

Antiquity

A Quarterly Review of Archaeology

VOL. VI No. 21

MARCH 1932

Editorial Notes

ARCHAEOLOGY is still something of a Cinderella at the British universities. Certain branches of this vast subject are indeed taught (for the most part incompletely) at a few of them: notably, classical archaeology in Oxford, Cambridge and London; Egyptology, more particularly at the first and last; the prehistory of Europe and the Near East at Cambridge and Edinburgh; British archaeology in London and at Cardiff; Romano-British archaeology at Durham and Newcastle. But all this is both very scattered and very restricted. When we remember that problems of first-class importance are now being attacked by British archaeologists in Greece, Palestine, Egypt, Irak, India, China, South America, South Africa, Kenya, and even in Great Britain itself, we realize that the facilities for preliminary training and subsequent research offered by our British universities are inadequate to the point of the ridiculous. And to the sum-total of professional archaeology must of course be added that incidental contact with archaeological materials or problems which from time to time complicates the routine of Dominion and Colonial administration. Some regularized instruction in the archaeology of our Colonies might (if the necessary machinery were available) reasonably be added to the burdens of our young Colonial civil servants. But the machinery is, in fact, *not* available; or, rather, no determined attempt has yet been made to set up the machinery from the parts that

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exist. There is nothing of that reasoned cooperation without which economy of effort and speedy and effective development cannot be expected. The time for cooperation and concentration is overdue.



One attempt was, it is true, made on a small scale before the War. At Liverpool an Institute of Archaeology, with three or four Chairs, was established as a focus for teaching and research, and has produced some notable work. But both the place and, perhaps, the time were ill-chosen. Liverpool has many claims to distinction, but it cannot claim to possess any special qualifications as a centre for the study of the world's archaeology. Even Oxford and Cambridge have not, and can scarcely hope to have, all the materials necessary for an Archaeological Institute on a really comprehensive scale. London stands—potentially—alone in this respect. Only in London can we expect permanently that convergence of materials and workers which alone can make such an Institute a real, world-wide power in this department of science. And, translated into academic terms, this is as much as to say that the responsibility for taking the greatest step ever yet attempted in the administration of archaeology, on an international basis, devolves now upon the University of London.



The University of London is a century old, but is only now in a position to put its house in order. For it is indeed only now, at long last, on the point of owning a house to put in order. Hitherto the University has been a lodger on remote and alien ground. Its new buildings, when they arise on the northern side of the British Museum, will be its first real home, and will at once present it with facilities for development that few, if any, other universities in the world can rival. How far it will take advantage of these facilities remains to be seen. In the meantime, those University departments of knowledge which rejoice in far-seeing directors and deep pockets are staking their claims for permanent accommodation. The Institute of Historical Research, established a few years ago on the initiative of Professor A.F. Pollard and already a flourishing centre of postgraduate work, will vacate its hutments and clothe itself in bricks and mortar. The Institute of Art, recently founded through the munificence of Mr Samuel Courtauld, will begin its labours under Professor W. G. Constable.

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It remains to add the third member of the trinity, and to establish, in close juxtaposition to these two Institutes, that Institute of Archaeology which would inevitably share so closely in many of their needs and interests.



In this special context, the whole matter is worthy alike of earnest thought and urgent action. Here is an unrivalled chance for co-ordination not only within the limits of archaeology itself but also between archaeology and two kindred departments of knowledge. Take the case of the libraries of these various establishments. The overlaps between archaeology, history, and the history of art are multitudinous: what economy of space and expenditure to have them side-by-side! A small scientific laboratory for research work and instruction in preservative measures—a necessary element in the training of every field- or museum-archaeologist—is equally necessary to archaeology and to art. And so on. It is unnecessary to elaborate the essential affinity of interest between the three Institutes. With this and other factors in mind, the University Board of Studies in Archaeology has prepared a carefully considered scheme for an Institute of Archaeology which shall occupy a part of the top floor of the new University buildings, alongside the Institute of Art. The scheme provides for the close storage of teaching and research-collections of a kind nowhere at present available, and includes the mechanism necessary for postgraduate work in all branches of archaeology.



To the details of this scheme we shall return in a future issue. It is a scheme which is both practical and urgent. But the most urgent part about it is that *now or never* must it find a sufficient financial guarantee to secure from the University of London the required minimum accommodation. This accommodation—which is, be it emphasized, the essential foundation of the whole scheme—will cost £28,000. The sum is large, but in no way disproportionate to the magnitude of the development which it represents, and it is in fact considerably less than is being spent on the Institute of Art. Under other conditions, isolated from the kindred institutes and the British Museum, such an Institute of Archaeology would cost incomparably more and would be incomparably less effective. But the plans for the

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new University buildings are already under preparation, and time is short. Unless a substantial part of that £28,000 is guaranteed almost immediately, we shall have missed perhaps the greatest opportunity that organized archaeological research has ever had in Europe. Who will help ?



The Editorial notes on our domestic affairs, printed in the December number, have met with an encouraging response, and we have received many friendly letters from subscribers, some of whom were induced by our 'appeal' to change their intentions. Others have told us they cannot do without ANTIQUITY—it was described by one as an 'educational luxury'—and will continue it in spite of the difficulties in which we all share. Some, of course, are compelled to withdraw their support—only temporarily we hope—but at the same time express their great regret at having to do so. We also wish to thank those who have sent their subscriptions for 1932 ; the next paragraph is inserted for the attention of those who have not yet done so.

The SUBSCRIPTION to ANTIQUITY for 1932 is now DUE. We would remind our Subscribers of the form and envelope inserted in the December number for the purpose of remitting payments. *An early response will be much appreciated as this will save avoidable trouble in having to send out direct reminders.*

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The Assistant Editor, 24 Parkend Road, Gloucester.