

closer indication of its place is necessary for the identification of the suspicious object: it is the same with the small stars near the positions of Kepler's and Anthelm's stars. Variability has been remarked in small stars which occupy places very close to the observed positions of Tycho's and Anthelm's stars, and probably also in the case of Kepler's, and it is very desirable that a strict scrutiny of these spots should be maintained. As happens in so many popular treatises, there is a confusion in Mr. Webb's statement with regard to Kirch's variable star χ Cygni (Bayer): the Greek letter is attached at p. 288 to the double star No. 2580 of Struve, and it is added, "About 4^m f, 50's is 17, or χ Bayer, discovered by Kirch; 1686, to be var., sometimes up to 5m." &c. It is, however, Flamsteed's 17 Cygni which corresponds to Struve's double-star, while the variable star is χ Cygni of Bayer. Flamsteed, it is true, attached the letter χ to his 17 Cygni, though, as was pointed out by Argelander many years since, through a mistake: he saw no other sufficiently bright star near the place to correspond to Bayer's, but the explanation of this circumstance is found in the fact that at the dates of Flamsteed's observations "the variable star was down," to borrow an expression with which observers of these objects will be familiar, so Flamsteed seized upon the nearest naked-eye star for Bayer's χ . Mr. Webb dwells particularly upon the colours of the double-stars, one of their most interesting characteristics, and has brought together a large number of attractive notes upon the objects which he includes in his survey of the northern heavens. That his volume will maintain its popularity amongst amateur astronomers is not to be doubted, and we must add that it well deserves to do so.

CARNAC

Excavations at Carnac. By James Miln. (Edinburgh: Douglas, 1881.)

MR. MILN, to whom we are already indebted for a work on Roman remains found near Carnac (Britanny), has continued his researches in this interesting locality, and has given us a second work, consisting of a record of archaeological researches in the alignments or stone avenues of Kermario.

The alignments of Kermario consist of ten rows of undressed stones, which extend for about two miles in an easterly direction, after which begin the avenues of Kerscant. The stones, which consist of a close-grained granite, are some of them as much as twenty feet high, though the majority are much smaller. At the base of many of them Mr. Miln found ashes, charcoal, and fragments of pottery of a character which led him to the conclusion that these mysterious and almost unique avenues of stones were erected as sepulchral monuments. Although the whole monument is of such an extensive character, Mr. Miln is of opinion that it had not been completed. He draws this inference from the fact that in the neighbourhood he found several heaps of long stones, which he supposes had been brought there in order to be erected.

Among the stone avenues run certain ancient earthworks, and at the head of them are, as Mr. Miln found, the remains of ancient buildings. It was in these earthworks,

at the base of the menhirs (which however he was very careful not to overturn), and among the ruins of these buildings that Mr. Miln's excavations were carried on.

The principal interest of the objects discovered in his researches, is the evidence they afford as to the period at which these menhirs were erected, and Mr. Miln comes to the conclusion from the result of his investigations that between Kermario and Kerloquet we have a long stretch of defensive works erected by the Celts at a period anterior to the Roman invasion; that the Romans on their arrival had occupied some of these, and in the more advantageous positions had constructed other works of greater solidity. On the other hand there seems some evidence that the erection of standing stones or menhirs did not altogether cease at this period, for under some of them, and in positions which would seem to show clearly that they were placed there at the time the menhirs were erected, fragments of Roman tiles and pottery have been discovered. These menhirs, however, formed no part of the "alignments."

It is interesting that, as Dr. Closmadeuc had already pointed out, we have evidence that there has been a change in the level of the land since the erection of these monuments. Mr. Miln considers that nearly the whole, if not the whole, of the bay of Quiberon must then have been dry land. On the Quiberon side of the bay the rows of menhirs extend under water, and on the Carnac side too, Gallo-Roman potters' furnaces have been found below high-water mark.

We much regret to add that the author died the very day after he had finished the proof sheets of this work. The present writer had the pleasure of examining Mr. Miln's excavations with him in the autumn of 1877, and may be permitted to add his personal expression of regret at the loss which archæological science has experienced in his death.

OUR BOOK SHELF

The Mind of Mencius. By the Rev. E. Faber. Translated by the Rev. A. B. Hutchinson. (Trübner's Oriental Series. 1881.)

MR. FABER is already well known in the field of Chinese studies by his digest of the doctrines of Confucius. In the present volume he gives us a systematic digest of those of Mencius, the greatest and most popular of the disciples of Confucius. These two philosophers form the bulwarks of Chinese conservatism, against the doctrines of socialism and communism, which first thrust themselves into notice after the death of Confucius. These men, as the translator remarks, made no appeal to external credentials; they rather based the truth of their mission on the conformity of their doctrines with the essentials of the human mind, as shown by observation. To them the "state" is everything—it is "the sum of all human endeavours, natural and civilised, working together as a united organisation." For about 3000 years the political fabric of China, based on the principles of which Confucius and his disciples were the exponents rather than originators, has held together in spite of shocks before which any other system known in history would have disappeared, and at the present day seems as vital and vigorous as at any portion of its existence. To explain by the light of the best commentators what these principles, as enunciated by Mencius were, is the object of Mr. Faber. This philosopher was a contemporary of Plato and Aristotle, but his doctrines are still living and active principles in Chinese ethics and politics. The