

IPSWICH MUSEUM.

On Thursday the 13th December was celebrated the second Anniversary of this very promising Institution. By half-past twelve there was a very numerous and respectable assemblage, when the Rev. Samuel Hinds, D.D., Lord Bishop of Norwich, entered, accompanied by the Rev. Robert Eden, M.A., F.S.A., his Lordship's Chaplain, the Revds. the Professors Sedgwick and Henslow, the Rev. E. Sidney, the Hon. and Rev. F. De Grey, the Rev. A. B. Power, the following Fellows of the Linnæan, Geological, Astronomical and Zoological Societies, Mr. G. Ransome, Mr. May, Mr. John Gould, Mr. Richard Taylor, Capt. Ibbetson, Mr. G. Waterhouse, Mr. J. S. Bowerbank, Mr. L. Reeve and other gentlemen, several of whom were most hospitably entertained during their stay in Ipswich by G. Ransome, Esq., and C. May, Esq.

The Bishop of Norwich having taken the chair addressed the meeting as follows:—Mr. Kirby, the time-honoured President of this Institution, being unable to attend as usual, it has fallen to my lot to occupy the chair. Before entering on the business of the day, however, permit me to express the great gratification I feel at the opportunity which this meeting has afforded me of introducing myself to some sort of acquaintance with a great number of those among whom my lot is now cast, and whose welfare it will be my duty henceforward, as well as, I assure you, my earnest desire, to promote in every possible way. I may be permitted to express, at the same time, my sympathy with the sadder feeling which, no doubt, my occupancy of this chair today will have awakened in the minds of many, who remember their connection with one who is now no more; one who was not only a zealous friend of the Ipswich Museum, but an ardent supporter and patron of every enterprise which had for its object the intellectual advancement and the moral elevation of his fellow-men. I regret that my habits and pursuits but ill qualify me to contribute to this meeting the enlivening anecdote and the interesting information which he, on these occasions, always had at command, from the stores of his own observation, and from his researches in a particular branch of Natural History; but I wish to assure you that I am not the less alive to the value of this Museum and of Museum meetings, especially a Museum which is the resort and the property of the humbler classes, of the artisan, the mechanic, the mere day working man. That I believe is the distinctive feature of this Institution. I know of no other characterized in the same manner. Now, I conceive this to be a very interesting point of view. No question, perhaps, at this moment, is more important, socially and morally, than the question, how the humbler classes of our brethren, those who have to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow,—how they are to employ their little leisure time, so as at once to make it available for the relaxation and recreation that are necessary for them, and, at the same time, to be improving themselves? A museum appears to me to combine the two objects most excellently; it is amusing and it is instructive. The objects which they find in the Museum, together with the instruction which they derive from

other sources here, constitute a knowledge which comes across them in their daily avocations : things which cross their path in the field, or in their workshop, and which would never otherwise, perhaps, have been so much as observed, now become the means of interest, of instruction, and of improvement to them. The Museum is in this manner, I should say, to them the acquirement of a new faculty, of a new power ; and I cannot but hope and believe, although the Institution has been in existence but two years, that the result has been altogether satisfactory, and even beyond what could have been expected from it. I shall not detain the meeting longer from so much that is valuable and interesting, to which we are looking forward, and I shall, therefore, at once call upon Mr. Ransome to read the Report.

George Ransome, Esq., then read the Report, containing a view of the objects and progress of the Institution, from which we give the following passage :—

“And how, it may be asked, does the Institution intend to accomplish these purposes ? or how does it tend to advance the education of the people ? If any presume that we merely gratify an idle curiosity, we answer that we have evidence to assure us that we not only very greatly increase the gleaners of knowledge, but that we add to the number of the real cultivators and reapers in the fields of science, and especially in the various departments of Natural History. We lay the foundation of future inquiry ; we awaken the mind. From the advantages afforded them in the Museum, by the sight of specimens, by lectures and classes, the visitors become admirers ; the admirers, students ; the students, collectors ; the collectors, donors, presenting specimens, and adding their ideas to the parent stock. Such is the assistance we have received, and are continually receiving, not only from our home friends, but from those who visit foreign lands.”

A tribute of well-merited gratitude and respect was then paid to the memory of Dr. Stanley, the late bishop of the diocese, and the lamented President of the Linnæan Society.

“We have now a melancholy part of our Report to dwell upon, the loss by death of Dr. Stanley, the late Bishop of Norwich, an early friend and a generous patron of the Museum. Its design and object were peculiarly dear to him ; he was a warm advocate in its behalf—he was greatly instrumental in promoting its success. He gave us the right hand of fellowship, and advanced our interests to the utmost of his power. We owe him a lasting debt of gratitude, and his bust and faithful portrait will long continue to associate his name and memory with an Institution which he admired, loved and cherished.”

The Rev. Professors Sedgwick and Henslow, and the Rev. E. Sidney, also dwelt upon the many excellences of Dr. Stanley in terms of the most affectionate remembrance. Several gentlemen having addressed the meeting, Mr. Ransome proposed the names of the Rev. M. J. Berkeley, the eminent cryptogamic botanist, G. Waterhouse, Esq., and Dr. A. B. Garrod, as Honorary Members. Mr. R. Ransome rejoiced in common with the company present at the success of the Institution ; thus far it had eminently prospered. The working classes had shown their esteem for it by the extraordinary amount of their visits, and that, too, without one single instance of

either disorderly conduct or damage to anything in the Museum. He hailed the circumstance of the Bishop coming forward to walk in the steps of his highly respected predecessor, as an omen for the future success of the Institution.

The Bishop of Norwich was much obliged to the meeting for the kind compliment, and for the hearty welcome which he had found in Ipswich. In supporting that Institution, in giving it what encouragement and countenance were in his power, in treading in the footsteps of his lamented and honoured predecessor, he felt that he was doing no more than a bare duty, for he could not but recollect that the Museum was a Museum for the people. He could not but congratulate the meeting on the result of what had taken place that day. These meetings were a most important arrangement in conjunction with the Museum itself; he might say that they gave life to the dead specimens with which they were surrounded.

The Dinner, which was numerously attended, was presided over by J. C. Cobbold, Esq., M.P. for Ipswich, supported by H. E. Adair, Esq., M.P., A. S. Adair, Esq., M.P., and J. H. Hardcastle, Esq., M.P.; the Bishop of Norwich, and many of the Clergy. His Lordship, in responding to a toast from the chair, remarked that it was quite true, as the Chairman had observed, that this was the first occasion upon which he had been called to respond to the toast of "The Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese." It was peculiarly gratifying to him that the first occasion of his doing so should be at a meeting of this particular description. It was a token of an improved and enlightened spirit of the age. The time, he hoped, was now quite gone by, when scientific and natural truth was considered not only at variance with, and distinct from, religious truth, but principally in opposition to it. As Professor Sedgwick had very forcibly pointed out that morning, the Word and Works of God were only books which we must trace to the same Divine authorship—different volumes of a revelation of mercy; and he was persuaded, that the more they compared the one with the other, in an honest and right spirit, the more He would enable us to illustrate and confirm the one by the other. The Museum and its meetings had a direct connection with the ministry; for an Institution which tended obviously to withdraw the humbler classes from debasing scenes and habits, and which rendered these classes industrious, sober, and honest, was an Institution that was co-operating with the ministrations of the clergy; to a certain extent it occupied the same ground, that was to say, it prepared the objects of their ministrations for the more ready application of the Divine word.—A meeting like the present was common ground for all. Whatever might be our differences or disagreements on politics or on religion, here, at least, we were united—we were one. The Museum, and its meetings, which were very important adjuncts, furnished us with the materials of a temple of charity.

On the previous Wednesday evening a highly interesting lecture had been delivered by Professor Owen upon the extinct gigantic wingless birds of New Zealand, which we hope to notice in a future number.



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