

OPENING ADDRESS OF THE ANTIQUARIAN SECTION AT
THE CAMBRIDGE MEETING.¹

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At the meeting of the Archæological Institute held last year in the good city of Edinburgh, the Chair of the Antiquarian Section was occupied by one whose great knowledge in various branches of Archæological lore is fully equalled by his power of communicating it by tongue and by pen. Dr., now Sir John Evans, on that occasion read a discourse on the "Progress of Archæology" during the period intervening between the years 1856 and 1891, which was so thorough in its review of all branches, from the palæolithic to the present periods, that it would be vain to travel again over so well trodden and observed a course. I regret that this year the Chair has not one equally learned and eloquent for its occupant, as I cannot but feel how weakly I shall perform the duty so admirably fulfilled by my predecessor. Indeed, it was rash of me to accept of so high a duty, and the more so as for some years past I have neglected following the course of events Archæological, and from various causes have retired in great measure from the active pursuit of Antiquarian study and research. I am behind the times, and must therefore crave the indulgence of my hearers for the meagre matter of my poor address.

The last meeting of the Royal Archæological Institute at Cambridge took place in the year 1854, in the month of July. On that occasion our Institute was honoured by the presence of that enlightened Prince whose loss our country and our beloved Queen must ever deplore. His keen perception fully appreciated, and his education in Germany—where Archæological studies and teaching have been, and still are, much in advance of what has hitherto been done

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in this country—had led him to a worthy estimation of the value of those pursuits which are the main objects of this Society.

On that occasion also our much lamented then President, Lord Talbot de Malahide, expressed his earnest desire to see the science of Archæology welcomed by *Alma Mater*, and more extensively recognised among academic studies. He congratulated Cambridge on the establishment of a professorship of Archæology, and offered his tribute of respect to Dr. Disney, to whose patriotism and disinterestedness the University was indebted for the gift of his collection and the endowment of that professorship.

By way of parenthesis I may also refer to a remark made at that time by Lord Talbot, to the effect that the Trustees of the British Museum were much to blame in neglecting to acquire the Faussett collection of Roman and Saxon objects, a fault which I think and hope may not now be found to prevail among their successors, for, in the matter of acquisitions, when desirable, we gladly consent when the Exchequer smiles!

I recollect, not now so many years ago, at Rome, in conversation with one of the most learned German antiquaries of our day, being asked how many professors of Archæology we had at the English Universities, doubtless anticipating an alphabetical list. The sudden shock of such a question was most trying, and I replied—I almost hoped inarticulately—one, at Cambridge!

Since then the Slade Professorships of Fine Arts were established, not intended merely for the teaching of art practice, but also for its history, to trace its rise, development and decadence at various periods and in various countries, the archæology of art.

And here, again, I must pause to congratulate Cambridge on having so valuable an occupant of that chair as she possesses in my friend Professor Middleton, whose works are so well known and so highly esteemed by us all. We now can say we have some other few Archæological professors, as at University College in London, and the Lincoln professorship so ably held by Professor Percy Gardner. Oxford also may boast of her keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, Mr. Arthur Evans, whose knowledge of classical antiquity and numismatics renders his lectures of such high

worth, and whose works on the "Horsemen" of Tarentum, and more recently on the "Syracusan Medallions," are of such value to numismatic science; as are also his recent contributions to Archæologia "On a late Celtic Cemetery at Aylesford, Kent," and his "Antiquarian researches in Illyricum" to the general stock. The University of Cambridge has in Mr. Middleton a second Archæological professor, who can teach beyond the range of classical antiquity. At Oxford Mr. Evans is our equivalent: but still they are too few, and much remains to be done in that direction before we can compare in Antiquarian teaching power with Germany, or even, perhaps, with France.

We need not now push this enquiry further, as its limits are, alas, too small. We leave the subject with a sigh, but yet with some hope that the study of Archæology at the seats of learning may be more promoted and encouraged in the future than it has been in the past and to our day.

The consideration of the science itself and its teaching naturally leads us to those treasure houses in which the smaller objects of its study and evidence for its conclusions are preserved—the museums of our own country and of the world.

In France almost every town has its Musée, many of them extremely well kept and fed, and in many instances containing objects of the highest local and general interest and importance.

Germany, ever active in the cause of education, has made rapid strides within the last few years in the establishment and development of museums in all her principal and many of her minor cities. For their national collections the Germans have become dangerous rivals in the auction room and the market for objects of art and of antiquity. Dr. Bode, the active and highly astute director of the Berlin Museum, supported by the liberality of the old Emperor and his successors in power, frequently has and does carry off to Germany treasures dispersed, alas, from many of our noble and formerly wealthy houses. Every such dispersion carries choice objects abroad which have long been the pride of those who had collected or inherited them, and were the boast of our country. But, nevertheless, we are not without good subject for rejoicing. The increase and development of our own museums in

every branch of science, which has occurred within my own and, doubtless, within the recollection of many of those whom I now have the honour of addressing, is almost, if not quite, parallel to the marvellous development of scientific discovery and its equally wonderful adaptations to the requirements of the human race.

I can recollect Paris with only a few gas lamps in some of the more fashionable streets; the rest was dimness made manifest by the feeble glimmer of the oil-fed wick smouldering in a filthy lamp that creaked on its suspending chain, barely revealing the slush of the foul road beneath. Electricity now changes their night's darkness into day. I can recall the time when present at experiments to try some method of transmitting messages by that electricity so far as round the precincts of a London dock. The globe is now in a network of its conducting cables. These are amazing steps in progress, but I can also recall the time within memory when the nucleus of our National Gallery—now one of the richest and, perhaps, the best representative collection of pictures in the world—was dimly seen in a private house, of moderate pretension, in Pall Mall. When old Montague House in Bloomsbury contained an *olla podrida* of savage implements, "an alligator stuffed and other skins of ill shaped fishes, green earthen pots, &c.," in truth Shakespeare's vivid description of the apothecaries shop was equally applicable to the then British Museum, to the dear old Ashmolean, and to what few others could be found in England and elsewhere. The development of natural historical science and of the study of Art and Archæology, for these last are twin sisters, has thrown as much light on these dark depositories as electricity has done on the filthy slums of old Paris.

Such remarks do not, of course, apply to the palaces and galleries in the great cities of Italy, France, or Spain, but even there the development of the last half century is seen throughout, although, alas, the private collections of the old Italian families are now for the most part dispersed.

To recur to our own museums. In London, that for natural history, now separately housed at the Cromwell Road, is a glory to the country that possesses it. At Bloomsbury the rich collection of British and Foreign pre-historic relics is well illustrated by the unrivalled series

of arms and implements in former and present use by the savage races of every portion of our globe. The careful systematic arrangement of this vast assemblage of objects, illustrative of the habits of the earlier condition of the human race, is due to the untiring industry and knowledge of Mr. Augustus Wollaston Franks, our now President of the Society of Antiquaries. The Egyptian galleries contain a vast and most rich collection of objects illustrative of the arts of that wonderful people, as also many important larger monuments.

The Assyrian galleries, so enriched by the discovery and excavations of Sir A. H. Layard, Sir H. Rawlinson, Mr. Rassam, Dr. Budge, and others, has an unrivalled series of sculptured monuments, while among smaller objects the inscribed tablets are of high importance. There is, probably no such representative a collection of Greek vases as that in the British Museum, recently re-arranged by Mr. A. Murray, the present head of that department, who succeeded Sir C. Newton, the discoverer of the Mausoleum, in the charge. Of Roman and Etruscan Antiquities we have rich store, and our Greek and Roman bronzes are numerous and fine. Not to dwell too long on the untold wealth of the British Museum, I cannot refrain from alluding to the collection of fictile wares of European and of Oriental origin, as also of glass, which is, perhaps, the choicest and one of the most extensive in the world. The precious contents of these galleries have come together within the last half century. At the sale of the Bernal collection in 1855, a Government grant to the Trustees permitted the acquisition of examples of Renaissance Art, under the astute guidance of Mr. Franks. Those acquisitions were added to by Mr. Franks's great liberality, and subsequently, by the bequests of the Slade and Henderson collections; some other gifts were added, but the "crowning mercy" was the presentation of his entire and historically important collection of Oriental pottery and porcelain by Mr. Franks, to whom the British Museum and, I may justly say, the British nation is most deeply indebted.

I cannot leave this subject without referring to the choice contents of the gem room at Bloomsbury, which now fairly holds its own with that of almost any other museum in Europe, both in regard to engraved gems,

as to Etruscan, Greek, and Roman jewellery, rings, &c., the last great acquisition being the Pichon Royal Gold Cup, of which, doubtless, many of us have seen the wood cuts and have read the description in the Illustrated London News, and upon which Mr. Franks recently read a paper before the Society of Antiquaries, which will probably appear in the second part of the fifty-third volume of *Archæologia*.

A better room for the preservation and exhibition of these beautiful objects, as also one for the rich cabinet of coins, is in preparation, and will soon be in readiness to receive their future precious contents.

I fear I may have dwelt too long on the glories of our National Museum, but I may, perhaps, as a humble member of its governing body, be pardoned for lingering over the untold wealth of such a treasure house, and endeavouring to impress on my hearers a stronger feeling of interest therein than is generally to be observed, even among persons to whom objects of Art and Antiquity are interesting, but who, when in London, rarely think of spending a morning in those galleries so full of rich and rare objects in every class, and of the greatest beauty and interest. Indeed, it is remarkable that among the higher and educated classes how seldom it seems to occur to parents and to teachers that a frequent visit to those galleries would impress more upon the minds of their children, or pupils, through the tangible evidence of objects of daily use and religious observance by peoples whose printed histories are crammed into their young brains, without any visible, and, as it were, living corroboration such as is afforded by the contents of our museums.

The growth of such institutions is in itself a history, and one which is so truly Archæological in character that I may yet perhaps be permitted to continue the theme.

The dispersal of the Bernal collection in 1855, one year after our Institute's last visit to Cambridge, was food for that new-born infant of the School of Design and the first Great Exhibition, which was assisted into being by the late Sir Henry, then Mr. Cole, and for which the good Prince Albert was the sponsor. But that food was ably selected, and further like nutriment continued to be furnished by one to whom the merit of forming and increasing the

collection of the South Kensington Museum for many years is chiefly due—Sir Charles, then Mr. J. C. Robinson. He, by his untiring energy far and wide, gathered nearly all the more important objects that form the glory of that rich but now somewhat too heterogeneous a collection, for latterly by purchase and by gift, in some instances of objects scantily worthy, and perhaps by a somewhat less effective management and direction, and ever-increasing want of space, it has become such a crowded “*omnium gatherum*” of ill-arranged and ill-assorted specimens that one loses oneself as in a maze. Nevertheless, it is a collection of primary importance, and one that with better accommodation and organisation will be of the greatest value to students of Art and Antiquity.

Edinburgh can now boast of her gallery and of museums of science and art. Dublin also, the loss of the late director of whose picture gallery, Mr. Doyle, all who knew him and of him so deeply regret. The larger manufacturing towns are now rivalling each other in the erection, and wealthy citizens are liberally contributing towards the formation and the filling of picture galleries and of museums for Art objects and for natural history specimens. Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Norwich, and many other less important cities can now boast of their collections and their galleries. It is to be hoped that the funds generously afforded by some municipalities and individuals for the erection of museums for Archæological and artistic objects, may not be used merely in the building and fitting of long and lofty Architectural galleries to hold a few good and many very inferior ancient and modern pictures, while the objects of local and general Antiquarian value are carelessly crammed into small lateral rooms of mean proportions, and treated as a mere appendage to the “galleries of Art.”

Here at Cambridge the munificence of Lord Fitzwilliam supplied a building of ample size and commanding architecture, which contains the gallery of pictures and the works of Art and Antiquity in other categories. Its keepership is now held by one of those few Archæologists whose all-round knowledge is so extensive and so profound, and wisely has it been directed that the Slade Professor Middleton should also be the Keeper of the University

Museum. And now Cambridge may also pride herself on the fine range of buildings devoted to the practical studies of natural science and to the conservation of specimens connected therewith, as also with what touches us more closely, her magnificent collection of casts from the antique, &c., so important to the student of classic sculpture.

It is, however, with deep regret that I must here refer to the loss of one so well known and so well esteemed at Cambridge as the late Rev. Samuel Savage Lewis, whose munificent bequest, not only of his collection of gems and antiquities, but of the reversion of money to a large amount, to his well loved College, Corpus Christi, of which he was a Fellow is so admirable. His loss was also much deplored by the Cambridge Archæological Society, of which he was long the active secretary.

Last on my list, but first in point of Antiquity, is the venerable old Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, which stands firm and somewhat forbidding behind those disintegrating terminals adjoining Exeter. This was a minor but parallel collection to that in Montague House, a mixture of the decomposing fragments of rare creatures, of which the now extinct Dodo was the most rare, of antique, mediæval, renaissance, and modern objects and curios, from the Alfred Jewel to Guy Fox's lantern, the whole surmounted by curious and some fine portraits and pictures. The noble gift by the Rev. Frederick William Hope (one of the oldest and dearest of my friends) of his extensive entomological collection, his library of works on natural history, and much money, gave the start to the already wished for museum of natural history, on the building of which those kindred objects which the Ashmolean contained were transferred thereunto. The late Mr. J. H. Parker did much for what remained, and left money towards the endowment of a curator, but it was not till Mr. Arthur Evans took the keepership that the old Ashmolean had new young blood stirred into its system, and, with the addition of some portion of my own, the collection has so increased that the old building is no longer adequate for its contents. The necessity for more adequate accommodation was manifest, but although a good site was in the hands of the University, behind and adjoining the Art galleries, the means for the erection could not be afforded. With some

aid proffered by myself for the endowment, the authorities of the University, after no small hesitation and most guarded consideration of my suggestions, have at length liberally agreed to find funds to the extent of £15,000 to build and furnish a new Ashmolean in direct communication with the galleries. Thus we shall have all our collections of Art and Antiquarian objects in connected buildings, affording every convenience for the study and enjoyment of their contents. This work is now in the architect's hands, and the builders will soon commence the erection of our new walls. The old Ashmolean shell, after transportation of its kernel to the new building, may be absorbed by and made useful to the Bodleian Library, to the great advantage of both Institutions. Thus, I hope, that, when completed, Oxford may possess a museum, which, although unable to boast of such wealth of marble as is shown in the magnificent atrium of the Fitzwilliam, will have equal accommodation for the treasures of Art and of pre-historic, local, classical, and renaissance Antiquity which it will contain.

Again, I am reminded of the loss of one whose liberal gifts constantly and steadily continued to enrich the Ashmolean with Egyptian, Sassanian, Hittite, and other objects, and finally by the bequest of his collection of engraved gems—the Rev. Greville Chester.

The Pitt Rivers collection, now housed in juxtaposition with the natural history museum, is another jewel in the Oxford crown, the munificent gift of that careful investigator.

I fear I have sadly taxed your patience by dwelling too long upon this theme, but museums have been, from my boyhood, places of great attraction to me, and I think I may justify myself in making them the principle subject of my address when we consider that in them is enshrined the precious relics of bygone ages. These are more truthful evidences of history than records, or than folk lore, and therefore of the highest value to the Archæologist. It is in the investigation, and elucidation of these relics that the true Antiquary learns to read and determine passages of history unknown. By the comparison of fragments new languages become revealed; a paltry piece of stone, a seal, records a personage or fact in history, which

may overset the carefully worked out or built up theory of the historian. Among those relics we have brought before us objects which human fingers fashioned thousands and, perhaps, tens of thousand years gone by, showing us objects of beauty and painstaking labour unsurpassed, aye, unequalled by any production which modern ingenuity, aided by modern science, can produce. Museums, therefore, are surely worthy of our consideration as Archæologists, and their rise, improvement and development are a part of the history of our own time which is equally interesting to the Antiquary, the Artist, and the Historian.

The "progress of Archæology" was, as I have before stated, so ably and so thoroughly laid before you and followed up to last year by the then President of the Society of Antiquaries, Sir John Evans, that I will hardly dare even to glance at the work accomplished during the past year.

I may, however, refer to the discovery of three human skeletons lying together in a cave opening from the red rocks at Mentone. The rude stone knife, the chaplet of pierced teeth, the fish bone necklet (if original), and the great depth of accumulated debris which had been over them, all pointed to a great antiquity, probably to the earlier neolithic, if not, as was at first supposed, to the palæolithic period of man's existence.

It is greatly to be regretted that the ignorant prejudice and greed of the owner of the quarry, and the dilatory and injudicious action of the authorities, allowed these precious relics to remain unprotected; that no photograph of them was taken when first discovered, and that the curious, unheeding of the mischief that they did, crowded into the cave greatly damaging these most interesting remains. They were very perfect when I first saw them, but exposure to the action of the atmosphere and carelessness have probably led to their disintegration and decay. I am not aware of any published scientific record of these remarkable remains, although I learned that the skulls had been entrusted to a French savant.

In Egypt Dr. Flinders Petrie has continued those researches which have taught us that the Greeks, before Greece, had communication with, and doubtless derived much knowledge from, the inhabitants of that country, whose history and civilisation seems to retire farther and

farther into the distant past as exploration reveals, more and more, of their wonderful remains.

An objector to some of Dr. Petrie's conclusions has, however, arisen, and a duel, by letters, is being fought with Mr. Torr, whose motto, in respect to many other conclusions, as also to various objects, presumably of antique origin, has so frequently been "*non credo*."

And here I must pause to express my own deep grief, the which I feel sure is fully reciprocated by all those whom I have the honour of addressing, as indeed it is by the Literary and Antiquarian world, at the loss we have sustained in the death of Miss Amelia B. Edwards, whose indefatigable labours in the cause of Egyptian Archæology were and are so valuable, and whose great work "A Thousand Miles up the Nile" is the best companion on board the Dahabeyah.

It was by rummaging about old stones that within the last few years the existence of another race of men and another language has been told to us, and the former whereabouts of a seemingly important people is becoming known. That field Professor Sayce has almost made his own, and much more knowledge of the Hittites will probably be revealed by his and other worker's investigations.

Day by day new facts are being discovered by the Antiquary, corroborating, explaining, or modifying the more difficult chapters of Biblical history, and it is from other such old stones and earthen tablets that so much has been gained of Babylonian and Assyrian record. It is here that so much and such good work has been done by the Society of Biblical Archæology, whose originator, the late Dr. Birch, was too soon called from his duties as its President. The curious discoveries by Mr. Theodore Bent of the remains of an ancient and, as he supposes, a Semitic race of early time in Africa are noteworthy.

In Greece a constant activity of Antiquarian research is being exercised by the Government of that country, as by the British School, the French, the German, and American Societies, their only want is that power which is represented by the "almighty dollar." In all other respects the Report read at the last Annual Meeting of the British School was quite satisfactory, and I would take this opportunity of referring my hearers to the admirable address delivered at that meeting by Lord Bute.

Here, again, I am reminded that the hand of death has laid low one of the greatest historians of our century, struck down so sadly when in the full pursuit of his great work on the History of Sicily. I allude, of course, to the late Professor Freeman.

I feel that I have too long trespassed upon your time, but I may be permitted to refer to the good work done by Mr. Bunnell Lewis, and by various other members of our own Institute. The old fountain head from which we sprang, the Society of Antiquaries, has also shown renewed energy since certain changes were effected in its executive; the publication of *Archæologia* now fairly keeps pace with the many valuable papers that our Fellows favour us by reading; the Proceedings also are well to the front. In direct research the excavations at Silchester are steadily continued, and will I trust be well supplied with that power to which I alluded when speaking of the work of the British School at Athens, and without which this English Pompeii cannot be thoroughly explored. A most interesting paper on this subject will be found in the second part of the fifty-second volume of *Archæologia*, since when more is recorded in the first part of the fifty-third volume. This year's excavations have laid bare the remains of perhaps the earliest Christian Church that England possesses, and on which Mr. St. John Hope, has prepared an exhaustive paper.

A congress of representatives of all the various Antiquarian and Archæological Societies of the United Kingdom (may it ever be so), has been formed at the instigation of the parent body, with the view to establishing mutual communication between those bodies centering round the old Society, and thus tending to a unity of action and concentration of much wasted power, particularly on subjects that are not merely local, but of general Archæological importance to the whole Kingdom. The establishment of such a Congress, we also hope may tend to sink rivalry in mutual action, and lead to more cordial and friendly intercommunication between all engaged in kindred pursuits, and animated by the same desire to illustrate and verify the real facts of history by an intelligent examination of its monuments.