

ON TWO INSCRIBED STONES OF THE ROMAN PERIOD FOUND IN GREAT BRITAIN.

BY THE REV. JOHN MCCAUL, LL.D., PRESIDENT OF UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE, TORONTO.

IN the month of June of the year 1872, some labourers who were working at Sea Mills, on the Avon, found a stone lying with its face downwards on the surface of the rock. Mistaking it for a part of the rock they broke it, but fortunately so that all the four pieces can be easily adjusted. For my knowledge of it I am indebted to the Rev. H. M. Scarth, who kindly sent me an accurate drawing that he had himself made of the object soon after it was found. This is reproduced in our engraving, Fig. 1. My learned correspondent in his letter describes it thus:—

“The human head cut on it has earrings attached to the ears, and rays appear to come from the head. Above the head is a curved line, at each extremity of which is, on the right hand a cock, on the left a dog. Above it is a cross. Below the bust is the word *SPES*, with a leaf-stop on each side; and below the letters *c* (or *o*) *SENTI*. There the stone is broken, or rather, as seems to me, cut.”

The characteristics of this stone sufficiently prove that it was monumental, in memory of a female named *Spes*. That it was monumental is indicated by the human head cut on it (the curve probably intended to denote the top of a niche in which a figure or bust was sometimes placed), the representation of animals, and by the inscription. In these particulars it resembles many sepulchral stones; the only thing not common is the angular form of the upper part, but of this there are several examples. That it was a memorial of a female named *Spes* is also, I think, certain. It may be assumed from the common practice in ancient Roman monuments that the human head was intended as a likeness of the person in whose memory the grave-stone was set up. The ear-rings and the absence of a beard sufficiently show that the person was a female, and this inference is warranted by the name *Spes* in the inscription.* The rays (for

* The radiated head is as old as the time of Augustus. In the coins struck after his death, bearing the legend *Divus Augustus*, rays are represented as