

THE CONTENTS

I N the summer of 1919 the Director discovered in a book shop in London a very rare book described by Mr. Hall in this JOURNAL. The Library of the Museum was fortunate enough to acquire this treasure through an appropriation from the funds of the George Leib Harrison Foundation. The book is a curiosity in literature. Its value, which is ethnological and artistic, is determined by the samples of tapa cloth that are bound up with it. These pieces of tapa were collected by Captain James Cook during his voyages of discovery in the South Seas. The unknown author who dedicates his book to a person not named engages our attention hardly less than the samples of cloth that owe their preservation to his intelligent use of them.

It will soon be one hundred and fifty years since Captain James Cook was killed in Hawaii, in the group of islands in the Pacific that he discovered on his last voyage. His death took place in 1779 and the Tapa Book bears the date 1787.

Although the author makes no reference to himself at all, it is clear enough that he was a man of firm character, large intelligence, pronounced opinions, catholic tastes and deep sympathies. It is also a fact that although he is sometimes ungrammatical his use of the English language is picturesque, forceful and full of charm. To those who knew him he must have been an attractive personality with a versatile and entertaining mind, but there is no clue to his identity.

The next question that presents itself has reference to the identity of the hero of the Dedication. He must have been a great man and a public figure. Mr. Hall suggests with entire plausibility that the hero was Warren Hastings whose impeachment was pending at the time the Dedication was written. Indeed Mr. Hall succeeds in showing that the man referred to could be no other than Warren Hastings.

Other copies of the book are in the following Libraries.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

Honolulu, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum.

Salem, Mass., The Peabody Museum.

THE MUSEUM JOURNAL

The Eckley B. Coxe Jr. Expedition to Egypt carried on its work from the beginning of 1915 till the end of 1919. During that time excavations were made at the Pyramids, at Denderah and at Memphis. It was at the latter place that monumental ruins were uncovered. The most interesting of these discoveries from an architectural point of view was the Throne Room in the Royal Palace which is now in process of being cleared by the Expedition. Mr. Fisher, who describes the Throne Room in this JOURNAL was trained in the School of Architecture of the University of Pennsylvania. In conducting the excavations in the Royal Palace he brought this training to bear on his work with advantage, for he was able by a close study of the ruins to reconstruct each portion of the building as the excavations proceeded. The restoration of the Throne Room reproduced in this JOURNAL gives a faithful idea of what that part of the Palace was like before the fire that destroyed it.

In Egypt the Museum has many tons of sculpture and other objects found in the excavations. These will be brought to Philadelphia and set up in the Museum when room shall have been provided by the addition to the building of the Egyptian Hall already planned.

The art of metal working among the ancient peoples of America is so well represented in the collections of the Museum that studies based on these collections are of special interest. Dr. Farabee continues his discussion on these native arts by two articles, one on bronze and one on a special collection of gold ornaments from Ecuador found buried in an earthenware chest and acquired last year by the Museum. For illustration there is reproduced a drawing of a most remarkable bronze knife from the collection obtained in Paris in 1919. The Ecuador gold is illustrated by many selected specimens.

The Museum collection of Central American vases, in stone and in clay, acquired during recent years is the most remarkable in existence. They represent the arts of the ancient Mayas and those of some of their neighbours. Among the latter, the people of the Ulua Valley, first made known by Dr. Gordon from personal exploration, are the most advanced. The perfection of their artistically carved white marble vessels entitles them to a foremost place among the

native American peoples and puts them squarely in the front rank of the world's earlier artisans.

These marble vases from the Ulua Valley, of which those in the University Museum are by far the finest that have come to light, are remarkable artistically. In their excellence, refinement and strength they are equal to the much admired bronze vessels of the Shang, Chou or Han Dynasties of China.

The style of decoration, the motives that make up the design and in fact the whole feeling of these Central American vases present a striking resemblance to the similar attributes of those early Chinese bronzes that are now so much sought by museums and collectors everywhere.

Recent discussion of one of these marble vases has revealed some errors on the part of well known writers that have led Dr. Gordon in this JOURNAL to publish the whole group in such detail that students of Central American and Mexican archæology will be able to study their form and decoration as well as if they had access to the originals.

In the last JOURNAL Dr. Legrain had an article on a fragment of an historical document found in the Museum's collection of clay tablets. A photograph of the fragment accompanied the translation. Since that article was published, Dr. Legrain has found among many unclassified fragments, a small piece of the same historical tablet which he was able to place in its proper relation to the larger fragment already published. A photograph of the two fragments joined, is now reproduced, together with a translation by Dr. Legrain of the new fragment. This is an example of the way in which the scholar who reads the cuneiform script is often able to assemble different fragments of a tablet and join them together upon evidence furnished within the meaning of the text. In the present instance the two fragments had been separated for thousands of years.