

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND.

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SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION, 1851-2.  
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ANNIVERSARY MEETING, *Nov. 28, 1851.*

WILLIAM WARING HAY NEWTON, of Newton, Esq., in
the Chair.

The Office-Bearers for the ensuing year were elected.

On the recommendation of the Council, the vacancies in the rank
of Honorary Members (the number of which is limited to twenty-
five) were filled by the election of

The VISCOUNT MAHON, President of the Society of Antiquaries of London.
His Excellency The CHEVALIER BUNSEN.
Councillor C. J. THOMSEN, Director of the Royal Museum at Copenhagen.
Professor P. A. MUNCH, of the University of Christiania.

The following Gentlemen were elected as Fellows :—

JOHN YOUNG CAW, Esq., of Chetham Hill, Manchester.
DAVID COUSIN, Esq., Architect.
WILLIAM FRASER, Esq., S.S.C.
SIR JOHN WATSON GORDON, Kt., President of the Royal Scottish Academy.
ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL SWINTON, Esq., Professor of Civil Law in the Univer-
sity of Edinburgh.

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And the following as Corresponding Members :—

JOHN FENWICK, Esq., Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

GILBERT J. FRENCH, Esq., Bolton.

A Report submitted by the Council to the Meeting, conveyed the gratifying intelligence, that the negotiations, long pending with the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, for the establishment of the Society's Collections on the footing of a National Museum, and securing permanent accommodation both for the Collections and the Meetings of the Society in a Public Building, had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The deed drawn up by the Lords of the Treasury, with the concurrence of the Hon. Board of Trustees for Manufactures, &c., and approved of by the Council of the Society, was read, and resolutions agreed to, adopting the same, and recording the special thanks of the Society to Sir William Gibson-Craig, Bart., M.P., and the Hon. B. F. Primrose, for valuable services rendered by them, in carrying out the arrangements as finally settled in the deed of agreement with the Treasury.

Dr DANIEL WILSON, Secretary, then delivered the following

ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS.

“ In those periods of the Society's History to which we now revert with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction, it not unfrequently devolved on my predecessors in the office of Secretary, to deliver the Anniversary Address ; and it is with feelings of no ordinary gratification that, in now following their example, I congratulate you on the attainment of an object which has occupied much of the time and attention of the Council during the last four years. By a deed of conveyance prepared by the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, with the concurrence of the Honourable Board of Trustees for the encouragement of Arts and Manufactures, and now finally approved of, and adopted by, the Society, we have made over to the Crown, as public property, the whole collections of Antiquities, Coins, and Medals, MSS., Books, &c., formed during the last seventy years, to be the nucleus of a National Archæological Museum for Scotland. The

Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, in accepting this gift for the nation, agree, on their part, to provide at all future times fit and proper accommodation for the preservation and exhibition of the collections to the public, in the galleries of the Royal Institution, or other public building in Edinburgh, as well as for the meetings of the Society, and reserve in the hands of the Society's Office-Bearers the curatorship of the entire collections. This arrangement has been completed after mature deliberation, as the one best calculated to secure the advancement of Archæological science, to promote popular education, and to excite a national interest in the preservation of the monuments of early art and ancient civilization; and we have the satisfaction of believing that, in making some personal sacrifice in the relinquishment of our proprietary interest in these valuable collections, we are thereby providing the best of all securities for their permanency and extension. Were we to contrast the gift by the Government to this Society, of free rooms for the accommodation of collections already so highly appreciated by the public, with the large annual and occasional grants of money to other institutions, especially in London, or with the aid which Foreign Governments extend in furtherance of such national objects, we might well deem it unsatisfactory. But looking upon this, as we do, as only the first instalment of an act of tardy justice, and a recognition of the services already rendered by the Society to the country, in maintaining and extending such a collection of its national antiquities, we are well content to let the further recognition of our just claims depend on the use which shall be made of that already conceded to us.

“ We cannot, with justice, consider the collections formed by the Society as in any sense fit to constitute a National Archæological Museum. Valuable as they are, they are merely the fruits of private zeal, and of the persevering exertions of a small body of men, labouring, under many disadvantages, to accomplish, with extremely limited means, what is elsewhere regarded as the proper duty of the Government. It has, indeed, been a frequent and just cause of complaint with us, that the private collections of this Society, formed and maintained under such disadvantages, have been brought into comparison with Continental Museums, fostered by all the aids of Royal patronage and Government influence. The agreement now entered into with Her Majesty's Government, is, to a great extent, a result of the strong conviction forced on our minds, that the establishment of a Museum of Historical Antiquities in the Scottish Capital, such as will supply to the scientific Archæologist the elements of unwritten history, is an object which cannot be adequately achieved by the most zealous private exertions; but, on the contrary, that it not only merits the co-operation of Government from its national importance, but, in reality, belongs to the

duties of the responsible advisers of the Crown, as the protectors of science and the patrons of all available means for the education of the people. In this respect Scotland has hitherto been subjected to peculiar injustice. In Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Brussels, Petersburg, Munich, Rome, Naples, and Athens, in Stockholm, Christiania, and above all, in Copenhagen, the Archæological Collections are objects of national care. In London they are in like manner liberally maintained from the public money,—though, till very recently, nearly to the entire exclusion of native antiquities,—and in Dublin the liberality of the Royal Irish Academy is supplemented by an annual grant from Parliament, while, up to this date, individual exertions and private funds have been the only sources of maintenance of a similar institution for Scotland. In Dublin, moreover, as in Copenhagen, a keen spirit of nationality and patriotic sympathy has been enlisted in the cause of Archæological science with the happiest results; while in Scotland, with a very few honourable exceptions (and especially that of our noble President, the Marquess of Breadalbane), our native nobility have stood aloof from us, and we have been left unaided to pursue our researches into the primitive antiquities and history of our country, while we mourn the decay of the old generous spirit of nationality, which is evinced by the array of names of our nobility, members of Parliament, and Scottish gentry, figuring in lists of the more fashionable Societies of London.

“It cannot be supposed that the lukewarmness of those whom we might so justly expect to take a foremost part in the establishment of such a native collection, and in the investigations of the Archæology of Scotland in a liberal and enlightened spirit, arises from an idea that our national antiquities are inferior in interest or value to those of any other country of Europe. On the contrary, a growing conviction is now felt by those who have devoted most attention to such studies, that Scotland offers one of the richest, though least explored fields, for the investigation of the primitive traces of European history. All that is needed is the possession of a sufficient number of specimens of ancient native art, no less requisite to the Historian and the Archæologist than are the Museums of Natural History, Comparative Anatomy, Mineralogy, or Geology, to the students of Natural Science, and with this the freedom to pursue the requisite researches without restraint. The contrast presented by the relations between the Government and the Archæologists of Paris, Stockholm, or Copenhagen, and those which subsist in Scotland, is altogether marvellous, and reflects little credit on the civilization or intelligence of the latter. France has her ‘*Commission pour la Conservation des Monuments Historiques*,’ and Sweden and Denmark their Royal Commissioners for the preservation of National Monuments, while Archæologists in Scotland have hitherto chiefly known the Officers of the Crown

in connection with the antiquated feudal law of Treasure Trove, which impedes their researches, accumulates difficulties of the most offensive character in their path, and frequently compels the students of a liberal science to pursue their researches with the stealth and secrecy of the lawless spoiler or resetter; and this, notwithstanding the earnest desire, both of the late and the present Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer for Scotland, to carry out the law according to its most liberal construction, and to render it available for the preservation of Archæological treasure. We have repeatedly had to acknowledge our obligations to the officers of Her Majesty's Exchequer for valuable donations derived from this source; yet, at the same time, as is well known to many of you, we have been frequently compelled, in preparing reports of the Society's meetings, to withhold all account of some of its most interesting proceedings, in order to avert the consequences of this law, while we have had no less frequently to accept the dread of its operations as an unanswerable reason for the refusal of gentlemen to allow the exhibition of objects calculated to throw much light on primitive history and national manners.

“The evils of this system we must hope are to a great extent at an end, in so far as this Society is concerned. Now that we are to occupy the position of Curators of a National Collection on behalf of the Crown, and for the use of the people, we may reasonably presume that no claims, under the law of Treasure Trove, will be allowed directly to impede our researches, or to interfere with our acquisition of objects of value for the Museum, whether by purchase or gift. Still, even this will only partially remove the evils complained of; and I trust this Society will not remit its exertions till we see the Scottish law of Treasure Trove, not abolished, but remodelled in the same wise and liberal spirit as has been productive of such valuable results throughout Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.

“By the establishment of the Society's Collections on the basis of a National Museum, I conceive that a responsibility devolves on the Government to place it on a footing worthy of such a position. As the collection of a private Society, our museum is one which may be examined with considerable interest, and is even now of much greater extent and value than the department of Native Antiquities in the British Museum; but, if the intelligent traveller is to be allowed to compare Scottish Archæology with that especially of Denmark, Naples, or Greece, Government must supplement the Society's operations much more liberally than by the mere provision of adequate accommodation for collections which are already among the most popular of the Museums or Public Galleries of the Scottish Capital. The increasing interest manifested in the Society's Collections is indeed a striking evidence of the great change which has

taken place of late years in the estimation of Antiquarian pursuits. In the year 1842, the number of visitors to the Museum, exclusive of members, was a little more than four thousand. When the Synopsis of the Museum was printed in 1849, the number had increased to nearly six thousand; but so rapid has been the increase even during the brief period which has since elapsed, that the number of visitors during the past year amounted to 10,888, and on several occasions the applicants for admission have exceeded the means of accommodation at the command of the Society. The space for the display of objects of antiquity is also found no less limited and inadequate. The means of proper classification has been greatly encroached upon by numerous recent acquisitions, and we are compelled to look forward to the entrance on the promised accommodation in a National Building to supply to us the requisite space for displaying some of the most valuable antiquities recently purchased or presented to the Society. Now that these Collections are to be placed on the same stable footing as any other National Museum, and the permanent security of all such donations is guaranteed by the Crown, this inconvenience must be expected rapidly to increase, so long as the completion of the liberal engagements of the Treasury are delayed, since it may reasonably be anticipated that Scotsmen will be induced to deposit in the Museum many valuable antiquities at present scattered through private collections, and liable to all the vicissitudes by which such objects are so frequently lost or destroyed.

“The success indicated by the present condition of the Society’s Collections, has not been accomplished without considerable sacrifice. In order to provide the requisite accommodation and attendance for the gratuitous admission of the public, the Society has had to burden its resources with heavy liabilities, as well as to draw largely on the private liberality of its members. But the chief source of regret, has been the necessity of suspending the printing of Transactions, consequent on the entire absorption of our annual revenue in the maintenance of the Museum—an object which has been, as I conceive, justly regarded as of primary importance in the absence of any other collection that could supply to the Scottish Antiquary, the requisite means of reference in pursuing the study of Archaeological Science. The use that has been made of its contents in more than one recent work, must be accepted as some atonement for the absence of more direct publications by the Society. The long delay which has taken place in the printing of Transactions, has not been allowed to pass without repeated remonstrances from those who were ignorant of the conflicting claims on the very limited resources at our command. Now, however, it is with sincere satisfaction that I congratulate you on the resolution of the Council to resume the printing of our Proceedings in a modified form, which, while it will, as I trust,

furnish a new source of energy to ourselves, will also restore us to a more active intercourse with kindred Societies, both at home and on the continent.

During the past Session, our numbers have been increased by an unusually large accession to the rank of Fellows, of gentlemen peculiarly fitted by their learning and reputation to further the highest objects of the Society. In addition to many valuable donations received during the same period, the Council has been enabled by the liberality of the members, to expend a larger sum than has been laid out in any former Session since the Society was founded, in the purchase of objects of antiquity, and it may be confidently affirmed, that in point of energy, efficiency, and zeal for the advancement of Archæological Science, the Society never was in a more flourishing condition than at present. While, however, we are thus enabled to look back on the past Session with such satisfaction, and to enter upon the present one as the beginning of a new era in the Society's history, pregnant with the brightest promises of increasing prosperity and success: we have to lament the unusually severe loss which the Society has sustained during the past year, in the death of so many members who had distinguished themselves in various departments of literature, and had furthered the best interests of the Society as its Office-Bearers, or as active sharers in its business, and contributors in different ways to the interest of its meetings. These include

The Right Hon. CHARLES HOPE, of Granton.	Elected 1794.
Sir HENRY JARDINE, of Harwood, Kt., F.R.S.E.	„ 1795.
Sir JOHN GRAHAM DALYELL, of Binns, Kt. & Bart., F.R.S.E.	„ 1797.
PATRICK NEILL, LL.D., F.R.S.E.	„ 1806.
ALEXANDER MACDONALD, Esq., <i>Curator</i> .	„ 1824.
Captain CHARLES GRAY, R.M.	„ 1841.
CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE, Esq. of Hoddam.	„ 1845.
WILLIAM M. GUNN, LL.D.	„ 1847.
DAVID MACBETH MOIR, Esq.	„ 1848.

It is only necessary to name these gentlemen, in order to remind you of the obligations under which the Society lies to most of them. Probably on no previous anniversary of this Society since its foundation, has it had to deplore the loss of so many esteemed and valued members. While we recal their names once more, as those whose memories we desire to cherish, I trust their example will not be without its influence on those who succeed to their duties, and that the sense of so great a loss sustained by the Society, will stimulate its members to seek to supply their absence and rival their exertions on its behalf.’

I. CONVERSAZIONE.—*Nov.* 28, 1851.

In the evening, the Society's Rooms were thrown open for a *Conversazione*; when a large collection of objects of Archæological interest, contributed by various members and friends, were exhibited. An elaborate Archæological Map of Fife and Kinross, drawn by Mr D. Millar of Arbroath, was shewn, and proposals submitted for having it engraved, as the first of a series of Antiquarian Maps of Scotland.