

afraid in this desultory manner I have occupied more of your time than I have been justified in doing. I have had the greatest possible pleasure in taking the chair, and I beg to express my full appreciation of the Society and its objects.

The noble Chairman then called upon the REV. CHARLES BOUTELL, M.A., to deliver his lecture on

MEDLÆVAL COSTUME AS ILLUSTRATED BY MONUMENTAL BRASSES.

THE speaker commenced by a reference to the subject of monumental remains in general, and brasses in particular. The metal of which they were composed was not, however, strictly brass, but a kind of bronze, and much harder. They first appeared in this country about the year 1200. The devices upon them were always engraved, and sometimes colour was employed, and so nearly approaching to enamel that it might with propriety be so called. The hardness of the metal, and the fact of the designs being engraved, made them very durable. The value of the designs of course depended on the ability of the artist who originally conceived them, and on the manipulative skill of the workman who carried out the design. For the most part they were good as works of art, more especially before the year 1430, the art of outline drawing being then thoroughly understood and appreciated. The designs were also invariably faithful in regard to costume and other accessories, not of the individual commemorated, but of the period when the work was executed. On knowing, therefore, the date of a brass, the most absolute reliance might be placed on its representations of costume, armour, &c. After the date named, monumental art in this country began to decline.

The study of these brasses had been of great advantage to art. Our historians and artists had made great mistakes in consequence of their ignorance of mediæval armour and costume; even Sir Walter Scott, in "Ivanhoe" had made very serious mistakes in consequence of this ignorance. It was not true, for example, that there was any authority for speaking of plumed helmets and other matters, which made a very pretty picture, but which were unfortunately not correct. The designs on the brasses for the most part represented not extravagant and eccentric, but the most ordinary fashions of their respective times, and hence their especial value as indicating costume with exactitude. The peculiar richness of this country in military brasses was adverted to, and the lecturer regretted that a national collection of them had never been formed at the public expense.

He proceeded to illustrate his remarks by reference to the

rubblings shown, pointing out how striking changes in armour in short intervals, even of ten years, were unfailingly indicated. In remarking upon the ecclesiastical brasses, of which rubbings were exhibited, the lecturer pointed out the desirableness of studying the artistic character of brasses, the workmanship of which was often as strongly marked and as easily recognisable as the works of well known engravers. The brasses representing ladies were somewhat remarkable as indicating that some portions of female dress of the present day had been taken from them. This was particularly true of the head-dress, consisting of nets precisely such as were now worn, and of the whole race of jackets.

In conclusion, he observed, that no portion of archæology could be more easily studied than brasses, from the abundance in which they were found, and the ease with which rubbings might be obtained.

At the conclusion of Mr. Boutell's lecture, coffee and refreshments were served. Music was furnished by the Militia Band, under Herr Ptacek.

MR. ORDISH read, in the course of the evening, a Paper

ON THE PURPOSES OF ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETIES.

After a few opening observations Mr. Ordish said:

THE Architectural and Archæological Societies of the kingdom, of which that of Leicester is an integral part, are but of recent date, generally established about twenty years back, chiefly by the clergy of our churches and colleges, with other literati, for the resuscitation of the knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture, which had for the preceding two centuries fallen into dissuetude, but more especially thereby to re-enforce the diffusion of knowledge, and impulse given to church and school enlargement, and general education. They were also intended to investigate and give a reasonable solution for those ritual forms and ceremonies which preexisted amongst us, so as to perpetuate and enjoy in a higher degree those Institutions, those privileges which our forefathers, under the Henrys, the Edwards, Mary and Elizabeth handed down through so many disasters. They aspire to link the beautiful with the spiritual; to impart into Christian worship a profound sympathy with the grace of nature, redeeming superstition.

In the realization of these its primary labours, a wider field developes itself, encircling ramifications of every day life; entering into the pastimes, occupations, and mental pleasures of the people during ancient days, and to those now so amply diffused

amongst ourselves, and by comparison contributing to their enjoyment; it is for this reason our Society appears before you this evening; and desires to enlist your co-operation; and, if in creating, we live, and as the "good men do is often buried with their bones," the study of architecture preeminently recommends itself, for what creative power defies time so long?

But the study of architecture and archæology is not merely interesting to those who love it as an art, but it is an evidence to which the historian can turn for the character of all ages. If you desire to study its especial history, British history, you may appeal with confidence for information to its bastions and bulwarks of the sea; to its walls, churches, and colleges which cover it; or to those incomprehensible archæological researches amid prairie lands and cities buried in the West; revealing those perceptions of the spirit and feelings of the hearts and minds of those who raised them; for generally speaking we cannot arrive at any better knowledge of people separated from us by so long an interval of ages, than by an examination of their buildings, tombs, &c., &c.

Their temples (we cannot learn from books alone) speak to us of their faith and forms and objects of worship—their palaces and courts, of their civil institutions and domestic life—their triumphal arches, of their love of country, and sometimes unrestrained ambition—their coloseums and amphitheatres of their sports and pastimes; in all of which you may find something, too, worthy of imitation. Moreover, its study will incite to travel and health and rest from strife, the lessening of pride, and will give mathematical information on citadels for defence (though mud and man's resolution have much simplified the science here); inform you how to throw bridges over torrents and mountain defiles; how to bring refreshing streams from distant mountains and lakes, for the health and welfare of the living, and how to raise worthy monuments to the dead, nationally so tardy in accomplishment.

The study of architecture has always, amongst civilized nations, been deemed one of the noblest occupations of the people, and may in its utilitarian sense apply to the adjusting and putting together pieces of an edifice having many ramifications, and has for its accomplishments—first, utility; second, light, or the adorning and illuminating all edifices for whatsoever use, and contributes to health and pleasure, and requires no specious or metaphysical reasoning to pervert.

The study of archæology, or the description of ancient things, is adopted as a science more with reference to the analysis and history of the constituents of architectural research, and encircles the human race and language, and is presumed to have had its origin in the natural cravings of the mind to comprehend and decipher the mysterious. It comprises the following tribu-