INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK TO THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD AT SCARBOROUGH.[1]

I find myself to-day in a position of considerable perplexity. When I first accepted the kind invitation of your President that I should be chairman of this meeting I too readily supposed that it would be my duty simply to preside at a series of meetings and to listen to a number of instructive papers and speeches. I was glad to show my interest in the work of the Institute, and I looked forward to receiving a great deal of pleasant instruction on the subject of archæology. But when at a later period I learned that I was expected to give an address I was alarmed at the responsibility which I had taken upon me. I felt that I ought to listen rather than to speak, to be a learner rather than a teacher. On looking at some of the records of your proceedings in past years I found that the various presidents had spoken at considerable length on archæological subjects, and had brought before the meetings most interesting reports as to the investigations and discoveries and the progress which had been made during the previous year. Now I am bound to confess to you that of all such matters I know absolutely nothing. I fear, therefore, that you will be greatly disappointed. Archæology is one of many subjects which have always greatly attracted me, but through the long years of a busy life I have never found the time to devote myself to its study. There are other pursuits in which I have employed my scanty leisure, for I feel very strongly that in every profession, and not least in the work of the ministry, it is in the highest degree desirable that every busy man should have some one or more interests quite apart from those of his daily life. Nothing is so likely to save him from the danger and misery of becoming narrow and one-sided in his range of thought; and it also serves to bring him into relation and intercourse with other classes of his fellow men. And

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this at least I may say in commendation of archæology: that it seems admirably adapted for providing a *diversion*—I use the word in its accurate rather than its popular sense—a diversion for busy people from their daily toil and anxious cares; as well as a wholesome alterative for others whose lives are mostly spent in pleasurable employments and whose daily duties are largely regulated by the customs and demands of society. No doubt there are many subjects and pursuits which offer the promise of reasonable and delightful recreation; for, even in these matters, the competition so universal in this nineteenth century finds a place. The number of subjects and books and occupations which hold out attractions to the thoughtful and intelligent are increasing upon us from day to day. Almost every newspaper has in it some suggestive reference to matters of the deepest interest which at once arrest our attention and awaken our desire for further knowledge. But to those whose minds and hands are already full of occupation the suggestion has in it something of the torment of Tantalus; for while we thirst, we can only look from a distance at the tempting cup, without any satisfaction of our longing desire.

Some of you may possibly have known in your own experience the trial of sitting from day to day in a well-stocked library and being debarred from any further knowledge of a large number of the books than can be gathered from a study of the titles inscribed on their backs.

At an early period of my life, in the course of my reading, I stumbled upon a Latin motto which I hailed with delight and immediately inscribed on my book case, "Humanæ sapientiæ pars est quædam æquo animo nescire velle." I will venture to put it into English for the sake of those who may not have heard me distinctly. "It is a part of human wisdom to be willingly ignorant of certain things, with a quiet mind." The philosopher of the sixth century, to whom we owe this maxim (he was by the way himself an archbishop), has placed me under a great obligation by this word of comfort. I have found no lack of occasions on which to apply it to my own needs, one of them has been in the matter of archæology; and I

heartily wish that some one of my learned brethren here to-day might have occupied my place, that not only you but I might have gained some profitable knowledge of those interesting matters with which your Institute is concerned. But, as this might not be, I have been thinking how I could best discharge my duty this morning; and in the course of my thoughts I began to ask myself, what is it that attracts us to this particular subject? What is it that brings so many persons together on such an occasion as this and induces them to travel by rail or by road, in sunshine or in storm, to visit objects of archæological interest? What is the source and character of the pleasure which we find in the study and the pursuits of archæology? I found myself face to face with a most interesting but difficult question, and I thought I might venture to put before you this morning some of the considerations which presented themselves to my own mind. I shall, of course, do this very simply—not in philosophical terms, but in popular language—and if you should find me dull I will at least be brief.

Archæology in its literal significance is the science of antiquity. Now at first sight we might have supposed that in this busy age men would have been sufficiently interested and occupied in what is modern; and content to let the dead past bury its dead. But this, as you know, is very far from being the case. In this the busiest age the world has ever known, and amidst the pressure and excitement of every-day life, men's thoughts still turn towards the ages of antiquity more generally and more earnestly than perhaps at any previous time.

Even in that most modern of nations—the great Republic on the other side of the Atlantic—in the midst of all the forward movement and untiring enterprise which characterises that remarkable people the interest in antiquity is growing day by day. They, too, have their archæological associations, although for the most part they have to go further afield to pursue their studies. Year by year they cross the oceans in thousands, not only to see the old country from which they sprung but to visit and admire those objects of antiquity which indeed are theirs as well as ours.

The interest in archæology is almost universal. We speak of the dead past; but, in truth, to a thoughtful mind the past is never dead. It is not even past—it still lives on, and lives to exercise a strange and powerful fascination on all educated minds, and even in some degree on the humblest and most ignorant. What then is the meaning and nature of the impression produced upon us in contemplating such objects as you will meet throughout this week? It is an impression quite unique and sometimes exciting, if we may judge by the expressions of delight and surprise which we frequently utter ourselves or hear from the lips of others around us. We stand face to face with some venerable building—half destroyed it may be by the ravages of time—a mere ruin crumbling to decay, and we are lost in admiration and delight. It may not retain the traces of any exceptional beauty or grandeur. It may never have been more beautiful than many modern buildings of the same character which we can behold without any emotion. But it is old. It has stood there through long centuries. And we travel a long way to see it, and hundreds make the same pilgrimage week after week.

We may say perhaps it is picturesque; yes! but what do we mean by this term? We apply it to things and persons which belong to our own day, but they do not stir our feelings like the old ruin. We may call it beautiful, but wherein does its beauty lie? There is beauty all around us for those that have eyes to see; and it is still a question among philosophers whether the beauty which we admire belongs to the object of our admiration or is the offspring of our own brain—whether, in short, it is objective or subjective. Nor does the ancient ruin impress us merely because it is old. No, for the hills by which it is surrounded are older still; and although we admire them in a certain way, it is not in the same way: they do not awaken in us the same kind of feeling as the broken walls and the shattered columns. Or, to take another illustration, we find in some remote spot a battered coin, bearing it may be the image and superscription of some ancient king; we seize it eagerly, and gaze upon it fondly, and show it with delight to our friends. And why? a new coin of the same value, in all

the freshness of its glitter and the perfection of its workmanship, would scarcely occupy our thoughts for a moment.

Or, again, in some of the excursions of a society like this you come upon arrow heads and saws of flint, or other weapons and instruments of very early civilization; or you find traces of ancient dwellings of a kind very unlike our own; or broken bits of household crockery and such like wreckage of a far off time; and you are willing to endure fatigue and toil if only they should bring you within reach of such discoveries.

Now it is not enough to say that these things are "so full of interest"; for our question is, on what does that interest depend? No doubt in many instances it is enhanced by its relation to special studies upon which we have embarked. To the student of history these relics are of great practical value, for they throw light upon the habits and pursuits of persons who lived at remote periods in our own country; or if the articles are manifestly of foreign origin, they may help us to solve the question as to the localities in which these foreigners took up their quarters, and perhaps enable us to trace the course which they followed as they penetrated into the interior, and the limits which they reached. For indeed archæology is the handmaid of history, or rather its sister, reading the records of the past, not in ancient manuscripts or early chronicles, but in the ruins and the wreckage which each succeeding generation has left behind it when it passed away. And not only the historian, but the architect, and the artist, and the mechanic, as well as the naturalist, the philologist, and the numismatist may be laid under great obligation by the investigations and researches of such a society as this.

Yet this is something quite apart from the emotional experience which we are trying to analyse—the impression received and the interest felt in the remains of antiquity—quite apart from their collateral bearing upon special pursuits. Now, in venturing to suggest any explanation of this experience, or rather to ascertain its conditions and concomitants, we are entering on an inquiry which is beset by obscurity. It may even be

beyond our reach; it is possibly "a task to which the faculties of man are inadequate." Yet the consideration of the question may not be without profit even if it issue in nothing more than guesses after the truth; and it may perhaps give some additional enjoyment to our archæological pursuits.

When we try to examine the sensations which are produced by the contemplation of what is old, we shall find that they arise not so much from the thing itself as from ideas associated with it. If instead of an abbey, a castle, or a lake dwelling, we were to come upon a crag or a boulder which closely resembled these forms, we should certainly not be impressed in the same way. We might be interested in them from a mineralogical or geological point of view, but this interest would be of a very different kind from that which we experience in the contemplation of an ancient ruin. Or, again, if instead of a coin or an implement of some very early age, we should find merely a shapeless piece of metal or the fragment of a bone, these would no doubt have their interest for specialists but not for mankind in general, and even this interest would be of a kind wholly different. And the difference surely lies in this: that there are associations of ideas connected with the one class of objects which do not exist in the other. But, further, we shall find that these associations belong especially to the human element, so to speak, connected with either the ruin or the coin. It is this touch of nature which makes the whole world kin. As we look at the ancient castle we think, it may be almost unconsciously, of the great kings or nobles who dwelt in it centuries ago with their household and retainers; we wonder what kind of lives they led, what share they had in human joys and earthly sorrows. We imagine for ourselves the deadly struggles which have taken place beneath the castle walls: or the great festivities which have been held within. We often say, if these walls could speak, what tales they could tell! It is not the mere ruin itself which stirs our feelings, however grand or massive, or picturesque it may be. It is its human history which speaks to our hearts as we look upon its silent walls. And so again as we gaze upon the ruined abbey we cannot but remember that it was built in all its grandeur and beauty

by human hands long since laid to their rest; and we picture to ourselves the groups or multitudes of worshippers who from generation to generation assembled within its walls, each generation in its time to pass away and to be numbered with the dead. Or once more, as we handle the primitive implement of war or peace, we are curious to imagine the circumstances and the character of those by whom it was constructed and by whom it was used in those far off days; while the coin suggests to us the thought of the multitude of human hands through which it must have passed, and the various uses to which it was applied at some remote period in the annals of our country or perhaps of the human race. It may have formed a part of some gambling gain, or of the price of blood; or it may have been the only store of some sad widow in the humblest rank of life.

I do not say that we are always *conscious* of such thoughts or that they equally find a place in all of us; but I believe—indeed I feel assured—that something of them is mingled with all the impressions which we experience in gazing upon the ruins of the past.

It would appear, then, that one important factor in the emotions and impressions which we are considering is the association of these various objects with the history, the circumstances, and experiences of men and women essentially like ourselves, however different their environment may have been; while this very difference gives an added interest to our thoughts and speculations about them. But further you will see that these results imply in every instance the exercise of one of man's noblest gifts, that of imagination. It is only by its powers that we can picture to ourselves the surroundings and the occupations of those to whom we owe these objects of interest of which I have been speaking. There is none among our heaven-born faculties that has such power to stir our utmost being or to awaken our keenest susceptibilities, nor is there any of our powers which can give so much pleasure by its exercise. And this is true not only in its exceptional operation in the poet or the painter, but in its humbler and more limited exercise—in the common ranks of humanity.

But there is yet another element which demands our

recognition. In all these remains and vestiges of the far off past there is involved a certain amount of mystery. In every case we are dealing in some degree with the unknown. There is no characteristic of mankind more universal than the fascination which he finds in contemplating the unknown. It manifests itself in earliest infancy amidst the toys and trifles of childhood; it asserts itself in the speculations of philosophy and in the meditations of the religious life; it survives to the extremest age as we peer into the darkness which lies beyond the range of mortal eyes. It is one of the most striking testimonies to our divine origin, to the τι θεῖον within us, to the image of God in which we were made. It reveals itself especially in the feeling of wonder which we experience in the presence of anything which transcends our understanding. It is here that our weakness and our strength, our littleness and our greatness, find a common ground. There is really nothing more wonderful than the sense of wonder as it ranges upward from the idlest curiosity to the most exalted contemplation of undiscovered truth. It has been beautifully said by an Italian poet that

> "Wonder is the daughter of Ignorance and the mother of Knowledge."

And this is no mere poetical sentiment—it is the statement of a great law which finds its operation even in the researches of the archæologist. The wonderment with which he looks upon some strange relic of the past is the stimulus to patient inquiry and the harbinger of ultimate success.

The association of ideas, particularly those connected with human history; the exercise of the imagination in realising these ideas; and the sense of wonder called forth in their contemplation—these then, as it seems to me, are some of the conditions under which we experience the pleasure which we find in connection with the study and pursuits of archæology. I do not set them before you as the settled conclusions of philosophic research, but as the unrevised results of a quiet hour of thought in the midst of a very busy life. At the best they are mere suggestions for your consideration stated in the briefest and simplest

way. They have given no little pleasure to myself in thinking them out, and I owe this to your kindness in having invited me here to-day.

It is always good for us to look within at ourselves, even when we are busy in contemplating objects which lie without and around us. For we cannot separate ourselves from them. It is by virtue of what we are that we find either pleasure or profit in them. The poet has wisely said that

"The proper study of mankind is man,"

—the proper study, not the noblest; for there is one nobler still. And it is man, not as he appears amidst the disguises and distractions of the outer world, but in the secret chamber of his inner life; not in his reputation, but in his character—in the "hidden man of the heart." It is man with his manifold capacities—intellectual, moral, and spiritual; man with his marvellous faculties of thought and will, of imagination and desire. If for a few moments I have been leading your thoughts away from the more practical work which lies before you to some faint and broken lights of our higher selves, I trust that you will forgive the unusual course I have taken. I do not think that you will the less enjoy the excursions awaiting you, in which, alas! I am unable to take my part.