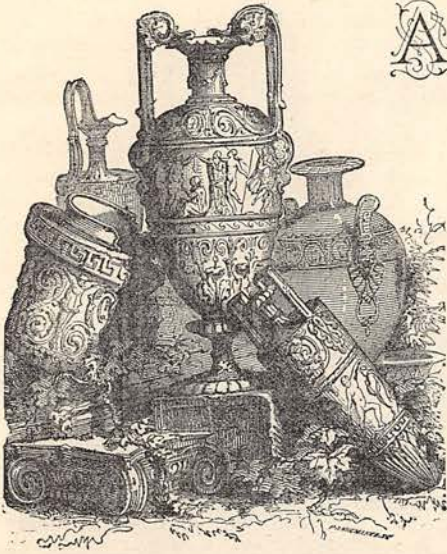


THE SUPPOSED SITE OF ANCIENT TROY.

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A GREAT deal of attention has been devoted, within the last few years, to the much-disputed question as to the site of ancient Troy, and all the archaeologists, besides a very large propor-

tion of the general public, have been in a state of excitement on account of the announced discovery of numerous important remains of the Trojans, of great value, in wonderful perfection and in great variety. The fortunate discoverer, or reputed discoverer, was a certain Dr. Schliemann, a German, known in his own country as a man of considerable research in matters of this kind. Very lately, indeed, the subject has been under discussion in a meeting in London, where Mr. Gladstone—not less remarkable as a Greek scholar than as a politician—appeared to endorse these discoveries, and showed clearly that he accepted them as a valuable contribution to knowledge.

Those who have travelled much in the islands of the Eastern Mediterranean, and on the shores of Turkey and Asia Minor, which are crowded with spots of historic interest, cannot fail to have experienced, as I have, the extreme difficulty of identifying interesting historic sites. It requires an amount of faith which falls to the lot of few old travellers to accept the local stories, while even to identify the descriptions of travellers of the eighteenth century is altogether hopeless. Nature has done so much in the way of obliterating all markings, that the help of man was hardly needed, but man has assisted with so much energy—the only energy shown in these countries is the energy of destruction—that very little can be obtained to confirm an opinion, should faith for a moment waver. I remember to have examined with some care a good many years ago the cliffs near Kertch, on the eastern shores of the Crimea, close to the Sea of Azof, where crowds of fragments of antiquity have been found. The whole apparent cliff is nothing more than the crushed ruins of ancient walls, but there is no appearance of a brick, and hardly of a coin. I remember also

visiting the ancient city of Samos, in Cephalaria. Here, except a few vast squared stones, the remains of old Cyclopean walls, and innumerable fragments of pottery turned up by the plough year after year, as the ground is scratched over before cropping, there exists no indication that there was once a city inhabited by thousands of intelligent and civilised people. But here the sites were accurately fixed, and the whole boundaries of the old cities known. In the case of Troy, a city whose very existence is doubtful, about which we know absolutely nothing with certainty, and which dates back to a period anterior to the earliest distinct Greek history, what can be expected but confusion and disappointment?

But in sailing through the beautiful waters that connect the Sea of Marmora with the Mediterranean, and pausing from time to time as we near the Asiatic coast, we pass the broad swelling hills and more level coasts which have always been regarded as enclosing the site of the great events recorded by Homer. Here was landed, as we presume, the great wooden horse; here rode the ancient triremes and other members of the navy of old Greece; on these plains descended the vast horde of Greeks, then as now piratically inclined, and only desiring a pretext to make depredatory war on their neighbours. How much of all the history is true, and what parts are pure imagination and poetry?

That the Greeks were even then an active, restless race, quarrelling among themselves, and only too willing at any time to make up their own grievances for the moment to pounce in united strength on a neighbouring people who possessed flocks, herds, or property of any other kind, such as men, women, and children capable of being utilised (made to work as slaves or sold to slavery)—all this is the very alphabet of knowledge of this remarkable people. They were then what they are now, and what they will be to the end of the chapter. *Klephts* is the classical name for them. Robbers, an ugly translation, can only be suggested far away from the country, by people whose ideas with regard to ownership are of a very different nature, and who hold strongly to the possibility of a distinction between might and right.

There can be no doubt that in some part of the plain of the Scamander, entered anciently by a deep bay, which is now nearly filled up, and is little more than swamp, was situated ancient Troy. The high lands by which it is separated from the shores of the Ægean Sea entirely shelter and enclose it, and are visible to every one entering or emerging from the Dardanelles on the way to Constantinople. On the other or eastern side the plain is bordered by Mount Ida and its numerous spurs, a range of considerable interest, but not to be mistaken for the much more lofty mountain of the same name in Crete, which rises nearly 8,000 feet above the sea. The Ida of the Troad consists of a number of jagged summits,

probably a branch of the mountain-chain of the Anti-Taurus, which forms the southern boundary of the Black Sea, and crosses into Europe to connect with the Balkan.

During the early spring the scenery is very fine, but from a distance there is not much appearance of population or cultivation. During the late autumn, when the rainy season commences, and also in the spring, when there are heavy rains occasionally, the streams which traverse the length of the plain between the high lands are greatly swollen, and much of the land is under water. No doubt this is much worse now than it was in former times, when the rivers entered the sea by a free and open course, not being then choked by the mud and alluvial deposits that have converted the former bay into a swamp. The climate is extreme, bitterly cold in winter and fiercely hot in summer.

For some distance from the present coast-line the ground is absolutely level, but it rises considerably from this swamp towards the end of the plain, which at one time was presumed to have been the site of the old city of Troy. In this part the level of the ground is as much as 400 feet above the sea, and is in fact rather a slope from the mountain ridge than a plain in the usual sense. The distance is about twelve miles from the line of the coast. Modern researches have proved beyond doubt that no town of importance has ever existed here, and thus, in spite of the learned disquisitions of some authors, we must look elsewhere for the real position of the old city.

The remains of antiquity in this part of Asia Minor, and on the shores of the Black Sea, consist of little more than tumuli. Large heaps, sometimes forming real hills, are seen at intervals, not presenting the slightest appearance of human agency, and often requiring long research to discover any indications of their origin. Of such tumuli none are found actually within the plain of the Scamander, but as many as ten are recognised on its margin. It is thus probable that there existed several villages or towns built on the slopes on each side of the plain, to take advantage of the more healthy atmosphere, and keep clear of the torrents that must at all times have swept down the valley from the adjacent hills after heavy storms of rain. Had there been villages and mounds in the plain, they would however in all probability have been entirely swept away, in the course of the 3,000 years that have elapsed since the valley was occupied in large numbers. Since then the population has probably been small, wandering, and rather given to pastoral than agricultural pursuits.

Such is the geographical position and condition of the celebrated plains that witnessed, as we are told by the poets, the struggle between the gods of classical times, represented by men in the shape of demi-gods and heroes. That there was once a thickly-peopled district dwelling in fixed and permanent habitation in this north-western corner of Asia Minor may be considered certain. The tumuli alone afford ample proof of this.

The researches of Dr. Schliemann seem to prove that the place now called Hissarlik, and marked on

the maps as Ilium Novum, was really the site of a city of enormous antiquity. It occupies a recess to the east of the course of the Scamander, and is barely more than three miles in a direct line from the sea. The modern village of Chiblat lies a little to the east, and all round there are indications of an ancient population seen in the innumerable fragments of pottery turned up whenever the ground is disturbed. There is a low acropolis overlooking the Scamander, and from it the Ægean Sea and the island of Tenedos are visible. Here Dr. Schliemann, by very extensive and continued researches, has unearthed the vast multitude of relics that have been put forward as proof of the existence of an ancient Troy, a rich and civilised city, whose date, judging from the style of the antiquities, is certainly not later than that usually assigned to the Trojan war.

Below the surface the deep trenches cut during the three years, 1870 to 1873, by a strong force of labourers—sometimes as many as 150 in number—under Dr. Schliemann's instructions, passed through the remains of a Greek town, and reached an old Cyclopean wall. Below this stratum of comparatively recent date there were found several distinct strata of débris, the lowest resting on the bare rock, and containing chiefly pottery; the one above composed of burnt ashes, with fragments of charcoal and earth, apparently the result of a great fire, but with some vases, also showing the action of fire; the third including fragments of an old town, and two above, of more recent date, but still very old. In another trench to the south were indications of a large palace, also of very great antiquity.

Among these ruins were unearthed an incredible multitude of antiquities of all kinds—in the newer deposits marbles and sculptures of some merit, but in the older only such as belong to the pre-historic period, and that correspond well with other discoveries of the older people who once inhabited Asia Minor; thousands of vases, chiefly of pottery, but some of silver; head-dresses, earrings, bracelets, and rings of gold, also to be reckoned by thousands; a few inscriptions, which are unsatisfactory, though apparently Phœnician; golden bottles; shields, kettles, vases, and other objects of copper; and many remarkable objects of *electrum*, a mixed metal, consisting of an alloy of three parts gold and one part silver, some of them cast and others hammered. All these attest a gradual advance in artistic labour that was attained by successive generations of these early people. Some vases and other objects are exceedingly large, and have evidently been adapted to domestic purposes. The pottery is considered to have great resemblance to specimens certainly of great antiquity found in the Greek island of Santorin, and also in some parts of ancient Etruria, in Italy. They are regarded by the best authorities as pre-Hellenic. It is not a little curious that similar vases worked into a semi-human form, and believed to indicate the worship of a goddess of wisdom more ancient than the Minerva of Athens, but also characterised by the owl, are met with in deposits of extreme antiquity in Pomerania, and on the shores of the Baltic.

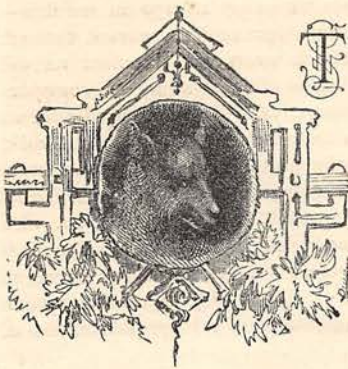
The list of objects collected by Dr. Schliemann, exclusive of a very large number discovered and stolen by the workmen, includes 12,710 pieces distinctly defined, without counting fragments; 180 are of ivory, 2,600 terra-cotta, 780 marble or stone, and 9,150 of various metals, besides 8,700 beads and a few objects in amber.

Such are some of the results of the explorations of the last five years in this part of Asia Minor. The zeal of Dr. Schliemann has revived the old question of the value of the Homeric poem, and its relation to history. It has also been the means of introducing to the notice of European archaeologists a vast variety of objects showing an early acquaintance with some of the arts of life now regarded as indicating high civilisation, belonging to a period of the most remote

antiquity. Whether he has settled the question as to a real Troy may still be regarded as doubtful, inasmuch as Homer's narrative is evidently imaginative, and contains many internal proofs of having been modified in successive generations. But that the ancient Phœnician races inhabiting the western extremity of Asia were so intelligent and cultivated that they lived on in the same spot from generation to generation, town after town rising on the ruins of that preceding it on the same spot, there cannot now be any question.

We owe much to the energy that, in spite of great difficulties thrown in his way by governments and people, and the very large expense required to carry on the work, has succeeded in bringing out results so important.

NOVEMBER.



THIS is generally a dreary month (especially in town), mists and showers alternating with furious gales, and it may be snowstorms. Still at the commencement of it the artistic eye finds much to admire in the masses of yellow foliage on the

elms, and the russet and golden beauty of birch and beech. The weather is probably mild, and many late autumnal wild flowers are yet blooming. On the 5th of the month last year we counted in a cold district of East Anglia as many as twenty-three species in an afternoon's walk. Amongst them were hawk-weeds, nipple-wort, three species of chick-weed, shepherd's purse, yarrow, bluebell, wild geranium, &c. In Devon at the same time the list was nearly doubled. Much interest attaches to the birds of the month. Wood-pigeons, which of late years, owing greatly to the system of gun licences, have largely increased upon the farmers, now assemble in flocks of two or three hundred and plunder the turnips, or pick up from the stubbles what should rightly belong to the partridges. Most of the winter birds come this month. The red-wing, field-fare, and Royston crow have already made their appearance; but the wild goose and duck, the widgeon, pochard, and teal, some of which have bred with us, are reinforced by large arrivals of their kith and kin, if the weather be at all severe.

The country is enlivened at present by the bustle and excitement of fox-hunting. In a genuine hunting population the cry of the hounds in the distance is the signal for all work to be suspended; men and boys ascend ladders and hayricks, and the horses in the farm-yards neigh, as if they knew the delights of the chase.

In Canute's Laws foxes are specially excepted from being animals of the forest or chase; any one might kill them; but in Edward I.'s reign fox-hunting had attained to the dignity of a sport. It is upon record how much was paid to the king's fox-hunter and his two boys, who took care of the dogs, in 1300. Since that time it has continued to grow more popular year by year; and even the enclosure of the country, the formation of railways, &c., have only added to its charms; whereas hawking, mainly from these obstacles to its free pursuit, has become practically extinct.

Addison has often been laughed at for the little knowledge he evinces of country life when he makes Sir Roger de Coverley hunt hares during the first fortnight of July, and speaks of the worthy knight chasing foxes with beagles.

Most country people know of a fox's earth, and are greatly interested in the safe escape of the cubs. The ground around it is generally littered with wings and tails of crows, hens, &c., which the old ones have brought home for their cubs. The little ones frequently seek the shelter of standing corn, and last year we knew of five thus darting from the centre of a wheat-field as soon as the reaping-machine pressed closely upon them.

When the ivy has ceased flowering (it generally begins to blossom in October), a marked diminution in insect-life will be observed. White notices that it is the last flower which supports the existence of butterflies, gnats, &c. On the sunny days of this month these may be seen swarming on ivy, especially the red admiral butterfly. Some die at the approach of cold weather, others hibernate. The different kinds of gnats must be very hardy, as they come out all through the winter during sunshine, even when snow is on the ground. Insect-eating birds and also trout are thus provided with an occasional dainty. Among the lepidoptera at least nine-tenths hibernate in the chrysalis state, but some of the perfect insects survive the winter, taking refuge under the rafters of outhouses