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WHATCOMBE,
BLANDFORD,
—AND TELEGRAPH—

July 19 1881

My dear General Pitt Rivers

Your letter has made me very sad - It is hard to have any one so closely related to take so conspicuous a political part on your own property. It is the more painful very much to blame. The Radical line of conduct seems to be the upsetting of every law and prescription. They will be only too glad to get your name to the point or as engine to promote their various projects. Would to God it could be otherwise for my own peace of mind. Every day answer me of the dreadful

troubles that are coming upon
us. A few years ago England
stood high among the Nations
but she has now descended
into the lowest depths & until
a new dispensation of an
Empire of peace such as
has announced to the
Shepherds on the plains of
Bottleham is heard we shall
be in turmoil and disaster.
Glad you have named the
peace of England & Education
that of Great Britain. his influence
although dead will be felt for
years to come. There is a
remarkable verse in the
Revelation ~~chapter 19~~ "Their
works do follow them - although
this referred to the good it is
as applicable to the wicked

We had a capital Guinean
meeting on Thursday. I sent
you a newspaper slip of what
I said as Chairman. I believe
Cunnington's collection will
soon be in the market
Thank you for your kind note
in noting down Knott's case
You work at home & at
Oxford is enough for any one
man so we must not
work you in any way beyond
giving us hints & advice
I have been already Jews
when acted upon (which they
will be) will be of great use
With our very kind remem-
brance to Mrs Pitt Rivers
Remain
Yours very truly
J. Marshall Heydell

The CHAIRMAN said, after hearing the report and the Curator's long list of donations to the Museum, perhaps it would be necessary for him to supplement them with a few words. First he must congratulate the members on the favourable state of the balance sheet. It must not, however, be supposed that they did not require that surplus, but merely allow it to accumulate; on the contrary, to make the Museum in any way complete they would have to expend twenty times as much. They had objects now under their roof which would require half as much room as is now at their disposal. They must bear in mind a museum was not only an instrument for amusement, but also for instruction. It must be typical as well as special. This could not be urged too strongly upon the subscribers. He agreed with General Pitt-Rivers that the Museum ought to be *par excellence* a depository of objects from Dorsetshire, but as it has only a limited area it is unable to furnish an unbroken series of the great families representing the animal and vegetable kingdoms. A separate section for non-Dorset objects, which would be world-wide, would give the student opportunities of recognising many missing links and analogies between extinct and recent forms. For instance, in the case of the land, fresh-water, and marine shells of the county, of which he believed they had materials for as perfect a collection as could be made from Mr. Wood's and his own collection, which he dredged from the deep sea or collected from the nearer shore-zone, supplemented by Mr. Damon's inexhaustible store. These, in connection with the foreign collection generously presented to the Museum by Colonel Hambro, would be a valuable study for the conchologist, who, by extending his enquiries into geological times, will find families which lived in the ancient seas æons of years ago represented at the present day, living now within the area of our own seaboard. The Challenger expedition brought up from the deep seas forms of marine life which were supposed to have been extinct. The Pholadomy, which flourished in the oolitic and cretaceous seas, and found in none of the succeeding beds, lives abundantly in the Australian seas. The shell is white and extremely fragile. During the long period of neglect and indifference to the objects exhibited at the old Museum, before Mr. Williams' munificence had placed us in our present satisfactory position, not only had no additions been made, but many county relics and valuable objects have been irretrievably lost through having no place to deposit them either by way of gift or loan. The late Mr. Thompson offered his splendid collection of birds, collected by himself and the Rev. O. Pickard Cambridge, to the County Museum, which was reluctantly refused for want of room. At Mr. Thompson's death the collection was sold and distributed. Had it been otherwise the Museum would have had a specimen of almost every bird which had been met with in the county. The researches of General Pitt Rivers, which have been so successfully carried out in the neighbourhood of Rushmore, and are so graphically described in the volume which he has presented to the Museum, are indicative of the treasures which lay hidden under the soil of the county. Mr. Warne's and Mr. Cunnington's collections tell the same story. There are one or two collections in this county of the highest interest and value to Dorset men, which will find many an outsider desirous of obtaining whenever an opportunity occurs. These ought never to be lost sight of, but well watched, so that at the first indication of changing hands every effort should be made to secure them for the county. It is possible when the number of members increases, of which there is every reason to hope, it will be possible to forego the rent they now receive from the School of Art, in which case they would have room for large additions which are continually coming in. Dorsetshire holds a prominent geological position through its great Liassic and Kimmeridgean reptiles, its Purbeckian mammalia and Eocene plant-beds. It is only within the last few weeks the Rev. O. P. Fisher and himself had recovered in England portions of at least two elephants (*E meridionalis*) which have only been found in the submerged forest-beds on the Norfolk coast. ~~Both of them~~ are waiting for warmer weather to ascertain the geological age of the bed in which the remains were found. It is possible like the Mammoth it survived both the glacial periods. A paper on an interesting discovery that this southern elephant once roamed among the ancient forests of Dorsetshire will be read shortly before the Geological Society. The County Field Club may be regarded as affiliated to the Museum. It is now organising a plan for tabulating the ancient monuments of the county, the meteorology, including not only records of the weather, temperature, &c., but the flowering and seeding of plants, the arrival and departure of birds of passage, and the alteration of the coast line by atmospheric and other agencies.

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