

# The Archaeological Journal.

---

DECEMBER, 1880.

---

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INSTITUTE HELD AT LINCOLN.<sup>1</sup>

I feel honoured to-day in being associated with the mayor and corporation and other citizens of Lincoln and inhabitants of this county in cordially bidding you welcome on your visit to this city after an interval of thirty-two years. It is no part of my duty to-day to pronounce a panegyric on the study of archæology. It may well stand on its own merits. Some, I am aware, have disparaged it as only subservient to the indulgence of an idle curiosity or learned pedantry. And doubtless it has its weak side, and cautions are needed in its pursuit. Sir Walter Scott, archæologist as he was, has revealed some of its frailties in his *Antiquary*. And another English poet not unwisely says :

How profitless the relics that we cull,  
Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome,  
Unless they chasten fancies that presume  
Too high, or idle agitations lull ;  
Heaven out of view, our wishes what are they ?  
Mere *fibulæ* without a robe to clasp,  
Obsolete lamps, whose light no time recalls,  
Urns without ashes, tearless lacrymals !

But I am speaking now of the study of archæology when rightly pursued. And at this time, and in this place, I do not scruple to claim for it something more than a technical and professional character, or even than a literary and scientific value. It has, I conceive, a high moral, social, intellectual, and spiritual dignity. Let me illustrate my meaning by reference to present circumstances. England has just been passing through the severe ordeal of contested elections, and is now approaching the close of a stormy Parliamentary campaign. At

<sup>1</sup> Delivered July 27th, 1880.

such a time it is surely a great relief to be raised above the troubled atmosphere of party politics, and to meet, as we do here to-day, as friends and brethren. Human nature is weary of strife; it craves peace, and longs for repose. The Middle Ages expressed that desire by their *trêve de Dieu*, their holy truce; and classical antiquity consecrated that longing every fourth year at the summer solstice beneath the light of the full moon, which gleamed on the waters of the Alpheus and on the olive groves of Olympia. Belligerent nations then laid down their arms; political feuds were forgotten in a general amnesty, and foes embraced one another in a periodic armistice. So it is now. We welcome all here to-day, as friends and brethren, to our own archæological Olympia. We forget our political differences. In the present week we are all Liberals, and we are all Conservatives. We are all Liberals because we are all met to promote those liberal arts and studies which adorn society and dignify human nature; and we are all Conservatives because we desire to protect, preserve, and restore with affectionate reverence the time-honoured monuments of antiquity, and thus we are associated in the fellowship of a Liberal-Conservatism, and of a Conservative-Liberalism. And we give a hearty welcome to all who have come to this peaceful harbour from the stormy sea of politics, and we hope that they may feel refreshed, like the ancient hero and his prophetic companion as described by the greatest of Roman poets, when they emerged from the shades of Erebus into the clear light and pure breezes of Elysium.

Devenere locos lætos et amœna vireta  
 Fortunatorum memorum sedesque quietas;  
 Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit  
 Purpureo, solemque suum sua sidera norunt.

But we may rise higher. We may claim for archæology a nobler prerogative than this. It emancipates us from the thralldom of modern prepossessions and prejudices, and frees us from the tyranny of ephemeral passions and local conventionalities. It makes us contemporaries with every age and citizens of every clime. We are too prone to be absorbed and engrossed by the things of to-day, and to be the slaves of personal interests and party trammels. We need to be liberated from such vassalage.

Archæology does this, if studied aright, and especially if it is connected, as your present visit to Lincoln is, with a tour and pilgrimage to places hallowed by the memories of great men in bygone ages. Pardon a personal reminiscence. About forty-seven years ago, when returning from Greece and Italy, I read with delight a passage of the great Roman orator, statesman, and philosopher, Cicero, which exactly describes this feeling. At the beginning of the fifth book of his philosophical treatise, "*De Finibus*," he is describing an afternoon walk which he took with his brother and friends from the western gate of Athens to the gardens of the Academy. He there observes that we are more affected by visiting places in which great men have lived than we are when we read their writings, or hear of their deeds. "*Magis movemur, quum loca videmus in quibus viros memoriâ dignos versatos esse accepimus, quam quum scripta eorum legimus aut facta audimus.*" And he illustrates this by a reference to objects which he and his friends saw that afternoon. Among these was the tomb of Pericles, and the spot where Demosthenes trained himself to become the greatest orator of Greece, and the grove of the Academy, immortalised by the School of Plato, and the beautiful Colonus, the birth-place of Sophocles and death-place of Œdipus. If I might illustrate this by referring to sacred archæology and topography, I would do so by a notice of the earliest Christian itinerary of the Holy Land, the letter of St. Jerome, in the fourth century, describing his visit, in company with the noble, pious, and munificent Roman matron, Paulla, the descendant of the Scipios, to the most celebrated sites and remains of Biblical history in Palestine. But I forbear, and will pass on to observe that in our archæological excursions and researches during the present week in Lincoln and its neighbourhood, our thoughts will be extended from the narrow range of to-day, and we shall be made contemporaries with nineteen centuries. In the Roman Arch standing in the northern wall of the ancient citadel of Lindum, and spanning the military road which stretched from Lincoln to the Humber, we may imagine ourselves spectators of the warlike legions of the ancient mistress of the world, which marched along those great

martial highways, marked by milestones, of which one was disinterred the other day from its grave of 1,600 years; and near it we may listen in fancy to oratorical pleadings of lawyers in the ancient Roman Basilica, of which the columns of the façade have just been revealed to our view. Near them we are brought into contact with the greatest of Saxon kings and of Norman conquerors in his feudal castle of Lincoln, and, with one of the greatest of Norman bishops, St. Hugh and with St. Hugh you will also hold spiritual communion in your visit to the noble Minister of Stow and to Stow Park; and when you make your pilgrimage to Southwell and its grand Collegiate Church, soon, we hope, about to become a Cathedral of a new diocese, you will be brought into union with Paullinus, the apostle of Northumbria and Lindissi, in the seventh century, who built a church at Lincoln, and with Cardinal Wolsey, Dean and Bishop of Lincoln in the sixteenth, and with King Charles I. in his later days, in the seventeenth century. You will thus be brought into sympathy with great men, and into synchronism with great events, and will drink in a refreshing draught of that generous spirit which the study of archæology freely ministers, and which, if we are not wanting to ourselves, will make us wiser and better men.

We might, if time allowed, dwell on that consolatory influence which this study exercises in times of sorrow. It was said by the greatest critic of antiquity that tragedy has a purifying power, because it displays noble examples of suffering. There is also a tragedy of events and of places connected with great events, and this has a purifying, elevating, and soothing influence. When we contemplate the desolation and ruins of ancient buildings and cities, of palaces, churches, abbeys, and castles, we forget our private griefs in a feeling of sympathy with public sorrows. I have referred to an antiquarian picture drawn by the hand of Cicero; may I refer to an antiquarian sketch, by means of which one of his friends, Sulpitius, consoled him in the bitterness of his private affliction, the death of his only and dearly beloved daughter. "On my return from Asia," he writes, "I was sailing from Ægina to Megara, and I then saw the

ruins of cities formerly famous, but now desolate. Behind me was Ægina, in front Megara, on my right Peiræus, the harbour of Athens, on the left Corinth, all once prosperous, but now dead and buried. Why (he adds) should we grieve so much for our own private losses, when cities themselves are tombs?" To a Christian this question comes with a greater force, for there is a promise of a glorious and eternal future for our children and friends, but there is no such resurrection for cities.

And here, before I conclude, may I be allowed to say a few words on the spiritual uses of archæology? One of the most instructive revelations which this study presents to us is that of the deep feeling of religion which animated the greatest nations of antiquity in their most heroic days, and which showed itself not only in their cities at home, but wherever they planted colonies abroad. Let anyone stand in the solitary plain of Pæstum, or on the hilly ridge of the Sicilian Girgenti—the ancient Agrigentum—and contemplate the group of magnificent temples on both those sites, or in the sequestered vale of Segesta, and look on that noble religious fabric standing there in its lonely grandeur, or on the huge columns of Selinus thrown prostrate by an earthquake; or let him stand on the Areopagus at Athens and look at the Erechtheum and Parthenon towering above him—and let him remember that all these grand buildings were works of religion, not, indeed, rightly directed, but grounded on a belief in unseen heavenly powers controlling human affairs, and in a future state of rewards and punishments; and let him consider also that those who erected those noble public religious buildings cared little for their own private houses, which were comparatively mean and insignificant, and he will feel himself constrained to ask whether we may not learn some lessons of religious zeal and self sacrifice, especially in this sceptical age, from heathens themselves. The first thing that some of them did in planting a colony was to build a magnificent temple. Where are our own cathedrals erected by England in her colonies?

One topic more. We may claim also for archæology the honour of illustrating the inspired text of Holy Scripture and confirming the truth of Reve-

lation. The researches of Rosellini and Sir Gardiner Wilkinson in Egypt have refuted the allegations of certain sceptics, and have corroborated the Mosaic narrative. The cuneiform inscriptions of Nineveh have proved that Samaria was not taken by Shalmanezzer—as some had supposed, but as the Bible nowhere asserts,—but by Sargon, once mentioned by Isaiah, whose history they have revealed. And they have shed a flood of light on Hebrew prophecy. Archæological researches at Babylon have brought to light Nebuchadnezzar's own account of his magnificent works in which he gloried, and have explained to us why Belshazzar is represented by Daniel as chief in power at Babylon when taken by Cyrus. Similar contributions have been recently made by archæology to the elucidation of the New Testament. The inscriptions lately discovered at Cyprus have removed objections to the accuracy of St. Luke's statement in the Acts of the Apostles on the Proconsulate of Sergius Paulus; and the inscription lately found at Jerusalem illustrates the assertion in that book that to bring Greeks into the Temple there was regarded as a heinous crime.

You will allow me, in conclusion, to pay a tribute of thankfulness to a sister society, our Diocesan Antiquarian and Architectural Association, which owes so much to the fostering care of my right reverend brother, the Bishop Suffragan of Nottingham, and which is a loving fellow-labourer with your own Institute, and which shows the use of archæology to Christianity. Since your last visit to Lincoln about a million of money has been contributed and expended in this diocese in the building and restoration of Churches; that this sum has been well and wisely applied, you will, we hope, have ample evidence in your visits to the churches in Lincoln and its neighbourhood in the present week. This is due mainly to the intelligent study of Christian antiquity, and to a spirit of reverential regard for the noble, ancient churches with which this diocese abounds. The study therefore of archæology, which has led to such valuable practical results, is well entitled to our respect on this account. For such reasons as these we heartily bid you welcome to Lincoln, and I request you to accept my respectful thanks for the indulgence with which you have now honoured me.