

was allowed to march on his downward way without let or hindrance. His first appearance in the Jesuit chapel was nevertheless a remarkable event. Nobody present could help taking notice of his evident attention and frequent emotion. Father Pedro was undoubtedly operating powerfully on the heretic's soul, and at length the whole town was edified by the tale of his conversion. He had sought an interview with the eloquent preacher, declared that his conscience would not allow him to rest in the errors of his Protestant education, and humbly solicited reception into the bosom of the Mother Church.

The brotherhood did not make many conversions in those days, and they made much of Morice Durone. The former rank of his family was magnified up to nobility. They had all been obstinate heretics for ages, and now their most promising scion having come to Spain, doubtless by the order of Providence, was converted by the eloquence of Father Pedro. If that did not wake up the church to the value of the Society, nothing would. Morice's reception was a grand ceremonial, at which all the treasures of relics, vestments, and altar-plate belonging to the college were displayed. Father Pedro preached one of his best sermons—at least, people thought so—for it was the fullest of Latin quotations. Half Malaga attended in the chapel and in the street, though the bishop, knowing how the wind blew at Rome, fell sick rather than countenance the Society by his presence; but everybody admired the devotion of the convert. All his relations in France and in England, as soon as they heard the news, wrote to disown him. The shrewd people of Malaga remarked that a Frenchman never recanted for nothing; but Morice held on his way, attending mass, prayers, and confession, with every appearance of sincerity, minding his business as heretofore, and manifestly looking for no temporal fruits of his conversion. The brotherhood considered him a shining example of reclamation from heresy. Father Pedro, in particular, was proud of his special work. The preacher, though keen, clever, and subtle, after the fashion of his Society, had two weak points, which, by the way, are not uncommon in the brotherhood, for he was somewhat vain, and somewhat fond of getting. From the signal service he had done to the college by his preaching, and the repute he acquired in the town as a confessor, it was thought proper at head-quarters to remove the superior, and promote Father Pedro to his office.

[To be continued.]

#### A NIGHT WITH THE ETHNOLOGISTS.

My curiosity having been considerably stimulated by the notices recently given of the discovery of a number of skulls in the diggings near Wroxeter, (the Uriconium of the Romans,) I availed myself of the introduction of a friend, to attend a meeting of the Ethnological Society, where I had an opportunity of seeing the crania, and collecting the opinions of the learned respecting them. As these crania have excited a considerable amount of public

attention, I am led to think that many readers of the "Leisure Hour" might like to peruse my record of what I saw and heard at the interesting *soirée* at which it was my privilege to be present.

To my mind, there was something instructive and seriously affecting in the spectacle I witnessed as soon as I entered the room. There were present some thirty or forty living heads, deeply occupied in the contemplation of the half dozen crania laid on the table just under the eye of the president. The gentleman through whose zeal for our instruction they had been brought to light and to London, was then furnishing his record of the conditions in which they had been found, and giving many interesting facts to assist the meeting in forming its conclusions respecting them. Our ethnographers pursued their inquiries, and offered their opinions, with becoming respect for the dead, whose remains they handled with all due reverence—very unlike the grave-digger in "Hamlet," who threw up his skulls with a song. The skull of "Poor Yorick" had lain "i' the earth three and twenty years," so that Hamlet could say, "I know him." These "domes of thought" had lain in the "dead past" some thirteen or fourteen centuries, and the only striking resemblance they bore to the remains in the churchyard scene, was the curious fact that one of the skulls was like that of the supposed lawyer, who had "his fine pate full of fine dirt."

The whole of these crania were dug out of a light loamy soil, from the depth of a foot to two feet and a half. The spot whence they were exhumed, which is elevated some thirty or forty feet above the level of the neighbouring river, is ascertained to have been within the walls of the buried city of Uriconium, now in the process of excavation. The loamy soil in this ancient grave is so friable and fine, that, except when wet, it forms a light powder, easily transported by the wind. It is the cause of much inconvenience to the excavators, who have to desist from the work when a constant wind has rendered it impossible for them to proceed with safety. Only one of the skulls was supposed to belong to a female, and the whole indicated adult age. From their oval form, the symmetry of their proportions, and their dimensions, it may be concluded that they belonged to a race considerably advanced in civilization. It will be observed, therefore, that these are not the remains of those early Celts who dwelt in this island before the Roman invasion, and the vestiges of whose rude art are at present the subject of scientific investigation. The difference between the round skull of the early Celt, and the oval forms under consideration, is well known to all who have given attention to the physical distinctions that mark the various branches of the human family.

It ought, perhaps, now to be mentioned that a great amount of curiosity had been awakened respecting these crania, from the report that they all exhibited a remarkable kind of deformity. By external pressure they had been somewhat flattened in the lateral portions, in a manner which it was suggested might have been artificial, when in infancy or at a later period. The causes which

may have produced this deformation were not suggested; but somehow the notion was very generally entertained, that we were to find proof that, during the Roman era, a race of barbarous people dwelt in this county, who, like the ancient Peruvians and other degraded peoples, sought to improve upon nature by giving the heads of their children a quadrilateral form. It was left for the learned members of the Ethnological Society, and the strangers present by their courtesy, to investigate the facts and interpret them—to say whether the deformation were the result of design or accident, whether produced in infancy or at a later age, or whether its date was posthumous, and if so, whether soon after death or by some cause of slow and prolonged action.

That the skulls had been subjected to pressure from the sides was evident to every one who examined them. It appeared also that the effect was so to distort the fore part of the head as to alter the direction of the sight—an object which no persons, however barbarous, would be likely to wish for. The hinder portions of the head and the forehead gave no evidence of such artificial pressure as would have been employed if any attempt had been made to impress them with new forms.

From the statement of Mr. Wright, that these remains were all found just within the site of the ancient Roman city, we may suppose, according to the suggestion offered by that gentleman, that they were not Roman, as that nation adopted the wise sanitary regulation of extra-mural interment. From the varied positions in which the bodies lay, it was inferred that the interments took place before the introduction of Christianity, or certainly before this portion of the native race had embraced it. It seemed to be a rational supposition that these were some of the native population who had besieged the city, and perished soon after entering within its walls, and, having fallen victims, were buried by their countrymen on the spot where they fell. We say "buried," for we have the circumstance of their orderly interment on the authority of Mr. Wright, whose name is intimately associated with the excavations, conducted under his superintendence. There is a tradition among the people near Wroxeter, that the old Roman city, after standing a prolonged siege, was taken by a curious stratagem. The Britons, it is said, collected some thousands of sparrows, and, having tied firebrands to their feet, set them free, when they alighted on the roofs of the city, which, being of thatch, the whole place took fire, and in the alarm and confusion the besiegers rushed in and took the city. It is some deduction from the truth of this story, that ample evidence exists that the houses were not roofed with thatch, but with flags of stone; and its value is further reduced by its commonness, it being similarly told of Cirencester, Silchester, and some half dozen other places of antiquity.

Without undertaking to report the valuable observations of the various speakers, who brought to the discussion a great amount of learning, anatomical, ethnographic, and archaic, I have to state that they were unanimous in the opinion that the deformation was attributable to posthumous causes.

The deformation was not congenital, showing itself at birth, like the varieties that distinguish the various races of the genus *homo*. Deformities produced in the first instance by artificial means are not perpetuated, as is clearly shown by the feet of the Chinese women, who are all born with feet of the natural size, notwithstanding the efforts made to prevent their proper development. Neither was it regarded as being produced by applying bands or boards, or any means of pressure, to the head in infancy, or at a later period. As to the change being after death, the learned disputants were all agreed; and it appeared also that the gentleman by whom the question was raised, felt perfectly satisfied with this conclusion.

Some difference of opinion still remains as to the way in which the deformities were produced after interment. From the circumstance that none of the plates composing the crania were fractured, and that they assumed their present form without great resistance, the conclusion is derived that the cause, whatever it might have been, began to operate before the bones had derived the rigidity they would assume from the loss of animal as distinguished from mineral matter. As to the mode in which the forces operated on the crania when lying in the earth, it appeared to be a very general opinion that the hypothesis of a superincumbent pressure beginning to act as soon as the head had fallen on one side might be taken as sufficient. As the discussion proceeded, however, the notion was suggested that it would be unnecessary to suppose any such pressure from above; and the importance of this idea will be seen when it is remembered that these remains were covered by not much more than two feet depth of light earth. It was thought that the lower side of each cranium would soften, and so yield, from lying on the moist earth, and that then the upper side would begin gradually to sink in. The author of this opinion seemed to gain the concurrence of a considerable portion of the company; and some respect was also given to the hypothesis that the action of frost and excessive heat had told on the results under contemplation. This I give as a faithful representation of the recent discussion of this interesting subject.

The buried city in which these relics were found is about a mile and three-quarters in extent, and a mile in breadth. As the excavations proceed, we may expect that the foundations of the whole of this Roman city will be laid bare. Probably, from the time of its capture and destruction, it has remained undisturbed, and the earth has gradually been allowed to accumulate and cover it up. It is about a year since a mass of building known from time immemorial as the "old wall" was cleared, to the north of which was discovered a large building which appears to have constituted the public baths of Uriconium. They appear in many respects to correspond with similar remains in Pompeii and in Rome. In the middle of this building there is a large square inclosure paved with narrow red bricks, set in something like herring-bone form. It is supposed to have been a place of public meeting, and may have been the market-place or forum. The workmen have come upon a street paved with

small round stones, like those in some of our old English towns. The excavators have also discovered the foundations of several dwelling-houses of considerable importance, in one of which is a hypocaust, about 25 feet by 23, still in good preservation. A quantity of burnt wheat has been discovered, as in the Roman house at Blenheim, near Oxford; and other proofs are furnished that the city, or some portion of it, was destroyed by fire. Mr. Wright, under whose superintendence the work of excavation is proceeding, says that "the houses seem generally to have been roofed with micaceous slate, set lozenge-shaped, so that from a distance, when seen in the sunshine, (as it occupies a beautiful elevation from the Severn, commanding the Vale of Shrewsbury,) the Roman city must have glittered like a city of diamonds."

It would be to the honour of our country if the necessary funds were furnished for carrying forward the work of exploration with more rapidity, and under constant superintendence of such a kind as to secure the due record of every discovery. No vestige of the remains of this interesting Roman city should be allowed to escape observation; and it will be not much to our honour, as an enlightened people, if this rare opportunity is not improved to the utmost extent.

#### A CUSTOM OF THE "CUSTOMS."

ONCE a year or so, or perhaps a little oftener, there takes place at the Custom House a rather remarkable kind of exhibition, which endures for a few days, and is then followed by an auction sale, also rather remarkable, which, however, does not take place at the Custom House, but at the Commercial Sale Rooms, Mincing Lane. The exhibition consists of an *omnium gatherum* collection of various articles, differing marvellously in character and description, and the bare enumeration of which would fill a goodly number of these columns. They comprise nearly every portable species of goods of continental manufacture, from the costliest gems and jewellery down to farthing toys, and from brandy in the butt to delicate laces and embroidery. There are all sorts of carving and cabinet work—of scientific instruments—of clocks and watches—of appliances photographic and electrical, and of musical instruments, fragmentary or entire.

All these multifarious objects are the property of the Queen, and have become so in consequence of their having in some way or other infringed the Customs regulations of the country. It is not to be supposed, however, that in the mass they represent so much roguery and smuggling, or attempts at smuggling. A portion of them have doubtless become so forfeited, and their quondam owners are justly punished by the loss of their property, for designing to defraud the revenue. But a good many of the articles have lapsed to her Majesty, owing to some neglect or informality, never contemplated by their owners; others have been abandoned by the exporters, on the discovery that nothing would be gained, except perhaps a loss, by paying the duty upon them and sending them into

the market; while others—and these, we imagine, constitute a large proportion of the whole—are what are called *ad valorem* goods, which have been retained by the Custom House officers and paid for at the prices set upon them by their owners.

A word of explanation seems necessary here. Upon most goods which pay duty on entering the British markets, a definite amount is levied according to a fixed tariff; but it is found in practice impossible to attach a definite duty on all kinds of wares, as things apparently quite similar may yet differ immensely in value, owing to high and elaborate finish in the workmanship, and other causes not readily perceptible save to those familiar with such species of manufacture. In such cases, it is obviously just that the duty should be rated in proportion to the value of the article; and therefore it is so rated. One consequence of this plan, however, is, that foreign manufacturers are too frequently induced to put a lower nominal value on their goods than they are really worth, in order to escape a high duty. To meet and counteract this tendency on their part, the Customs authorities reserve to themselves the right of purchasing any of the *ad valorem* goods at the prices set upon them by the owners, who are thus occasionally punished for attempting to evade a portion of the just duty. But out of this practice of the Customs authorities has arisen another consequence, not generally recognised or talked about, but which is perfectly well known to importers of certain descriptions of goods. Manufacturers abroad, knowing the contingencies to which the *ad valorem* goods are exposed, will make up a description of wares which are intended to meet these contingencies—wares which shall look well and yet be valued at a low figure, and which they would as willingly sell to her Majesty at the price they set on them, as have them passed through the customs and into the market in the regular way. There is a case in point ticking in our pocket as we write: it is a gold hunting-watch, lever movement, jewelled in ten holes, with compensation (?) balance, carefully finished works, and a couple of stout cases. It has been going well for the last seven years, varying about a minute and a half in a week from Greenwich time, and is in all respects a handsome and serviceable article—having on its dial, in characters too small to be read without a magnifying glass, the words, (say) "Etienne Horloge et Frères, St. Croix." Now we happen to know from the best authority, that Monsieur Etienne Horloge (say) made this watch, and some hundred others like it, on purpose for her gracious Majesty to buy. It cost us exactly ten pounds, including the duty, and was bought at a Custom House sale. It suited Monsieur Etienne Horloge quite well to let her Majesty have these watches at ten pounds sterling each, minus the duty; and their superior appearance, weight of metal, and evident good workmanship, tempted the revenue officers to buy them, in the hopes of making a profit themselves; for in all cases where such goods are taken at a valuation and sold, the profit, if any, is divided equally between the officers who seize and the Crown. The foreign manufacturer who plays this game must furnish a good article at a low price, and in this instance, at