

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1873

THE PRESERVATION OF OUR NATIONAL MONUMENTS

THE necessity of some measures being taken for the preservation of our national pre-historic monuments is constantly being forced upon public attention by the acts of destruction so frequently reported in the newspapers, and which, it would appear, the power of public opinion is by itself unable to prevent.

We have only to refer to any archæological work which treats of our cromlechs and dolmens, and other megalithic monuments, to see at once how fearfully many of them have been mutilated, if they have not been absolutely destroyed within the last century or two. The disappearance of the monolith near Kit's Coty House, which, though fallen in Stukeley's time, was still there to mark what was then known as "the general's grave;" the hopeless confusion into which the "Countless Stones," also near Aylesford, have been thrown; the cairns within the circle, known as Long Meg and her Daughters, which, since Camden's time, have vanished, while the Daughters appear to have been reduced in number from 77 to 68; the double row of immense stones near Shap, the destruction of which has been so great that a village has been almost entirely built out of their remains;—these are but a few examples of this kind culled at random from Ferguson's "Rude Stone Monuments."

It was, moreover, only last year that a portion of Avebury, a monument perhaps only second in importance to Stonehenge, was threatened, and was only saved for posterity by the public-spirited liberality of Sir John Lubbock, who purchased the site.

With barrows and earthworks the destruction has been equally rapid, though less noticed. We have, however, seen an expostulation in the *Times* on the subject of the vallum of an ancient circular camp being converted into bricks, and the threatened destruction of Cæsar's Camp at Wimbledon is still a matter of public interest.

It is, perhaps, rarely the case that these monuments are destroyed in a merely wilful manner; it is usually from economical motives. The barrows offer a mound of soil well adapted for being carted away to give a top dressing to some neighbouring field, and there is also the secondary advantage, that their site, after the removal of the mound, offers no impediment to the passage of the plough. The stones of the megalithic monuments offer supplies of material both for the purposes of building and the repair of the neighbouring roads. As it was with "the Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or Time had spared and which Avarice now consumeth," so it is with these rude monuments of our forefathers. When the belief was strong that "Mizraim cured wounds," there was some excuse for "mummies becoming merchandise," and

Pharaoh being sold for balsams; but to dress our fields with the sepulchral mounds of our predecessors, and to break up their monuments for the repair of our barns and roads, seems to us what Sir Thomas Browne would have stigmatised as a worse than "irrational ferity."

It is with a view to preventing such barbarisms that Sir John Lubbock has introduced a Bill in the present

Session of Parliament, to make provision for the preservation of certain national monuments, which has now been read a first time. The means adopted for dealing with this somewhat difficult subject appear to us well calculated for producing the desired result, and in a manner which even those who consider they have a right to destroy any monuments on their own property, cannot but regard as equitable.

The conservation of monuments such as barrows, dolmens, menhirs, earthworks, stone-circles, &c., is placed by the Bill under the charge of a body of Commissioners, consisting of the Inclosure Commissioners, the Master of the Rolls, the Presidents of the Societies of Antiquaries of London and of Scotland, the Keeper of the British Antiquities at the British Museum, and three other Commissioners to be nominated by the Crown. Under their charge are placed certain monuments specified in a Schedule attached to the Bill; but, with the consent of the Treasury, other monuments of a similar kind may, at any future time, be brought under their control. When once this has been done, any injury or damage to the monuments will be treated as a malicious injury and become penal, unless the written permission of the Commissioners has been obtained, or they have declined to purchase either the monument itself, or a power to restrain the owner or occupier of it from injuring it during a certain period of years.

Powers are given to the Commissioners to purchase the freehold, or other estate, in any monument and rights of way for the public to it, as well as to exercise the power of restraint from injury. The amount of compensation to be awarded under either head is to be determined under the provisions of an already existing Act of Parliament; but in all cases the consent of the Treasury will be necessary before there can be any outlay of public money.

These are the main provisions of the Bill, but the necessary clauses with regard to notices, powers of access, conservation of monuments, and other matters, have not been omitted, and have evidently been carefully considered. The Schedule attached to the Bill is at present apparently undergoing revision, but about eighty of the principal prehistoric monuments of the United Kingdom are already specified.

It appears to us that it would be wise for the local societies in our different counties to furnish Sir John Lubbock with catalogues of the principal monuments in their respective districts, such as in their opinion ought to be placed under the protection of the Commissioners, so as to make the list as complete in the first instance as possible, and avoid the necessity of making continual additions to it.

The mere fact of a barrow, dolmen, or camp, being thought of sufficient importance to be cited by name in an Act of Parliament would tend to raise it in the respect of the inhabitants of the surrounding country, and in most cases suffice to preserve it from wanton injury. The general spread of education will also do much to encourage a regard for our national antiquities, of which, notwithstanding neglect in the past, we have still a fair number to show. Let us do what we can to preserve them ere it be too late, and not let posterity charge the present generation with neglect, should at some future time a greater interest arise in these relics of a dim past, and it then be

found that of monuments now extant all that can be said will be "Etiam perire ruinae."

In France it is certainly the case that where a building or other ancient structure is "classé comme monument historique," it is regarded with some degree of pride and affection by those who live near it, and the necessary expenses for the preservation of such monuments do not appear to be grudged.

In this country, also, what small expense the Treasury might incur in the defence and preservation of our national monuments would, we are sure, be cheerfully met; but we are inclined to think that it will only be in rare and exceptional cases that any outlay whatever, beyond, perhaps, the expense of a few notices, will be necessary.

Among the multitude of private Bills brought in at the commencement of a Session, it is not always that the doctrine of the "survival of the fittest" applies. In this instance, however, we trust that the Bill will be exposed to neither neglect nor mishap. It is supported by members on both sides of the House; it does not appeal to Party, but to the patriotism of the whole nation, and it is brought in under the auspices of a member whose reputation as an archaeologist, though great throughout the country, is exceeded by his popularity as the author of the most successful measure of private legislation in modern times—the Bank Holiday Act.

HERBERT SPENCER'S PSYCHOLOGY

The Principles of Psychology. By Herbert Spencer. Second Edition. (London: Williams and Norgate.)

I.

TO give readers some idea of the contents of a good book is very often the most useful thing a reviewer can do. Unfortunately that course is not open to us in the present instance. The subject is too vast. We cannot exhibit the grandeur; we can only in a few general phrases express our admiration of the profound, all-embracing philosophy of which the work before us is an instalment. The doctrine of evolution when taken up by Mr. Spencer was little more than a crotchet. He has made it the idea of the age. In its presence other systems of philosophy are hushed, they cease their strife and become its servants, while all the sciences do it homage. The place that the doctrine of evolution has secured in the minds of those who think for the educated public may be indicated by a few names taken just as they occur. Mr. Darwin's works, the novels of George Eliot, Mr. Tylor's "Primitive Culture," Dr. Bastian's "Beginnings of Life," and Mr. Bagehot's "Physics and Politics," have almost nothing in common but the idea of evolution, with which they are all more or less imbued. In a word we have but one other thinker with whom in point of influence on the higher thought of this, and probably of several succeeding generations, Mr. Spencer can be classed:—it does not need saying that that other is Mr. J. S. Mill.

As we cannot present such an outline of Mr. Spencer's system of psychology as would make it generally intelligible, the purpose of directing attention to the work will perhaps be best served by selecting as the subject of remark one or two points to which the presence of the controversial element may lend a special interest. After

pointing out that the cardinal fact brought to light when nervous action is looked at entirely from the objective point of view, is, that the amount and heterogeneity of motion exhibited by the various living creatures, are greater or less in proportion to the development of the nervous system, Mr. Spencer comes to the vexed question of the relation between nervous phenomena and phenomena of consciousness. This is a subject about which in its more subtle aspects there is much uncertainty and some confusion of thought. It may be taken as established that every mode of consciousness is a concomitant of some nervous change. Given certain physical conditions accompanied by a special state of consciousness, and there is every reason to believe that physical conditions in every respect identical, will always be attended by a similar state of consciousness. This, and not more than this, we think, was intended by Mr. Spencer in his chapter on *Æstho-physiology*. Nevertheless, several able men have, it would appear, been led to suppose that he countenances a kind of materialism (not using the word to imply anything objectionable, for why not be materialists, if materialism be truth?), which forms no part of his philosophy. To give precision and emphasis to what we say, we would take the liberty to refer to the position taken up by Dr. Bastian in his remarkably able and important work on the "Beginnings of Life." The expression that definitely raises the issue of which we wish to speak, and which at the same time fixes Dr. Bastian to a view not in harmony with the teaching of Mr. Spencer, is the following:—"We have not yet been able to show that there is evolved, during brain action, an amount of heat, or other mode of physical energy, less than there would have been had not the Sensations been felt and the Thoughts thought;" but he believes that this is the case. Our present object is not so much to show that here speculation has got on a wrong track, as that, if we understand Mr. Spencer, it is not his opinion that anything of this kind takes place; though certainly some ambiguous phrases might be held to convey this meaning. We have mentioned the significant fact that the size of the nervous system holds a pretty constant relation to the amount and heterogeneity of motion generated. The implication is that none of the motion evolved during nervous action disappears from the object world, passes into consciousness in the same sense that physicists speak of momentum passing into heat; that whether consciousness arise or not, there will be for the molecular motion set up in the nerve substance, exactly the same mechanical equivalents. Whether, for example, those ganglia that in the body of each one of us are employed in carrying on what we call reflex action, are so many distinct seats of consciousness, like so many separate animals, an idea for which much has been said, or whether the nerve-changes that go on in these ganglia have no subjective side; in either case the objective facts will remain the same. If consciousness is evolved, it is not at the expense of a single oscillation of a molecule disappearing from the object world. No doubt it is hard to conceive consciousness arising in this apparently self-created way; but if any suppose that by using phrases that would assimilate mind to motion they ease the difficulty, they but delude themselves. It is as easy to think of consciousness arising out of nothing, if they will, as to