

The President's Address.

Mr. E. B. CELY TREVILIAN then delivered the following address :—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Before availing myself of the quarter of an hour, which I suppose may be considered the reasonable limit to which addresses of a purely presidential character should extend, I beg to acknowledge the compliment which has been paid me in my election as President for the coming year. I shall have the deep sympathy of my audience with me while I remind you of the great loss the society has lately sustained in the death of our bishop, Lord Arthur Hervey. He was a good archæologist, and had presided more than once over these meetings. But he was much more than this : like a good pilot he steered his bark, not among the creeks and shallows, but upon the deep mid-channel of the mighty stream which brings life and fertility both to the heart and to the intellect

of this nation. All who have experienced the great personal charm of Lord Arthur Hervey, and there are very few in this diocese who have not, will ever remember him as the most kindly, and I will add the most delightful, of mankind.

It is not merely in the variety of the subjects with which it deals, but in the diversity of the people who take an interest in it, that archæology may be compared to the net which was cast down into the sea and brought up of every kind. On the one hand are those really informed persons to whom we owe so much, the Freemans, the Buckles, Dr. Norris and Mr. Paul : on the other, that vast majority in whose mental equipment are united ignorance and credulity with wide sympathies and great curiosity towards the past. These, borrowing Mr. Arnold's famous phrase, we may call The Barbarians, and of these your President-elect claims to be the chief.

Well, in one regard at any rate, both wings of the army claim to stand upon common ground : over both of us the future casts her spell. Learned or unlearned, we should all like to be assured that the Fates look kindly on the future of archæological study. The interest that mankind takes in its own youth and manhood springs only partly from the element of *auld lang syne* : partly, may we not go so far as to say chiefly, it springs from the consciousness that that far-off youth is the direct parent of our approaching maturity and age ; and the *σύντροφον ὄμμα* of the archæologist will refuse to have its vision blocked either in the one direction or the other. The narrow tongue of land on which we stand is bounded, no doubt, by a shore on either side, but the same ocean washes each. It is then no contradiction to say that archæology, like the Roman God, looks both ways at once, and that even while painfully and on her knees she drives a trench through the barrow, or uncovers the foundation of the lost Lady chapel, she casts furtive glances at the modern erection that is springing up in the adjoining parish, and that is daring to incorporate within its mushroom walls many of her own sacred stones.

What then are the prospects of archæology in view of the phenomenally rapid social changes of the time? If our sky is looking (let us hope it is only for a time) somewhat overcast, it is not that people are beginning to regard with active aversion the study of the past, and the habits of mind that it engenders, but that we as a nation are beginning apparently to look upon life and the world from a new point of view. The sole aim and object seems to be to satisfy the requirements of the importunate, the exacting, the inexorable present moment. The sayings, the doings, the precedents of the olden time interest us but little, and our debt to the past—if indeed it exists at all—sits lightly upon our shoulders; while with regard to the future many of us apparently acknowledge no claim at all. The prayer for daily bread is becoming not only more intense but more restricted in its scope. Never was the State more necessitous, but—money or no money—the charioteer who directs our course points with imperious finger to a thousand objects of desire. All have to be procured, and all have to be paid for. It is by this road that we reach the domain of archæology, whose manifold treasures produce indeed no direct income, but do as a matter of fact represent vast sums of money. Suddenly, and without warning, it seems to have dawned on the mind of the tax gatherer that here lay untapped a rich source of revenue, and he is shewing no scruples about draining it to the last drop. It is true that a *chef d'œuvre* by Flaxman or Gainsborough, or many another great work of plastic or pictorial art, is not necessarily archæological, but an undoubted Holbein or Vandyke would almost certainly bear that character. But it is not the pictures only that are at stake:—coins, manuscripts, parchments, the thousand objects that fill museums, like the unvalued jewels strewing the floor of the ocean in Clarence's dream, will all have to contribute in an altogether greater proportion than formerly to the support of a power, which, while exacting the last drop

that is due, appears to regard with equanimity the inevitable shrinkage of the tributary stream.

The bulk of these things, as they gradually quit their present home (for none but the very richest will afford to retain such costly luxuries) will not pass from private hands into the possession of the nation. That is not the way in which great social movements operate. The probability seems to be that they will vanish altogether. It is certain that the pictures that had been brought together at Whitehall by Charles I formed the most important private collection of the time. With the success of the Puritan movement their dispersal into the distance was inevitable, and several of them can still be traced in the famous galleries of Europe. To take an extreme—a very extreme—case, but none the worse for that, as an illustration:—let us imagine for a moment that the Elgin marbles had remained in private hands. It will be understood of course that I am now discussing the probable future of archæological things which happen to be owned by private individuals, and not the rights and wrongs of Lord Elgin's audacious enterprize. Let us suppose, I say, that these marbles had never entered the doors of the British Museum, but had remained the private property of the illustrious Giaour who brought them over. And then let anyone who has made himself acquainted with the new law (especially the principle which it contains that a man's whole private patrimony will in future be regarded by the State as tainted if he happens to have succeeded in addition to the possession of any beautiful—though utterly unproductive—objects), calculate the amount of the tax which would now be due to the State whenever the ownership of these marbles changed by death. If they really possess the archæological value that is attributed to them, it is not too much to say that under the new system the mere fact of dying in possession of the spoils of the Parthenon, even if the dead possessor had been reckoned among

the comparatively rich, would cripple his surviving family for a generation.*

Assuming, however, that a prudent foreboding in the mind of our hypothetical private owner of these archæological treasures would prompt an immediate sale, would the nation in its present mood offer to purchase them itself? There is no

* The following comparison will help to make this clear:—

The case of A.		The case of X (inheritor of the Elgin marbles) valued at, say a quarter of a million pounds).	
Value of A's property at } the time of his death }	£	Value of X's property at } the time of his death } plus the marbles ... }	£
150,000		150,000	
Charges, for jointures, younger children, etc. }	£	Charges, for jointures, younger children, etc. }	£
50,000		50,000	
Duty, payable under Finance Act, at 6 per cent. ... }	£	Duty, payable under Finance Act, at 7 per cent. ... }	£
9,000		28,000	
59,000		78,000	
£91,000		£72,000	

£91,000 at 4 per cent. = £3,640 per an. | £72,000 at 4 per cent. = £2,880 per an.

	£
Income of A's successor ...	3640
Income of X's successor ...	2880
Annual fine on X's successor	760

Thus, assuming that the Elgin marbles are worth a quarter-of-a-million of pounds, and that £150,000 would, in these days of agricultural depression, fairly represent the value of the estate of an average landed magnate, the fact of X dying possessed of the Elgin marbles makes—through the working of the graduation and aggregation principles—a difference of £760 per annum between the income of his successor and the income of A's successor: although, except for the possession of these archæological treasures, *which possess no annual value whatever*, the positions of both men, as regards the amount of their property and liabilities, are identical.

One of two men of *equal means* is selected to pay an annual fine of £760. And this is not all, for unless he makes haste to purge himself of his transgression by getting rid of the offending objects, a new demand—calculated upon the same principles—will be made upon his son, over and above the obligation to pay the annual fine of £760 which he will have inherited from his father.

ground whatever for supposing that it would. If in the exercise of a wise economy we reduce our very modest contribution towards the maintenance of the English school of Athens to vanishing point, we may be certain that such a venture as the purchase of the Elgin marbles would be considered as far beyond our reach.

But we are proposing not only to tax everything that may broadly be called archæological property :—there is a danger (or to keep in harmony with the spirit of this address, a likelihood) of our being driven at the dictation of the inexorable present to lift up our hand and destroy it. The discussion, which is not yet concluded, about Egyptian irrigation and the temples of Philæ will afford a very fair object lesson. The best service one country can do another is to give it freely of its own most precious possessions, its thought, its idea, its example. Now, the progress of our work in Egypt has brought us face to face with the necessity of deciding in her interest, and in the interest of the world, the following question :—shall we advise that, by the sacrifice of the temples, the desert be made to wave with golden grain, or shall we keep the temples and the desert too? What a *cause célèbre!* And what a judgment hall, all silent beneath the burning blue of the unchanging East! The Present, with importunate gesture, and hungry threatening face, makes her claim : opposite her in motionless disdain sits the Spirit of the Past! Indeed it is the overwhelming nature of the claims of the Present moment that colours Demos' whole theory of life and duty. And there is no reason, devout archæologists though we be, to shrink from the admission that, when these claims of his are translated into plain prose and looked fairly in the face, we are bound to acknowledge that from his point of view these claims are not unreasonable, and that his alacrity in formulating them into a creed to be endowed with the sanction of an immutable law, is at least intelligible.

Unlike her sister History, Archæology has no Muse. She

cannot be taught either in Board school or University. No annual grants of public money are made—and for that matter scarcely ever have any been demanded—on her behalf. She has to take care of herself: and it is not the new social order alone that she has to fear. But few of the very rich have been real friends to her. They too live and move in the living exacting Present. As with Demos so with Dives, agents do his seeing, his hearing, his thinking. He too is dominated by his theory, and just as the temples are submerged, and the pictures and the manuscripts make unto themselves wings and fly away when Demos goes forth in the guise of the good Fairy with the day's dinner in her basket for every cottage in the land, so when Political Economy presents herself in her more ravaging moods before the eyes of Dives medieval manor house and Roman pavement alike crumble and totter before his ruthlessly improving feet. He it is who pulls down to the ground, and rebuilds, and makes an end. His is no delicate touch, and he abominates, as already said, by proxy, the bruised reed and smoking flax.

Well, the point of view is everything. Not that the true archæologist need by any means despise the food presented to him, perhaps in somewhat imperious fashion, by the Day in which his lot is cast, but that he is haunted by a longing desire to sit down to meat with those faces opposite him which he has seen down the dim vistas of his thought—the faces of beings who form a part not of his ordinary work-a-day existence, but of his buried life. He will loyally co-operate, if that is what is required, in making all things new, but, after all said and done, the real interest of the world resides in the men and women in it:—in the real men and women, not merely in the countless repetitions of one common-place type, which, aided by an unfortunate facility of reproduction, threatens to elbow all others out of the road, but in the more original of those of them who lived long ago, and who, with silent persistency, refuse to be excluded from our thoughts.

Were the actual progenitors of any of us who are assembled here in this room galloping down Bow street, on a famous day more than two centuries ago, in front of or behind the thick plain man in slouched hat and huge wading boots, of whom Dr. Norris is going to discourse to us? Perhaps if we could see their faces we could tell! Certainly, if we could hear them speak:—for who so keen as we to detect that imperceptible family accent of which we are so conscious, but which we all indignantly disown! Of course Aller and Guthrum and King Alfred are too far off for tracing likenesses of face or utterance, of custom or of personal habit. Yet why “of course?” We can see how the people of Pompeii walked about and amused themselves; why should we despair of something more being revealed to us of the home life of our own forefathers in those two hostile camps, something of a more intimate and familiar nature than those coarse generalizations which history deals out to us in her lordly self-satisfied way? Hostile, we say; but is the word strong enough to mark the gulf that naturally separates a christian from a pagan race? And yet, on reflection, may not the word be too strong for marking a difference which there appears to have been no difficulty in sweeping away absolutely and for ever at the sound of the trumpet, between the rising and the setting sun, with the sprinkling of a little water in ratification of the deed? Strange Faith! strange men, these ancestors of ours! We stand in the shadow of Chatham’s column on Troy hill, and we fondly imagine, while looking down on the hundred ‘haunts of ancient peace’ that now stud the legendary plain, that we realize the whole astounding transaction. Yet, on second thoughts, what would we not give to have one little question answered:—from both races we derive our blood, to which—or indeed to what—source do we really owe our christianity? Yes, it was the Saxon, of course, who blew the trumpet, and spake the word; but whence the “mighty stream” with which I ventured to open this address? to what

'hill or valley, fountain or fresh shade' are we to trace back the boon, if indeed we yet possess it, of the secret of life, the inward grace? Let us turn our backs upon the twilight scene, and seek for firmer outlines:—yes, there is no doubt about the frontier ridge of Neroche, and a gleam, as of returning sunlight, is falling on the towers of Kingsbury and Isle Abbots:—these inanimate things remain in general aspect the same: have *we* changed more than they have changed, or less? Such is our dream!

'No hungry generations tread thee down.'

But Demos too has his longings, and the pathos of the whole matter lies in this, that his ideal which brooks no rival is, in intention, excellent. A living wage for all, and the derelict fields of the earth made to wave with golden corn, may well compete in attractiveness with the prospect that was revealed to footsore Israel, of a land that flowed with milk and honey. Still, the great question remains unanswered:—why do these advances in material civilization, in human happiness (if you will) require us to hold to ransom the treasures of the Past, and to thrust aside the helping hand which the ancient world holds out to us?

The great question for us archæologists:—for we must bring ourselves to realize that an Act of Parliament enabling us to do this, or an Act forbidding us to do something else is merely an indication of the direction of the wind: the direction, that is, in which the vast circumambient air, in which we live and think and talk, is gradually and surely moving. When, therefore, it is objected that our investigations into the topography of the battle of Langport need surely not be interfered with by these movements of the time, the answer is—be not too sure; it depends upon ourselves, and our ability to interpret the signs. It is not an open enemy whom we have really to fear: the gates of the fortress may be opened from within, for our own fascinated hearts may lend an ear to the summons of the invincible Present Moment, and may themselves turn traitor.

Who can stand against the flowing tide? It is as when a caller—it may be one's own boy freshly home from school—breaks in upon one's morning's study: straightway the mental atmosphere is dispersed, the thread is broken and cannot be recovered: for that day at least all work is over; and mark, the student himself, who being an archæologist is nothing if not sympathetic, becomes himself infected by the enthusiasm of the moment, and—*horribile dictu*—himself accepts the post of ringleader!

In view of the rapidity with which these social readjustments are crowding upon us, and the consequences to Archæology which they involve, it would seem prudent to rob a few hours from the study of the objects, and devote them to the prospects of the Science itself. Before we set to work to read the inside were it not well to see that the book itself is safe. We should make a careful study of the vast shapeless catalogue of the nation's treasure house, and we should see to it that those things at least are safe which are portable and small. The great monuments are more difficult to deal with. To take the MSS. as a type of the former, bury them beyond the reach of the destroying hand:—not as the bodies of Egyptian kings were buried beneath mountains of stone, but make the printer (or still better the photographer) your sexton, and let the book-binder make the coffin. Lose no time in writing learned prefaces: that can wait till the new Renaissance. Make the famous quotation “there is safety in numbers” your motto:—for of course you will take care, in your capacity of parish and county electors, that every community, large or small, is provided with a public library, and that every library possesses a copy. Thus some fragment at least of the knowledge to be extracted from the originals will be saved. But the cathedrals and parish churches! We cannot pack them off to another continent for safe keeping, as the painted windows of Salisbury cathedral were packed off to Normandy, to be brought back again when the storm had passed. The Nonconformists, not to mention Churchmen, would oppose such a measure to

the death. Well, the safest course is to be forewarned. To treat these fears as idle is unphilosophic to the last degree. The world is strown with ruins, and to regard our own land as exempt from the universal lot would be to tempt the Fates indeed.

To sum up the whole matter, I would say:—no one can expect the world to stand still in order that his particular hobby may have the whole road to itself. There must be ups and downs; and the most prosperous life is but a balance of loss and gain, in which the gain has slightly the advantage. Even the distant hum of that irresistible, that fascinating flowing tide, to which I have already alluded, though it may give us some anxious thoughts, need not overwhelm us with despair. The great world movement, if rightly understood, may in the end work us only good:—in the end, for reflect what a treasure house the whelming waters are even now depositing for the delight of our archæological descendants! But I refrain:—it would be too long a story to refer to the devastations of those Teutonic hordes whose children in the flesh we are, and the inevitable Renaissance—the new birth—which they were unwittingly preparing.

To every young man who proposes to join the brotherhood, I would say:—make haste to acquire a modest competency, and so furnish one more recruit to the leisured class. But chiefly and above all, be not ashamed of a habit of lurching on bread and cheese in the open air; and, deeply as you may have loved hitherto these fragrant hedgerows, these haunted vales of our western land, learn with advancing years to love them more.

And should it be ever whispered that in warning his hearers against the darkening effect upon future Archæology of the rapid social changes of the time, the President-elect for 1894 was—like a bad cobbler—wandering from his last, I beg you to bear in mind that no plant will thrive if deprived of light and air, and that of all the multifarious subjects in which

Archæology is interested, the most important—nay, the one vital—subject is the pious conservation of that atmosphere in which she lives and breathes. And in the same connection I beg you also to bear in mind that Archæology proper is *par excellence* the occupation of the expert. The intelligent *amateur* indeed, with the Goddess to whom I have already alluded (*splendidé mendax*) at his elbow, can brighten his hours of ease by skimming through the heroic periods and romantic episodes of History's tale divine. But the real archæologist cannot be a mere *amateur*:—he must add knowledge to his enthusiasm. And if this seems—as of course it must seem to most of us—a counsel of perfection, we can at least show ourselves (when the opportunity presents itself, as it presents itself to me to-day) very jealous in our mistress' cause; as the good soldier who, though but slightly acquainted with the pros. and cons., the Blue Books and the Protocols, bearing on the causes of the war, is nevertheless ready to stand to the last by the colours of the Queen.

The Very Rev. THE DEAN OF WELLS proposed, and Mr. F. T. ELWORTHY seconded a cordial vote of thanks to the President for his address, which was carried by acclamation.

After luncheon at the Langport Arms Hotel, a visit was made to the