

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY

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DURING the past year the Academy has lost three of its Fellows, representing three different branches of study. Sir Edward Fry was an eminent Judge and a great public servant. After passing through the professional career of a barrister, which brought him to the Bench at the age of 50, he served for fifteen years as a Judge of the High Court and a Lord Justice of Appeal; but retiring at the age of 65 in the full possession of his powers, he was able for another twenty years to render eminent service to the State as arbitrator or commissioner in a number of matters of the highest importance. For many years he was the person to whom all Governments instinctively turned when a man of judicial mind, of transparent impartiality and honesty of purpose, attached to no party and with no personal interests to serve, was needed for the solution of difficult controversies. He was an inevitable member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration established at The Hague in 1900, and he was the first British Plenipotentiary at the Peace Conference in 1907. He was elected to the Academy in 1903, immediately after its foundation; and though he never took an active part in our proceedings, his name added distinction to our section of Jurisprudence.

Professor Hume Brown was an historian and a palaeographer, whose life was spent in Scotland and who devoted himself to the history of his country. His main work was his *History of Scotland*, in three volumes, published between 1898 and 1909, and distinguished by learning, by sobriety, and good judgement. Other volumes, his Rhind Lectures on *Scotland in the time of Queen Mary* and his *Short History of Scotland* (probably the most trustworthy guide to that history for those who have not time or courage to face the larger work), were offshoots or products of his *magnum opus*; and his presence in the Academy, to which he was elected in 1909, filled an obvious gap.

Archdeacon Cunningham, our latest loss, was distinguished by a remarkable individuality in both character and career. His chosen subject as a Cambridge undergraduate was moral science; he was an active and able priest of the Church of England, Hulsean Lecturer, vicar of the University church, and Archdeacon of Ely; he was also an historian, and above all a master of economic thought. But all these apparently diverse interests had in reality one root—a profound interest in and sympathy with human nature and a desire to ameliorate the conditions of the life of the people. His economic philosophy had a strong human side, and political economy in his hands was as far as possible from being divorced from the realities of life. He had also an independence of character which made him weighty in counsel; and the Academy, of which he was an original Fellow, owes him a debt of gratitude for his services as a member of Council and as chairman of Section IV.

Of our Corresponding Fellows we have lost two, Professor Ernst Windisch, of Leipzig, and Professor Björn Magnusson Olsen, of Reykjavik. Professor Windisch was an eminent philologist, whose interests led him into the two very different fields of Sanskrit and of Irish literature. In both capacities he was necessarily brought into touch with British scholars, and was dealing with subjects with which British scholars are especially concerned. What his views may have been during the War, I know not; but at least let it be recorded to his credit that he was not one of the 93 who signed that notorious manifesto which stands to the eternal discredit of German scholarship, and which, until it is repudiated, remains a serious bar against the resumption of friendly relations.

Professor Olsen, on the other hand, instead of being a citizen of a great and hostile state, was a citizen of a small and friendly one. In the words of Professor Ker, who speaks with a knowledge which I do not possess, he was probably the chief scholar of his day in Icelandic and Old Scandinavian philology, who commanded all the extant literature in verse and prose, and during forty years published a series of critical articles on the text and interpretation of two old poems, on the Icelandic sagas, the *Landnámabok*, &c. His election last year was avowedly intended as a recognition of the scholarship of a small but historic country, many of whose sons are British subjects and as such were fighting by our side. We regret that Professor Olsen was our colleague for so brief a period.

The new elections to our body are again few in number, but of unimpeachable quality. While our numbers remain at the limit which was somewhat fortuitously fixed at our foundation, we cannot

wish our elections to be more numerous; but it is a painful experience to see, year after year, candidates passed over perforce whose qualifications for membership are admitted on all hands.

The principal activities of the Academy during the past year have been summarized in the Report which has been laid before you this afternoon. I wish to take this opportunity of speaking at somewhat greater length with regard to the subject which has been, on the whole, the most important with which we have had to deal—important both in itself and because it has furnished an illustration of the way in which a national Academy can and ought to be of service as the general representative of the branches of learning which fall within its scope.

This subject may be most briefly described as the Organization of Archaeology.

The break-up of the Turkish Empire as a result of the War releases from incompetent and unsympathetic administration some of the most important areas for archaeological research on the surface of the earth. The position of Egypt, for practical purposes, will not be greatly altered; but Mesopotamia, Palestine, Syria, and parts of Asia Minor will come under European control in some form or another. This fact lays a great responsibility on the nations in whose hands the control will be placed. The administration will cease to be incompetent. It is essential that it should cease also to be unsympathetic.

The Academy has not been idle in this matter, and I desire to lay before the Fellows a statement of what has been done, and the principles on which we have been acting, in the hope that they will use their influence to make these views prevail, and to create a wholesome public opinion with regard to the responsibilities of this country.

As soon as British arms began to make progress in Mesopotamia and Palestine, the Council approached the Departments of State concerned—the War Office, the Foreign Office, and the India Office—with a view to securing a proper recognition of our responsibilities with regard to the antiquities of these countries. The first need was to see that any damage done to ancient sites or objects by the retiring Turks and Germans was recorded to the credit of its actual authors, and not laid to the door of our own troops; the next, to secure such sites or objects against unnecessary injury. Except in regard to the sacred sites of Palestine, respect for which was universally recognized as a prime necessity, military exigencies were bound to take precedence of other considerations; but subject to this

proviso, much might be done to avert ignorant or unnecessary damage to important sites or buildings. It is satisfactory to record that the soldiers entered readily into the spirit of these suggestions. Of their own initiative much was done to safeguard the relics of antiquity. Nothing could have been better than Sir Stanley Maude's proclamation after the occupation of Bagdad, or than the work done by the Military Governor of Jerusalem, Brig.-Gen. Storrs; and many individual officers did what they could to promote the interests of archaeology. Permission was given to the British Museum to recommend scholars for attachment to the armies in the East, in order that they might give the local authorities, whether military or civil, the benefit of expert advice, and might utilize such opportunities for archaeological research as the chances of war might bring in their way. Similar work was done by the not inconsiderable number of trained scholars—generally, if not always, former students of the British School at Athens—who were attached to the British forces in Macedonia and the Aegean.

At home also, where the Foreign Office has been under the control of two Fellows of the Academy—Mr. Balfour and, in his absence, Lord Curzon—a most sympathetic response has been given to the representations of the Academy. Acting on a suggestion put forward in this quarter, Mr. Balfour invited the Academy to form an Archaeological Committee, composed of representatives of all the principal Societies interested in the subject, whose views would thus be brought into one focus, and presented through the Academy to the Departments of State concerned. This had the double advantage of giving the Departments a single body to deal with—the Academy—and of putting the weight of all the specialist Societies and all their expert skill behind the representations of the Academy. Incidentally it may be observed that it put the Academy into what I ventured to point out last year was its proper position, as the official adviser of the Government on the matters coming within its competence.

Mr. Balfour's invitation was accepted without hesitation, and the Academy communicated with the Societies, several of which were already being prompted to move in the same direction. A joint Archaeological Committee was formed, consisting of representatives of the British Academy, the Society of Antiquaries, the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Anthropological Institute, the Societies for the Promotion of Hellenic and of Roman Studies, the Egypt Exploration Fund, the Palestine Exploration Fund, the British Schools at Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem, the Byzantine Research Fund, the Royal Asiatic Society, and the Royal Numismatic Society.

The membership of this Committee included, it is safe to say, nearly all the scholars most qualified to speak from experience of the interests and requirements of archaeological research; and with them were associated representatives of the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. The voice of expert archaeology was thus concentrated as it has never been before; and the Government had the advantage of knowing that by following its advice they were secure against the criticism of having ignored the opinion of scholarship on matters with which scholars alone are competent to deal.

The deliberations of the Committee have been concerned mainly with two points, which, however, are closely associated. At the request of the Military Governor of Jerusalem they have drafted a Law of Antiquities applicable to Palestine; and they have drawn up, and communicated through the Foreign Office to the British Delegation in Paris, recommendations with regard to the organization of archaeology in the former Turkish Empire, applicable both to those portions which may remain under Turkish rule and to those which may be assigned under mandate from the League of Nations to various European Powers. These recommendations have been very sympathetically received by our delegates in Paris; and it has been a great advantage to the end we have in view that the American delegation have taken a keen interest in the same subject, and have been working actively in the same direction. The subject was referred to a small international committee, on which this country was represented by a Fellow of the Academy who is also a member of the Archaeological Committee, and draft clauses were drawn up for insertion in the treaty of peace with Turkey and in the mandates to be given to the mandatory Powers. Until these documents are made public it is too early to say whether these clauses have been adopted without change; but we have at least good reason to hope that the principles which have commended themselves to our Committee will form the foundation of the organization of archaeological research in the Near and Middle East under the new régime on which those portions of the world are now entering.

The essential fact which conditions the whole of such organization is the fact that the scholars of Europe and America are working, or desire to work, in areas which are not their native lands, but which are the homes of civilizations in which they are deeply interested. Any organization of archaeological research in such areas must therefore take into account two aspects of the question: (1) the interests of the country itself in which the research takes place; (2) the interests of the advancement of knowledge in civilized countries in

general. The relative importance of these two aspects differs in different areas. The interests of the inhabitants of the Gobi Desert do not claim so much consideration as the interests of the inhabitants of Rome or Athens; and between these extremes there are gradations of infinite variety. But no settlement which wholly ignores either point of view can be a good settlement; and it is to the production of a satisfactory reconciliation of these interests, and the persuasion of political administrators to accept them, that our efforts have mainly to be directed.

The first point to secure is that the antiquities shall not be destroyed. If ancient monuments are buried beneath the soil, like the palaces of Nineveh before the coming of Botta and Layard, and the native has no reason to suppose that they can be converted into a source of profit, they will remain undisturbed, especially in unprogressive lands, for centuries. But houses or stone inscriptions may be treated as quarries for building materials; the soil in which papyri are buried has fertilizing properties as manure; and the spread of agriculture, with its accompanying irrigation, may destroy ancient records of priceless value. On the other hand, if the possession of an antiquity may be a source of annoyance to the possessor, he will often destroy it lest it should come to the knowledge of a prying inspector. Hence the first essential is to forbid injury to known monuments or sites, and to watch over their safety by an efficient inspectorate; the next is to let it be known that the finder of an antiquity, who reports it in the proper quarter, will be rewarded—not inconvenienced, still less punished. Regulations to this effect need to be drawn up by those who have knowledge of the native mind and of native customs; otherwise, for all their good intentions, they may do more harm than good.

The next point is to secure that research is conducted by those who are qualified to conduct it. No doubt it is a gain that antiquities should be brought to light, in whatever way they are brought to light; but the value of a discovery may be greatly impaired if the circumstances of the discovery are unknown, and the whole record of a buried site may be confused and lost if it is excavated by inexperienced diggers. When a site has been long occupied, only the most skilled excavators can unravel its history; and though Schliemann's discovery of Troy was of epoch-making importance, the methods of his time could not reveal its full history, and it was reserved for Dörpfeld to interpret the record of the succession of towns which occupied this historic site. If any explorer less skilled than Sir Arthur Evans had dug into the hill of Knossos, the history

of the capital of Minoan Crete and the sequence of its dynasties might have been hopelessly destroyed. Therefore, in the interests of scientific archaeology, our regulations must guard ancient sites against both the native digger and the untrained treasure-hunter. They are better untouched until they can be taken in hand by some one who is qualified to extract their full value from them.

This raises at once the crucial question of the position of the Western explorer in Eastern lands. If the search for antiquities is not conducted with the knowledge and experience of the foreigner, it either will not be conducted at all, or it will be conducted ignorantly, with much loss of evidence of scientific importance. On the other hand, how far is it right that the historic and artistic treasures of Eastern lands should be removed from their native soil for the benefit of Western collections and museums? This is one of the most delicate questions which the trustees of historic lands have to solve.

There is a tendency on the part of British administrators to regard the explorer as a plunderer, against whose depredations it is their duty to protect the helpless native. This is an unintelligent development of one of the cardinal virtues of British administration, its protection of the races committed to its charge. It is unintelligent, because it disregards other interests which have a right to be considered, and because it eventually benefits neither the natives nor the progress of knowledge. If there is one thing more certain than another as the result of experience, it is that to prevent the explorer from deriving any benefit from his exploration leads only to disaster, and benefits only those who have least right to benefit.

In some lands, notably Greece and certain parts of Italy, a discoverer may be sufficiently rewarded for his labour and expense by the right of publication. The glory of discovering Troy or Olympia or Delphi or Pompeii would be sufficient for any right-minded scholar; and he need not greatly grumble at being obliged to leave his discoveries *in situ*, provided that he knows that they will receive proper care, and will be adequately accessible for study by scholars. But where the discoveries are of lesser magnitude than these, or where the sites, once uncovered, cannot be properly protected, or where they are so inaccessible that few scholars capable of profiting by them will be able to reach them, the conditions are different, and provision must be made for such a distribution of the proceeds of exploration as will satisfy the legitimate claims of science as well as those of the locality in which the discovery is made.

Consequently the simple rule that every antiquity must remain

in the country in which it is found is, in most cases, the worst of all rules. It operates only to the advantage of the smuggler and the plutocrat. Societies or individuals of repute will not undertake labour from which they will derive little credit and no reward; on the other hand, unlicensed diggers will surreptitiously plunder whatever they can sell to foreign customers. Unless, therefore, the country itself can provide competent explorers, scientific research comes to a standstill, while surreptitious tomb-robbing flourishes. The records of discoveries are lost, or deliberately falsified; and the proceeds find their way into the hands of the highest bidder.

A notorious example of this evil state of things is the island of Cyprus. Here the prohibition of export is not due to British administrators but to the ignorant shortsightedness of local autonomy; and the results have been instructive. All excavation by qualified explorers from outside has ceased since the passing of the law. The island itself produces no qualified explorers. Smuggling pursues its course unchecked; and the only persons who can derive nothing from the island are the subjects of the protecting Power. Not so very long ago certain valuable antiquities came to light there. They were duly smuggled out of the island and sold to an American. The purchaser, with much generosity, offered to present them to a museum in England; but an intimation was received from official quarters that in that case they would be claimed on behalf of Cyprus and returned thither. Accordingly they found their home in an American collection. This is a somewhat unusually complete example of the results of a policy of exclusiveness; but it illustrates what, in greater or less degree, is of constant occurrence.

This, however, is not the only ground on which a policy of exclusiveness is to be condemned. No country lives to itself alone, and it is to no country's advantage that the products of its civilization should be confined within its own borders. The reputation of Italy and Greece is due to the fact that the products of their art have in the past gone out into all lands. It is to the advantage of England that English art and English history should be known on the Continent and in America, and that we in turn should be acquainted with the products of France and Italy. It is a misfortune for a country if a knowledge of its culture is confined to those who are able to visit it in person; and it is a misfortune to other countries just so far as they might profit from an acquaintance with this culture. A special instance which comes home to us in England is that of India. The Indian peoples have every right to the conservation of their own monuments and to the full representation in museums

throughout the country of the artistic and historic products of the past ages of their civilization. In this direction the policy of Lord Curzon in establishing such museums and in founding a Department of Archaeology has borne excellent fruit. At the same time it would be a calamity for India as well as for England if Indian art were not fully represented here. We want more knowledge of India, not less. We want our people to appreciate the civilization of India and to realize the greatness of her history. Therefore a wise administration of Indian archaeology will not grudge to England the possession of full and characteristic collections representing Indian history and art.

Again, the claim of the population which now inhabits a given territory to the ownership of all objects found in its soil varies considerably in moral validity under different circumstances. No one would dispute the right of the modern Italians to be regarded as the lawful heirs of the Romans; all that can be said here is that France and Spain and England can also claim Roman parentage and consequently a rightful interest in the civilization of Rome. In Egypt there is continuity of population in a certain sense, but a frequent change of masters, and a much lower power of appreciation of the significance of the monuments of antiquity; hence the claim of the fellah to the relics of the Pharaohs is not on the same plane as that of the Italian to the heritage of the Caesars. In Palestine the Mohammedan population have an indefensible claim to the buildings which their own people have set up; but they have no rightful control of the monuments of Christianity or of Judaism. In Mesopotamia the local claim is weaker still. Neither by race nor continuity of civilization nor power of appreciation have the present inhabitants any pre-eminent claim to the monuments of the Sumerian, the Babylonian, or the Assyrian. This claim can at most only go back to the commencement of Mohammedan rule; and the duty of the tutelary Power will be satisfied if it endeavours to foster in the population, as it advances in education, an interest in the past records of their historic lands.

But in truth it is not necessary to argue as if the desires of Western civilization could not be satisfied without injustice to the native. A policy of exclusiveness is in fact all the more shortsighted, because it is wholly unnecessary. Except under very special circumstances, the results of exploration admit of adequate representation in the country of origin as well as in the country which conducts the research. Egypt has filled the museums of the world with her antiquities, and yet has retained at Gizeh the finest

collection of all. Mesopotamia has already produced hundreds of thousands of cuneiform tablets, and yet there will be no difficulty in supplying a future museum at Bagdad with an amply adequate representation of all the successive civilizations of the country, from pre-Sumerian to Mohammedan days. This will be the function of the Department of Antiquities which should be founded in each of the territories that have been detached from the Turkish Empire.

The policy, therefore, which the Academy and the Archaeological Committee have been advocating, and which, with the powerful backing of the American representatives, who have taken an active share in the discussions, has been endorsed by the international committee in Paris, is that in each country possessing archaeological importance a Department of Antiquities should be set up and a Law of Antiquities passed, which will secure equal and similar administration in all of them. Antiquities (including under that term sites believed to possess historical importance) will be protected from injury. Natives will be encouraged to report discoveries that they may make, and rewarded for so doing. The trade in antiquities will be conducted under licence. Permits to dig will be granted only to persons of recognized competence or guaranteed by societies of repute; but to such persons or societies they will not be refused, unless for very special reasons. The proceeds of excavation will be divided between the explorer and the country of origin in proportions and under regulations to be fixed. In case of need, permission should be given for the entire proceeds to be temporarily removed, if so desired, in order that they may be adequately studied, the agreed portion being subsequently returned to the country of origin. It is not possible to edit papyri adequately in Egypt, or cuneiform tablets in Mesopotamia; they must be removed temporarily to London or Paris or Berlin, and the partition made after they have been catalogued or published. And the explorer's work is not completed until he has published an adequate record of his discoveries.

Attention may be drawn to two points in this programme, because they have sometimes been neglected in the past. The first is reciprocity. It should not be possible for any nation to assert a monopoly in any country other than its own homeland. Even within the homeland it is a questionable policy, and only justifiable if all the work that is needed is adequately carried out by the nation itself. Outside the homeland it is unjustifiable. England has no exclusive rights in Egypt or Mesopotamia, nor France in Syria (if she should receive the mandate of the League of Nations for that

country), nor Italy in Tripoli or Asia Minor. They are, or will be, trustees, not owners, and other nations have a legitimate interest in the ancient civilizations of these districts. Reciprocity, the right of equal opportunities, should be prescribed by the League of Nations, and no nation can expect to receive facilities in territories controlled by other nations, if she does not grant them in territories controlled by herself.

The second point is publication. It should be a condition of every permit to dig that an adequate publication should be made of the results, and within a reasonable time. It is not possible to lay down exact definitions of what publication is adequate and what time is reasonable, but every scholar knows of cases where all permissible limits have been exceeded. A preliminary publication is in almost all cases possible within a few months; the reports contributed yearly by Sir Arthur Evans to the Annual of the British School at Athens during the progress of the excavations at Knossos are a model of what is required. A full publication may be a matter of years. And the means of enforcing this regulation are simple: no fresh permit would be granted to an explorer who had failed to do his duty in respect of a previous permit. The Department of Antiquities which grants the permits would have the matter in its own hands, and would be expected to enforce the requirement intelligently and yet firmly.

These are, in outline, the principles which the Committee have enunciated, and which we hope will receive the imprimatur of the League of Nations. But our duty will not be accomplished when they have been enacted. On the contrary, from that moment we assume a fuller responsibility than before. The credit of the nation will be pledged to the full cultural development of the areas which may be assigned to our charge. It will be our duty to see that sound laws of antiquities are passed, and are enforced, in each such area, and to allow all proper facilities to qualified explorers; and it will be our shame if we ourselves stand aside and allow other nations to bear the burden and reap the credit of recovering the history and the monuments of the ancient civilizations of the countries for which we are responsible. We shall be in honour bound to see that English scholarship is not at a disadvantage in comparison with French or German or American scholarship. And this is a responsibility which rests both on the people and on the Government.

English scholarship, in the domain of archaeological research, has no reason to shrink from comparison with the scholarship of any other nation. In natural aptitude for exploration, and in the

historical sense needed for the interpretation and reconstruction of ancient civilizations, I soberly believe we can claim equality with any, and in particular are superior to the Germans. What we need is, on the part of our scholars a thorough equipment in the literature of the subject and a willingness to bear the full burden of thorough research, and, on the part of our people and our Government, a recognition of the importance of the task and a readiness to support it. If educated opinion in the country is ready to support archaeological research, instead of scoffing at it, Governments will be ready to find the very modest sums which are required to carry it out; and if opinion in the country does not appreciate its importance, then it is the business of an enlightened Government—of a Government which really believes in the things of the mind—to encourage an interest in it as a part of the education of the people. Surely we ought not always to have to complain that we are unable to compete with the resources which are provided by the State in France or Germany, and by private generosity in America.

The opportunities before archaeology are now very great. The horizon is very bright. In the course of the next year or two, not only should work be renewed in Egypt under conditions at least as favourable as before, but in Palestine, in Syria, in Mesopotamia it should have prospects such as it has never had in the past. To take advantage of these opportunities we need men and money. The Academy has done what it can to secure that research shall not be hampered by unwise administration. It will gladly administer any funds that may be put into its hands, whether by the Government or by individuals, for the advancement of knowledge and the credit of the nation; and it is confident that, if the means are forthcoming, the men and the experience will not be lacking.