The Romance of the Museums.

I.

By William G. FitzGerald.

IT may be taken as a general rule that museums are fearfully dull places, and their officials miracles of courtesy. And yet if, instead of miserable little labels, the articles on show only had their whole histories writ large, that he who ran might read, what an earnest pilgrimage would commence towards grimy Bloomsbury and airy South Kensington!

For example, take that far-famed specimen of Greek art known as the Portland Vase, which is shown in the accompanying illustration. At present it is deposited in the Gold Ornament Room (it is entirely of glass) in the British Museum; of course, it has a glass case, and it rests on a nice pad of crimson plush. As usual, the official information deals almost exclusively with the apocryphal subjects depicted on the vase—"Peleus and Thetis on Mount Pelion," and the like recondite allusions. The Portland Vase is 9¾in. high and 21¾in. in circumference. The material is a kind of glass—an imitation of onyx, the ground being a rich transparent dark amethyst colour, with snowy figures in bas-relief of truly exquisite workmanship. Wedgwood compared these figures with the finest cameos, and asserted that the vase was the labour of many years. It was found in a marble sarcophagus inside a sepulchral chamber under the Monte del Grano, about 2½ miles from Rome, on the road to Frascati. It was deposited there A.D. 235; and the vase is supposed to be the urn that contained the ashes of the Roman Emperor, Alexander Severus, and his mother, Julia Mammæ. It was unearthed by order of Pope Barberini (Urban VIII.), and it was for more than two centuries the principal ornament of the Barberini Palace.

THE PORTLAND VASE.

In 1786 the then Duke of Portland purchased the vase at a sale for 1,029 guineas; and he deposited it in the British Museum in 1810, when it was carefully placed under a glass case on an octagonal table in the middle of an ante-room near the Hamiltonian Collection.

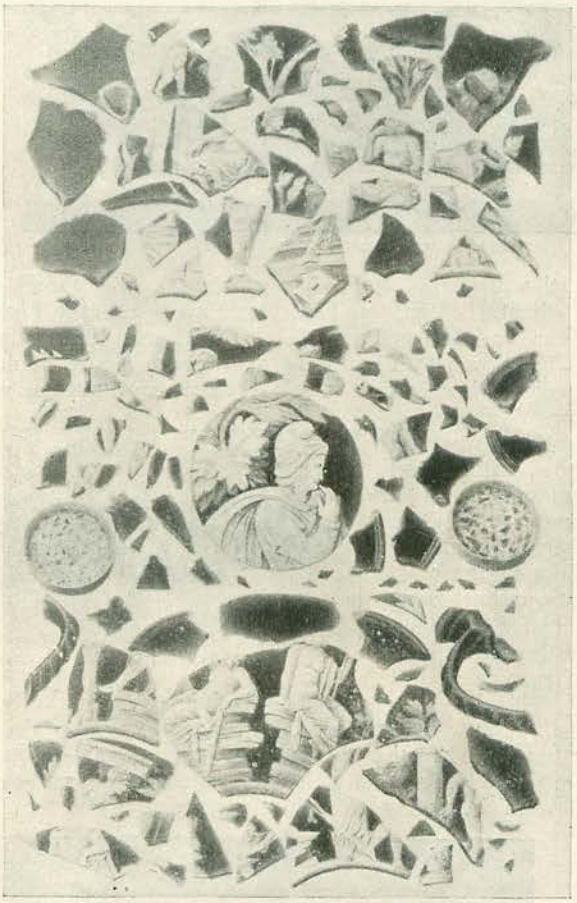
At a quarter to four on February 7th, 1845, a number of visitors were going round the Hamiltonian Room and its ante-chamber, in much the same limp, aimless way that people perform their museum peregrinations to this day, when they heard a fearful crash. Now, when we consider that even a subdued chuckle is somehow vastly increased in volume amid the sombre galleries at Bloomsbury, we realize in some slight degree the appalling effect of that crash.

The moment the attendants hastened to the spot, they beheld the priceless Portland Vase scattered in a hundred fragments over the floor. The doors were immediately closed; and Mr. Hawkins, the superintendent, at once questioned the horrified persons in the apartments, none of whom attempted to escape, lest the odium of the fell deed should descend upon him. All gave satisfactory replies, until the de-

linquent himself was taxed, when he at once cried: "Alone I did it!"

He was immediately given into custody, and on being brought before Mr. Jardine, at Bow Street Police Station, he, too, fell from his high estate by alleging "delirium, arising from habitual intemperance" — clearly a euphemism for a state of uproarious drunkenness. The culprit was William Loyd, a theatrical scene painter of Dublin, but then living at a coffee-house in Long Acre. Of course, the outrage was a mere bid for evanescent notoriety, an act of vandalism *ad captandum vulgis*, with not even the redeeming feature of having been committed in order to draw attention to the perennial wrongs of Ireland.

All this was bad enough, but even worse remained behind, for, amazing as it may seem, the law was almost powerless in the matter. The Wilful Damage Act directed the payment of £5, or two months' imprisonment, for deliberate damage done to property under the value of £5; from which it is evident that those who piloted the Act through Parliament had an idea that no human being would venture to damage property above that value. Be this as it may, the magistrate was driven to the evasion of directing Loyd to pay £5—*the nominal value of the glass case under which the vase stood.* All the miscreant possessed, however, was ninepence; consequently he was haled off forthwith to Tothill Fields Prison, where his truculent disposition manifested itself from time to time in violent assaults on the turnkeys.

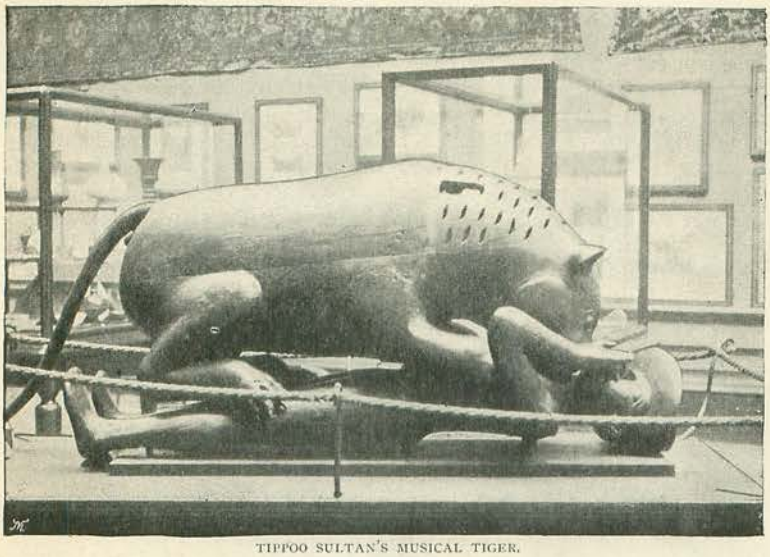


SHATTERED FRAGMENTS OF THE PORTLAND VASE.

This extraordinary story has a curious sequel. On February 13th, a letter was received by Mr. Jardine at Bow Street, inclosing £5, which the anonymous donor requested might go in payment of Loyd's fine. Subsequently the governor of the gaol received the authority of the magistrate to set the prisoner at liberty. One result of this remarkable affair was that the Government passed a special Act to protect works of art from the recurrence of outrages of this kind.

In one corner of the room in which the Portland Vase is at present exhibited hangs a curious water-colour drawing, in a plain oak frame, of the shattered fragments just as they lay on the floor immediately after the outrage. Perhaps I should have mentioned that the missile Loyd used was a curious little piece of sculpture that was exhibited close by the vase itself. The drawing of the pieces, which is reproduced here, bears the following inscription in faded ink at the top left-hand corner: "Destroyed Feb. 7th, 1845; restored Sept. 10th, 1845.—John Doubleday." Below is written: "Drawn from the fragments by T. Hosmer Shepherd, 1845." In the centre is seen the bottom of the vase entire. It is a bust of Paris, and in this particular picture the hero seems to be contemplating with sadness and dismay the havoc that has been wrought around him.

In the next illustration we see an extraordinary musical instrument, made to the order of that crafty and ferocious potentate, Tippoo Sultan, in order to amuse his Court.

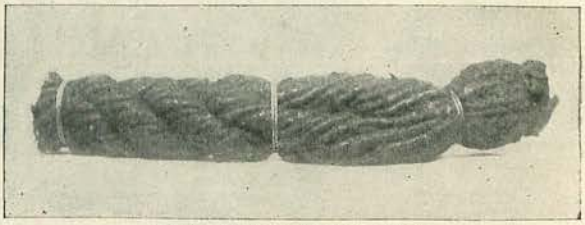


TIPPOO SULTAN'S MUSICAL TIGER.

The idea is that the Tiger of India is at the throat of Great Britain, typified by an Indian officer in the uniform of the last century. From what I gather, this unique mechanical instrument was brought out into Tippoo's courtyard, and one of his attendants turned a handle, whereupon the prostrate man shrieked horribly and raised and let fall his arms spasmodically, while the tiger emitted fearsome, realistic growls. The growling, by the way, was produced by two short stop diapason pipes of half a tone interval. One side of the tiger opens, displaying a row of ivory keys and four rows of pipes. This Royal toy passed into the possession of the East India Company, and was transferred to the South Kensington Museum in 1880, together with the rest of the collection belonging to the same powerful and wealthy corporation.

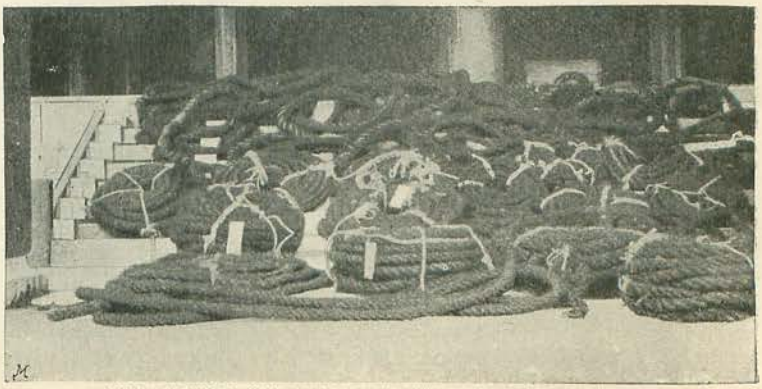
As illustrating the ignorance that prevails concerning the contents of our great museums, I may mention that not long ago a veteran Anglo-Indian wrote to the papers inquiring anxiously after "Tippoo's Tiger," and suggesting that this interesting relic should be "discovered and taken care of." The gentleman also said that he remembered seeing it in the offices of the East India Company, in Leadenhall Street. The Assistant-Director of the Museum, Mr. C. Purdon Clarke, replied to the letter, informing all whom it might concern, that this curious instrument was deposited at South Kensington; and, furthermore, that while the mechanism was being repaired, it was found that the whole had been made either in London or in Paris.

In the next illustration that figures in this article, we see a section of one of the largest of twenty-six immense ropes of human hair



SECTION OF ROPE OF HUMAN HAIR.

which are used in the building operations of Japanese temples. The section seen is no less than 6in. in diameter, and is at present deposited in a wall-case, in the second northern gallery at the British Museum. It



HEAP OF HUMAN HAIR ROPES CONTRIBUTED BY DEVOUT BUDDHISTS.

seems that these ropes have been contributed by devout Buddhists since the year 1880; and the extraordinary photographic reproduction just below the section shows a huge pile of these extraordinary donations, now in the possession of the Chief Priest of the Hori-Gwan-ji temple at Kioto. Here, truly, we have a record in the way of queer contributions towards church funds. It would seem that the devout Buddhist uncovers himself in a very literal sense, out of respect for the shrine of his Omnipotent Deity.

Not a little of the romance of the museums lies in the life-stories of the benefactors of these institutions. By way of illustration, I may mention the truly magnificent collection of art furniture and the like bequeathed to the South Kensington Museum by the whilom workhouse apprentice, Mr. John Jones. This extraordinary individual became a tailor in Waterloo Place, with such ultimate success that he died in 1882 worth £400,000. For the most part, Mr. Jones lived at No. 95, Piccadilly—quite a little house, but literally packed from top to bottom with costly furniture. Marble and jasper columns, bearing vases worth small fortunes, stood on every second step of the staircase, and the back dining-room was only 7ft. 2in. wide; yet competent judges have pronounced the Jones Collection at the South Kensington Museum to be worth, at the very least, £250,000.

MARIE ANTOINETTE'S TOILET TABLE.

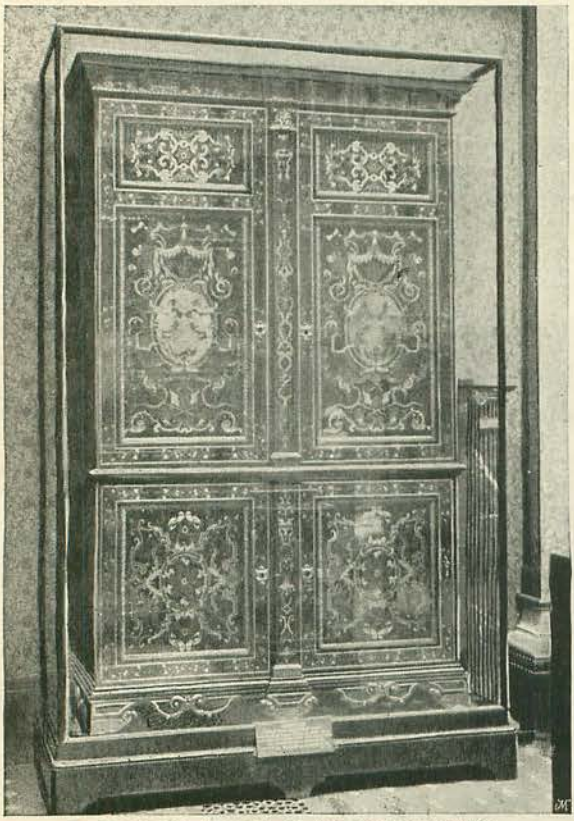
According to his valet, who was also something of a queer character in his way, Mr. Jones would go round the sale-rooms, ask the price of an article he fancied, and then write out his cheque forthwith. This strange man never married, and had no near relatives. The sole hobby of his life was his collection, and in order to convey to my readers some notion of his enthusiasm in this direction, I mention the following incident: On one occasion Mr. Jones purchased an egg-shaped Gros Bleu Sèvres vase, with medallions of Cupid and Psyche, at Lord Pembroke's sale, the price being 3,000 guineas. After it had been delivered to the princely collector, doubts were thrown upon its genuineness on account of the darkness of the colour. Mr. Jones immediately sent it off by a special messenger to the manufactory at Sèvres, fully insuring the precious vase beforehand, and taking many other precautions that involved an incredible amount of trouble and expense. He was, however, assured that the vase was perfectly genuine, and his representative was actually shown the original mould, together with all the documents relating to this particular piece.

Not the least important item in the Jones Collection is the toilet table that formerly belonged to Marie Antoinette. This is shown in the accompanying illustration. It was purchased by Mr. Jones for £6,000, somewhere back in the fifties; and since it has been in the Museum several copies have been made, the most noteworthy of which was one made by Messrs. Gillow and Co., the well-known upholsterers, for an American millionaire. I gather that Messrs. Gillow's men paid many visits to the toilet table, and made a large number of drawings of the various parts.

Shortly after the Jones Collection was deposited in the South Kensington Museum, the French Government sent over a committee of experts, accompanied by photographers, to inspect the various pieces. At the head of the committee was M. Williamson, the Principal of the Garde Meubles Nationale at Paris. These gentlemen recognised many items in the collection as the former property of the Garde Meubles, and actually pointed out to the authorities at South Kensington the makers' marks and stamps, which are generally carefully concealed, and certainly had not been noticed

in this country. Perhaps I should explain that the Garde Meubles is the name of the institution which has the care of the furniture of the public buildings of France.

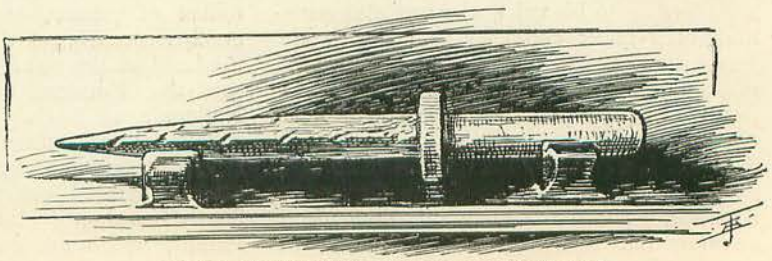
M. Williamson and his committee stopped short before the large armoire, shown in the next picture; this is, perhaps, the most important piece of furniture in the whole collection. It is, also, supposed to be the grandest and most unique piece of furniture in the whole world; and although Mr. Jones picked it up cheaply, so to speak, at a sale that took place in a mansion in Carlton House Terrace, the armoire could be sold to-morrow for 10,000 guineas. It was probably designed by Berain, and executed by Boulé, for Louis XIV., about the end of the 17th century. One of the distinguished visitors before referred to looked wistfully at this magnificent piece of artistic furniture, and declared, half seriously, half playfully, that if France ever went to war with England for anything, it would be on account of that Louis Quatorze armoire. M. Williamson's visiting committee, I should mention, took back with them large photographs of almost everything in the Jones Collection. They generously conceded that Mr. Jones, and therefore the Museum, had an incontestable right to these works of art, two revolutions of decent proportions having taken place in Paris since they had been in the possession of the French.



THE LOUIS XIV. ARMOIRE, IN THE JONES COLLECTION.

I have now to record the miraculous recovery of a man through whose body the pin or pivot passed which is reproduced here. This ugly-looking weapon was shown to me by Professor Stewart at the Royal College of Surgeons, and it is deposited in the Museum there, together with a coloured picture of the sufferer himself in two positions. His name, by the way, was John Taylor, and the accident happened while he was on board the brig *Jane*, of Scarborough, then lying in the London Docks. One of Taylor's mates was guiding the pivot of the try-sail mast into the main boom when the tackle gave way. The pivot instantly slipped from the man's hand and shot through the air point downwards, striking Taylor above the heart, passing out lower down his back, and then embedding itself in the deck. The unfortunate sailor was carried at once to the London Hospital, and in five months he recovered so completely as to be able to take little walks in the hospital premises. Ultimately, Taylor returned to his duties as a seaman, notwithstanding that this terrible spike, 15in. in length, and weighing 7lb. or 8lb., had passed obliquely through his body.

Close by this spike, in the same Museum,



MAST PIVOT WHICH PASSED THROUGH A SAILOR'S BODY.

is seen the shaft of a carriage, which also passed through the body of a gentleman who happened to be standing near the vehicle when the horse plunged violently forward, with the result that the off-shaft perforated his side under the left arm and came out from under the right arm, pinning the unfortunate man to the stable-door. And yet he walked upstairs to bed; his wounds were practically healed at the end of nine weeks, and he lived nearly eleven years after this terrible accident.

An even more extraordinary story attaches to the next illustration, which depicts the clothes of a man struck by lightning. This curious relic, or, rather, collection of relics, is artistically hung in a glass case in the Museum presided over by my amiable and indefatigable friend, Professor Stewart. The story is as follows: At half-past four on June 8th, 1878, James Orman and three other men were at work near Snave, in Romney Marsh, about eight miles from Ashford. The men were engaged in lopping willows, when the violence of the rain compelled them to take shelter under a hedge. The storm increased, however, so they retreated to a shed close by for more efficient protection. Three of the men at once entered, but the last, James Orman, remained by the willow close to the window of the shed. Scarcely were the three men inside when a blaze of lightning rushed in at the door, across the shed, and out of the window, which it blew before it into the field. Presently the three men hurried out of the shed, and noticed that the tree under which Orman had taken shelter was partly stripped of its bark. Their companion's boots stood close to the foot of the tree, while the man himself lay almost perfectly naked on his back a few yards further on, calling for help. When they left him a few moments previously he was completely and strongly clad in a cotton shirt, cotton jacket, flannel vest, and cotton trousers secured at the waist and knee with leather straps and buckles. Orman also wore a pair of new, stout, hob-nailed boots, a hat and a watch and chain. Now, however, positively all he had on him was part of the left arm of his flannel vest. The field was strewn for 22yds. with fragments of the unfortunate man's clothing.

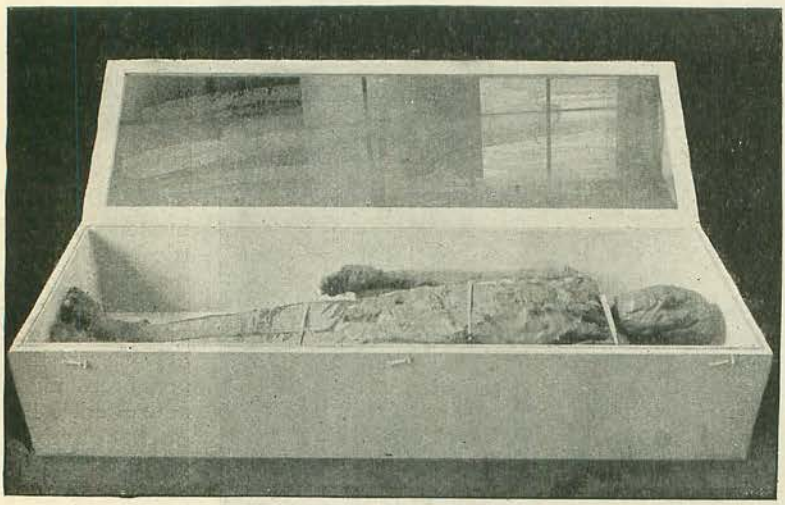
CLOTHES, WATCH, BOOTS, ETC., OF A MAN WHO WAS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

Without doubt, this is the most eccentric vagary recorded of the mysterious electric fluid. Orman was thrown down; his eyebrows were burnt off, his whiskers and beard much scorched, his chest covered with superficial burns, and he had sustained a broken leg. His clothes, as I have already said, were distributed all over the field; his strong boots were torn from his feet, and his watch had a hole burnt right through it, as though a soldering-iron had been used. The watch-chain was almost completely destroyed, only a few fused links remaining. These, together with some fused coins found close by, are deposited in a box beneath the clothes in the Museum.

According to Orman's account of the affair, he first felt a violent blow on the chest and shoulders, then he was involved in blind-

ing light, and hurled into the air. He said he never lost consciousness; but when at the hospital he seemed very deaf and stupid. He was discharged perfectly cured twenty weeks after the occurrence. The scientific explanation of this amazing escape is that the wet condition of the man's clothing increased its power of conduction, and, in this way, saved his life. The electric current passed down outside Orman's body, causing everywhere a sudden production of steam, which, by its expansion, tore the clothing off and hurled it away. It is a curious fact that where the flannel touched the man's skin the burns were merely superficial, whereas in those parts touched by the cotton trousers they were very much deeper.

Also under Professor Stewart's care in the Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons is the oldest mummy in the world, which is



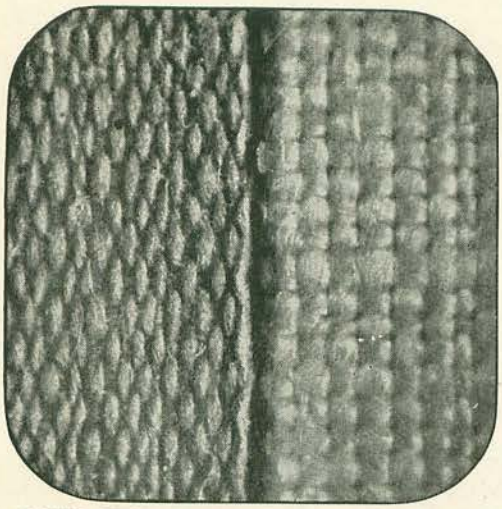
THE OLDEST MUMMY IN THE WORLD.

shown in the accompanying illustration. According to Professor Flinders Petrie, this mummy belonged to the 4th Egyptian Dynasty, and is upwards of 6,000 years of age. I gather that this individual was a high functionary in the ancient Egyptian Court, and his body was preserved by methods not then generally used. Professor Petrie himself took this mummy from a tomb at Medum, in Egypt. "After some preliminary steps," declared Professor Stewart, in describing for me the preparation of the mummy, "his body was probably imbued with spices, and then covered with a layer of resin, most likely derived from the Cedars of Lebanon, after which the features were painted to represent life." The mummy arrived at the Museum in 1892, and Professors Flinders Petrie and Stewart commenced their examination of it a month or two after its reception.

"We took it out into the courtyard," remarked Professor Stewart to me, "and there commenced to unwrap it. The mummy was extremely dry and fragile, and from it arose a fine pungent dust that was extremely irritating. I found that the brain remained, while the body itself was stuffed with handfuls of ancient cloth. It was wrapped in a gauze-like texture, which I at first took to be papyrus; and it was quite by accident that I looked at a piece of this texture under the microscope, when I found it to be linen. I at once suspended operations on the mummy, and made my way to Bond Street, where I entered a linen warehouse and asked for some of the finest linen that it was possible to buy. The assistant brought me a piece, assuring me, in a confidential whisper, that its like was rarely sold, and that when a buyer *did* come along, he or she was among the highest and wealthiest in the land. I hurried back with this linen, and compared it under the microscope with the ancient Egyptian texture, woven more than 6,000 years ago."

I reproduce here Professor Stewart's microscopic photograph of the two linens, the finer being the ancient Egyptian fabric, and the coarser the very best linen that Belfast or Bond Street can produce.

No one would think of seeking for romance amid the pre-historic skeletons that haunt the long gallery at the Natural History Museum, which is under the supervision of Dr. Woodward. And yet romance is certainly there. First of all let me show the skull and tusks of a mammoth—a particularly prominent feature of the gallery before mentioned. Now let me tell the story: As long ago as 1844, Sir Antonio Brady, an enthusiastic geologist and scientist, had his attention drawn to the great deposits of brick earth occupying the valley of the River Roding at Ilford, near his



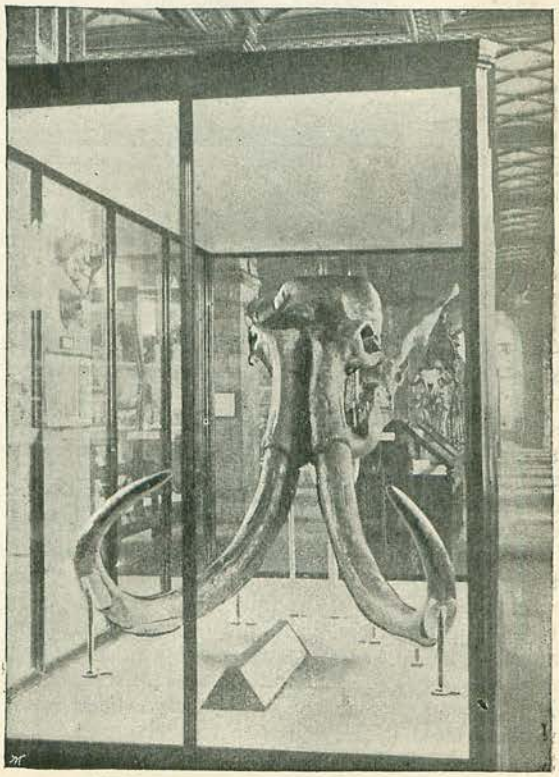
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN AND MODERN BOND STREET LINEN COMPARED UNDER THE MICROSCOPE.

own residence. Some idea may be formed of the palæontological wealth of this deposit when I mention that Sir Antonio Brady obtained from it in this one locality over a thousand specimens of mammalian remains. One of the first of this gentleman's finds was made while workmen were digging clay for the manufacture of bricks for the Great Eastern Railway, then in course of construction. The owner of the field, a Mr. Thomas Curtis, invited quite a crowd of scientific gentlemen down to Ilford to view the bones that had turned up. All these were exhumed with much care, some of them being deposited subsequently in the Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons.

When notice of a fossil "find" was brought to Sir Antonio Brady, he would first of all reward the finder, and in many cases paid large sums in order that a whole gang of labourers might remain idle while the precious bones or tusks were being carefully removed from the earth. These same bones and tusks, by the way, were, as a rule, very fragile, and had to be immediately treated with liquid glue, wet paper, and plaster of Paris. As a matter of fact, this enthusiastic scientist would deal as tenderly with fossil remains as though he were an expert surgeon handling broken human limbs.

One day in 1864, a messenger was despatched in hot haste to Sir Antonio Brady with news of an important find in the Uphall brickfield, at Ilford, owned by a Mr. William Hill. On arriving at the spot, Sir Antonio found that the workmen had come upon an immense skull and tusk about 15ft. below the surface of the earth. The cranium itself was nearly entire, the upper portion only of the left side having received a blow from a pick or a spade when the workmen first came upon it. It is probable that the entire skeleton was there, for, before news of it had got abroad, the workmen, knowing nothing of the *Elephas primogenius*, had broken up the bones they had come upon week after week and carried them off in bagfuls to an old bone shop, where they were promptly exchanged for coppers, which were of far more value to the finders than all the skeletons in the Natural History Museum.

When they came upon the tusks, however, the overseer interfered, feeling sure that his men had come upon a big thing in more ways than one. It was entirely owing to the skill and judgment of Sir Antonio Brady and the experts from the Natural History Museum that this mammoth's head was removed from the matrix entire, and brought away in safety. The right tusk, together with a portion of its socket, had evidently become detached, for



SKULL AND TUSKS OF THE ILFORD MAMMOTH.

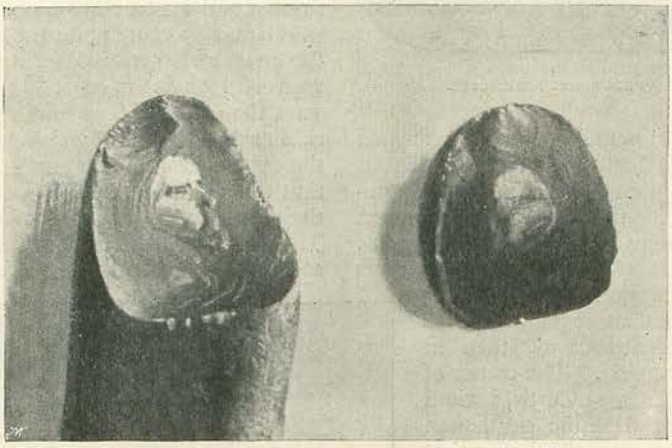
it was found upon the same level in the pit, but nearly 20ft. away from the cranium to which it belonged. Of course, the whole specimen received prompt attention, and it was thoroughly drenched with a solution of glue in hot water. One of the tusks alone is estimated to have absorbed no less than three gallons of this solution. The tusks measure 8ft. 8in. on the outside curve, from the point to the insertion in the socket, the length held within the socket being about 18in. The circumference of the tusk at one foot from the socket is 26in. By the side of this important specimen in the Natural History Museum are photographs of the entire skeleton of the mammoth, as seen in the St. Petersburg Museum.

The latter skeleton, too, has a singularly interesting story. It was discovered by a Tungusian chief in the summer of 1799, half buried in the frozen soil and ice at the mouth of the River Lena in Siberia. When the gigantic beast was entirely freed from the ice, in 1804, the chief cut off its horns and exchanged them with a merchant for goods to the value of sixty roubles, or in English money, £7 18s. 4d.—the reward of five years' watching and waiting. Two years later Adams heard of the skeleton, and traced out the spot where it lay. He then sent the remains to St. Petersburg, a distance of 11,000 versts, or 7,330 miles. The missing tusks turned up later on, and the skeleton was built up in the St. Petersburg Museum.

The curious part of this story is that Professor Maskelyne, who examined this mammoth skeleton very carefully when in St. Petersburg, in 1865, gave his opinion that *the tusks did not belong to the skull.* In any case, the authorities at the Natural History Museum state that the tusks have been wrongly fixed. The Russian authorities, on the other hand, said that they are right and that our own scientists are simply libelling the unfortunate mammoth in setting up its tusks as seen in our picture.

In the next illustration we see a piece of brown jasper, originally shaped like a spectacle case, and concerning which an extraordinary incident is related. This stone was picked up outside Cairo by a native donkey driver, whose ass had become violently obstreperous. It seems the native threw the stone with all his force at poor Neddy, with the result that part of it broke away, revealing on both sections *a portrait of Chaucer!*

I learn that this piece of jasper was brought to the British Museum before registers were made, and therefore the story does not figure in any of the official publications; however, anyone may see the "Chaucer Stone" who cares to visit the amazingly well-kept, but withal dismal, mineral gallery at the Natural History Museum presided over by Mr. Fletcher, himself a most courteous and affable gentleman.



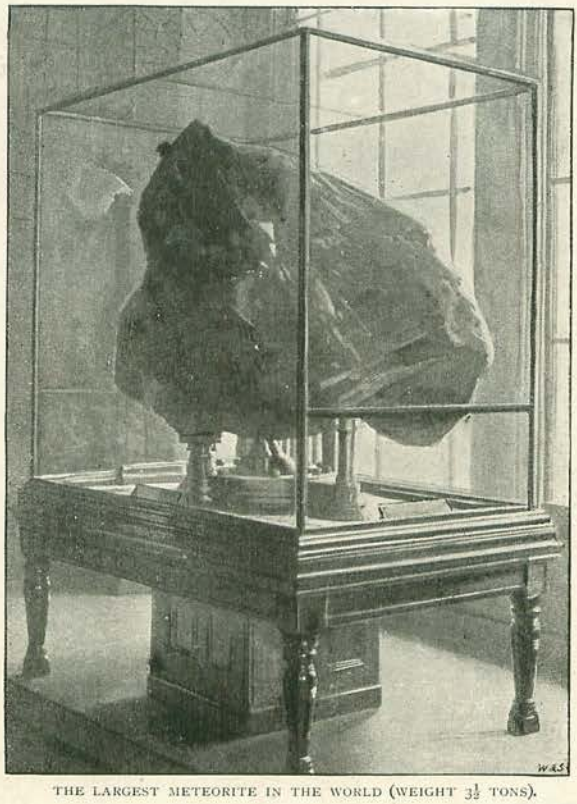
BROKEN STONE WHICH REVEALS A PORTRAIT OF CHAUCER.

Here is an immense meteorite, weighing 3½ tons, which was discovered at Cranbourne, near Melbourne, in 1854. It was found by a Mr. Bruce, of Chislehurst, who, having seen a piece of meteoric iron in the fire-place of a squatter, asked the man if other bits of that kind were to be met with in the neighbourhood. Mr. Bruce was then conducted to a spot in the adjoining parish of Sherwood, where an irregular spur of iron projected from the ground; and he then and there purchased the supposed meteorite for a sovereign, with the intention of presenting it to the British Museum. Later on, when the huge mass was dug out of the ground, and it was found to be, without exception, the largest meteorite in the world, large sums of money were offered Mr. Bruce for the splendid block, but he declined all offers, it being his fixed intention to make over the meteorite to the British Museum.

Mr. Bruce at once arranged for the conveying of the meteorite to England; whereupon such a tremendous commotion was raised throughout the Colony, that it was actually seriously suggested to fit out a ship that might pursue Mr. Bruce's steamer, and bring back the great meteorite to its native soil. In other words, the authorities of the Melbourne Museum were determined to secure the unique specimen. On inquiring how everybody concerned happened to know that it *was* a meteorite, I learned that native iron is extremely rare in the district.

This meteorite was shown in the exhibition of 1861 together with a second—the Abel Meteorite—which was found not very far away from it. The Melbourne Museum, however, continued to clamour childishly for its meteorite, and suggested that the mass should be cut in halves, one section to go back to Australia and the other to be retained in England. The authorities of the Natural History Museum, however, settled matters by purchasing the Abel Meteorite, and sending it back to Melbourne.

There are, of course, many other meteorites in the same gallery, and many of them have interesting histories; unfortunately, however, the things themselves are not picturesque. One, the Mhow Meteorite, fell upon and killed a native in 1827 in the North-West Provinces of India. Another was found at Imalac in Chili. It lay in a ravine, half buried in the sand, and had to be conveyed 150 miles in a cart to the coast. This meteorite weighs 450lb., and now rests on the right-hand side of the one that was found near Melbourne.



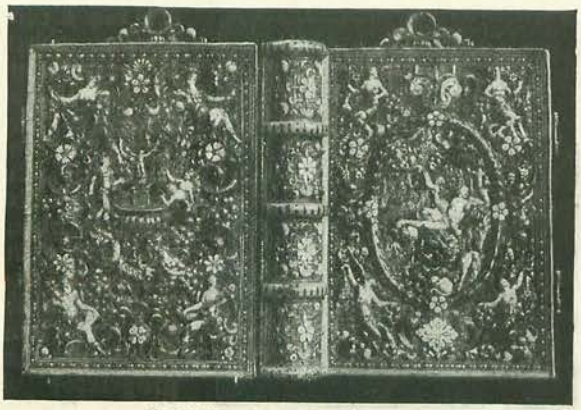
THE LARGEST METEORITE IN THE WORLD (WEIGHT 3½ TONS).

The Romance of the Museums.

II.

By William G. FitzGerald.

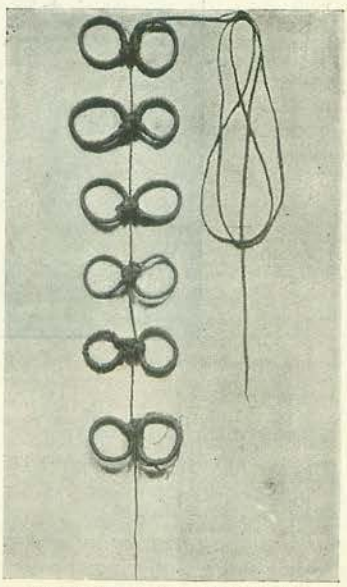
QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA'S missal, which is now in the South Kensington Museum, is a capital specimen of those articles which find their way into the possession of our museum authorities in a very peculiar manner. One day a certain titled lady came into the directors' office and abruptly pulled a little book out of her pocket, requesting that the expert might value it for her. Her ladyship explained (1) that she was not in want of money; (2) that the book was not an heirloom, but had been left to her family by will; and (3) that she wanted to help a certain institution with the proceeds of the sale of the little volume.



QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA'S MISSAL.

She was told, however, that the museum authorities did not make valuations, but were always open to buy; and, furthermore, that her property was indeed a unique work of art. The lady said she had an inkling of this, a cautious dealer having offered her £70 for the book—the mere value of the gold on the cover. The director, on examining the volume further, declared, rapturously, that it was priceless; probably this is why he offered £500 for it then and there. More discussion followed, and at length the director of the museum begged the lady to wait a moment while he conferred with his colleagues, being himself a little flustered. Presently he came back, and in a burst of fine generosity said that he would give her ladyship another chance. Did she really want to part with the book at once? For, if so, the authorities—who seemingly fell over each other in their excited admiration of the workmanship—were disposed to increase their offer to £700, the cheque to be made out and signed on the spot. The bargain was concluded forthwith, and Queen Henrietta Maria's missal now adorns the hideous building at South Kensington. This is, in every respect, the smartest museum transaction on record; and I am assured that the wonderful book-cover must have been the whole life-work of a marvellous artist. There is no knowing to what fabulous figure this little book—scarce 4in. high—would be run up, were it to figure in the auction-rooms to-morrow.

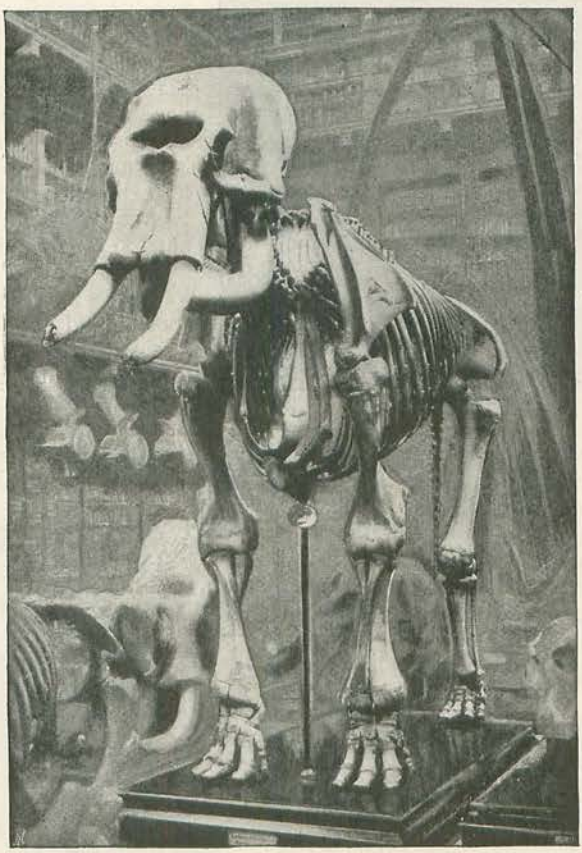
Most country people and many foreigners are imbued with a wholesome dread of the perils of London; I sincerely trust they will not altogether shun the Metropolis on learning that traps for catching human souls are kept at Bloomsbury. Anyone interested in the fearsome articles can see a good specimen at the British Museum — Ethnographical Gallery, Wall Case 120. This particular soul-catcher



TRAP FOR CATCHING HUMAN SOULS.

is of no more supernatural material than plaited cocoa-nut fibre, with a string attached. There are six double loops, and the whole measures 41½in. in length.

The trap shown here comes with peculiar appropriateness from Danger Island, in the Indian Ocean, where these articles range in length up to 28ft., and have loops of different sizes, the latter intended variously for adults and children, the aristocracy and the *canaille*. I am unable to say whether the islanders can now see through these soul-traps (the loops are arranged spectacle-fashion), but their effect was at one time disastrous in the extreme. If a person had the misfortune to offend the "sacred men," or were very ill, a soul-trap would be suspended by night from a branch of one of the gigantic laurel trees that overshadowed his dwelling. On the family inquiring what sin had been committed that their souls should be treated as pestilential rodents, some ceremonial offence against the gods would be assigned. A priest watched near the trap; and if an insect or a small bird flew through one of the loops it was asserted the soul of the culprit, assuming this form, had passed into the trap. It would then be spread abroad that poor So-and-so had lost his soul, and lamentation and bitter weeping would result. The friends of the unhappy man would then intercede for him, offering presents and miscellaneous property to the sorcerer, sometimes with success. If the bribe were not large enough, and an unfavourable answer received, the victim would simply pine away and die—even though, before the trap was set, he was in full possession of health and strength.



SKELETON OF CHUNEE, THE MAD ELEPHANT.

The next story I have to tell is so interesting, that were I to do it justice I should need many pages of THE STRAND MAGAZINE; therefore must I be brief. My story is about poor Chunee, the far-famed elephant, who was destroyed at Exeter Change in March, 1826, under circumstances that—to borrow a convenient phrase of journalese—"positively baffle description." The skeleton of Chunee is here shown; it is now a conspicuous object in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. According to Mr. Cross, to whose menagerie the elephant belonged, Chunee's first owner was Mr. Harris, then proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre, who purchased the young animal for 900 guineas on its arrival in England in the *Astel*, which vessel was commanded by a Captain Hay.

After a little preliminary training, Chunee appeared in the Covent Garden pantomime, and he continued in Mr. Harris's possession for many years, until his weight increased to such an extent as to endanger the stability of the stage. In 1814 Mr. Cross bought Chunee—and I should remark here that this gentleman had for twenty years been superintendent of the Royal Menagerie, Exeter Change, a site now occupied by Exeter Hall; from which it will be seen that this spot has been a place of entertainment from time immemorial.

When the animal arrived from India, there

were two keepers with it, and these accompanied their charge to Exeter Change. Now, Chunee was a model of elephantine decorum until one of these men died; then he became troublesome and required a bigger den. One day in 1822 the keeper went into this new den to put the elephant through his performance, but found that he was, so to say, on strike; he simply refused to do anything, whereupon the keeper struck him with a little cane. Chunee could not have been hurt, but he nearly killed that keeper, who was only rescued by a veritable miracle in the concrete form of Mr. Cross himself.

After this Chunee began to have dangerous annual paroxysms; and later on it was pointed out to the proprietor of the show that in India, under similar circumstances, the elephants were let run loose in the forest, and presently came back cured. This sort of thing, however, was not advisable in the Strand, so Mr. Cross resorted to physic. After fifty-two hours' coaxing, Chunee was induced to swallow his first dose, which consisted of 24lb. of salts, 24lb. of treacle, 6oz. of calomel, 1½oz. of tartar emetic, 6 drachms of powder of gamboge, and a bottle of croton oil. This produced no more appreciable results than the tendering of one of the buns of commerce. Next followed 6lb. of beef marrow and, later, 4oz. of calomel—all of which had absolutely no effect on Chunee, who at this time was devoting all his energies to the demolition of his den. One Wednesday morning, the great beast made a terrific onslaught on his own massive front gate, which he all but dislodged. Medicine of another sort was then tried—firstly, 4oz. of arsenic, then ½oz. of corrosive sublimate, and lastly a lot of strychnine, mixed with sugar and conserve of roses and things, the whole tastefully done up in a little bladder, and left about in the den, "promiskus"; for the monumental cussedness of the animal was such that he would devour greedily any scrap of food that happened to be on the floor, while he would reject scornfully a decent square meal tendered him by his keeper.

Let me be clearly understood. Chunee was not "immune"; he simply swallowed no part of the second course of "medicine," refusing everything—even food. His appearance now indicated that trouble was at hand; his eyes glared like glass lenses, reflecting a red and burning light. Chunee had declared war. He had, so to speak, given the human ambassadors accredited to him their exequaturs, and would, doubtless, have given them their quietus if he had had a chance. *Quem Deus vult perdere*, etc. I cannot say whether the elephant was predestined to an awful death, but he certainly was very mad at this time.

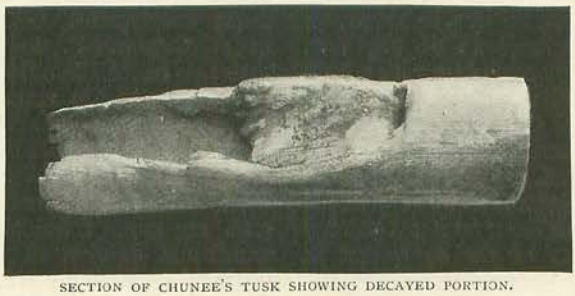
The excitement quickened. Chunee was about 10ft. high and weighed four or five tons; consequently his gratuitous performance threatened to bring down the house — in a literal sense — menagerie and all, upon the respectable shop-keepers below. Mr. Cross at length sent in hot haste for his brother-in-law—one, Herring — who was something of a shot, but who, nevertheless, arrived upon the spot with no more formidable weapon than a monstrous opinion of himself. The two instantly repaired to Holborn for guns and things. On their way back they looked in at the College of Surgeons, with the charitable intention of getting a few hints from Professor Stewart's predecessor as to where they could most advantageously smite the enemy. Mr. Cross also burst in upon the eminent anatomist, Mr. Joshua Brookes, who was in his theatre lecturing, and who, therefore, resented this violent intrusion, which could not fail, he said, to scandalize his pupils.

He, however, also contributed his quota of advice as to where to hit Chunee, and he also sent along a pupil to direct the marksmen in the way they should shoot. On returning to Exeter Change, poor Mr. Cross was implored to run off to Somerset House for the "millingtary," as the rampageousness of Chunee was fast overcoming all assaults, and indeed forcing his would-be assassins to defend their own lives.

The "army of occupation" at Somerset House consisted of one sentry, who with touching heroism defied the distraught showman, saying he could not leave his post; and two privates and a corporal. These warriors, like the gentry in the parable, began to make excuses, saying they could not come; they *did* eventually turn up in the battle, however, fired a conscientious three rounds of ball through Chunee's tough hide, and then remained impotent, having no more ammunition.

Is this not an amazing story? And yet the newspapers of the day relate the facts with sublime unconsciousness of the tragi-comic character of the episode. The unhappy Cross rushed hither and thither after arms; and he would actually have removed the old howitzers that lay in the quadrangle of Somerset House, if the guns could have been safely fired. At last he

borrowed a swivel gun from Hawes's Soap Factory, on the Surrey side of the river, near Blackfriars Bridge, and with this and a few balls, *and the head of a poker*, he darted back to open fire on poor Chunee—who was then dead. The unequal combat was ended, and for the first time in the annals of natural history a Herring had killed an elephant.



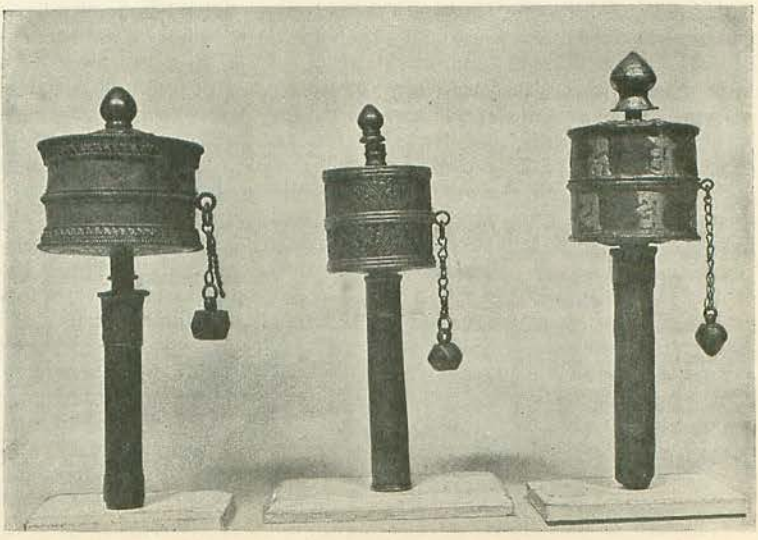
SECTION OF CHUNEE'S TUSK SHOWING DECAYED PORTION.

The fight had lasted more than two hours, during which time Chunee was exposed to rifle fire from every side, not to mention pitchforks and swords fastened on poles. But 260 shots had been fired before Chunee was killed.

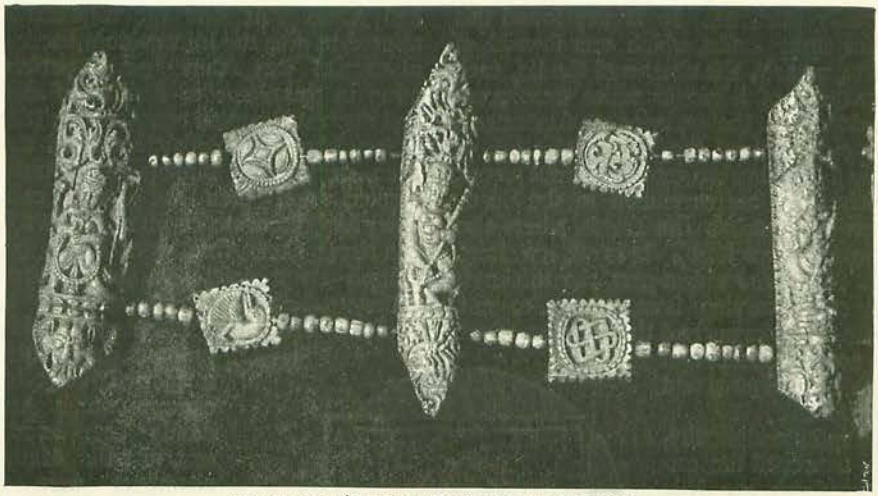
The elephant's skin was sold to a tanner for £50, and £35 was taken at the door for permission to view the body. In addition to this, the receipts on subsequent days were at the rate of £250 a day—which, let us hope, compensated the unfortunate Cross for the loss of Chunee, whose value was about £1,000. The dissection of the carcass was quite a great function. Pulleys were fixed for the purpose of raising it for the anatomist; and the operation took place in the exhibition-room, lined for the purpose with nice green baize, and, of course, packed with spectators. Then, and not till then, was it found that *Chunee had been driven mad with toothache.* The principal portion of the diseased tusk is here shown; and it is evident that this was a case of *mal aux dents* on a very large scale.

There remains an amazing sequel, related to me by Sir William Flower—most courteous and delightful of men, and director of the Natural History Museum. In 1861 Sir William took charge of the museum at the College of Surgeons; and exactly fifty years after the tragedy of Exeter Change—namely, in 1876—a man called upon my informant at his office and produced an ivory splinter, saying that his father had told him it was knocked off Chunee's tusk by a shot during the great battle. Sir William immediately took the man into the museum, applied the bit of ivory to Chunee's tusk, and, behold, it fitted exactly!

One often hears of worldlings who, if they pray at all, pray mechanically and without devotion. Now, the Tibetans are devout enough, yet they pray mostly by machines, such as are shown in the next illustration, which depicts a few praying-mills. The cylinders contain copies of the Sacred Writings, and revolve upon the spindle that passes through the centre of each. The instrument is held in the hand, and whirled round by means of the weight hanging at the side. The mere revolutions of the Sacred Writings are held to be efficacious prayers. As a fact, the Lamaism of Tibet is a religion *pour rire*—at any rate, from our point of view. I am assured that in the Buddhist temples in that remote region, grotesque articles—such as "Old Tom" bottles with gaudy labels, and tailors' pattern-books—have been found



PRAYING-MILLS FROM TIBET.



NECROMANCER'S GIRDLE OF CARVED HUMAN BONES.

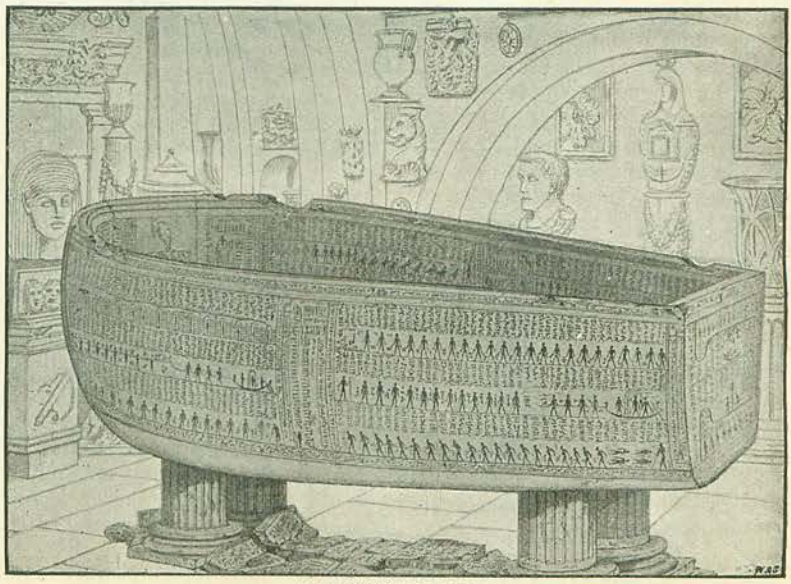
doing duty as decorative objects. One of the last-mentioned bore the cash prices of coats and trousers, and was hung lengthwise on the wall.

Apart from hand praying-mills, there are others on a larger scale worked by wind and hydraulic power; and in some of these the Lamaistic formula, "Om-ma-ni pad-me Hum," is printed hundreds of millions of times. I next show a sash or girdle of richly-carved human bones, also from Tibet, and forming an indispensable part of the outfit of a necromancer. The latter is called Nag-pa, probably because he is objectionable and a nuisance. This is, however, a generic designation given to the rest of all his numerous tribe, who are as a rule illiterate, fearfully and wonderfully dressed, and closely allied to the original type of Tibetan devil dancer. Besides this girdle, Nagpa also carries some weapon wherewith to stab the demons against whom it is necessary to operate.

In the next illustration is shown the sarcophagus of Seti I., which was discovered by Belzoni in 1819.

The career of Giovanni Batista Belzoni, by the way, is one long romance. A poor barber's son, born in Padua in 1778, he came to England in 1803, and became a street mountebank, performing feats of strength, for he was 6ft. 7in. in height. Later on, Belzoni was engaged at Astley's; but he is far better known for his important discoveries in Egypt than for his performances in itinerant shows.

Let us return, however, to the sarcophagus of Seti I. In October, 1819, Belzoni was exploring the ruins at Thebes with a party of labourers, when he came upon an important tomb at Biban-el-Moluk. This tomb was 18ft. below the surface of the ground, and was



SARCOPHAGUS OF SETI I.

wonderfully intricate. In it was found this beautiful stone coffin, which was formed of two parts, namely, the chest and the lid, each hollowed out of a single white translucent block, dug from the quarries of Alabastron, on the east bank of the Nile. The lid, or cover, had been broken into numerous pieces, of which there are seventeen in the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where also is the sarcophagus itself. It is 9ft. 4in. long, and 3ft. 8in. at the widest part, the thickness of the stone varying from 2½in. to 4in. Both the sarcophagus and the remains of the lid are covered inside and out with small figures and hieroglyphics.

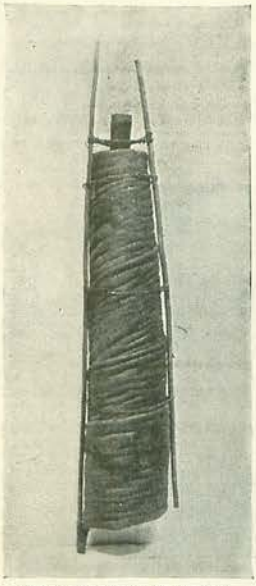
With infinite difficulty, Belzoni conveyed the sarcophagus down the Nile and shipped it to London. When it arrived in this country it was offered to the British Museum for £2,000, but the authorities thought it much too dear. Now, as both Russia and France were anxious to possess this magnificent sarcophagus, it would probably have left the country, had it not been for Sir John Soane, who promptly bought it and had it conveyed to his house, much of the wall whereof had to be removed before the great stone coffin could be deposited where it is now to be seen, beneath a glass case that cost £69.

The extraordinary thing is that the mummy was missing. Where was Seti I.? and who removed him from his sarcophagus? No one knows. Anyhow, he turned up in 1881 in the tomb of Queen Hat-a-su, but, of course, the reason of his mysterious visit can never be ascertained.

MUMMY OF SETI I.

About this time the attention of Maspero, the somewhat ferocious curator of the great Egyptian Museum, then at Boulak, was drawn by trippers to certain curios and relics that had been sold to them by the Arabs. Maspero knew a good thing when he saw it, and, accordingly, he set his spies to work, with the result that a couple of Arab chiefs were arrested and asked whence certain relics had come. At first the wily chiefs flatly refused to give the information, because, as a matter of fact, they had a perfect gold mine in the shape of a *caché* of mummies and ancient Egyptian remains. By Maspero's orders, however, the bastinado and the kourbash, or whip of hippopotamus hide, were applied, and then the Arabs confessed. They had discovered a pit at Dahr-el-Baîreeh —a long shaft that went down into the ground about 30ft. At the bottom was a gallery which went off at right angles; and the first thing Maspero and his myrmidons came upon was a magnificent leather canopy which had evidently been used as a sort of pall. Many other chambers were passed through, and at length the search party entered the tomb of Queen Hat-a-su, where, ranged stiffly along the walls, were found quite a number of missing Pharaohs — Seti I., Rameses the Great, and many others—all nicely labelled with their names in hieroglyphics. Maspero had all the mummies removed to Boulak, where they were unrolled and photographed; and Seti I., who is shown in this illustration, may be seen to this day in the great Museum at Ghizeh, while his sarcophagus adorns the more prosaic district of Lincoln's Inn Fields; all this, however, if we are to judge from appearances, is a matter of utter indifference to Seti.

Next in this wondrous category comes a musical instrument, which is at the same time something of a grave curse. It is called the Juruparis, or Devil, and you will see it in the Ethnographical Gallery (Wall Case No. 88) at the British Museum. This instrument is quite a lady-killer in its way; but not by reason of its dulcet tones. Let me explain. The Juruparis is used by the Indians on the Rio Maupés, a tributary of the Rio Negro, in South America; and it is held in such veneration, that if the mere ordinary squaw but glances furtively at the thing, she is promptly poisoned. Lest the villages should



THE JURUPARIS, OR DEVIL.

be altogether depleted of womenfolk, however, the instrument is buried in the bed of a stream, deep in the primeval forest, where no person dares to drink or bathe; and it is only brought forth on great occasions. No young brave, even, is allowed to play upon the Juruparis until he has been severely knocked about by scourgings and fastings.

Much of the romance of the museums lies in the extraordinary way in which articles have been acquired. One day in the year 1874 Mr. Pierce, an intelligent inhabitant of the village of Lamberhurst, in Sussex, called at the local tobacconist's for half an ounce of the common or villainous variety of shag. After tea that night he took from his vest-pocket the paper of tobacco, and noticed that it was wrapped in thick, tough paper, bearing queer, old printed characters. Mr. Pierce at once called round at the shop, and found that the paper had been torn from a priceless old work — Lydgate's Translation of Boccaccio's "Fall of Princes," printed by Prynson in 1494. Unfortunately, many other portions had been torn out to wrap up tobacco and snuff; but the volume was at once rescued, purchased by the authorities of the British Museum, and it may now be seen in the inner Reading Room. The torn leaves were pieced and repaired as far as possible; and this is shown in the illustration.

Here is the unimposing throne of Quaco Acka, King of Appolonia, in Ashantee. When the British were last upon him, with ugly intentions, His Majesty seated himself upon this stool, the pillar of which was stuffed with trade gunpowder, and he resolved to blow himself to pieces rather than submit to our troops. I should not omit to mention that his wives were, *nolens volens*, gathered round him; but these heroics had a very tame ending, the potential martyr surrendering quietly and presenting his captor —Captain W. H. Quin—with a gold ring.

THRONE ON WHICH THE KING OF APPOLONIA WAS ABOUT TO BE BLOWN UP WITH HIS WIVES.

LYDGATE'S TRANSLATION OF BOCCACCIO'S "FALL OF PRINCES," RESCUED FROM A TOBACCONIST'S SHOP.

There are four chess pieces of the twelfth century, carved out of walrus tusk, and with a queer history. The illustration shows a knight, king, queen, and bishop, the queen having a look on her face like unto that which comes over one who has inadvertently crashed into a full-length mirror. One morning in the beginning of 1831 a peasant of Uig, in the Isle of Lewis, was digging in a sandbank when he came upon a number of chessmen — altogether about enough to make six sets. The figures were of excellent workman-

ship, and, judging from the costume, certainly of remote antiquity. At first the Scottish antiquaries were of the opinion that, as the pieces had been found near a ruined nunnery, they were originally intended to beguile the tedium of cloistered seclusion; but it was afterwards determined that these chessmen had probably formed part of the merchandise of an Icelandic *kaup-mann*, or trader, who was carrying them to the Hebrides or Iceland when his vessel was wrecked, and the pieces swept on shore by the waves.

LONG-LOST CHESSMEN.

For the sake of distinction, many of these chessmen were coloured red, but the action of the salt water for seven centuries had almost washed this out; the pieces are about four inches high.

In the next picture we see the rattle staff of an African King, brought from the Gaboon (West Coast). This wonderful stick is a sectional tube made of narrow strips of bamboo, bound with rattan and painted with broad bands of dark red; the ends are closed. In the interior, small bits of reed are placed transversely all the way down, forming a perfect network. There are also a lot of seeds inside, so that, when smartly inverted, these trickle gradually down the tube with a curiously loud noise, like unto that of a stream rushing over a rocky bed. The assistants of the British Museum very kindly took this staff from the wall-case in the Ethnographical Gallery, and gave me demonstrations of its singular character; it is 4ft. long and 1¼in. in diameter. I gather that the dusky monarch who owned the "silence stick" would, on occasion, rise up in the midst of his young men, and ask for a hearing, knocking the tube sharply on the ground at the same time. If silence were not observed within a large radius by the time the seeds had ceased falling (about a minute and a quarter), some loquacious brave would certainly suffer death.

THE "SILENCE STICK."

The Romance of the Museums.

III.

By William G. FitzGerald.

IN spite of a big army of astrologers, palmists, phrenologists, physiognomists, and other modern magicians with aristocratic addresses and high tariffs, men have embarked, and doubtless will continue to embark, blindly on big undertakings, whose only appreciable results are vexation and black ingratitude on the part of potential beneficiaries. Were it possible for the veil of the future to have been lifted for Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin, I doubt very much whether that painstaking, much-abused diplomatist would ever have ventured upon the acquisition of those exquisite, but mutilated, Greek sculptures which bear his name in the Elgin Room at the British Museum.

Lord Elgin was born on the 20th of July, 1766, and he attained the rank of major-general in our army. His diplomatic career began in 1790; and nine years later he was appointed to the Embassy at the Ottoman Porte. Just before Lord Elgin left England, however, his architect in Scotland—a Mr. Harrison—reminded his lordship that he would presently be in a position to procure, for the benefit of British students, some casts of the far-famed Greek sculptures at Athens. Thereupon Lord Elgin communicated with the Government, feeling, however, totally disinclined to embark upon such a costly and hazardous enterprise himself.

On his voyage to Constantinople, Elgin touched at Palermo, where he consulted Sir William Hamilton on the subject of procuring casts and drawings from the works of the Greek architects and sculptors. Sir William not only encouraged the idea, but applied forthwith to the Government of Naples for permission to engage His Majesty's painter, Giovanni Battista Lusieri, who in turn "collected" five other eminent artists in Rome, and with them prepared to accompany Lord Elgin to Turkey. In the summer of 1800 these six artists were dispatched to Greece, and were at first chiefly employed in making drawings—though, of course, every conceivable obstacle was thrown in their way by the iconoclastic Turk. After a year's hammering at the Porte, the necessary firman was granted, permitting scaffolding to be fixed round the ruined Parthenon, mouldings to be made of ornamental sculptures, and the removal of "any pieces of stone with old inscriptions thereon."

It should be noted here that the actual removal of any of the sculptures formed no part of Lord Elgin's original plan, which was only modified when he saw how the priceless marbles were being knocked about by the devout "men in possession." At this time the wondrous Temple on the Acropolis was in a bad way. Could Phidias have seen his *chef d'œuvre* when the British Ambassador to Turkey commenced operations on it, the greatest of Greek sculptors must have wept in impotent wrath. As early as 1687 the Parthenon was used as a Turkish powder-magazine; and this is how it looked after Morosini, the Venetian, had dropped a shell into it during the siege of Athens from the neighbouring hill named, curiously enough, the Musæum.

MODEL OF THE PARTHENON, SHOWING EFFECTS OF BOMBARDMENT.

I really must mention two or three things in order to convey some notion of the appalling task poor Lord Elgin had set himself. In 1759, the Ionic temple on the Ilyssus was in decent trim; whereas, when our diplomatist arrived on the spot, it was a

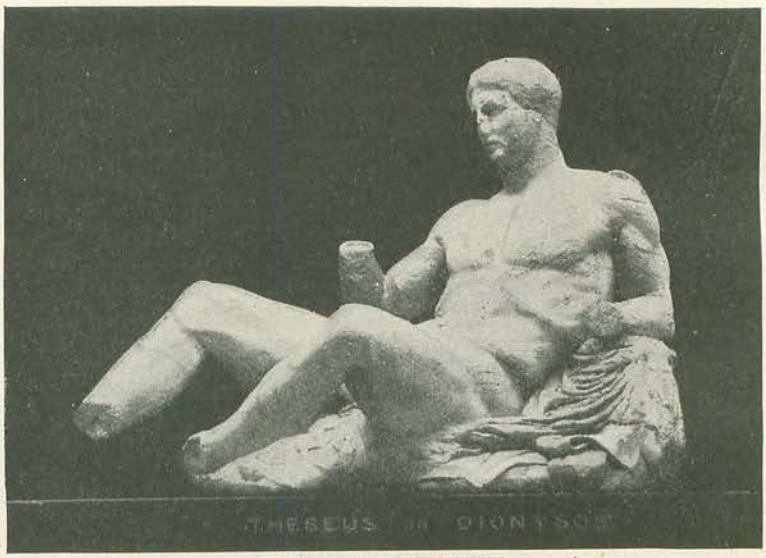
matter of infinite difficulty even to trace the foundations. In truth, the Turks worked extremely hard to complete the destruction commenced by their whilom enemies, the Venetians. Throwing off the traditional lethargy of their kind, and heedless of the potential thunderbolts of Jove, they climbed nimbly up the remaining walls of the Parthenon, and knocked off the heads and limbs of sundry gods and goddesses—as the veriest Cockney may see for himself in the Elgin Room at this day.

Such sculptures as were quite beyond reach were perseveringly shot at, while marbles that chanced to be at a more convenient altitude were actually ground up for cement (being nice and white) or built into the houses of the Turks. On one occasion Lord Elgin bought outright the house of one of the Turkish janissaries that happened to be built immediately under the portico of the Parthenon. This house he presently had demolished, and in the foundations the greater part of the draped statue of Victory turned up, also the torso of Jupiter, a bit of the redoubtable Vulcan, and several other fragments that revealed the extent of the ignominy that had been heaped upon the gods.

After a tremendous lot of persuasion and negotiation, another Turkish official was induced to hand his dwelling over to the "house-breaker." This same house had been built close to where a great wall, bearing a magnificent frontispiece that depicted a contest between Minerva and Neptune, had been blown down by the force of the explosion that destroyed the temple.

The house was pulled to pieces, but much to Lord Elgin's mortification, nothing was found. The former owner watched the men at work and made no sign; he just smoked calmly and, like the renowned Tar-baby, "kept on sayin' nuffin'." When the work was over, however, that aggravating Turk blandly stepped in and volunteered to conduct everybody concerned to a certain part of the modern fortifications, where the very statues our Ambassador was in search of would be found figuring as cement in the interstices of the stones. The mighty were indeed fallen; fancy Mars and Minerva as mortar! No wonder that Lord Elgin resolved then and there to rescue the remaining treasures from a similar fate.

The marbles of the Parthenon are considered by artists and critics to be absolutely the finest series of sculpture in the world. Before them Canova went into raptures, and their exquisite beauty of pose caused Mrs. Siddons to melt into tears. Foremost among the Elgin Marbles comes the apocryphal Theseus, shown in this picture. This far-famed figure is the most perfect of all in the collection; which does not say much for the others, seeing that the hero is, as Shakespeare would say, *sans* nose, *sans* hands, and *sans* feet. Theseus is half reclined upon a rock which is covered with a lion's skin; wherefore did Visconti conclude that this is a Hercules. The figure is 5ft. 8in. long, and 4ft. high. Anatomically and technically it is perfect—barring bullet marks; and for this reason it is seldom without its devotee in the form of an aspiring art student.



ELGIN MARBLES—THE THESEUS.

There must be some unknown value in ancient Greek sculptures as defensive material; at any rate, the subject is worthy the attention of our military strategists. Look at the Turks. Into the walls of their fortifications and magazines they built whole columns, groups, and friezes; and their

officers seemingly liked nothing better than a couple of Venuses as door-posts.

On the right hand of the Propylæa was a temple dedicated to unwinged Victory, built from spoils won in the glorious struggles for freedom at Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa. The sculptures on its frieze represented many incidents of these memorable battles, but the only fragments that had escaped the ravages of the unspeakable Turk formed part of the wall of a big powder-magazine that was established near the site of the temple. The finest block had been carelessly inserted wrong way up; but, of course, our indefatigable Ambassador rescued the whole—not, however, without incredible difficulty.

Lord Elgin also secured several of the metopes from the Parthenon. These represent the battles of the Centaurs and Lapithæ, at the nuptials of Perithous—*Anglice*, a glorious row at a wedding. The original ran all round the entablature of the temple and formed ninety-two groups.

The next illustration shown here depicts the head of one of the horses attached to the chariot of Selenè, goddess of Night, who discreetly disappeared below the horizon at the birth of Athenè, which auspicious event took place at dawn. This head far surpasses anything of the kind ever seen, in the truth and spirit of its execution. The nostrils are distended, the mouth open, the ears erect, and the veins swollen — one might almost say throbbing; and the high-bred animal seems to neigh with conscious pride. The head is 2ft. 6in. long and 1ft. 7½in. high.

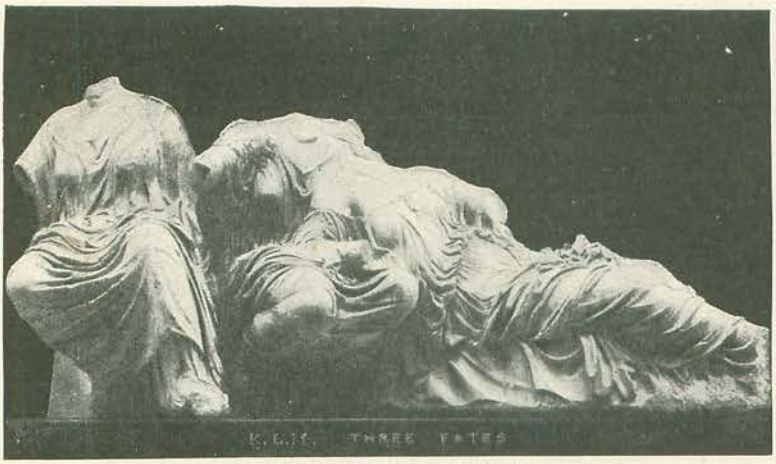
ELGIN MARBLES—THE HORSE'S HEAD.

Never did a man devote himself so earnestly to the accomplishment of a mission as Lord Elgin did to the acquisition of these mutilated marbles. The vestibule of the Temple of Neptune was—seemingly, like every other available square inch of Athens—converted into a powder-magazine; and there was no other access to it than by a little hole in the wall between the columns. Through this our accredited Ambassador wriggled, almost on his stomach, but—thrice blessed is he that expecteth little—he found nothing. Notwithstanding this, Lord Elgin commenced to ramble round the town, for a strange rumour had reached him. He learned that the peasants of Athens were in the habit of placing in niches over their doors sundry fragments of sculpture which they discovered when ploughing. By the way, as instancing how lively things were in Turkish dominions at this time, I may mention that the very ploughmen carried a musket over their shoulder while at work in the fields. His lordship there selected and purchased for cash quite a number of curious antique votive tables, with sculpture and inscriptions. Again, during his peregrinations in the plains of Troy, Lord Elgin fortuitously lighted upon the famous Boustrophedon inscription, then forming the chief attraction (in the shape of a seat) at the door of a Greek chapel, and resorted to by individuals troubled with ague of long standing. It must have been efficacious, for afflicted pilgrims rolled on the thing until there was next to no inscription.

It seems that every other Ambassador from Christendom to the Porte had been after this identical inscription, but, probably finding something else to occupy their time in Pera, they were unable to go exploring in Greece.

By no means the least important item in the Elgin collection is the group known as the Three Fates, next shown here. According to Visconti and Greek mythology, they preside over birth as well as death. They were the companions of Ilithyia, the goddess of Child-birth, and they sang the destiny of new-born infants. One wonders if they ever sang their own, which—in this particular instance, at any rate—was to have their heads knocked off by unsympathetic Moslems.

In the former Elgin Room one of these figures was separated from the other two; but its adjustment, and other circumstances, indicated that the three originally formed one group. Besides, they appear together in the



ELGIN MARBLES—THE THREE FATES.

drawings of the pediments of the Parthenon, executed in 1674, by Jacques Caney, who ought to know, seeing that he was on the spot before the big explosion took place. These figures are spoken of in terms of high eulogium. The grace of the attitude and the disposition of the draperies are equally deserving of admiration. The necks and wrists exhibit traces of ornaments; and the separate figure is 4ft. 6in. in height. The breadth of the group is 8ft. 9in., and the height 3ft. 7in.

On Elgin's departure from Turkey in 1803, he withdrew all his artists from Athens, except Lusieri, whom he directed to remain in charge of the excavations. It was not, however, until 1806 that the Ambassador arrived in England, having been "detained" in France after the rupture of the peace of Amiens.

In 1803, part of the Elgin collection was prepared for embarkation for England, tremendous difficulties having to be encountered at every stage of its transit. A special ship with a suitably serious name—the *Mentor*—was chartered, and Mr. W. R. Hamilton (afterwards British Minister at Naples) was put in charge of the precious cargo. Lord Elgin's troubles, however, were very far from being over. That ship sank in ten fathoms, off Cytherea, now called Cerigo. After many weeks of maddening anxiety, Mr. Hamilton got together a few Greek divers from the distant islands of Syme and Calymna, and these gentry, after *two or three years' work*, actually brought up the unfortunate sculptures uninjured from the hold of the sunken vessel before it had completely broken up.

This was bad enough, but even worse followed. On his return, Lord Elgin was fairly howled at on every side. It was "regretted that he had removed these sculptures from the spot where they had for ages remained"; he had stripped the temples of Greece of their noblest ornaments, and was, therefore, accused of vandalism and rapacity. The very method of obtaining the antiquities was termed dishonest and flagitious. The House of Commons was reminded that when the firman was delivered to the Vaivode of Athens presents of value were admitted to have been delivered to that exalted lover of bakhshish—a complaint that betrayed grievous ignorance of Oriental life. And this after the unfortunate nobleman had spent £62,440 out of his own pocket for the benefit of an ungrateful public. This sum, by the way, presently mounted up to £74,000 when all expenses had been paid—maintenance of artists, scaffoldings, packing-cases, workmen's wages for several years, compensation for houses demolished, transport, loss of the *Mentor*, and wages of divers.

The unkindest cut of all, though, was an attempt to minimize and depreciate the artistic value and importance of the sculptures. Upon this, Lord Elgin determined to throw open his collection to public view, and this he did by arranging the sculptures in a big temporary shed near his house in Park Lane.

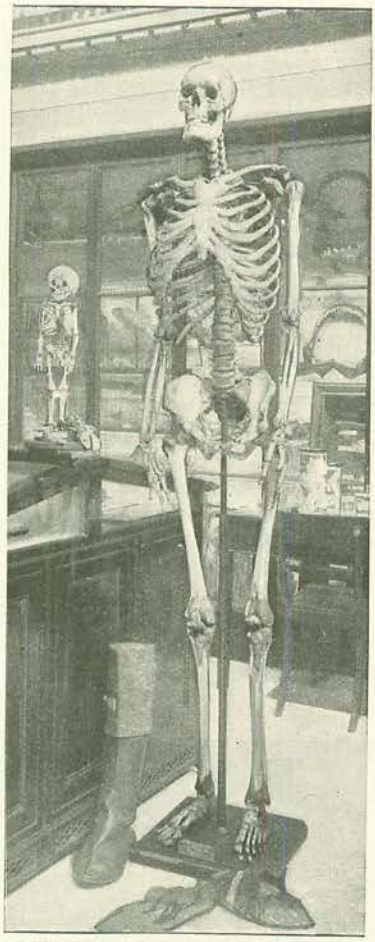
In 1811 Mr. Perceval was disposed to recommend that the sum of £30,000 be given for the Elgin Marbles, but this offer was declined, and his lordship continued to add to his treasures. A year later eighty fresh cases of antiquities arrived in London; and in 1815 Lord Elgin offered, in a petition to the House of Commons, to transfer the property to the nation upon such conditions as the House might deem advisable, after an inquiry upon evidence as to its merits and value. Be it noted here that the House had in the meantime absolved Lord Elgin from all blame, and even magnanimously approved his conduct. Two independent valuations were made. Mr. Richard Payne assessed

the valuation of the marbles at £25,000; while Mr. W. R. Hamilton priced them at £60,800. In the end the very Select Committee appointed to sit upon these antiquities oracularly declared that in their opinion £35,000 was a fair price. The act of Legislature, whereby the Elgin Marbles were secured to the public, was dated July 1st, 1816; and it is well worthy of note as a significant fact that, in view of a further collapse of negotiations, the King of Bavaria had lodged £30,000 with an English banking house; for he, too, longed to possess the contents of the Elgin Room at the British Museum.

In the next illustration shown here, we see the skeleton of Charles Byrne, the famous Irish giant, who went by the name of O'Brien, and died in 1783 at the age of twenty-two. O'Brien was 8ft. 4in. in height. He lived in Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, and his death is said to have been due to excessive drinking, to which he was always addicted, but more particularly since the loss of all his property, which he had guilelessly invested in a single bank-note of £300.

There is a most curious story about this skeleton. It seems that O'Brien had known for a long time that Hunter, the famous surgeon, was anxious to obtain his body after death for medical examination. Accordingly, the giant made a bargain with some fishermen, whereby his body after death was to be taken out into the Irish Channel and dropped overboard. Hunter must have been very keen on this particular "specimen," for he set detectives to work who found out about O'Brien's gruesome compact. The great surgeon then promised the same fishermen another £100 note to fulfil their previous instructions, but to attach a rope to the body, and drag it up again after it had been immersed, in accordance with the giant's wishes. This was done, and Hunter himself set up the skeleton, which may be seen to this day in the magnificent, but somewhat depressing, Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. At the side of this great skeleton is seen one of the giant's boots and a pair of his slippers.

Also, in the foregoing illustration is seen the skeleton of a female child, of extraordinary stunted growth. This is all that remains of Caroline Crachami, the Sicilian dwarf,



SKELETON OF BYRNE, THE IRISH GIANT, AND OF THE SICILIAN DWARF.

ROWLANDSON'S CARICATURE OF THE IRISH GIANT AND HIS ADMIRERS.

who was exhibited as an Italian Princess in London, in 1824. The child did not grow after birth, and died at the age of about nine years. Signorita Crachami's thimble, ring, slippers, and stockings are also preserved, together with a cast of the dwarf's face.

The last picture on the preceding page was reproduced from an original caricature by Rowlandson, which hangs in the private office of Professor Stewart—a gentleman who maintains surprising vivacity and geniality amid the peculiarly gruesome surroundings of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons. The drawing shows the giant we have just alluded to, surrounded by his admirers. O'Brien has his hand on the head of a stalwart soldier, while another old gentleman, standing on a chair, is surveying the giant's imposing proportions. One young lady has wriggled herself into O'Brien's boot; another is comparing her own Trilby-like foot with his; while a third individual is surveying the giant's second boot on his own very ordinary leg. The caricature is, of course, very much exaggerated.

The next illustration depicts what is known as the Durham Book, or St. Cuthbert's

THE DURHAM BOOK.

Gospels. This manuscript is a folio volume written on 258 leaves of thick vellum, and containing the four Gospels in the Latin version of St. Jerome, to which are prefixed as usual the Canons of Eusebius. The manuscript was written and illuminated—according to a note at the end of the book—in honour of St. Cuthbert by Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, who succeeded to the see in the year 698, and died in 721. His successor, Æthelwald, caused it to be splendidly bound and adorned with gold and gems. Thus completed, it was preserved in the Monastery of Lindisfarne till about the year 875, when on account of the renewed devastations of the Danes, Bishop Eardulf and Abbot Eadrid carried away from the monastery the bones of St. Cuthbert and other saints, together with the precious volume shown in the picture. Now, having proposed to go over to Ireland, they set sail from the River Derwent, but encountered a terrific storm, in which their ship was thrown on one side by the violence of the waves and St. Cuthbert's Gospels carried away into the vasty deep. A book of such value, however, was not permitted to be lost; and it is interesting to note that, in a dream, it was shortly afterwards revealed to one of the monks that, on their arrival at Whitehaven, or Whitern, as it was then called, they would find the precious volume at the ebb of the tide. To their great joy this actually happened, and the Durham Book was picked up at a distance of three miles from the haven. The historian, Simeon — good, easy man — records it as a miracle that the pages of the manuscript were not in the slightest degree injured by the salt water; and although the visitor to the British Museum at this day may discern occasional stains upon the vellum, yet the illuminations are throughout in the most perfect preservation. Beyond this nothing more is known of the famous book, except that it was preserved at Durham at the time of the Reformation, when it was despoiled of its cover for the sake of the gold and jewels which adorned it, and which constituted quite a respectable little property. Subsequently the Durham Book came into the hands of one Bowyer, clerk to the Parliament in the reign of King

THE BRONZE MERCURY.

James I., and later on it found its way into the library of Sir Robert Cotton, with whose magnificent collection it was presented to the nation in 1753.

Next is shown a bronze Mercury of the same period as the Jupiter which was found in 1792 at Paramythia, in Epirus. One peculiarity of this figure which has never been observed in any other of Mercury, or of any deity who had the desirable gift of perpetual youth, is the marking of the veins, which are distinct and prominent as in the figure of Jupiter aforesaid. Figures of Mercury are among the most common; but in none other is there any indication of veins, either in the limbs or body; and, therefore, is this characteristic considered proof of the high antiquity of the figure. The finishing is throughout in a degree of perfection unknown in anything else. Listen to the rhapsody of the art lover, speaking of this identical figure: "Though every lock of hair is accurately composed, it seems movable with every breeze; and though the lines of the lips, brows, and eyelids are perfectly finished, no magnifier could trace any sign of a tool in any part of the surface. Every muscle appears elastic, and the countenance absolutely speaking with a beauty and sweetness of character positively more than human." The drapery, too, is composed and finished with the same happy mixture of breadth, lightness, sharpness, and delicacy, and has been cast with the left arm and shoulder, which it covers, in a second piece, fastened to the rest with a gold stud, which was drawn out and the drapery removed to allow of the figure being moulded some years ago in Paris. The right arm, too, of which the hand holds a purse made of the entire skin of some small animal, has been cast and wrought separately and very neatly joined to the body a little below the shoulder.

This exquisite figure was found exactly as it is here represented, on its ancient pedestal elegantly enriched with the lotus, inlaid with silver and enamel, and with a votive gold torque hung loosely round its neck, on the 19th of February, 1732, at a place called Pierre Luisit (*absit omen!*), near Huis, Lyons. Two labourers being driven from their work by a shower of rain, observed a small cave near a cascade, the mouth whereof was stopped up by a large stone. This they removed with their pickaxes, and inside they found this figure, which they at once carried to a bourgeois of Huis, named Janin, in whose possession it remained until 1747, when it was purchased of Janin by the almoner of the Chapter of Belleville, who had the interesting story of its finding recorded in a *procès verbal* before a notary. The figure remained at Belleville in the almoner's possession until the year 1788, when he died, leaving it to his friend, the Abbé Tersant, at

MODEL OF A CHINESE VILLA.

Paris. The latter, upon realizing the dangers which threatened all the French clergy in 1792, sold it for a few francs.

In the preceding reproduction is shown a beautiful little model of a Chinese villa—occupants, grounds, and all. It formed part of a present sent by the Emperor of China for Josephine, wife of the first Consul, Buonaparte. It never reached its destination, however, for the vessel in which the model was being conveyed to Europe was captured by one of the ubiquitous British ships of war. After the treaty of Amiens in 1802 the restitution of this interesting present was offered, but refused; and subsequently it passed into the museum belonging to the East India Company. The thing may now be seen in the Indian section of the South Kensington Museum.

In 1873, the Prince of Wales presented to the British Museum—or, to be quite correct, to the department of Greek and Roman antiquities—a quadrangular stelé or pillar of white marble, on the four sides of which is inscribed a decree of the City of Rhodes, recording the raising of a voluntary loan for the defence of the city in some great emergency. The names of the contributors of the loan, and the sums subscribed by each, are recorded on the marble—for all the world like the subscription list of a Mansion House fund. But fancy Rhodes raising a loan! One wonders whether there were any troublesome Outlanders to be dealt with. And the Rhodesian horse, what of that famous fighting body? But I am digressing. The stelé from Rhodes is shown in the picture. It seems that three transcripts of this same decree were ordered to be inscribed on stelœ and set up in as many public places in the city. Experts have for generations fought frantically over the inscription, and here is the latest result: "From the character of the paleography, this decree may be referred to the third century before Christ; and from internal evidence (can they have turned the thing inside out?) it is probable that the emergency for which the loan was raised was the celebrated siege by Demetrius Poliorcetes (305—304 B.C.)." This, of course, leaves us strangely calm. Why fight over it? The "emergency for which the loan was raised" was probably one which cometh to every man among us

THE STELÉ FROM RHODES.

This inscription was formerly embedded in the pavement of the Church of St. John, in Rhodes. After the Turkish conquest this church became a mosque, and the vaults under it were used as a powder-magazine—which will surprise no one who has attentively read the former part of this article dealing with the Elgin Marbles. In 1856 the powder exploded—why, deponent knoweth not—and the church was destroyed. As a natural sequence, the stelé was broken into a number of fragments, but the principal part, when found, was fortunately uninjured. And the pilgrim who makes his way to the Reading Room of the British Museum among the *habitués* thereof—a race apart—may turn aside on the left into the parts filled with antique bits of sculpture and things, and may examine the stelé from Rhodes at his leisure. But, believe me, he will be an impressionable man who views the thing with emotion.

The picture reproduced on the next page is from a photograph of that famous Rembrandt etching, "Christ Healing the Sick," more popularly known as the "Hundred Guilder Piece," because tradition says that an impression was sold for that sum—rather less than £8 of our money — during the artist's lifetime. This etching is probably the most famous in existence; and of the "first state" only eight impressions are known to exist. At least six of these are in public collections, and two are in the Print Room of the British Museum.

An original impression was offered for public sale in 1893, and as it was known to be the last that could come into the market, it realized the large sum of £1,750. In the year 1799, the Rev. Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode, who died in that year, bequeathed his library to the British Museum, including a large number of etchings and drawings, which comprised Rembrandt etchings of the highest quality. The romantic story attached to the "Hundred Guilder" etching commenced with the year 1808. At that time

"CHRIST HEALING THE SICK"—ONE OF THE REMBRANDT ETCHINGS STOLEN FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

permission to visit the Print Room of the Museum was extremely difficult to obtain.

Just previous to that year, however, one Dighton, a caricaturist, who kept a fruit shop at Charing Cross, did obtain such permission by an order from no less a personage than the Prince of Wales. At this time, Mr. Beloe, the assistant librarian, was in charge of the Print Room; and relying on the Prince's introduction, he neglected his duties by leaving the supposed student unattended in the department. Now, the latter availed himself of the opportunity to steal a large number of fine prints—especially the Rembrandt etching. Some of these he offered for sale to Messrs. Woodburn, who were then the leading dealers in pictures and prints, and had their establishment in St. Martin's Lane. Among the etchings offered by Dighton was the one reproduced here; and having doubts of its origin, Mr. Samuel Woodburn immediately took it to Great Russell Street, to compare it with the original in the Museum. Of course, he held that original in his hand, and on missing it from its place he presently discovered the robbery from certain imperfectly obliterated marks on the mounting of the impression. Woodburn at once communicated with the trustees, who, as promptly, procured a search-warrant and proceeded to Dighton's establishment, where they seized all the prints they could find, whether belonging to the Museum or not. Dighton himself was taken into custody, but, amazing as it may seem, it was subsequently ascertained that, as there were no marks upon the Museum prints sufficient to establish their identity, no prosecution could be sustained, and Dighton was accordingly set at liberty, the prints only being retained — another Portland Vase case, in fact. These exquisite Rembrandt etchings are known to collectors by the imprint of a palette and brushes which Dighton had coolly stamped upon them to mark them as his own. Mr. Beloe, the custodian of the Print Room, resigned his appointment in consequence of this affair, while Dighton himself fell into disgrace and poverty, dying miserably some two or three years afterwards.

The man had certainly hit upon an ingenious method of stealing the prints. Beneath his arm he brought his own portfolio, filled with blank paper, returning each time with a priceless lot of etchings. In 1817, Dibdin wrote about the incident, referring elegantly to the thief as a "bipedal serpent," and denouncing bitterly his release from imprisonment, "to be set loose among other print-

collectors without a hair of his head being touched."

An indirect appeal was made to the various purchasers of the stolen treasures, and to the credit of most of them, be it said, they were promptly returned to the Museum.

The entrance to the Nimroud Gallery of the British Museum is flanked by a lion and a bull, winged and man-headed. These were brought by the well-known explorer, Sir Henry Layard, from the north-west palace of Ashur-nasir-pal, at Nimroud. They formed part of Sir Henry Layard's discoveries at Nineveh. Having traversed Asia Minor and Syria, Sir Henry felt an irresistible desire to penetrate to the regions beyond the Euphrates ; but when he reached Mosel, to secure Mohamed Pasha's permission to make the necessary excavations, he met with every conceivable obstacle. On one occasion it was found that the Cadi was endeavouring to stir up the people against the explorer on the grounds that he was carrying away treasures—which in a sense was true. Another rumour was bruited abroad that Sir Henry was unearthing inscriptions which proved beyond doubt that the Franks had once held the country, and yielding evidence whereby the unbelievers would be enabled to resume possession and exterminate all devout Moslems. The lion was given five legs in order that, from whatever point of view it was regarded, the spectator could behold the perfect animal.

SIR HENRY LAYARD'S MAN-HEADED BULL FROM NIMROUD.

For various reasons, the Arabs who assisted Sir Henry Layard in his excavations gave peculiar, and at times violent, demonstrations of their interest in the work. The moment certain pieces of sculpture turned up they were promptly beaten and spat upon, while others were devoutly kissed. At times, too, the fiery fellows dashed into the trenches like madmen with streaming hair, and removed the baskets of earth with surprising celerity, shouting at the same time the war-cry of their particular tribe.

In spite of all this display of feverish energy, however, these discoveries were made under very trying conditions. Sir Henry's health was rapidly giving way ; nor is this to be wondered at seeing that he had to pass many hours in the trenches when the thermometer registered from 112deg. to 115deg. in the shade. Hot winds swept over the devoted band like furnace blasts during the day, and clearly were not conducive to sleep at night. Being at this time without the necessary means for removing these huge sculptures in safety, Sir Henry Layard was advised by the trustees of the British Museum to leave them where they were discovered until some favourable opportunity presented itself for transporting them. Naturally, the explorer did not like to forsake the treasures he had recovered, so he resolved upon attempting the removal and embarkation of two of the smallest and best preserved. Accordingly, he fixed upon this bull and its companion the lion. Then a new difficulty arose, because no wood but poplar was conveniently available for the construction of a cart. A carpenter was, therefore, dispatched to the neighbouring mountains to fell mulberry trees, and in due time a rude conveyance was built upon which were enthroned, so to speak, the bull and the lion. This cart was then dragged down to the river by the Arabs, where it remained with its precious cargo until Sir Henry had succeeded in persuading a raftsman from Baghdâd to construct a raft for each piece of sculpture. Eventually this was done, the rafts being held together by 600 dried sheep and goat skins. Both bull and lion were in this way floated down to Baghdâd, whence they were transported direct to England.

The Romance of the Museums.

IV.

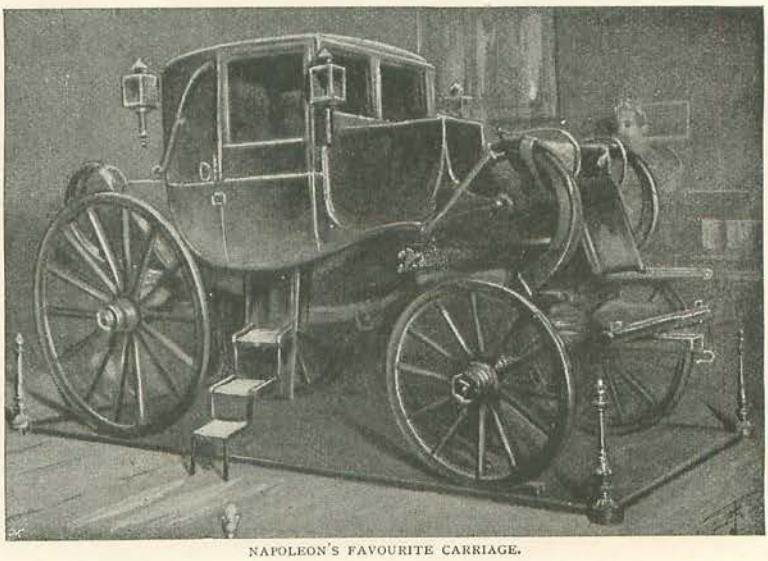
By William G. FitzGerald.

THE bright particular star of the Napoleonic Museum in Madame Tussaud's is the extraordinary carriage depicted on this page. Now, why is not this unique vehicle at South Kensington, instead of in the Marylebone Road? It seems to me that the more essentially popular a relic is, the less inclined are our museum authorities to purchase it. This carriage was built by M. Simon, of Brussels, in the year 1812, and was originally intended by Napoleon for use during the expedition to Russia. It went on to Moscow, and constituted almost the whole equipage, either of the Emperor or of his army, that escaped the disastrous retreat. It afterwards carried Napoleon back to Dresden, and brought him back a second time to France. He used it also in Paris, and it subsequently bore him to the shores of the Mediterranean, and was shipped with him to Elba, and used in all his excursions around the island.

Napoleon would never enter any other vehicle than this. When he planned his bold attempt to regain his throne, the troops were forbidden to take baggage of any kind; but, notwithstanding this, the favourite travelling carriage was carefully shipped and landed at Cannes. Napoleon made his triumphant journey to Paris in it; nor would he quit it for the State carriage that had been dispatched to convey him in triumph to his capital. When he again departed to rejoin his army in the north of France, this carriage again accompanied him, and in it his marvellous political career terminated. It is a curious fact that the fall of Napoleon can be traced to the hour he entered this carriage, which was as fatal to him as was the Chariot of the Sun to Phæton; for, lastly, it bore him to the fatal field of Waterloo.

Now for the description. In colour the carriage is a dark blue, ornamented with gold, with the Imperial arms on the panels. There is a lamp at each corner of the roof and a lamp at the back, throwing a strong light into the interior. The panels are bullet-proof, and behind is a projecting sword-case. The springs are semi-circular, and each seems capable of bearing half a ton. The pole is a lever, by means of which the carriage was kept level on even the most villainous of roads. The interior was adapted to the various purposes of kitchen, bedroom, dressing-room, office, and dining-room. Beneath the front seat was a compartment for utensils of probable utility; and, by the aid of a lamp, anything could be heated in the carriage. And to this day—also beneath the coachman's seat—may be seen a small box, 2½ft. long by 4in. square, holding a polished steel bedstead, in sections, which could be fitted together in a minute or two. The carriage also contained a mahogany liqueur-case, in which was originally some Malaga wine and some Old Tom. There were also innumerable miscellaneous articles of silver; mahogany cases, holding plates; toilet articles, in gold and silver; perfumes; Windsor soap; court plaster; Eau de Cologne; and maps and telescopes. On the ceiling was a network rack for small articles, and inside one of the doors was fixed a pistol holster.

The story of the capture of the carriage is



NAPOLEON'S FAVOURITE CARRIAGE.

most interesting, and for it I am indebted to Mr. John T. Tussaud, whose skill as an artist is only equalled by his boundless *bonhomie*.

At eleven o'clock at night, on the 18th of June, 1815, Major von Keller, an officer under Blucher, arrived at Jenappe, some fifteen miles from that Waterloo which has nothing to do with the South-Western Railway Company. Near the entrance to the town the Major met this carriage, which was rumbling along at a tremendous rate, drawn by six brown horses of Norman breed. The gallant Major, feeling confident that he was intercepting the "God in the Car," called on the coachman to stop, but that silly man, like the Levite in the parable, turned a deaf ear and went his way—or tried to. Not many moments after this the postillion was shot dead, and the two foremost horses were also dropped by well-directed shots. The obstinate coachman was cut down by the Major himself, and the lucky officer then forced open one of the doors of this carriage, only to find, however, that Napoleon had escaped on the other side and had ridden off on horseback. In his haste to escape, however, the Emperor had dropped his hat, sword, and mantle, which were promptly picked up and placed in the carriage—which, by the way, is an almost miraculous example of *multum in parvo*.

Its builder, the M. Simon aforesaid, has publicly stated that most of the wonderful contrivances in this carriage for economizing space and insuring comfort and convenience were suggested by the Emperor himself.

It was a Royal prize—even considering merely the intrinsic worth of its contents. Besides the numerous articles of gold and silver plate taken from the carriage, a lot of diamonds were also found, besides money treasure of enormous value. The carriage, with its four horses, was sent as a present to the Prince Regent. At this time a man of the odious name of Bullock had an exhibition at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, and after some negotiations he got permission from the Government, first to exhibit the carriage, and then to purchase it.

Bullock bought the carriage from George IV. for the sum of £2,500. It was a good investment, for, in the month of March, 1817, it was stated that the showman had cleared £26,000 by exhibiting the carriage; and the previous year no fewer than 100,000 persons gratified themselves by sitting in it. As a matter of fact, the enthusiasm with which the populace regarded this carriage was so great, that the Government requested Mr. Bullock to exhibit it in every town in the three kingdoms. And, altogether, about 900,000 people paid to see it.

After this "provincial tour," the carriage was sold by auction, the man who bought it intending to exhibit it in the United States; and in this one would think there was a huge fortune. This purchaser was, however, compelled to re-sell the carriage; and, curiously enough, the next owner had the same intention as his predecessor, but failed likewise to carry it out. At last, Mr. Robert Jeffreys, a decent, respectable coachmaker in Gray's Inn Road, took the thing in part payment of a very bad debt. And in the year 1842 it was acquired by the proprietors of Madame Tussaud's.

Mr. Tussaud tells me that the original lining of the carriage was all cut away within a year or two by relic-hunters. This necessitated the re-lining of the vehicle, but nothing could appease the desire of the public for scraps of the leather, and the re-lining process has had to be repeated periodically ever since.

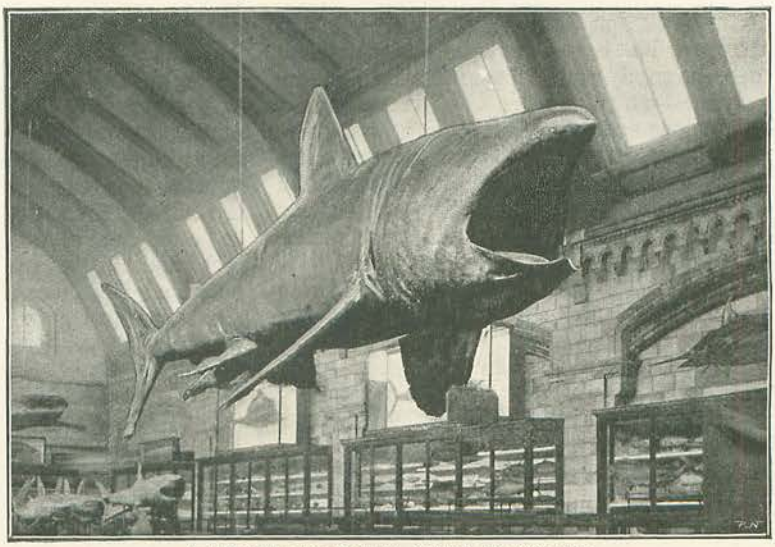
"Thousands of people all over the world," remarked Mr. Tussaud to me, "must now be gleefully showing to friends a precious relic which is in reality only a bit of leather, bought at wholesale price from a City warehouse."

THE BRASS COLLAR FROM THE CONGO, SHOWING SHOT-MARK.

This is a massive brass collar, weighing something like 30lb., brought from the very heart of the Congo Free State by the Rev. Harry Grattan Guinness—whom to know is to love—and by him deposited in the very interesting museum of the Congo-Baloto Mission at

Harley House, 53, Bow Road. The story of this collar is as follows: Dr. Grattan Guinness chanced to be some 800 miles in the interior of the Congo some four or five years ago, when he met Major Lothaire, famous in connection with *L'affaire Stokes*. I cannot dwell here on the awful cruelties perpetrated by this man, who pays the wages of his native carriers and servants in trade gin at 2½d. a bottle; and who would wipe out a village for the sake of a few perfect tusks. As a matter of fact, Lothaire's men were sacking and burning a village when Dr. Grattan Guinness arrived on the scene. The wearer of the collar—a young native girl—fled in terror to the Doctor's hut; but, before she could reach cover, her savage pursuers opened fire, one of the balls striking the affrighted fugitive with tremendous force on the extraordinary collar here depicted. Of course, this terrible encumbrance saved her life. It seems that these things are fixed on the native youngsters at an early age, and are considered ornamental in a high degree. This collar was afterwards removed from the girl's neck by a blacksmith, acting under orders from Lothaire himself, who desired the article, probably as a souvenir of a rich haul. A day or two afterwards, however, chancing to meet Dr. Grattan Guinness, the redoutable Major incidentally remarked that he had no boots, whereupon the Doctor promptly suggested that if Lothaire would make over to him the shot-marked brass collar he would make him a present of a pair of military riding-boots. The exchange was soon effected, and the gentle, courteous Doctor took the relic home with him.

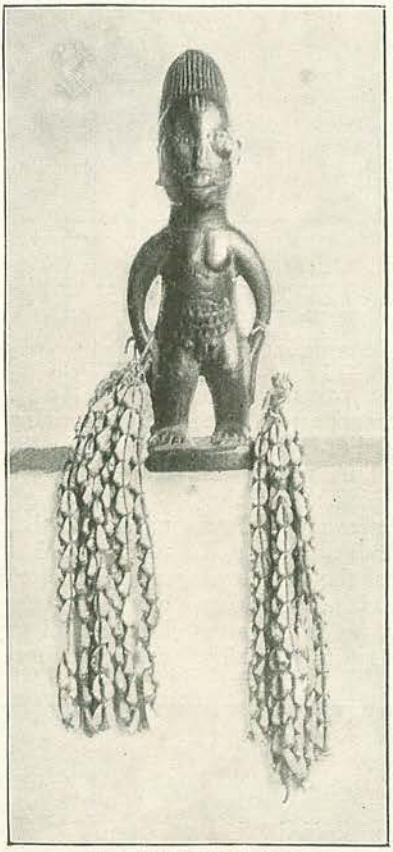
Now turn your attention for a moment to the next picture, which depicts, *more* Mahomet's Coffin, one of the Basking or Thirsty varieties of shark. One morning, some years ago, this monster was cast ashore dead on the beach at Shanklin, causing a flutter of excitement at that delightful little watering-place—though it was during the winter season. Then ensued a dispute between the coastguards who were officials and the fishermen who were not, but who found the thing and were, therefore—as they argued—entitled to it. In one way, the basking shark was something of a white elephant, because the fishermen, although they wanted it awfully, could not take it home with them, it being 28ft. long and 13ft. in circumference. The coastguards said nothing; they just sallied forth and imprinted a few broad arrows on the vast expanse of the shark's flanks; then they retired, feeling sure they had done the right thing. Somebody in the town wrote to the British Museum authorities, giving some information about this interesting flotsam, and in due time the well-known naturalist and taxidermist, Mr. Edward Gerrard, was dispatched to Shanklin to inquire into things. On seeing the monster on the beach, Mr. Gerrard resolved to buy it for the sake of its skin, although this was torn in places where the shark had been dragged along the shingle. The crux of the affair was to find the owner; and at last Mr. Gerrard, animated by the *esprit de corps* of officialdom, went to the coastguards' little office in a private house, "planked down" about £45, and the shark was his. There could not have been a very exhilarating sense of ownership in this case, because Mr. Gerrard and his many tons of dead shark were at Shanklin, and all that was wanted at Bloomsbury (where the Natural



THE BASKING SHARK CAST ASHORE AT SHANKLIN.

History Museum then was) was the skin. But the Museum's envoy set to work briskly. First of all he went into the town and bought up all the butchers' knives he could find; then he engaged eight surly fishermen, who blasphemed horribly when they heard of the "deal" that had just been completed. After this commenced the work of skinning the shark; but this work was so unpleasant—for one thing, the spines on the skin of the monster scratched and tore the men's arms—that presently four of them "jacked it up"; they struck, drew their 10s., and departed. When the upper side of the prostrate shark had been skinned, no appliances were forthcoming for turning the monster over. So Mr. Gerrard had to direct his men to cut right through the 13ft. of cartilaginous flesh until the skin on the other side was reached. At ten o'clock in the morning the work commenced, and at four o'clock the shark was wholly denuded of its skin; while the remainder of his body was distributed over a large extent of beach. A small spring cart was then procured, but it was found impossible to raise the skin into it. Accordingly, holes had to be dug in the sand to receive the wheels in order that the cart might sink almost level with the beach. Then things went on famously; only, unfortunately, when the skin was "on board," the cart could not be got out, and an inclined plane, dug on strict geometrical principles, had to be made. Howbeit, the skin was dispatched to Waterloo by the night mail and it was set up on Mr. Gerrard's premises in Camden Town. When this enormous specimen was ready for delivery to the Museum, and lay in the taxidermist's grounds, Mr. and Mrs Gerrard and their five children entered the capacious jaws and partook of that mysterious meal known as "high tea."

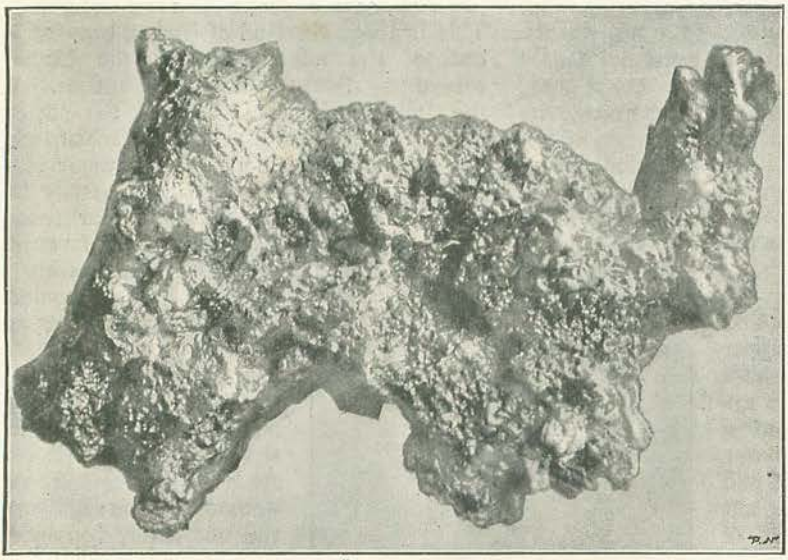
Before me, as I write, is the original of this photograph—a stumpy little wooden idol, about 10in. high, and adorned with ten rows of cowrie shells, five on each side. This is Ibegi, the God of Twins, brought by one of the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society from West Africa. At the Igbein mission station of the society there was formerly a certain catechist, who was a more or less converted savage; also, he had a sister who resisted obdurately the exhortations of every missionary for seven-and-twenty years. Ibegi was her favourite idol, purchased for three pounds from a village priest after years of scrupulous economy. This being so, it is no wonder that the lady clung to her idol, on whose face, by the way, are the family and tribal signs of the Yoruba people. As a matter of fact, the woman had one child, and she was firmly convinced that if she embraced Christianity and gave up this image to the missionary, that child would surely die.



IBEGI, THE GOD OF TWINS.

One day, a certain distinguished representative of the Church Missionary Society, who cured bodies as well as souls, and studied human nature as well as theology, took this idol from the woman, and before her eyes lopped off the greater part of one of its ears. On this the mental agony of the horrified woman was piteously manifested; but at last she was compelled to acknowledge that sturdy little Ibegi was something of a humbug, and she ceremoniously made him over to her brother the catechist exactly six months before her death. The idol can be seen at any time in the Church Missionary Society's Museum in Salisbury Square.

In the next picture is shown a model of the largest gold nugget ever found—the famous "Welcome Stranger," which was unearthed by John Beason and Richard Oates at Dunolly, forty miles north of Ballarat, in Victoria, on the 5th of February, 1869. Of course, the nugget was melted down into ingots almost immediately. In the rough this nugget weighed exactly 2,250oz. 10 dwts.



THE "WELCOME STRANGER"—LARGEST GOLD NUGGET EVER FOUND.

14grs. It was found on the extreme margin of a patch of auriferous alluvium running from Bulldog Reef, and was about 21in. in length and 10in. in thickness; although mixed with quartz, the greater part of it was solid gold. The lucky owners appear to have heated it in the fire in their hut in order to get rid of the quartz, and thus reduce its weight before taking it to the bank at Dunolly. The pure melted gold given away to their friends by the fortunate finders amounted to 2,228oz.; its value at the Bank of England being £9,534. Near the spot where this precious mass was found there were also unearthed two other nuggets, weighing respectively 1140z. and 360z.

This cast of the "Welcome Stranger" nugget is now to be seen in the mineral gallery of the Natural History Museum, where it is under the charge of Mr. L. Fletcher. The courtesy of this gentleman is such that all his correspondents, from Ruskin downwards, meet with the same attention. Some little time ago, Mr. Fletcher received a letter from a gentleman in the office of a steamship company in Vancouver. The writer wanted Mr. Fletcher to furnish him with particulars of the largest gold nugget ever found. He wanted to know the weight and value of it; also where it was found and the date. The fact was that Mr. Fletcher's description of the "Welcome Stranger" nugget was required for the definitive settlement of a bet!

The Charlemagne Bible is next shown. This wonderful book is to be seen in the British Museum, exhibited in Case G., in the department of manuscripts. It is of the largest folio size, measuring 20in. by 14½in., and containing 449 pages of extraordinarily fine vellum, with double columns 15in. in length.

About the year 778, Charlemagne commissioned the favourite disciple of Bede to revise the Latin version of the Scriptures, in order that it might be freed from the numerous errors that had been committed by unskilful copyists. This manuscript was then commenced, and completed in the year

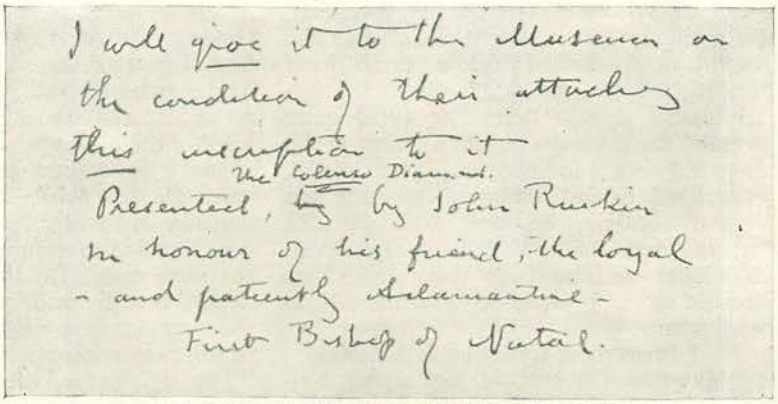
THE CHARLEMAGNE BIBLE.

800. Being then too old to undertake the long journey, the scribe sent the fruit of his labours to Rome by his friend and pupil, one Nathanael, who presented it to Charlemagne on the first day of 801, during his coronation. Lothaire, grandson of Charlemagne, lost the throne of France, and entered the Monastery of Prum, in Lorraine, as a monk. Here he deposited this Bible. In 1516 the convent dissolved, and the Benedictine monks preserved the manuscript carefully and carried it with them to a place near Basle. Here it remained until the occupation of the Episcopal territory of Basle by the French troops in 1793, when all the property of the abbey was sequestrated, the Bible becoming the property of M. Bennot, Vice-President of the Tribune of Declemont, from whom, in 1822, it was bought by M. de Spey Passavant, of Basle. An album accompanied it containing the opinions of nearly all the European *litterati* acquainted with old manuscripts. It was put up at £7,000 and afterwards bought at £1,500.

On the 30th of April, 1829, M. de Passavant offered the Bible for sale to Lord Stuart de Rothsay, at that time the English Ambassador to France. In January, 1836, this indefatigable salesman came to London for the purpose of selling his Bible to the British Museum, or, rather, submitting it to the trustees. Much correspondence took place. The owner first of all asked £12,000, then £8,000, and lastly £6,500, declaring that he feared he would go down into his grave on accepting the last-named sum. At last, finding he could not part with it on anything like these terms, M. de Passavant resolved to sell the manuscript by auction. On the 27th of April, 1836, the Bible was knocked down by Mr. Evans, of Oxford, for £1,500—to the proprietor himself! Overtures were again made to the owners of the British Museum, and, ultimately, the Charlemagne Bible was bought for £750.

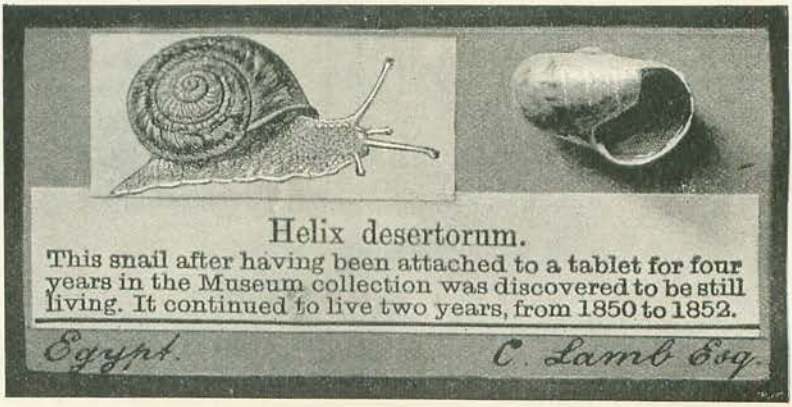
I next show a photograph of the Colenso Diamond, which was presented to the Natural History Museum by Professor John Ruskin. Our artist has also photographed that portion of Ruskin's letter to Mr. L. Fletcher which indicates the character of the label he wished to be affixed to the specimen. Now, this diamond has a singularly interesting history, and I will tell this as briefly as possible. In 1883, a storekeeper at the Cape left his shop and went up country with £2,000 and an acute attack of diamond fever. With this capital our friend purchased a claim in which two other men were also interested. The three worked frightfully hard for a long time, until they were at their wits' end for money, their claim being, apparently, quite valueless. One morning two of the partners declared they would work at the claim no longer, and the third set out to try his luck alone. Of course, misfortune had fallen heavily on the men who remained at home, but it fell with far greater force on the third man; so did the mine, burying the solitary worker in the débris. On seeing

THE COLENSO DIAMOND.


I will give it to the Museum on the condition of their attaching this inscription to it
The Colenso Diamond.
Presented, by by John Ruskin
in honour of his friend, the loyal
- and patient & adamantine -
First Bishop of Natal.

FACSIMILE OF RUSKIN'S LABEL FOR THE COLENSO DIAMOND.

what had happened the unfortunate man's colleagues decamped, lest they should be accused of his murder. Some months after this the ex-storekeeper came back, probably conscience-stricken, and he dug out his comrade's body. One result of this charitable act was the finding, near the decomposed body, of a number of loose diamonds, among them being the splendid yellow specimen stone seen in the picture. After this the finder came to England, and was recommended by the Hatton Garden dealers to take his most valuable find to Mr. R. Nockold, the dealer of Frith Street, Soho. After some preliminary negotiations with the man, Mr. Nockold bought the specimen, and promptly sent a description of it to Mr. Ruskin, at Brantwood; the diamond itself presently followed this description.



I should explain here that, until quite recently, Ruskin was a constant visitor at the dingy little house in Soho—a visit to which, he declared, reminded him of the "Arabian Nights." Ruskin, however, had no idea that this was such a valuable specimen. His letter addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Nockold is before me as I write. It is dated from

"Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire.

"My dear Couple,—I had nearly congealed into a diamond myself with fright when I opened the box. I thought in your first letter that 130 (it was written like that) meant 13½ carats, or I never should have asked for the loan! I'm most thankful to have it, for it is safe here and is invaluable to me just now; but what on earth is the value of it? I don't tell *anybody* I've got such a thing in the house.

"Ever gratefully and affectionately yours,

"J. Ruskin."

Four days later there is another letter from Brantwood, to Mrs. Nockold. It contains the following:—

"And now, please, will Mr. Nockold and you *advise* me whether to buy this diamond for Sheffield Museum or not?"

Ruskin did buy the stone from Mr. Nockold for £1,000, and, as we have seen, he presented it in 1887, with certain stipulations of his own, to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington.

The story of the wonderful snail seen in the next illustration will be long remembered at the Natural History Museum. In March, 1846, a number of shells were presented to the British Museum by Mr. Charles Lamb, who had collected these specimens in Egypt and Greece. Among them were two specimens from Egypt of the snail of the desert; and on the 25th of March, 1846, these were fixed on tablets and placed among the other mollusca of the Museum. Here they remained, summer and winter, until March 15th, 1850, when Dr. W. Baird, Mr. E. A. Smith's predecessor in the shell gallery of the Museum, had occasion to examine some specimens in the same case. On this occasion Dr. Baird noticed that the cardboard beneath one of the shells was a little discoloured, while over its mouth was spread a thin, glassy covering. "The epiphragm," remarked the doctor, luminously, "had spread over its mouth—and that with evident signs of recent formation." Of course, the good man was surprised, and he removed both specimens and placed them in tepid water.

In less than ten minutes out crawled one of the snails, after having "lain low" for upwards of four years. Next day Dr. Baird fed his *protégé* with some cabbage leaf, but he subsequently found that the fastidious little creature preferred lettuce. He allowed it to complete certain repairs in its domicile, and then he placed it in a glass jar, 18in. high, up the sides of which it climbed daily, presumably by way of exercise after a long period of inactivity. In due time the doctor placed a companion with his snail, and it is gratifying to learn that the two lived harmoniously together for two years.

The Romance of the Museums.

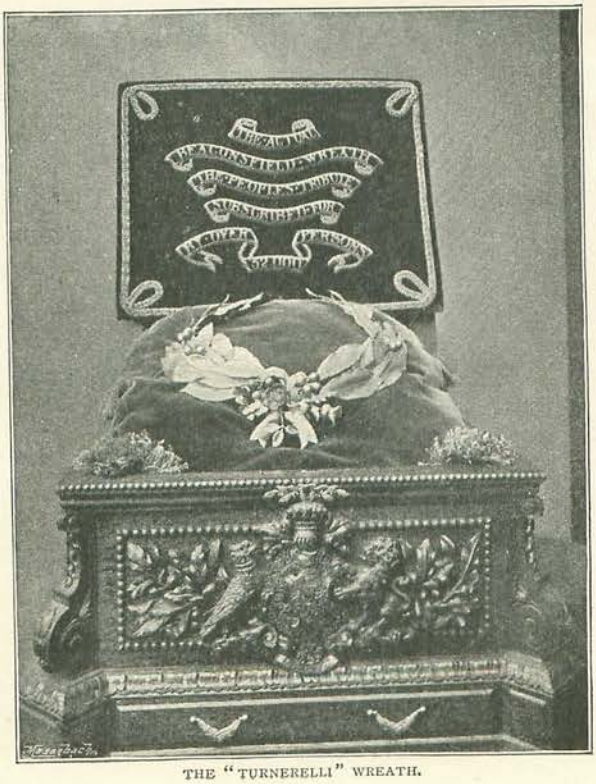
V.

By William G. FitzGerald.

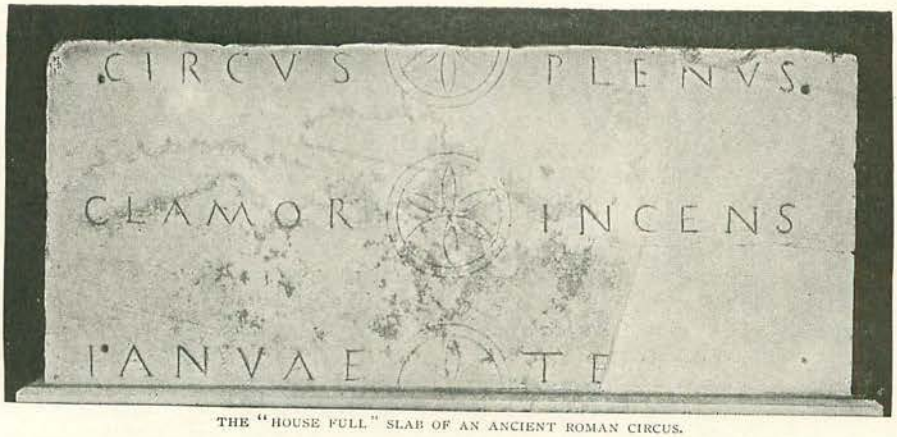
AMONG relics with histories must certainly be mentioned Mr. Tracy Turnerelli's famous Beaconsfield wreath, whereof a photograph is reproduced below. Turnerelli's great idea was to get up a workman's penny subscription as a tribute to Lord Beaconsfield's policy, which brought about "peace with honour," after the famous Congress of Berlin.

The plan was, that each county or large town was to be asked to furnish the cost of one leaf, on the back of which the name of the place contributing the leaf was to be engraved. From calculations he had made, the famous crank found that the cost of each leaf would be about £5, and thus, that each leaf would represent the subscriptions of 1,200 working men. Many humorous questions and doubts were started by the critics of the scheme. For one thing, said some, the "Conservative working man" has no existence outside Lord Beaconsfield's imagination. But Turnerelli proved the contrary. For no fewer than 52,800 working men readily paid their pennies. The wreath was then ordered of Messrs. Hunt and Roskell, the well-known jewellers of Bond Street, and it is really a fine piece of workmanship. The wreath cost £500; and, as a matter of history, this is important, because the amount subscribed was only £220, which shows that more than half the money must have come from some source other than the workmen. This wreath, which is now in Madame Tussaud's Museum, and was photographed for me by Mr. Edwin J. Poyser, the managing director, has thirty-four leaves of different sizes, and on the back of each leaf is engraved the name of the town that subscribed for it. The largest bear the names of London, Oxford, Norwich, Sheffield, Accrington, Leamington, Greenwich, and Birmingham —all these being of equal size. Some towns gave much smaller leaves; and in several cases three or four towns combined to give one leaf. Thus a little one was provided by the united subscriptions of Holywell, Leicester, Hertford, and Heyward.

When completed, this wreath was put on show, first at the rooms of the makers and afterwards at the Crystal Palace; and it was also shown to the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family. When everything had been arranged for its presentation, Lord Beaconsfield, to the amazement of everyone, declined to have anything to do with it. Of course, this refusal was the subject of much comment, and many reasons were assigned for it. Turnerelli's own explanation was that, according to a high legal functionary, the wreath was a typical Imperial diadem, which could only be legally offered to a Sovereign, and that, therefore, its acceptance by Lord Beaconsfield would be an insult to the Crown.



THE "TURNERELLI" WREATH.



THE "HOUSE FULL" SLAB OF AN ANCIENT ROMAN CIRCUS.

Beaconsfield's letter to Turnerelli, declining the wreath, is dated June 16th, 1879; and the disappointed man sold it to Tussaud's for the mere intrinsic value of the gold. Mr. John T. Tussaud assures me that Turnerelli inserted an advertisement in the papers magnanimously proclaiming that all those who had contributed could have their pennies back *if they wrote to him for them.*

A curious relic of Roman civic life is seen in the above reproduction; it is an ancient circus placard found at Porto Portese (Lanuvium). This is a thin oblong slab of stone, about 3ft. long, the upper corners being pierced with holes for cords, so that it might be hung outside the theatre to warn late arrivals that there was no room within. This is evident from the inscription, which may be thus freely translated: "Circus packed." "Uproarious applause." "Doors shut."

Now, obviously, we have here the prototype of the "House full" boards, hung outside our own theatres, not so much for the convenience of late comers, as to advertise the "big business" that is being done.

A very interesting fact in connection with this inscription-slab is that it was specially reproduced in platinotype last December so as to form a Christmas card, which was sent across the Atlantic by the staff of the Lyceum Theatre, as a mark of the esteem and respect in which they held their distinguished chief, Sir Henry Irving.

There is a capital story connected with the fine guinea seen in the accompanying illustration, for it is closely associated with an historic wager, made in the House of Commons between Pulteney and Sir Robert Walpole. On February 11th, 1741, Sandys informed Walpole in the House that he should on the following Friday bring an accusation of several articles against him. The Minister at once rose, thanked him for his notice, and after requesting an impartial hearing, declared he would not fail to be "in his place," since he was unconscious of having committed any crime. So saying, Walpole laid his hand on his breast, and exclaimed, "*Nil conscire sibi nulli pallescere culpæ.*"

Pulteney at once got on his legs, and remarked that the right hon. gentleman's logic and Latin were equally faulty; he had mangled Horace, who had written "*Nullâ pallescere culpâ.*" The Minister defended the quotation, and Pulteney repeating his assertion, he offered to back himself for a guinea. The challenge was accepted, and Sir Nicholas Hardinge, Clerk of the House, was nominated arbitrator. Hardinge decided against Walpole, whereupon the guinea was instantly thrown to Pulteney, who caught it, and held it up to the House, exclaiming: "This is the only money I have received from the Treasury for many years, and it shall be the last."

The photograph reproduced is from this

THE PULTENEY-WALPOLE GUINEA (WON OVER THE ONLY BET EVER MADE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS).

identical guinea, which Pulteney deposited in the Medal Room at the British Museum, with an autograph memorandum narrating

the circumstances of the bet, and saying one or two nasty things about the loser. "This guinea, I hope," concludes Pulteney, priggishly, "will prove to my posterity the use of knowing Latin, and encourage them in their learning."

Few objects in the British Museum have such romantic histories as that which attaches to the Moabite Stone, a cast of which is here shown. This world-renowned stone is nearly 3,000 years old, having been erected by Mesha, King of Moab, in the year 890 B.C., as a commemorative offering to his god Chemosh, for delivering him from serious trouble. King Mesha recorded his tardy victories in the Phœnician language; but he could have had no idea how his alien posterity would fight over the slab—which, by the way, was set up at a place called Dibon, to the east of the Dead Sea, where it was discovered in 1868 by a Prussian missionary, the Rev. Augustus Klein.

CAST OF THE MOABITE STONE.

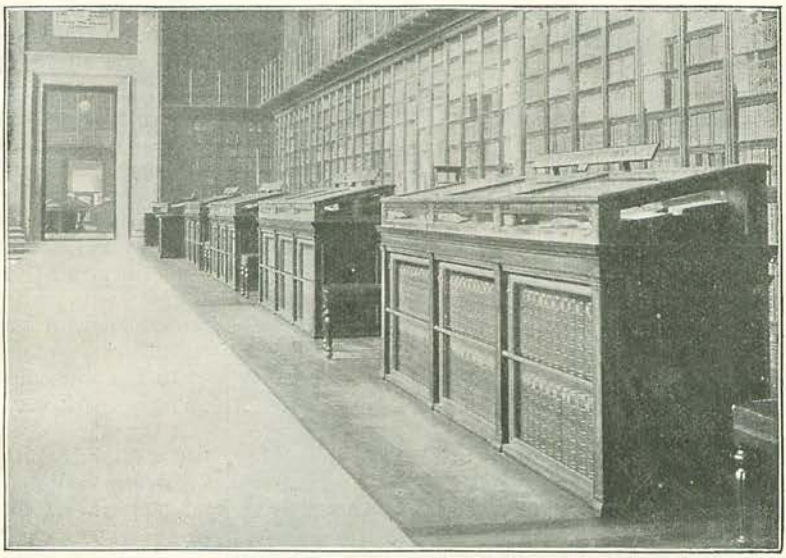
One day the son of the sheikh, with whom Dr. Klein was staying, told him of a certain mysterious stone with an indecipherable inscription. Of course, the reverend gentleman inspected this stone without delay, and copied a complete alphabet from the inscription; then he found himself compelled to resume his journey. The value of the find was at once perceived by the experts to whom Dr. Klein showed his copy of the writings, and the Arabs were immediately approached on the subject of its purchase.

Now, the Arabs, like the keen business men they are, and ever have been, immediately put a fancy price on the stone; the Franks could have it, they said, casually, for a paltry *thousand pounds!* Furthermore, the rascals pointed out gravely that a blight on their crops, and numerous other agricultural misfortunes, could not possibly fail to descend upon them the moment the sacred stone had disappeared from their midst.

The Grand Vizier interposed, but was defied, and eight months' fruitless negotiation followed. At last a fair price was paid to the local sheikh, who promised to get the stone safely away. But he had reckoned without his subordinates, who at the last moment declared, without the least semblance of regret, that the slab should not be removed.

The French Government next arrived upon the scene in the person of a scientific representative (M. Ganneau), who vainly offered the assembled Arabs a big price. Well, then, might he take an impression of the inscription? They would see; but in the meantime he must do nothing. The Frenchman did take a few impressions, however, whereupon the Arabs grew furious and all but destroyed his wax tablets, finally giving him a wholly unlooked-for "impression" in the shape of a sword-thrust in the back as he fled from their dangerous proximity. After this exciting affair the Arabs broke the Moabite stone in pieces, distributing the fragments as charms among the chief families of the district. Crushed and torn as were the impressions of the inscription taken by the French envoy, M. Ganneau, they were yet decipherable, and proved of inestimable value in piecing the fragments together subsequently; for M. Ganneau did succeed in buying up these fragments, with the assistance of Captain (now Major-General Sir Charles) Warren; and the famous stone was then restored and presented to the Louvre by the committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

In my opinion, the most extraordinary printed work in the British Museum is the Chinese Encyclopædia, part of which is shown in the illustration. That this monumental work is a library in itself will evident from the fact that it was publisl "complete in 6,109 vols." The Museum



THE CHINESE ENCYCLOPÆDIA (PUBLISHED IN 6,109 VOLS.).

authorities, however, have bound it up into a modest thousand, arranged in ten table cases, at the south end of the King's Library. Anyone wishing to look up a subject in this Encyclopædia simply asks one of the courteous assistants for "The Koo Kin T'oo Shoo Tseih Ch'ing—Pekin, 1726," and the exact position of this mine of Celestial knowledge will at once be indicated.

The eminent Orientalists who discuss this work cannot have a particle of humour in their composition. "The historical and literary encyclopædias of China," says one, oracularly, "form a marked feature" (*sic!*) "in every library in that country." I should think they do, indeed. "If Chinese literature contained nothing else," declares another philological enthusiast, "it would be worth while to learn the language in order to read it"—*i.e.*, this *magnum opus*. But does the professor think, poor finite, our lives resemble Tennyson's immortal brook?

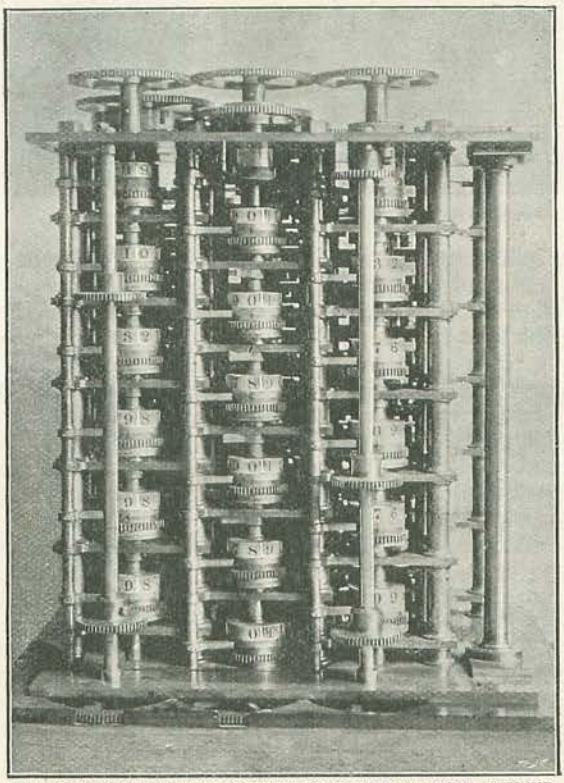
It seems that the Koo Kin, etc., is an improved edition of the Wăn Heen Tung Kaou, by Ma Twan-Lin. One learns that the new edition—which was small—owes its appearance to the Emperor Kien-Lung (1735–95), who, probably, dictated it aloud—hence his name—though this latter statement is by no means certain. And, of course, I need hardly say that the supersession of Ma's work was by no means intended as a slight upon that distinguished personage.

Everything about this Encyclopædia was of great value—especially the type, which was of copper, and cast specially for the new edition. Before long the Chinese Government—"yielding," as we are deliciously informed, "to a severe monetary crisis"—ordered the copper type to be melted down and made into innumerable "cash." I learn further that "there are very few copies in existence, and it is but rarely that one finds its way into the market." "Copies" is good, considering the 6,109 volumes; and one marvels how a copy "finds its way" anywhere without a special train.

Babbage's Calculating Machine, part of which is shown in the next illustration, would require a whole volume to do its marvellous history anything like justice; and, indeed, such a volume exists, written by Major-General Babbage, son of the famous inventor, who was kind enough to come from Cheltenham to these offices for the purpose of giving the writer really authentic details concerning what was unquestionably one of the sensations of the nineteenth century. In the year 1819, Babbage really commenced operations by taking a number of wheels to a wheel-cutter at Lambeth to have the teeth cut in them. Towards the end of July, 1823, the inventor commenced upon the Difference Engine which is the subject of the illustration, and he worked on it for four years regularly, with the result that in October, 1827, he had spent £3,475. The very first Difference Engine made, however, was put together between the year 1820 and June, 1822; it consisted of from six to eight figures. A bigger and more perfect engine was afterwards commenced in 1823 for the Government.

The latter—which our artist has photographed—was to have six orders of differences, each consisting of about twenty places of figures; it was also intended to print the tables it computed. In 1827 Babbage's wife died, and he was advised to travel on the Continent, being in a low state of health. He left the drawings, however, in order that

the work might be carried on in his absence, and he also gave his banker instructions to advance £1,000 while he was away. In the beginning of 1829 the Government directed the Royal Society to inquire into the machine, and the Administration also directed that a fireproof building should be constructed in East Street, Manchester Square, close to Babbage's house, No. 1, Dorset Street, in which it was intended to place the machines when finished. One day, early in 1832, finding he could no longer make payments in advance, Babbage informed the engineer in charge of the works that in future he would not pay him until money was received from the Treasury. Thereupon, the mechanician struck work and dismissed his men; one of these, in receipt of two guineas a week, was afterwards the famous engineer, Sir J. Whitworth.



THE DIFFERENCE ENGINE OF THE BABBAGE CALCULATING MACHINE.

Babbage's troubles had just commenced. His best draughtsman came to him one day and said he had just received a tempting offer from the French Government; whereupon his tortured employer had to give him a substantial increase of salary in order to retain his services. After the strike of the inventor's men, years of delay and anxiety followed, Babbage applying repeatedly to the Government for its decision upon the subject; but in vain. Notwithstanding that the Difference Engine was suspended, this indomitable man still continued his inquiries, and, having discovered principles of far wider extent, he ultimately embodied them in the Analytical Engine; both machines can be seen on application at the South Kensington Museum. For upwards of twenty years Babbage maintained, in his own house and virtually at his own expense, an elaborate establishment for carrying out his views. He died at his London house on October 18th, 1871; and Sir Robert Peel admitted in the House of Commons, in March, 1843, that although £17,000 had been spent by the Government on the machine, Babbage himself had never received a shilling.

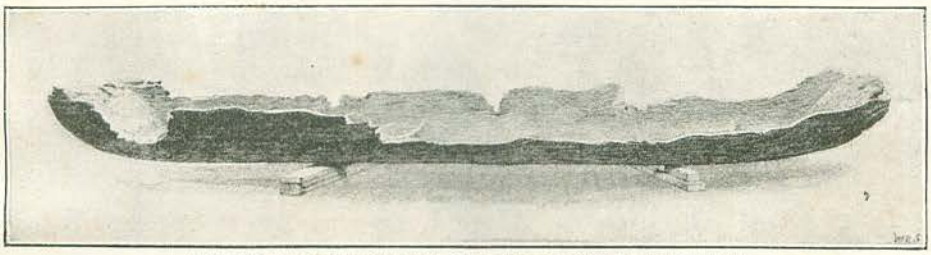
And yet the invention was not wholly valueless. An eminent and wealthy manufacturer of Manchester came to London and saw this machine, and, on inspecting it closely, he found mechanical contrivances which he subsequently introduced with the greatest advantage into his own spinning machinery. Of course, even after the machine had been definitely cast adrift by the Government, a vast amount of interest was taken in it by the public. Many members of both Houses of Parliament were very fond of putting puerile questions to the inventor. "Pray, Mr. Babbage," cried one of these ancient dandies, "if you put the wrong figures into the machine, would the right answer come out?"

The fame of Babbage's Calculating Machine spread to the ends of the earth. Count Strzyelecki once told Babbage that the Chinese inquired after it. The guileless Celestials were anxious to know whether the machine could be carried in the pocket. The inventor assured them, however, through his Excellency that "it was essentially an *out-of-pocket* machine."

The Difference Engine seen in the above illustration was not exhibited in 1851. Its loan was refused to New York, and also to the Dublin Exhibition of 1847. It was, however, exhibited in the Exhibition of 1862, but space for its drawings was refused; and that the authorities had a low opinion of the thing will be evident from the fact that pay-

ment of 6s. a day for a competent person (formerly Babbage's secretary) to explain the mechanism was refused by the Commissioners. General Babbage, the inventor's son, assured me that Wellington, when Premier, went to Lambeth to personally inspect the machine, and having seen it at work—for it is quite perfect in its way—he directed the Chancellor of the Exchequer to arrange further grants, his idea being that the calculating part should be finished first, in order that there might be something of real value to show to Parliament in return for the money of the nation. General Babbage further assures me that when the machine was abandoned, it could, in his opinion, have been entirely completed for £500.

It is scarcely correct to speak of the next article as being *in* the British Museum, the fact being that it lies underneath the great colonnade of that famous institution, on one side of the entrance. This is a pre-historic "dug-out" canoe, more than 35ft. long, which for generations served as a bridge to connect two big meadows at North Stoke, about three miles above Arundel. In all probability this seared oak-trunk would still be serving its very useful purpose, were it not for certain improvements carried out by the Lord of the Manor, Lord Egremont, of Petworth. Much of its length was buried in either bank of the creek it spanned, consequently the workmen did not at first realize how tough was the job they had tackled. It took eleven horses with chains and ropes to drag the canoe-bridge from its bed; and then it was noticed that three equi-distant bars had been left, partly to strengthen the bottom, and partly also to serve as footholds for those who worked the paddles. This canoe may be safely regarded as a relic of the aboriginal Britons, wrought before or soon after the arrival of the Romans among them.



PRE-HISTORIC CANOE WHICH DID DUTY FOR MANY YEARS AS A BRIDGE.

THE STREAM BETWEEN TWO MEADOWS FORMERLY SPANNED BY THE ABOVE CANOE.