

the whole face of England into bare undulating folds of naked rock. The prehistoric monuments which we now find on the surface of the land, like this Welsh cromlech or the numerous barrows of our English downs, belong to a much later race, as one can see at once from the very fact that they are so often built up of glacial boulders. Indeed, the earlier preglacial men were mere hunting savages of the rudest type, wholly incapable of co-operation for works such as these; so that even if the ice had not swept away every trace of them, as it has now swept over the whole face of Greenland, we should still have few monuments of such early date save only the angular hatchets of the drift and the shapelier bone harpoons of the whale hunting cave-men.

Originally this cromlech must have been covered with a barrow. It formed, indeed, the central chamber of a neolithic tomb; and over it the earth was once heaped up in a great and conspicuous pile. In England, as a rule, the barrows still survive, especially in all the southeastern plain and the lesser hills or downs. But in Wales and Cornwall, and in the more mountainous regions generally, where soil is scanty and denuding agents act more rapidly, the barrows have oftener been washed away by rain or torrents or slowly crumbled down by sun and wind. That, no doubt, is partly the reason why people generally believe that "Druidical remains," as they choose to call them, are specially frequent in these Keltic regions. It seems natural enough to suppose that ancient British monuments should be carefully preserved in such outlying spots as these where the Ancient Britons still survive in almost unmixed purity. But, as a matter of fact, the cromlechs are really less preserved here than elsewhere, because their barrows have mostly been washed away, and the body within has long since disappeared. The best preserved cromlechs are, of course, those which you cannot see at all, because they are

still covered with their inclosing mound of earth and still contain the bones and relics of the dead man within them. It is the desecrated tomb that we call a Druidical monument; the undescended we only describe as a prehistoric barrow.

There can be very little doubt that this cromlech, like all others, was once upon a time the tomb of an early chieftain. From the general character of its workmanship, and the very slight extent to which the stones have been dressed, I feel pretty confident that it must belong rather to the neolithic than to the bronze age. Hither, some day five thousand years since—perhaps ten thousand for all that science can say—a crowd of brown-skinned, short-statured tribesmen bore up the dead body of their chief from the village in the clearing on the little stream below. Here with wooden levers and round logs for rollers they toilfully brought together by sheer force of straining sinews these four great ice-worn boulders which lay scattered upon the slope around. On the crest of Mynydd Mawr they hewed them into rough symmetry, and built them into a rude imitation of the royal hut, first placing the three uprights in position, and then prising up the flat roofing-stone with their log rollers over an inclined plane of loose earth. In the hut thus formed they placed the dead body of their chief, with his weapons, his ornaments, and his household goods, that his ghost might eat, drink, and fight in the world of ghosts as it had done in the valley below. Then they piled up the great mound of earth above it to keep the body safe from beasts or birds; and around the fresh heap they performed I know not what barbaric orgies of dancing and sacrifice and human sacrifices. Perhaps the wives and slaves of the dead man were slain and buried with him, to attend him in the other world; perhaps the blood of human victims was poured over the new-made grave as an offering to the thirsty ghost. Sitting in this peaceful industrial nineteenth century on