

[*From the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries, March 13, 1890.*]

H. RIDER HAGGARD, Esq., through the President, exhibited a remarkable² glass bottle of the Roman period, from Cyprus, on which the President read the following remarks :

“On behalf of Mr. H. Rider Haggard I exhibit to the Society a remarkable glass bottle, which he acquired from the finder when he was travelling in Cyprus about three years ago. In outward form it resembles many of the bottles of the Roman period, having a nearly spherical body with a slightly expanding neck, somewhat constricted where it joins the body. The neck is about $1\frac{5}{8}$ inch long and 1 inch in diameter at the mouth ; the body is 3 inches in diameter, and the total height of the bottle is $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches. On the body of the bottle, about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the base of the neck, are six small triangular projections, apparently made by lifting up a small part of the glass while still soft with heat by means of a pointed instrument.

So much for the outward form.

The most remarkable feature in the bottle is that within the spherical body there are five delicate threads of glass attached at their upper ends close to the constriction of the neck, and at their lower ends to the lower part of the body of the bottle at about an inch above the base. As the glass is thin and clear these threads can be seen inside the bottle, diverging radially from around the neck and slanting downwards at an angle of about 60 degrees. At the spots whence the threads around the neck proceed there are slight depressions outside. There are also depressions where the threads join the body of the bottle below, but these are deep conical holes extending into the threads in one case as much as half an inch.

The existence of these conical cavities seems to afford a clue as to the manner in which this remarkable example of ancient skill was manufactured.

It appears to me that in the first instance a bottle was blown of much the same general form as it was to be when enlarged,



GLASS BOTTLE OF THE ROMAN PERIOD, WITH INTERNAL THREADS. FROM CYPRUS. (Full size.)

but smaller and possibly flatter and of thicker glass; that while still hot a fine but blunt tool, like a knitting pin, was pushed into the body of the metal in a slanting direction, which carried forward with it enough glass to form a small tube, the end of which was by pressure made to adhere to the upper part of the spherical body close to the neck.

The small bottle would then have five tubes in it arranged

like the threads in the enlarged bottle, but shorter and larger in diameter. It would then be heated again and the blowing resumed until the sphere assumed its present dimensions, and while this was going on the tension in being stretched and the pressure in blowing would reduce the diameter of the tubes and partly convert them into mere threads, the conical depressions at the outer ends being all that was left to testify as to their original character.

The slight depressions in the outside of the bottle around the neck are witnesses of the strain exerted by the tubes while being stretched.

The flattening of a part of the sphere so as to form a base on which the bottle could stand would be a final process, as would be also the finishing off of the neck.

I am not aware of any other example of such a bottle being in existence. I think that it may be safely referred to Roman times."

