anthropological Society of London, and C. CARTER BLAKE, F.G.S., Hon. Sec. A.S.L.

“ Fernando Po, Oct. 23, 1863.

“ Dear Sir,—I have the honour to send by this mail two calvaria—a faith offering to the Anthropological Society. They are from Annabom, the island in the West African Seas colonised by Portugal in 1471-1500. The whites afterwards mixed with the slaves of a ship-wrecked English craft, hence the present Mulattoes. They are doubtless at times recruited by a few pure Africans, yet they preserve the “ Métis” appearance, manner, and inclinations. They are Christians, and the dead are buried under the stamped earth of the largest church—a barn of plant and thatch. When the rude vaults are full, and room for another corpse is required, the oldest occupant's bones are rooted up, and thrown into the nearest patch of bush; hence the dilapidated appearance of the crania; yet they were the best that could be procured. I am trying hard to secure for you a Bube's head, but it is a difficult matter. With best wishes to the Society and to yourself, believe me,

“ Dear sir, yours very truly,

“ RICHARD F. BURTON.

“ The Secretary of the Anthropological Society.”

The two skulls have been received, and are certainly very interesting.

No. 1. The larger one, which I take to have been a male, exhibits all the more striking negro characters in its physiognomy. The narrow forehead, dolichocephalic skull, square orbits, and especially the markedly prognathic maxilla, are as well developed as in any ordinary negro from the Gold Coast. The spread of the temporal muscle, and the prominence of the supraoccipital bone, likewise accord with the conventional definitions assigned to the negro skull. The friable condition of the bones has precluded my bisecting the skull vertically, so as to arrive at a precise estimation of the angle of the foramen magnum. The sutures are obliterated to a great extent; and sufficient of the nasal bone remains to show it was flattened. The teeth in place are solid, and in good condition; the right upper canine has been conical in form, and its posterior surface, as well as part of that of the left premolar, has been worn away by the abrasion of the tooth immediately behind it in the series. The peculiar character which differentiates this skull from those of the majority of negroes with which I am acquainted, is the great breadth of the palate, which is deeply excavated, and to which the oblique implantation of the incisors gives a very remarkable appearance.

No. 2. The smaller size and less development of the muscular processes, may lead us to infer that this specimen belonged to a female, but to an individual of greater age, as indicated by the condition of the sutures. All the characters observable in the large skull accord with those in this specimen, with the exception of the nasal bones, which are here more elevated.

From an examination of the above skulls, according to my interpretation, there is no character which would lead us to consider that they belonged to any other race than the negro, viewed under his most favourable conditions, so far as regards food and freedom from disease. I can detect nothing approaching the "European" type; nothing superior to that of many well-fed negroes which I have seen from Ashanti.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

The thanks of the meeting having been voted to the authors of the paper,

The PRESIDENT said that though the communication from Captain Burton was short, it was interesting; and the two skulls that accompanied it would form a valuable addition to the Society's museum. There could be no doubt they were very interesting specimens; and he hoped they should be favoured with more of the same kind, so as to be better enabled to appreciate their character.

Dr. THURNAM read a paper on "The Two Principal Forms of Crania amongst the Early Britons," which will appear in the *Memoirs* of the Society.

Several skulls, taken from the barrows which Dr. Thurnam had opened, were placed on the table to illustrate the different characters of the skulls mentioned in the paper; and there were also exhibited a number of photographs of the various skulls discovered, intended for illustrations of the forthcoming part of "Crania Britannica." Dr.