

Danish and Swedish antiquaries and naturalists, MM. Nilsson, Steenstrup, Forchhammer, Thomsen, Worsäae and others, have succeeded in establishing a chronological succession of periods, which they have called the ages of stone, of bronze, and of iron, named from the materials which have each in their turn served for the fabrication of implements.

The age of stone in Denmark coincided with the period of the first vegetation, or that of the Scotch fir, and in part at least with the second vegetation, or that of the oak. But a considerable portion of the oak epoch coincided with 'the age of bronze,' for swords and shields of that metal, now in the Museum of Copenhagen, have been taken out of peat in which oaks abound. The age of iron corresponded more nearly with that of the beech tree.\*

M. Morlot, to whom we are indebted for a masterly sketch of the recent progress of this new line of research, followed up with so much success in Scandinavia and Switzerland, observes that the introduction of the first tools made of bronze among a people previously ignorant of the use of metals, implies a great advance in the arts, for bronze is an alloy of about nine parts of copper and one of tin; and although the former metal, copper, is by no means rare, and is occasionally found pure or in a native state, tin is not only scarce but never occurs native. To detect the existence of this metal in its ore, then to disengage it from the matrix, and finally, after blending it in due proportion with copper, to cast the fused mixture in a mould, allowing time for it to acquire hardness by slow cooling, all this bespeaks no small sagacity and skilful manipulation. Accordingly, the pottery found associated with weapons of bronze is of a more ornamental and tasteful style than any which belongs to the age of stone. Some of the moulds in which the bronze instruments were cast, and 'tags,' as they are called, of bronze, which are

\* Morlot, Bulletin de la Société Vaudoise des Sci. Nat., t. vi. p. 292.