Mirror-case of Sculptured Ivory.

In the Collection of the Hon. Robert Curzon, jun.
Date, early 14th cent. Orig. size.

The Archaeological Journal.

MARCH, 1851.

# ON THE STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGY.

A DISCOURSE READ AT THE OXFORD MEETING OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, JUNE 18, 1850, BY CHARLES NEWTON, M.A.

THE record of the Human Past is not all contained in printed books. Man's history has been graven on the rock of Egypt, stamped on the brick of Assyria, enshrined in the marble of the Parthenon,—it rises before us a majestic Presence in the piled up arches of the Coliseum,—it lurks an unsuspected treasure amid the oblivious dust of archives and monasteries,—it is embodied in all the heir-looms of religions, of races, of families, in the relics which affection and gratitude, personal or national, pride of country or pride of lineage, have preserved for us,—it lingers like an echo on the lips of the peasantry, surviving in their songs and traditions, renewed in their rude customs with the renewal of Nature's seasons,—we trace it in the speech, the manners, the type of living nations, its associations invest them as with a garb,—we dig it out from the barrow and the Necropolis, and out of the fragments thus found reconstruct in museums of antiquities something like an image of the Past,—we contemplate this image in fairer proportions, in more exact lineaments, as it has been transmitted by endless reflections in the broken mirror of art.

Again, the vouchers for Printed History, the title-deeds of our great heritage of Printed Literature, are not all preserved in printed texts.

Before there can be Composed History, there must be evidences and documents, Tradition Oral and Tradition Monumental; before the publication of Printed Literature, there

must exist the elements and sources from which such publication is made; before the Printer must come the Palæographer; before authoritative edition, scrutiny and authentication. Before we can discern the image of a period, or read the history of a race in Monuments of Art, we must ascertain to what period and to what race these monuments belong; before antiquities become the materials for the history of manners, they must be collected and arranged in museums; in other words, if we would authenticate Printed Literature, if we would verify and amplify Printed History, if we would not ignore all those new elements of thought and memorials of the deeds of men which time is for ever disclosing to us, we must recognise the purpose and function of Archaeology; that purpose and function being to collect, to classify, and to interpret all the evidence of man's history not already incorporated in Printed Literature.

This evidence, the subject-matter of Archaeology, has been handed down to us, partly in spoken language, in manners, and in customs, partly in written documents and manuscript literature, partly in remains of architecture, painting, and sculpture, and of the subordinate decorative and useful arts.

Or, to speak more concisely, the subject-matter of Archaeology is threefold,—the Oral, the Written, and the Monumental.

Perhaps it would be more exact to say, that there are but two classes of archaeological evidences, the Oral and the Monumental, Monuments being either inscribed or Monuments of art and of handicraft.

But I shall venture, on this occasion, to waive strict logical accuracy for the sake of an arrangement which seems more convenient and impressive.

I shall consider each of the three classes of archaeological evidence in succession, taking, first, the Oral, under which head I would include not only all that has been handed down to us in Language, but all that can be gathered from the study of Manners and Customs.

That spoken language is Archaeological evidence is sufficiently obvious. Every one is aware that in tracing out the history of any language, we must study not only its written form, but those archaic words, inflections, and idioms, which literature has either rejected or forgotten, which, once general, have become provincial, and are retained only in the mother-tongue of the peasantry.

These obsolete and rare forms of speech are to the philologist what the extinct Faunas and Floras of the primeval world are to the comparative anatomist and the botanist, and, as Geology collects and prepares for the physiologist these scattered elements of the history of nature, so does Archaeology glean these vestiges of language, and construct out of them glossaries of provincial words, that they may form evidence in the great scheme of modern Philology.

As only a certain portion of the spoken language of a race is permanently incorporated in its literature, so its written poetry and history only represent a certain portion of the national tradition. Every peasantry has its songs and mythic legends, its rude oral narrative of real events, blended with its superstitions. Archaeology rescues these from oblivion, by making them a part of Printed Literature. It is thus that Walter Scott has collected the minstrelsy of the Scottish border, and Grimm the traditions of Germany.

Such relics are of peculiar interest to the historian of literature, because they contain the germ of Written History and Poetry; before the epic comes the ballad, the first chronicle is the sum of many legends.

But unwritten tradition is not all embodied in language, it has been partly preserved to us in manners and customs. In a rude, unlettered age, indeed at all times when men are too ignorant, hurried, or pre-occupied to be acted upon by language alone, the instinct of those who govern the multitude has suggested other means.

Symbolic acts and gestures, tokens, forms, ceremonies, customs are all either supplementary to or the substitute for articulate speech.

In the processions, military triumphs, coronations, nuptials, and funeral ceremonies of all races we see this unwritten, inarticulate, symbolic, language in its most fully developed and eloquent form.

Hence it is obviously necessary for the Archaeologist to study customs. Addressing the eye by symbols more generally and readily understood even than words, they may be said to exhibit the utterance of thought in its most primitive and elementary form; the repetition of such utterance becomes record which, however rude and precarious, may still rank as a distinct source of historical evidence.

For the observance of such customs as fall under the

notice of the Archaeologist, it is for the most part necessary that certain acts should be performed, or certain instruments employed with or without the recital of a set form of words; the custom may be commemorative or symbolic without reference to the past; the event of which it is the memorial may be real or mythical; the doctrine it typifies and embodies may be religious, political, or legal; its observance may be occasional, as in the case of a marriage ceremony, or periodical, as in the case of the great festivals with which most nations distinguish the course of the seasons. The Archaeologist, of course, directs his attention less to those customs which form a part of the established religion and legal code of a race than to those which, being the result of ideas once generally prevalent, still survive among the peasantry in remote districts, or of which dim traces may be still discerned in the institutions of modern society. It is thus that, in the customs of Calabria, we still trace the relics of the ancient heathen worship, and that the customs of Greece and Asia Minor remain a living commentary on the text of Homer.

The peasant's mind reflects what has been rather than what is. It revolves in the same circle as the more cultivated mind of the nation, but at a much slower rate. On the great dial-plate of time, one is the hourhand while the other is the minutehand.

When customs are only partially extant, the Archaeologist has not only to record and interpret the usage, but to preserve the instrument with which that usage was associated.

It is thus that the horns which once ratified the tenure of land, the sword or mace, once instruments of investiture and insignia of feudal or official power, vessels once consecrated to the service of religion, are gathered in, one by one, into national museums, the garners and treasuries of archaeology.

A custom may be not merely extinct, but buried. In the tombs of many races, such as the Celtic or Scandinavian, we find nearly all that is known of their sepulchral rites, and thus an examination of the places of sepulture of various countries enables us, with the aid of philology, to trace out many unsuspected national affinities, while at the same time it gives us the means of comparing a number of unwritten creeds. In an uncivilised age men do not define their religious belief in a set form of words, but express it by symbolic rites, by acts rather than by statements.

It is the business of the Archaeologist to read these hieroglyphics, not graven on the rock, but handed down in the memory and embodied in the solemn acts of races, to elicit these faint rays of historical evidence, latent in the tomb.

Manners differ from customs, in that they furnish rather general evidence of a nation's character than special evidence for particular facts; that they are neither commemorative nor symbolic.

It was the custom of the last century to drink the king's health after dinner; it is part of the general history of English manners to know how our ancestors comported themselves at their meals, and when they first began to use forks.

Traces of ancient manners must be sought, as we seek for customs, in the secluded life of the peasantry, or we must discern them half-obliterated beneath the palimpsest surface of modern society, and this palimpsest must be read by a diligent collation not only with early literature, but with the picture of ancient manners preserved in Monuments of Art.

Such then is a slight outline of the Oral evidence of Archaeology. It is inferior in dignity either to Written or to Monumental evidence, because of all the means which man possesses for utterance and record, the oral is the most transient.

We may add that animals are not altogether destitute of oral utterance. Though they do not articulate, they communicate their meaning vocally, and by gesticulation; and some of them can imitate articulate speech, action, and music.

But no animal but man draws or writes, or leaves behind him conscious monumental record.

It is because man can draw, because he possesses the distinctive faculty of imitating forms and expressing thoughts not only by his own gesticulations, but by and through some material external to himself, that he has acquired the inestimable power of writing. This general assertion, that all writing has its origin in drawing is, perhaps, open to discussion, but those who have most deeply investigated the question, have been led to this conclusion, by a comparison of the most primitive systems of writing now extant.

It is stated by these authorities that the elements of all written character are to be found in the Picture, or Direct Representation of some visible object; that such Pictures

were subsequently applied as Phonetic symbols, or symbols of sounds, and as Emblems, or symbols of ideas; that these three modes of conveying meaning, by Direct Representation, by Phonetic symbols, and by Emblems, existed co-ordinately for a while, and were finally absorbed into, and commuted for the one fixed conventional Alphabetic method.

If we apply this theory to the classification of the systems of writing which remain to us, it will be seen that, though not of course admitting of arrangement in chronological sequence, they exhibit the art in various stages of its development. The Mexican will present to us a system in which the Pictorial is predominant; the Egyptian hieroglyphics will enable us to trace the gradual extension of the Phonetic and Emblematic, the abbreviation of both forms in the more cursive Hieratic, and the decay of the Pictorial system: the Chinese, and perhaps the Assyrian Cuneiform, will bring us one step nearer the purely conventional system; and the perfection of the Alphabetic method will be found in the Phœnician, as it has been adapted by the Hellenic race.

I will not attempt here to illustrate more fully, or to justify more in detail, this theory as to the origin of writing; nor do I ask you, on the present occasion, to admit more than the general fact, which the most superficial examination of the Egyptian or Mexican hieroglyphics will show, that there have been ages and nations when the Alphabetic system was as yet undeveloped, and the Pictorial was its substitute, and consequently that there was a period when art and writing were not divorced as they are at present, but so blended into one, that we can best express the union by such a compound as Picture-writing.

This original connection between two arts which we are accustomed to consider as opposed, obliges us to regard the elements of writing as part of the history of imitative art generally. Thus the inscribed monuments of Egypt are neither art nor literature, but rather the elements out of which both sprang, just as early poetry contains the germ both of history and philosophy.

It is this first stage in the history of writing which peculiarly claims from the Archaeologist thought and study. The art of which he has to trace the progress, as it has, perhaps, more contributed to civilisation than any other human inven-

tion, so has it only been perfected after many centuries of experiment and fruitless labour. We, to whom the Alphabetic system has been handed down as the bequest of a remote antiquity, find a difficulty in transporting our minds backwards to the period when it was yet unknown ; the extreme simplicity of the method makes us accept it as a matter of course, as an instrument which man has always possessed, not as something only wrought out by patient, oft repeated trials in the course of ages. Till we study the Egyptian hieroglyphics, we are not aware how difficult it must have been for the more perfect Phonetic system to displace the Pictorial, how long they continued co-ordinate, what perplexity of rules this co-ordination engendered, how obstinately the routine of habit maintained an old method however intricate and inconvenient, against a new principle however simple and broad in its application. The history of writing, in a word, exhibits to us most impressively a type of that great struggle between new inventions and inveterate routine, out of which civilisation has been slowly and painfully evolved.

When we pass from the study of imperfect and transition systems of writing, such as the Mexican, Egyptian, Cuneiform, and Chinese, to the study of perfect alphabets, it is rather the tradition of the art from race to race, than the inventive genius shown in its development, which forms the subject of our inquiries.

The Phœnician alphabet is the primary source of the system of writing we now use. The Greek and Roman alphabets, each adapted from the Phœnician with certain additions and modifications, were gradually diffused by commerce or conquest through the length and breadth of the ancient civilised world. On the decay of the Western empire of the Romans, their alphabet, like their language, law, architecture, and sculpture, became the property of their Teutonic conquerors.

Rude hands now wielded these great instruments of civilisation ; strong wills moulded and adapted them to new wants and conditions ; and it was thus that the Roman alphabet, transferred from marble to parchment, no longer graven but written, was gradually transformed into that fantastic and complicated character which is popularly called black letter, and in which the original simple type is some-

times as difficult to recognise, as it is to discern at the first glance the connection between the stately, clustered pier and richly sculptured capital of the Gothic cathedral, and its remote archetype, the Greek column.

The changes which the handwriting of the Western world underwent from the commencement of the Middle Ages to the revival of the simple Roman character in the first printed texts have been most clearly traced out, century by century, by means of the vast series of dated specimens of medieval writing still extant.

When we turn from the Palæography of the Western to that of the Eastern world, we find the evidence of the subject in a far less accessible state.

In tracing back the history of Oriental systems of writing, as in investigating the sources of Oriental civilisation, we cannot, as in the West, recognise in many varieties the same original classical type; there is no one paramount influence, no one continuous stream of tradition, no one alphabet the parent of all the rest; the chronological basis of the Palæography rests on much less certain grounds.

When this branch of the history of writing has been more studied, we shall be able to say more positively whether the Assyrian Cuneiform is a modification of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, whether the Phœnician alphabet was derived from the same elements, whether it was the parent not only of the Greek and the Roman, but also of the Semitic alphabets generally, and we shall probably discover more than one other independent source whence some of the Oriental alphabets may have been derived.

This, then, is one point of view in which the Archaeologist may regard all written memorials,—as evidence either of the invention or of the tradition of the alphabetic system; but the history of the art cannot be fully investigated without taking into account the nature of the writing materials employed. These materials have been very different in different ages and countries. Character may be either *graven* on hard materials, such as stone or metal, *written* on pliable materials, such as bark, papyrus, parchment, linen, paper, or *impressed* as the potters' names are on the Samian ware, or the legends of coins on a metallic surface. The greater part of the writing of the ancient world has been preserved on the native rock, hewn stones, metallic tablets,

or baked clay, as in the case of the Cuneiform character. There was a preference for hard unpliable materials in classical antiquity just as there was a preference for parchment as a writing material all through the Middle Ages, both in Europe and Asia. As the harder materials fell into disuse, the character of course became more cursive, writings circulated more generally from hand to hand, and were multiplied by frequent copies not only to meet an increased demand, but because that which is written is more perishable than that which is graven ; the stroke of the chisel is a more abiding record than the stroke of the pen.

In consequence of this difference in the writing material, the researches of the Palæographer of classical antiquity embrace a far wider field than those of the medieval Palæographer. It is in the marble and the granite, in the market-places, the temples, and the sepulchres of the ancients that we must search for their records ; these were their libraries, their muniment rooms, their heralds' college. If Magna Charta had been ceded to the Roman plebs, instead of to the English nobles, it would not have been called Magna Charta, but Magna Tabula, or Magna Columna ; most of the Diplomatic record of the ancients was a Lapidary record.

I have been as yet considering the written memorials of races only as they are evidence of the art of writing itself, but Archaeology has not only to study character and writing materials, but also to interpret more or less the meaning of the words written, and to inquire how far they have an historical value.

Now all written character, all *literature*, to use this word in its original sense, may be divided into two great classes,—the Composed and the Documentary.

By Composed Literature I mean history, poetry, oratory, philosophy, and such like mental products ; by Documentary Literature I mean all writings which have no claim to rank as literary composition,—such as deeds, charters, registers, calendars, lists,—in a word, all those historical and literary materials, some of which are already incorporated in composed history and composed literature; some of which are stored up in national, ecclesiastical, municipal, or private archives ; some of which yet remain *in situ*, associated with the architectural monuments and works of art on which they are inscribed, and some of which, uncared for or unknown,

moulder on the surface of untravelled lands, or in the ruins of deserted cities.

Now, in regard to Composed Literature, it is obvious that its subject-matter is far too vast for the scope and limits of archaeological research ; it is chiefly with its manuscript text that the Palæographer has to deal ; his business is to collect, decipher, collate, edit. Printing transfers the text from his hands to those of the philologer, the historian, and the critic.

In dealing with the Literature of Documents, the Archaeologist has to do more than barely edit the text. On him, in a great measure, is devolved the task of interpretation and classification ; the mere deciphering or printing the documents does not at once render them accessible to the general reader, nothing but long familiarity, acquired in the course of editing, can give dexterity and intelligence in their use. It is the business, then, of the Archaeologist to prepare for the historian the literature of documents generally, as Gruter has edited his great work on Latin inscriptions, or Muratori the documents of medieval Italy.

He must as far as possible ascertain the value of this unedited material in reference to what is already incorporated with printed literature, how far it suggests new views, supplies new facts, illustrates, corroborates, or disproves something previously acknowledged or disputed ; whether, in a word, it will contribute anything to the great mass of human knowledge which printing already embodies.

Composed Literature should be as far as possible confronted with those written documents which are, in reference to it, vouchers, commentary, or supplement. Sometimes we possess the very materials which the historian used ; sometimes we have access to evidence of which he had no knowledge.

Now, it is needless to insist on the historical value of such documents as the inscription of Darius on the rock of Behistan, the Rosetta stone, and the many hieroglyphical and cuneiform texts which the sagacity and learning of a Young, a Champollion, and a Rawlinson have taught the nineteenth century to interpret by means of these two trilingual keys.

Such evidence speaks for itself. When in the laboratory of the philologer and the historian these documents shall have been slowly transmuted into composed narrative, we may hope to contemplate the ancient world from a new point

of view. The narrow boundaries of classical chronology may be enlarged by these discoveries as the barriers of ancient geography were burst through by the adventurous prow of the Genoese navigator; events, dynasties, and personages, which flit before our strained eyes, far away in the dim offing of primeval history, shrouded in the fantastic haze of Hellenic mythology, may be revealed to us in more defined outlines, if not in perfect fulness of detail.

But it is not merely where there is such immediate promise of a great historical result that the Archaeologist must study written evidence, nor must he confine his labours to the editing what is already complete as a document; he must out of isolated and fragmentary materials construct instruments for the historian to use.

Roman coins are not Fasti, nor are Greek coins a treatise on ancient geography, yet the labour of numismatists has made the one almost the best authority for the chronology of the Roman empire, and has found in the other an inestimable commentary on Strabo and Ptolemy.

The seals, deeds, and sepulchral brasses of the Middle Ages are not in themselves pedigrees, but how have they not contributed to the legal proof of genealogies? The countless rolls relating to the property of individuals preserved in muniment rooms, seem many of them of little historical value; but out of them what a full and minute history of ancient tenures has been developed; what directories, and gazetteers, and inventories of the past, giving us the names, titles, and addresses of those historic personages, whom in reading the old chronicles we are perpetually liable to confound.

The pioneering labour which prepares the Literature of Documents will always be appreciated by a great historical mind. After a Gruter, an Eckhel, and a Muratori, come a Gibbon, a Niebuhr, a Sismondi.

Before we dismiss this branch of our subject, there is one more point to be noted, the use of written documents not for the immediate purposes of history, but subordinately, as evidence for archaeological classification. It is obviously easier to fix the date of an inscribed than of an uninscribed work of art, because Palæography has rules of criticism of its own, perfectly independent of those by which we judge of art or fabric. In arranging the Monumental evidence of Archaeology, we cannot dispense with the collateral illustration

of the Written evidence. Palæography is the true guide of the historian of Art.

It is this third branch of our whole subject-matter, the Monumental, which we have now to consider.

Monuments are either works of Art or works of Handicraft. Art is either Constructive or Imitative; Handicraft either Useful or Decorative.

I must recall you for a moment to the point from which I started in treating of the history of writing. I said that man was the only animal that imitated in a material external to himself; who, in other words, practised painting and sculpture. To draw and to carve are natural to man; speech, gesture, and music are his transient,—sculpture, painting, and writing, his permanent means of utterance. There is hardly any race that has not produced some rude specimens of sculpture and painting; there are a few only who have brought them to perfection.

Now, there is a point of view in which we may regard the imitative art of all races, the most civilised as well as the most barbarous—in reference, namely, to the power of correctly representing animal or vegetable forms such as exist in nature. The perfection of such imitation depends not so much on the manual dexterity of the artist as on his intelligence in comprehending the type or essential qualities of the form which he desires to represent. One artist may make the figure of a man like a jointed doll, because he discerns in human structure no more than the general fact of a head, trunk, and limbs. Another may perceive in nature and indicate in art some traces, however slight, of vital organisation, of bones and muscles, and of their relation to each other as pulleys and levers. A third may represent them in their true forms in action and repose.

This is real, intellectual art, because it represents not the forms merely, but the life which animates them. This difference between one artist and another in the mode of representing organic life is the most essential part of what is called style. As the styles of individual artists differ in this respect, so it is with the art of races.

If we compare the representation of a man in Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Medieval, Chinese, Indian, and Mexican sculpture, we shall see that the same bones and muscles, the same organisation and general type, have been very diffe-

rently rendered in different ages and countries; and that the examples I have cited may be ranged in a scale from the Greek downward to the Mexican, according to the amount of essential truth embodied in these several representations of nature. Here then we get a common measure or standard of the art of all races and ages, whether it be painting or sculpture, whatever be the material in which it is executed; whether the work of which we have to judge be one of the statues from the pediment of the Parthenon, or an Otaheitan idol; a fresco of Michael Angelo, or a Dutch picture; a painted window, or a picture on a Greek vase; a coin, or the head of Memnon; the Bayeux tapestry, or the cartoons at Hampton Court.

All these are works of imitative art; some more, some less worthy of being so called.

Now, the artists who executed these works had this in common, that they all tried to imitate nature, each according to his powers and means, but they differed very widely in those powers and means. Some painted, some carved; some worked on a colossal, others on a minute scale. For the solution of the problem they had proposed to themselves, a very varied choice of means presented itself. Thus by the word painting we may mean a fresco painting, or an oil painting, or an encaustic painting, or a painted window, or a vase picture. Sculpture may be in wood, in ivory, in marble, in metal. Each material employed by the sculptor or painter imposes on him certain conditions which are the law under which he ought to work. He may either turn the material he uses to the best account, master its difficulties, and atone for its deficiencies, or he may in turn be mastered by them.

The difference between artist and artist, or school and school, in this respect, constitutes what has been justly called specific style, as opposed to general style. The Archaeologist must take cognisance not only of general, but of specific style. He must compare the art of different races as much as possible *in pari materiâ;* he must ascertain as nearly as he can the real conditions under which the artist wrought before he can appreciate his work; he must observe how similar necessities have in different ages suggested the trial of similar technical means; how far the artist has succeeded or failed in the working out these experiments.

In this, as in every other branch of archaeological research, he will be led to remark great original differences between races, and certain resemblances, the result of the influence of school upon school by tradition or imitation.

By this study of external characteristics he will obtain the true criteria for arranging all art both chronologically and ethnographically, and will also be able to form some kind of scale of the relative excellence of all that he has to classify.

Thus far his work is analogous to that of the Palæographer, who acquaints himself with the systems of writing of all races, traces their tradition and the changes they undergo, and assigns them to their respective periods and countries.

But, as we have already pointed out, the Palæographer has not only to acquaint himself with the handwriting, but to bestow more or less of study on the words written ; and in some cases, as in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, the work of deciphering and of interpretation compel him to be deeply versed in history and philology.

So it is with the Archaeology of Art. We must not only know the mere external characteristics of the style, we must know the meaning or motive which pervades it ; we must be able to read and to interpret it.

It is only a knowledge of the meaning or motive of art that enables us to appreciate its most essential qualities. The highest art is thought embodied and stated to the eye ; hence it has been well defined as "mute poetry."

Now, when we survey all the remains of art of which Archaeology has cognisance, we shall perceive that it is only a certain portion of these remains that can be said to embody thought.

It is those works of Imitative Art which embody thought, which have the first claim on the attention of the Archaeologist, and, above all, those which express religious ideas.

The most elevated art which the world has yet seen has been devoted to the service of Religion. Art has stereotyped and developed that Figurative and Symbolic language, of which we find the partial and transient expression in the Oral Symbolism of rituals.

When I speak of a Figurative and Symbolic language, I include under this general term all idols and visible emblems, all productions of the painter and sculptor, which have been

either themselves objects of worship, or have been associated with such objects,—have been designed to address religious sympathies, to teach religious doctrines, or to record religious traditions.

There is, perhaps, hardly any race, which has not at some period of its history possessed some sort of Figurative and Symbolic language for religious uses. The utterance of this language is feebler, or more emphatic; its range of expression narrower, or more varied, according to the character of the religion, and the genius of the race. Some religions are pre-eminently sensuous, such, for instance, as the Egyptian, the Greek, the Hindoo, in fact, all the great systems of polytheistic worship; in other cases, the nature of the creed warrants and requires a much narrower range of Figurative and Symbolic language, as in the case of the ancient Persian fire-worship, or interdicts the most essential part of it, as the Mahommedan interdicts all representation of animal forms.

Now, as in Philology, we lay the foundation for a general comparison of articulate languages by the study of some one example more perfect in structure, fuller and richer in compass than the rest, such a type, for instance, as the Greek or the Sanscrit; so, if we would acquaint ourselves with the Figurative and Symbolic language of Art generally, we should study it in its finest form.

When we survey the monuments of all time, we find two perfectly developed and highly cultivated forms of utterance, the language of Greek Art, and the language of the Art of Medieval Christendom; in almost all other races the expression of religious ideas in art seems, in comparison, like a rude dialect, not yet fashioned by the poet and the orator. Of the idolatrous nations of the ancient world, the Greeks were, as far as we know, the first to reduce the colossal proportions of the idol, to discard monstrous combinations of human and animal forms, and to substitute the image of beautiful humanity. The sculptor and the poet shaped and moulded the mythic legends; as the Figurative language of Art grew more perfect, as the mastery over form enabled the artist to embody thought more poetically and eloquently, the ancient hieratic Symbolism became less and less prominent.

As the Greek myth gradually absorbed into itself the

earliest theological and philosophical speculations of the race, blending religious tradition with the traditions of history, personified agencies with the agencies of real personages, the record of physical phenomena with poetic allegory,—so the Figurative Language of Art expanded to express this complex development. Mythography, or the expression of the Myth in Art, moved on, *pari passu*, with mythology, or the expression of the Myth in Literature: as one has reacted on the other, so is one the interpreter of the other.

It is impossible till we have studied both conjointly, to see how completely the religion of the Greeks penetrated into their social institutions and daily life. The Myth was not only embodied in the sculpture of Phidias on the Parthenon, or pourtrayed in the frescoes of Polygnotus in the Stoa Poicile; it was repeated in a more compendious and abbreviated form on the fictile vase of the Athenian household; on the coin which circulated in the market-place; on the mirror in which the Aspasia of the day beheld her charms. Every domestic implement was made the vehicle of Figurative language, or fashioned into a Symbol.

Now, to us this mother tongue of Mythography, these household words, so familiar to the Greeks, are a dead letter, except so far as the Archaeologist can explain them by glosses and commentaries. His task is one of interpretation—he is the Scholiast and the Lexicographer of Art.

The method of interpretation which the classical Archaeologist has applied to Greek Art is well worthy the attention of those who undertake the interpretation of Christian Medieval Art.

As the Greeks have bequeathed to us not only a Mythology, but a Mythography, so in the painting and sculpture of medieval Christendom we find an unwritten Theology, a popular, figurative teaching of the sublime truths of Christianity, blended with the apocryphal traditions of many generations. The frescoes of the great Italian masters, from Giotto to Michael Angelo, the ecclesiastical sculpture of medieval Europe generally, are the texts in which we should study this unwritten theology.

It is in these continuous compositions, designed by great artists, that we can best study the Figurative and Symbolic language of Christian Art as a scheme, and seek the key to its interpretation. This key once obtained, we learn to read

not the great texts merely, but the most compendious and abbreviated Symbolism, the isolated passages and fragments of the greater designs.

It is then that we recognise the unity of motive and sentiment which runs all through Medieval Art, and see how an external unity of style is the result of a deeper spiritual unity, as the manners of individuals spring out of their whole character and way of life; it is then that antiquities, which to the common observer seem of small account, become to us full of meaning. Every object which reflects and repeats the greater art of the period, whether it be costume, or armour, or household furniture, is of interest to the Archaeologist.

The cross which formed the hilt of the sword of the warrior; the martyrology which was embroidered on the cope of the ecclesiastic, or which inlayed the binding of his missal; the repetition of the design of Raffaelle in the Majolica ware; if not in themselves the finest specimens of medieval art, are valuable as evidence of the universality of its pervading presence,—as fragments of a great whole.

In many cases the interpreter of Christian Art has an easier task than his fellow-labourer, the interpreter of Greek Art. Christian Iconography is at once more congenial, and more familiar to us, than Greek Mythography. Much of the religious feeling it embodies still exists in the hearts of men; the works of Christian art themselves afford far ampler illustration of their own language. The frescoes of Cimabue and Giotto, the great poems of Fra Angelico, Raffaelle, and Michael Angelo, have not perished like the works of the Greek painters, or been preserved to us in fragments, like the sculptures of the Parthenon. The façades of the cathedrals of Europe are still rich in statuary; the "dim religious light" still pierces through "the storied window."

We possess not only the original designs of the great sculptors and painters of the Middle Ages, but endless copies and reflections from these designs in the costume, armour, coins, seals, pottery, furniture, and other antiquities of the contemporary period. We are not compelled to seek for Art in what was meant as mere Handicraft, as we study the history of Greek painting in vase-pictures; we have not only the Art, but the Handicraft too.

But we have not shown as much diligence in applying Medieval Literature to the illustration of contemporary Medieval Art as the Classical Archaeologist has shown in comparing mythology and mythography.

Christian Iconography and Christian Symbolism must be read, as Lord Lindsay has read them, with the illustration of the lives of the saints, the theology and the poetry of the Middle Ages. We must study the Pisan Campo Santo with Dante in our hands.

In these remarks on the figurative language of Art, I have not attempted to lay down for your guidance systems and canons of interpretation; I have rather called your attention to the example of classical art in which a particular method of study has been long and successfully carried out.

Nor have I at all alluded to a most essential part of the History of Art, the tradition of its Figurative and Symbolic language from race to race; or shown how far the Mythography of the Greeks was modified by, and contributed in turn to modify, the Oriental and Egyptian Mythographies; how Roman Pantheism gradually absorbed into itself all these motley elements; how the earlier Christian Art, like the architecture, law, language and literature of medieval Christendom, was full of adapted Paganism; how, not forgetting the power of deep-rooted associations, it borrowed the symbols of an extinct idolatry, as medieval literature borrowed the imagery of the classical writers; how long the influence of that symbolism and that imagery has survived, affecting, in a peculiar manner, the view of physical nature both in art and poetry; and how, lastly, the great features of the landscape which ancient sculpture and poetry translated into a peculiar figurative language, have been, so to speak, retranslated in the painting and the poetry of an age of physical science like our own.

It remains for me to say a few words on other branches of Imitative Art. There is an ideal art which is not devoted to religion, but purely secular in its subject-matter and purpose, just as there is a secular poetry which gradually prevails over the religious poetry of an earlier age; but the portion of this secular ideal art of which Archaeology has to take cognisance is comparatively small.

Again, there is Historical art, or that which represents real events in history; and Portraiture, which, taken in its widest

sense, includes all representation not only of human beings, but also of visible objects in nature. Now it is hardly necessary to insist on the interest either of Historical art or of Portraiture as archaeological evidence.

Historical art can never be as trustworthy a document as written history; its narrative power is far more limited;—but how much it illustrates written history, how much it supplies where written history is wanting, or is yet undeciphered?

The bas-reliefs of Egypt and Assyria are the supplement to the hieroglyphic, or cuneiform text; the type of the Roman coin completes the historical record of its legend; the legend explains the type; the combination presents to us some passage in the public life of the emperor of the day.

Inscribed Historical art is at all times the simplest and most popular mode of teaching history; perhaps in such a state of society as that of Egypt or Assyria, the only mode.

Again, when Historical art is presented to us completely detached from the written text, and where the composed history of a period is ever so ample,—who would not use the illustration offered by Historical art?—who would reject such a record as the spiral frieze on the column of Trajan, and the bas-reliefs on the triumphal arches of the Roman empire? Who would not think the narrative of Herodotus, vivid and circumstantial as it is, would acquire fresh interest could we see that picture of Darius setting out on his Scythian expedition, which Mandrocles caused to be painted?—or the representation of Marathon with which Micon and Panænus adorned the Athenian Stoa Poicile?

If Historical art contribute to the fuller illustration of composed history, still more does Portraiture. If the very idea of the great *dramatis personæ*, who have successively appeared on the stage of universal history, stirs our hearts within us, who would not wish to see their bodily likeness?—who would not acknowledge that the statues and busts of the Cæsars are the marginal illustration of the text of Tacitus? that the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rich as it is in every kind of document, is incomplete without the portraits by Vandyke and Reynolds?—or, to pass from the portraits of individuals to the general portraiture of society, can we form a just idea of Greek and Roman manners without the pictures on vases and the pictures of Pompeii? or of medieval manners without the illuminations of manuscripts?

Are not the Nimroud bas-reliefs all that remains to us of the social life of the great Assyrian empire? If costume, armour, household furniture and implements, are all part of the history of manners, if these relics are in themselves worth studying, so too must be those representations which teach us how they were applied in daily life.

Having considered the monuments of Imitative, I will now pass on to the monuments of Constructive Art, and the products of the useful and decorative arts generally, or of Handicraft, from all which may be elicited a kind of latent history, rather implied than consciously stated, not transmitted in writing, nor even in words.

Of all monuments of Constructive Art, the most abiding, the most impressive and full of meaning, are the architectural. The first object of the Archaeologist, in studying a building, should be to ascertain its date, the race by whom, and the purpose for which it was erected. But his task does not end with this primary classification; he ought to indicate the value of Architecture as evidence for the Historian, to read and interpret the indirect record it embodies.

Of many aspects in which we may regard Architecture, these three may be especially noted. First, it is an evidence of the constructive power of a race, of their knowledge of mechanical science. Secondly, being an investment of capital, it is a measure of the financial resources of a nation at a particular period, a document for their financial history. Thirdly, we must consider Architecture as the great law which has in all time regulated the growth and affected the form of painting and sculpture, till they attain to a certain period in their development, and free themselves from its influence. I shall say a few words on each of these three points.

First of Architecture, as evidence of constructive power: In all building operations more or less of the same problems have to be solved.

The purpose of the edifice, the space allotted for the site, the quantity and quality of the building material, and the law of gravitation, prescribe a certain form. These are the external necessities within which the will of the architect is free to range. The problems he has to solve may be more or less difficult; the purpose of the building may dictate a more or less complicated structure; the site and building

materials may be more or less favourable ; the mechanical knowledge required may be more or less profound ; it is in the solution of these problems that various races have shown a greater or less degree of intellectual power ; it is from the study of the architectural problems so solved that we obtain a common measure of the mind of races perfectly distinct from any other standard.

In a Gothic cathedral the truths of mechanical science are stated, not by words, but by deeds ; it is knowledge, not written, but enacted.

The pyramids and temples of Egypt, the Parthenon, the ruins of Baalbec, the Duomo at Florence, the railway bridges and viaducts of the nineteenth century, are all so many chapters in the history of mechanical science, not in themselves treatises, but containing the materials of treatises. So much has been recently written on this branch of architectural study, that I shall merely allude to it here, especially in addressing an audience many of whom have the advantage of hearing every year a lecture on structure from the historian of our cathedrals, Professor Willis.

Having glanced at Architecture as part of the history of science, let us regard it for a moment as part of the history of finance. In all Architecture there is an outlay of the capital of labour, and of the capital absorbed in the cost of materials. The wealth thus permanently invested, if it be national wealth, is seldom replaced by any direct financial return. In the balance-sheet of nations it is more frequently entered as capital sunk, than as capital profitably invested.

When, therefore, we have made an estimate of the probable cost of an ancient edifice, grounded partly on the evidence of the building itself, partly on our general knowledge of the period to which it belongs, we must next consider out of what resources it was reared : did the builders invest income or capital ? in the hope of profitable return, or from what other of the many motives which induce men to spend money ?

Here, then, we find an architectural common measure, not only of the wealth of nations at a particular period, but also of their taste and judgment in spending that wealth.

When we survey the architecture of all time in regard to its motive, it presents to us under this aspect four principal

groups. It is either Votive, Commemorative, Military, or Commercial. By Votive, I mean all edifices dedicated to the service of Religion; by Commemorative, such structures as the triumphal arches of Rome; all sepulchral monuments from the Pyramids downwards; all buildings, in a word, of which the paramount object is national or personal record.

The term Military needs no explanation.

By Commercial, I mean much of what is commonly called civil architecture: all such works as bridges, exchanges, aqueducts, moles, tunnels, which, however great the original outlay, are undertaken by nations, companies, or individuals, with the ultimate hope of a profitable return.

Now, if it be admitted that the religious sentiment,—the historical instinct, or rather the sense of national greatness, its source,—the military spirit or necessities,—the commercial enterprise and resources of a race, severally determine the character of its Votive, Commemorative, Military, and Commercial architecture,—such monuments will give us a measure of the relative strength and successive predominance of each of these great motives of national action. Thus, in the chart of universal history, we may more distinctly trace the direction and calculate the force of some of the tides and currents of public opinion by which society has been variously swayed.

In Egypt, Architecture was pre-eminently Votive and Commemorative: in the temples of the Athenian Acropolis, the Votive and the Commemorative were blended, the glory of the individual was merged in that of the state,—the idea of the state was inseparable from that of its religion; the practical genius of the Romans was developed in great works at once Military and Commercial,—roads, bridges, aqueducts, moles, tunnels, fortifications; Votive and Military architecture absorbed the surplus wealth of the Middle Ages; in our own day, the magnificence of our Commercial architecture, of our railway bridges and viaducts,—contrasts somewhat strangely with the stunted and starveling Gothic of our modern churches; but it is fair to remember that the imperious need of an ever increasing population has transferred to charity part of the resources of architecture, and that we must not seek for the Votive investment of the nineteenth century only in its Religious edifices.

The study of the motive of architectural investment is essential to the Archaeologist for the due comprehension of the whole style of the Architecture; but the tracing out the financial sources of that investment is rather the business of the Historian. Therefore, I will but remind you here how the centralising power of despotism reared with the slave labour of captive nations, and the produce of the most fertile of soils, the Votive and Commemorative architecture of Egypt,—how the victories of Marathon and Salamis gained for Athens those island and Asiatic dependencies, whose tribute built the Parthenon,—how Rome gave back to a conquered world part of their plundered wealth in the aqueducts, bridges, harbours, and fortifications, which the Empire constructed for the provinces,—and how, lastly, in most parts of Medieval Christendom, as there were but three great Landowners, so there were but three great Architects, —the Sovereign, the Churchman, and the Noble.

The third aspect in which the Archaeologist must regard Architecture, is in its relation to Painting and Sculpture. Every one who is the least conversant with the history of Art knows that Architecture, Painting, and Sculpture, as they are naturally connected, so have in all times been more or less associated, and that the divorce by which, in modern times, they have been parted, is as exceptional as it is to be deplored. In a great age of art, the structure modifies and is in turn modified by the painting and sculpture with which it is decorated, and it is out of the antagonism of the decorative and the structural that a harmonious whole is produced. The great compositions of Phidias in the pediments of the Parthenon were regulated by the triangular space they had to fill, the proportions of the whole building itself were again adjusted to the scale of the chryselephantine statue of Pallas Athene which it contained; for in the Greek, and the ancient idolatries generally, the temple of a god was considered his dwelling-place, his statue in the interior, the symbol—and more than the symbol—of his bodily presence.

Therefore, if the Mythography was colossal, so was the Architecture; if the genius of the religion invested the god with a form and character not so much exceeding the familiar proportions of humanity, the architecture was adjusted to the same standard. This, doubtless, was one

chief cause of the difference in scale between the Egyptian and Greek temple.

The subject might be pursued much further. It might be observed that in Gothic architecture, where the building is dedicated to a Being who dwells not in temples made with hands, and whose presence there is rather shadowed forth by the whole character of the edifice than embodied in the tangible form of a statue, the structural necessities are supreme; the painting and sculpture are not, as in Greek buildings, works of art set in an architectural frame, but subordinate and accessory to the main design.

I have glanced for a moment at this relation between Architecture and Imitative Art, because the principle it involves is equally applicable to all cases where decoration is added to structure.

The Archaeologist cannot fail to remark how severe, in a true age of art, is the observance of this great Architectonic law,—how its influence pervades all design,—how the pictures on Greek vases, or the richly embossed and chased work of the medieval goldsmiths, are all adjusted to the form and surface allotted to them by an external necessity.

Having considered the greatest form of constructive art, Architecture, at such length, I have hardly time to do more than allude very briefly to the remaining material products of man comprised under the general term,—Monumental Evidence.

To attempt here to classify these miscellaneous antiquities would be as difficult as the classification of the various objects which may form part of the great Exhibition of 1851. The task which England has undertaken for 1851 is an Exhibition of the Industry of all nations at the present day; the object which Archaeology would achieve if possible, is not less than the Exhibition of the Industry of all nations for all time.

Wherever man has left the stamp of mind on brute-matter; whether we designate his work as structure, texture, or mixture, mechanical or chymical; whether the result be a house, a ship, a garment, a piece of glass, or a metallic implement, these memorials of economy and invention will always be worthy of the attention of the Archaeologist.

Our true motto should be—

HOMO SUM, HUMANI NIHIL A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

To collect the implements, weapons, pottery, costume, and furniture of races is to contribute materials not only to the history of mining, metallurgy, spinning, weaving, dyeing, carpentry, and the like arts, which minister to civilisation, but also to illustrate the physical history of the countries where these arts were practised.

The history of an art involves more or less that of its raw material; whether that material is native or imported, has been turned to the best account, or misused and squandered, are questions ultimately connected with the history of finance, agriculture, and commerce, and hardly to be solved without constant reference to the Monumental Evidence of Archaeology. I will not detain you longer with this part of the subject; those who wish to know why a spear-head or a stone hammer are as interesting to an Archaeologist as fossils to the Geologist, should visit the museum at Copenhagen, and read M. Worsaae's little work on Scandinavian antiquities, its result;—should learn how the Etruscan remains in the Museo Gregoriano of the Vatican illustrate Homer,—and the remains of Pompeii in the Museo Borbonico present to us Roman life in the Augustan age.

I have endeavoured, in these remarks, to present to you an outline, however slight, of the whole subject-matter of Archaeology,—a sketch of its Oral, Written, and Monumental Evidence.

In treating of these three branches, my object has not been so much to explain how they may be severally best collected, classified, and interpreted, as to show by a few examples the historical results to which such previous labours, duly and conscientiously carried out, will lead; the relation of Archaeology to History, as a ministering and subsidiary study, as the key to stores of information inaccessible or unknown to the scholar, as an independent witness to the truth of Printed Record.

I have said nothing of the qualifications required of the Archaeologist, the conditions under which he works, the instruments and appliances on which he depends. He who would master the manifold subject-matter of Archaeology, and appreciate its whole range and compass, must possess a mind in which the reflective and the perceptive faculties are duly balanced; he must combine with the æsthetic culture of the Artist, and the trained judgment of the Historian, not a little

of the learning of the Philologer; the plodding drudgery which gathers together his materials, must not blunt the critical acuteness required for their classification and interpretation, nor should that habitual suspicion which must ever attend the scrutiny and precede the warranty of archaeological evidence, give too sceptical a bias to his mind.

The Archaeologist cannot, like the Scholar, carry on his researches in his own library, almost independent of outward circumstances.

For *his* work of reference and collation he must travel, excavate, collect, arrange, delineate, decipher, transcribe, before he can place his whole subject before his mind.

He cannot do all this single-handed; in order to have free scope for his operations he must perfect the machinery of museums and societies.

A museum of antiquities is to the Archaeologist what a botanical garden is to the Botanist; it presents his subject compendiously, synoptically, suggestively, not in the desultory and accidental order in which he would otherwise be brought in contact with its details.

An Archaeological Society gives corporate strength to efforts singly of little account; it can discover, preserve, register, and publish on a far greater scale, and with more system, than any individual, however zealous and energetic.

A society which would truly administer the ample province of British Archaeology should be at once the Historian of national art and manners, the Keeper of national record and antiquities, the Ædile of national monuments.

These are great functions. Let us try, in part at least, to fulfil them. But let us not forget that national Archaeology, however earnestly and successfully pursued, can only disclose to us one stage in the whole scheme of human development —one chapter in the whole Book of human History—can supply but a few links in that chain of continuous tradition, which connects the civilised nineteenth century with the races of the primeval world,—which holds together this great brotherhood in bonds of attachment more enduring than the ties of national consanguinity, more ennobling even than the recollections of ancestral glory,—which, traversing the ruins of empires, unmoved by the shock of revolutions, spans the abyss of time, and transmits onward the message of the Past.