



Museums and Raree Shows in Antiquity

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MUSEUMS AND RAREE SHOWS IN ANTIQUITY.

Most people believe that museums and collections of antiquities are quite a modern invention, and that they were instituted to meet the needs of a growing spirit of enquiry and a more intelligent interest in the habits and customs, the arts and pastimes of our ancestors. But that is quite a mistake, for the ancients were just as interested in rarities as we are, just as eager to see or hear any new thing, although they were, perhaps, somewhat more credulous and gazed upon the marvels shown them with a faith as uncritical as that with which the most devout mediaeval pilgrim contemplated the relics offered to his view. Yet even in those days there were a few more enlightened souls who from time to time had the hardihood to utter some sceptical comment or even to try to analyse the phenomena and to give some rational explanation.

Longinus, we are informed, was a living library and a perambulating museum, words evidently intended to convey an almost reverent admiration, but to our ears rather doubtful praise.¹ The word *Museion* or *Museum* was originally applied to the place where a philosophical school assembled, and in it they not only cultivated those studies over which the Muses presided, but the building also served as an art gallery where images of the Muses themselves or statues dedicated to them were set up. The most celebrated *Museion* was the one at Alexandria founded by the Ptolemies, which contained, besides the Library, a promenade, an *exedra* and a large hall where the philosophers

¹ Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, 445.

took their meals in common. From the accounts of the studies carried on there, one gathers that the various adjacent halls contained rooms of anatomy, astronomical instruments, etc. Other texts lead one to believe that the Museion was completed by a botanical garden for exotic plants, and parks where animals of the rarest species were collected from all parts of the then-known world.

In the classical period the museums *par excellence* were the temples and their precincts. Here many objects were collected, which by degrees accumulated a hoary crust of tradition, never allowed to lack picturesqueness by the custodians who discoursed to an admiring crowd of sight-seers about the treasures which enriched the sanctuary.

The official catalogue of one such sanctuary has been preserved, and from it we gain a good idea of the marvels exhibited. This catalogue is what is known as the Chronicle of the Lindian Temple of Athena at Rhodes,¹ a temple said to have been founded by Daneos or his daughters, and certainly of great antiquity. The early temple and almost all its contents were destroyed by fire about B.C. 350, for with the year B.C. 330 begins the list of offerings which were still extant in the later temple in B.C. 99, when the catalogue was compiled and inscribed on a marble *stèle* erected in the precinct. Each of the forty-two items is in a separate section or chapter, and at the close of each the compiler cites the sources from which he drew the information.

The first offerings are all of the mythic period; Lindos, the eponymous hero, dedicated a bowl, and so did the Telchines, a Rhodian tribe, "and no one could tell of what they were made," an observation intended to indicate the extreme age of the objects. Kadmos dedicated a bronze *lebes* and Minos a silver drinking vessel, whilst Herakles offered two shields and Rhesos a golden cup. The cup was probably stated to be of gold, because that was considered

¹ Chr. Blinkenberg, "Die Lindische Tempelchronik," in *Kleine Texte für Vorlesungen und Uebungen*, No. 131 (Bonn, 1915).

the only proper material for one who was lord of the rich Thracians and whose golden horse-trappings and splendid steeds aroused the cupidity of Diomedes, who laid an ambush for him and slew him, in spite of his prayers, to gain possession of them.

The heroes who returned from the Trojan War were lavish in offerings, for Menelaos dedicated the dog-skin cap and dagger of Alexander; Helen presented a pair of armlets; Kanopos, the steersman of Menelaos, a rudder; and both Meriones and Teucer offered quivers, and the latter the bow of Pandareos as well.

With the beginning of historical times comes an interesting list of very varied objects. In some cases a famous old vessel set upon a new stand was offered, for the inscription on the lip refers to earlier events, whilst that on the stand commemorates the dedicator. The Lindians who went with Battos to colonise Cyrene sent a group of Pallas and a lion being throttled by Herakles made of lotus wood. Another dedication was a wooden cow and calf on which was inscribed: "Anphinomos and his sons from Sybaris of broad dancing places, the ship having been saved, dedicate this tithe." Anphinomos is otherwise unknown to fame, but the dedication bears all the marks of truth, for the landing at Rhodes was and is often very dangerous: the gift must in any case be placed before the destruction of Sybaris in B.C. 510.

Deinomenes, the father of Gelon, Hieron, Thrasybulos and Polyzalos, being a Lindian, founded Gela with Antiphemos and dedicated a Gorgon of cypress wood with a stone face, on which was written: "Deinomenes, the son of Molossos, dedicated to Lindian Athena a tithe of the things from Sicily." Here there is an evident confusion between an earlier Deinomenes who accompanied the founder Antiphemos, and the later one who was father of the three brothers who in turn became tyrants of Syracuse.

The Akragantines dedicated a Palladion, the extremities

of which (that is, the face, hands and feet) were of ivory, on which was inscribed "The Akragantines to Lindian Athena, spoil from Minoa." To judge by the formula used the offering must have been made shortly after the overthrow of the tyrant Phalaris in B.C. 550, since it is the Akragantines who are named and not the tyrant who had already dedicated in his own name a splendid ancient *Krater* inscribed: "Daidalos gave me as a gift to Cocalos"; and on the base was written: "Phalaris of Akragas to Lindian Athena." Yet the offering of the Akragantines must be placed before the siege of Minoa shortly before B.C. 500, because after that date the official name of the town was Herakleia. The rest of the image was most likely of wood, a simpler technique than the later chryselephantine statues. These primitive wooden groups must have been extremely interesting, and would have added enormously to our knowledge of the development of sculpture had they been preserved.

Amasis, King of the Egyptians, dedicated a linen corselet, each thread of which had 360 strands, two golden images and ten bowls. The compiler adds that there were two inscriptions on the images, on one: "Amasis, the far-famed King of Egypt, was the bestower"; on the other was an inscription "in what the Egyptians call sacred writing,"—that is, in hieroglyphics. Amasis reigned from B.C. 570-526, and probably the offering was made shortly after his accession, because it was all part of his policy of conciliation towards Cyrene and the Greek states. The corselet is mentioned twice by Herodotos, by Aelian and by Pliny,¹ the last named citing a traveller in the Orient, Gaius Licinius Mucianus, who about A.D. 60 visited Lindos and states that there he touched the corselet of Amasis, which was by that time reduced under the hands of inquisitive generations to the merest rags. These rags were most likely genuine, a

¹ Herodotos, ii. 183; iii. 47; Aelian, *περὶ ζῴων*, ix. 17; Pliny, *N.H.*, xix. 12.

few shreds saved from the burning of the temple. Herodotus states that Amasis bestowed a gilded Athena upon Cyrene, but the images sent to Lindos were of stone. The Rhodian local chronicler, however, was envious of this gilded statue and could not bear that Lindos should take second place after the Libyan colony, so he changed the stone images to gold !

Among the gifts preserved in the later temple were skulls of oxen as records of the sacrifices made by Alexander the Great after he had conquered Dareios and made himself Lord of Asia, by King Ptolemy I. and by Pyrrhos, King of Epeiros, this last offering inscribed "in accordance with the oracle of Dodona, and the weapons he used on his perilous exploits." Two other kings, Hieron and Philip, evidently the third of that name, dedicated weapons.

From these extracts it will be seen how much this Lindian Chronicle can teach us of the art, and especially of the history of the early period. As the offerings had perished we cannot vouch for the genuineness of *all* the objects mentioned, but the majority at least bear the stamp of truth, and if the description is not absolutely accurate, they were at any rate the kind of gifts and the dedicatory formulae in use at the period.

The objects collected in these ancient museums were as varied and curious as the relics in many ancient churches to-day, but we cannot here discuss those which were mentioned merely on hearsay, introduced by the ancient writer with some such phrase as—"they say"—"they relate"—"it is reported." Neither can we stop to consider the immense list of marvels to which early writers allude in perfect good faith but of which they had no personal knowledge. Pfister in his important book, *Reliquienkult im Altertum*, not a very large work, but packed with interesting and suggestive matter, has collected a vast number of references to such objects, some mentioned in detail, others alluded to by a tantalisingly vague remark.

How romantic is the tale of the bronze necklace with the inscription : " Diomed to Artemis " ; he hung it round the neck of a stag, to which it adhered, so that later the creature was found by Agathokles, King of the Sicilians, who dedicated the necklace in the Temple of Artemis in Apulia.¹ The necklace of Helen at Delphi,² her sandals at Athena's temple, Japygia,³ or the shoe of Perseus in Egypt,⁴ all awaken a thrill. But perhaps the most intriguing of all is the celebrated necklace made by Hephaistos and given as a bridal gift to Harmonia when she wedded Kadmos, but later bestowed as a bribe upon Eriphyle as the price of her treacherous persuasion of her husband Amphiaraios to go to Thebes, although he, with his miraculous gift of foreknowledge, knew that he would never return thence alive. Amathus in Cyprus claimed possession of this necklace, but another story told how it was dedicated in Delphi and carried off thence by the Phocian tyrants.⁵ Pausanias himself becomes quite stirred up about the matter, and gives his reasons for believing that the necklace at Amathus was not the genuine one. He says : " There is a city Amathus in Cyprus, in which there is an ancient sanctuary of Adonis and Aphrodite. They say that in it is preserved the necklace which was originally given to Harmonia, but was called the necklace of Eriphyle, because she accepted it as a bribe to betray her husband. The necklace was dedicated at Delphi by the sons of Phegeus : how they acquired it I have already shown in my account of Arcadia. But it was carried off by the Phocian tyrants. Nevertheless I do not think that it is in the sanctuary at Amathus. For the necklace at Amathus is of green stones fastened together with gold ; but Homer in the *Odyssey* [xi. 327] says that the necklace which was given to Eriphyle was made of

¹ Aristotle, *De mir. auscult.*, 110.

² Diodorus, xvi. 64 ; Ephorus in *Athen.*, vi. 232 d.

³ Lycophron, 850 ff. ; Tzetz., *idem.* ⁴ Herodotos, ii. 91.

⁵ Apollodoros, iii. 7. 7 ; Pausanias, vii. 24. 10 ; ix. 41. 2 f.

gold. The passage runs thus : " Who took precious gold as the price of her dear lord." Not that Homer was ignorant of necklaces composed of various materials. Thus in the speech of Eumaeus to Odysseus before Telemachus has returned to the court from Pylus, he says [*Odyssey*, xv. 459 *seq.*]: " There came a cunning man to the house of my father / With a golden necklace, and it was strung at intervals with amber beads." Again, among the gifts which Penelope received from the wooers, he has represented Eurymachus giving her one [*Odyssey*, xviii. 295 *seq.*]: " And straightway Eurymachus brought a necklace, cunningly wrought / Golden, strung with amber beads like the sun." But he does not say that " Eriphyle received a necklace curiously wrought of gold and stones." This is a good, but not entirely convincing argument. Still, *green* stones certainly do sound suspicious, although Mr. Randall M'Iver has pointed out to me that necklaces of green glass beads and also of a rare green stone were known in Egypt at an early period, and examples may be seen in Professor Flinders Petrie's collection at University College, London. Possibly the trophy at Amathus was one of these chaplets, brought from Egypt by travellers or traders.

Another dedication which calls up many memories is the weapons of Herakles, bequeathed by him to Philoktetes.¹ You all know the story of how these weapons were left as his sole means of support to the unhappy man when his companions, sickened by the nauseating odour of his poisonous wound, abandoned him on the island of Lemnos. Later, when they realised that only with his assistance could they ever hope to capture Troy, they sent Odysseus and Neoptolemos on an embassy to persuade him to come. At first, in the bitterness of his spirit, he refused until Odysseus, with his usual guile, induced Neoptolemos to gain possession of the bow. Deprived of this last standby,

¹ Aristotle, *De mir. auscult.*, 107, tr. Dowdall (Oxford, 1909); Justin, xx. 1; Euphron in Tzet., Lycophron, 911.

the wretched Philoktetes yielded, allowed himself to be conveyed to Troy, and there, with an arrow from this renowned bow, he wounded Paris mortally and hastened the downfall of the mighty city. Even a Greek of a late period must have gazed with awe upon these antique weapons which had played such a prominent part in the soul-stirring events of that distant day.

A contemporary weapon was the sword of Memnon, concerning which Pausanias remarks :¹ " That weapons in the heroic age were all of bronze is shown by Homer's lines about the axe of Pisander and the arrow of Meriones : and I am confirmed in this view by the spear of Achilles which is dedicated in the temple of Athena at Phaselis, and by the sword of Memnon in the sanctuary of Asklepios at Nicomedia : for the blade and the spike at the butt end of the spear and the whole of the sword are of bronze. This I know to be so."

Apart from these and many others not very well authenticated relics there are certain objects described by ancient writers from personal observation. Among these were the ships once belonging to two heroes. One was that of Theseus in Athens.² You all remember how Theseus sailed back to Athens after slaying the Minotaur. But in his excitement he forgot to hoist white sails in token of victory, and his old father, at sight of the black sails approaching, in his despair cast himself into the sea. This ship was preserved until the fourth century of our era, for the injured parts were restored, so that the philosophers might demonstrate to their pupils. The second ship was that of Aeneas, and was on show in Rome. Procopius states³ that the length was 120 feet and the breadth 25 feet. Ships seem to have formed a favourite offering, although it is probable that only the beaks were placed in the temples : those of

¹ Pausanias, viii. 3. 8.

² Plato, *Phaedron*, 518 A.B. ; Plutarch, *Thes.*, 23.

³ *Bell. Goth.*, iv. 22. p. 573 B.

Agamemnon, of Odysseus and of the Argonauts are all mentioned. The last named heroes appear to have scattered votive offerings broadcast, for they dedicated a bowl in Samothrace,¹ tripods at Berenice in the Cyrenaica,² an anchor stone at Cyzicus,³ and a disc and two anchors at Colchis; one, of iron, did not seem to Arrian to be old: but he recognises the truth of the tradition concerning the other, which was of stone.⁴

An interesting relic was the sceptre of Agamemnon in Chaeroneia. The sceptre of heroic days was not a stumpy thing like the kingly sceptre of modern times, but a long staff upon which the ruler could lean. Pausanias is quite definite about this sceptre; he says: "Of all the works which poets have declared and obsequious public opinion has believed to be the work of Hephaistos, none is genuine save the sceptre of Agamemnon. Homer says that Hephaistos made it for Zeus, and Zeus gave it to Hermes, and Hermes to Pelops, and Pelops bequeathed it to Atreus, and Atreus to Thyestes, from whom Agamemnon had it. I am persuaded that it was brought to Phocis by Electra, Agamemnon's daughter. There is no public temple built for it, but the man who acts as priest keeps the sceptre in his house for a year; sacrifices are offered to it daily, and a table is set beside it covered with all sorts of flesh and cakes."⁵

At Sparta he saw another remarkable object, for he tells us: "An egg is here hung by ribbons from the roof: they say it is the famous egg which Leda is reported to have given birth to."⁶ This was probably a votive ostrich egg like those found in the tomb at Vulci, which many of you have most likely seen in the British Museum.

¹ Diodorus, iv. 49.

² Diodorus, iv. 56.

³ Apollonius Rhodius, i. 955 ff.; Pliny, *N.H.*, xxxvi. 9.

⁴ Timonax in *Schol. Ap. Rhod.* iv. 1217; Arrian, *Persplus*, 9.

⁵ Pausanias, ix. 40. 11; 41. 1.

⁶ Pausanias, iii. 16. 1.

Further on he relates : " Aristomenes took his shield to Lebadeia and dedicated it there, where I saw it suspended myself ; the blazon on it was an eagle, whose outstretched wings touch the rim of the shield on either side." ¹ Countless vase paintings of the period depict warriors armed with just such shields, for these blazons served as coats-of-arms or insignia by which famous warriors were recognised from afar, as we learn from the celebrated description in Aeschylus' play of the *Seven against Thebes*, where the messenger recites the blazons of the seven champions. It is quite likely that the shield was really the one dedicated by Aristomenes, because he was a real historical character, leader of the Messenians in the second war with the Lacedaemonians about B.C. 630-600. Aristomenes was so well-beloved a hero of the oppressed and exiled Messenians that his shield was regarded with great veneration. This is illustrated by a story which, says Pausanias, " I myself heard at Thebes." ² The Thebans say that just before the battle of Leuctra (B.C. 371) they sent envoys to enquire of various oracles, and in particular of the oracle of the god (Trophonios) at Lebadeia. Trophonios, they say, replied in hexameter verse : ' Before you engage with the foeman, set up a trophy / And adorn it with my shield which was deposited in the temple / By bold Aristomenes the Messenian. Verily I / Will destroy the host of the shielded foe.' When this oracle was reported they say that Xenocrates, at the request of Epaminondas, sent for the shield of Aristomenes, and with it decorated a trophy in a place where it would be seen by the Lacedaemonians. Some of them, we may presume, knew the shield by having seen it at their leisure at Lebadeia, but all knew it by hearsay. When the Thebans had gained the victory, they restored the shield to Trophonios, in whose shrine it had been dedicated." An inscription has been found at Thebes which seems to refer to the incident here related, and the tale shows that

¹ Pausanias, iv. 16. 7 ; ix. 39. 14.

² Pausanias, iv. 32. 5. 6.

the shield in those days was certainly regarded as genuine, and could still inspire dread in the hereditary foes of its whilom owner.

A curiosity to be seen in Rome were the tusks of the Calydonian boar which the Emperor Augustus carried off from the Temple of Athena at Tegea. Pausanias tells us :¹ "As to the boar's tusks the keepers of the curiosities say that one of them is broken, but the remaining one is preserved in the imperial gardens, and is just half a fathom long." He adds that the boar's hide was still exhibited in the temple at Tegea : "It is rotting away with age, and is now quite bare of bristles." He is much more scornful about the tusks of the Erymanthine boar preserved at Cumae, stating flatly : "The assertion is without a shred of probability."²

In Rome, too, was the skeleton of the sea monster who wished to devour Andromeda : it had been brought from Joppa,³ where the chain which bound the maiden was still preserved.⁴

The imperial gardens at Rome contained other attractions than the tusks of the Calydonian boar, for they seem to have included a kind of zoological garden where were many rare and curious beasts. Pausanias relates : "I saw white deer at Rome, and very much surprised was I to see them.⁵ I saw, too, the Ethiopic bulls which they call rhinoceroses, because they have each a horn (*keras*) on the tip of the nose (*rhis*), and another smaller horn above the first, but on their heads they have no horns at all. I saw also Paeonian bulls : they are shaggy all over. And I saw Indian camels in colour like leopards."⁶ From the name Ethiopian bulls which Pausanias applies to the animal, it

¹ Pausanias, viii. 46. 1 and 5; Callim., *Hym. in Dian.*, 218 ff.; cf. Procopius, *Bell. Goth.*, i. 15. p. 77 B; Lucian, *De indoct.*, 14.

² Pausanias, viii. 24. 5.

³ Pliny, *N.H.*, ix. 11.

⁴ Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iii. 420.

⁵ Pausanias, viii. 17. 4.

⁶ Pausanias, ix. 21. 2.

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appears that he is describing the African rhinoceros which, as he says, has two horns on its snout.

Another writer saw seals fighting with bears, a passage which Professor Jennison, of the Manchester Zoological Gardens, explains as follows: "Has it ever been suggested that these were probably Polar bears (*ursus maritimus*)? Bears, always plentiful in the spectacles, are not referred to elsewhere in connexion with seals or water, though water exhibits usually got special mention, for example the crocodiles and hippopotami of Scaurus and Augustus. No bear except a Polar bear would enter water after his prey. The best way to exhibit such a treasure in Rome was to provide a tank, stock it with seals which were cheap and plentiful, and turn in the bears—thus providing a fine display of natation and the certainty of a good noisy fight."¹

But to return to the imperial gardens where the great trophy was not the collection of animals, but the Triton. Listen to Pausanias; first he describes the Triton at Tanagra:² "Yet more wonderful (than the image of Dionysos) is the Triton. The more pretentious of the stories about the Triton is that before the orgies of Dionysos the women of Tanagra went down to the sea to be purified, and that as they swam the Triton attacked them, and that the women prayed to Dionysos to come to help them, and that the god hearkened to them, and conquered the Triton in the fight. The other story is less dignified but more probable. It is that the Triton used to waylay and carry off all the cattle which were driven to the sea, and that he even attacked small craft, till the Tanagraeans set out a bowl of wine for him. They say that, lured by the smell, he came at once, quaffed the wine and flung himself on the shore and slept, and a man of Tanagra

¹ Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecl.*, vii. 65-6; G. Jennison, *Classical Review* xxxvi. p. 7.

² Pausanias, ix. 20. 45; 21. 1.

chopped off his head with an axe. Therefore the image is headless.

“ I saw another Triton among the marvels of Rome, but it was not so big as the one at Tanagra. The appearance of the Tritons is this. On their heads they have hair which resembles the hair of marsh frogs both in hue and in this, that you cannot separate one hair from another. The rest of their body bristles with fine scales like those of a shark. They have gills under their ears and a human nose, but their mouth is wider and their teeth are those of a beast. Their eyes, I think, are blue, and they have hands, fingers and nails like the shells of mussels. Under their breast and belly, instead of feet, they have a tail like a dolphin's.”

Sir James Frazer comments on these passages: “ It seems it was not an image, but a real Triton or what was exhibited as such. For in the next chapter Pausanias says that he saw another Triton at Rome, describes the appearance of the supposed creature, and then gives a list of other strange animals. That the Triton at Tanagra was professedly a real animal embalmed or stuffed, appears from a statement of Demostratus, reported by Aelian,¹ that he had seen at Tanagra an embalmed or pickled Triton; the creature resembles the pictures and images of Tritons, except that the head was decayed with time and no longer distinct or recognisable; and when he touched it, some hard rough scales fell off. A Roman senator, in the presence of Demostratus, took a piece of the beast's skin and burned it, as an experiment, it emitted a fetid odour; but the spectators could not decide from the smell whether the creature was a sea or land animal. From Demostratus' description and Pausanias' story it would seem that the Triton of Tanagra was headless. What was shown as a Triton may have been either a real sea beast of some sort or an effigy made up by the priests. Had it been merely an effigy, it would probably have been complete, since it is just as easy to make a false

¹ *περι ζώων*, xiii. 21.

head as a false tail. The fact that the creature was headless seems to show that it was a real marine animal, which the priests palmed off upon the credulous as a Triton. As the popular idea of a Triton was a fish with a man's head, it became necessary, before exhibiting a real fish as a Triton, to cut off its head or at least to mangle it past all recognition, and then to invent some story to account for the mutilation. It is not surprising, however, that on the coins of the city the creature should appear with its head complete. The people of Tanagra were doubtless proud of their Triton, which probably drew sightseers from afar; and in putting him on their coins as a badge of their city they naturally represented him, not in the mauled and mangled condition which all the exigencies of natural history rendered necessary, but in all his glory with a human head and a fish's tail."

Augustus was in many ways intensely modern: he collected antiquities and took a deep interest in the history and relics of the great episodes of the past. An incident which illustrates this is narrated by Livy, who writes:¹ "This fact I learnt from Augustus Caesar, the second founder of every shrine in Rome, for this I heard him say that when he entered the shrine of Jupiter Feretrius, which he restored from an almost ruinous state, he read with his own eyes the inscription on the linen corselet." The corselet was that dedicated by Aulus Cornelius Cossus, who defeated an Etruscan chief in the fifth century B.C. and won the *spolia opima* by defeating the enemy's leader in single combat. Professor Conway comments on the story: "What interests Livy is the picture of the young triumphant emperor Augustus, in the course of his devout restoration of the shrines of Rome, stopping to read the archaic letters written on a linen breastplate torn from a dying Etruscan chief by his vanquisher, the consul Cossus, 400 years before."²

¹ Livy, iv. 20. 5.

² *New Studies of a Great Inheritance*, pp. 197-9.

Augustus was modern, too, in his interest in prehistoric remains, for we are told: "He adorned woods and shrubberies with things noteworthy for their age and rarity, like those on the Island of Capri, immense limbs of wild beasts which are called bones of giants, and the arms of heroes." ¹ Tiberius regarded such things from a more coldly scientific point of view; for in Pontus a great jaw was found, and one of the teeth from it was sent to the Emperor with an enquiry if he would like the whole jaw of the hero. Tiberius made an artist reconstruct the entire head and body from the size of the tooth, but sent the tooth itself back to Pontus. ²

Colossal bones were found in many places; at Rhodes bones far larger than those of the present day were discovered, ³ and whole skeletons in the so-called grottoes of Artemis in Dalmatia. ⁴ In Crete human bodies thirty cubits in height were revealed by a river in flood, ⁵ and still others measuring forty-six cubits. ⁶ Giants' dwellings were unearthed in Syria. ⁷ Yet the ancients believed strongly in the personal touch. A colossal bone was only a bone, however gigantic it might be. But if it were identified as the superhuman remains of some hero or giant, then it took on quite a different aspect, and became an object worthy of reverent conservation. At Megalopolis in Arcadia were limbs of extraordinary size, said to be those of the Giant Hopoladamus. ⁸ Sir James Frazer notes that to this day in Arcadia many mammoth bones are found, some of which are in the museum at Dimitsana. Both Lydia and Thebes claimed the bones of Geryon. ⁹ At Phlegra in Thessaly there was a noise as of men fighting with giants, and the

¹ Suetonius, ii. 72. 3.

² Phlegon, *Mirab.*, 14. p. 137, ed. Westermann.

³ Phlegon, *Mirab.*, 16. ⁴ Phlegon, *Mirab.*, 12.

⁵ Solinus, i. 91.

⁶ Pliny, *N.H.*, vii. 73; Serv. Virg. *Aen.*, iii. 578.

⁷ Pausanias Damasc., *F.G.H.* iv. 469. ⁸ Pausanias, viii. 32. 5.

⁹ Pausanias, i. 35. 7; Lucan, *Adv. ind.*, 14.

floods sweeping over the fields disclosed human bodies of portentous size and the mighty stones they had hurled at one another.¹ Plutarch says that the bones of the Amazons were shown at Samos, but these were rightly explained by later writers as those of prehistoric animals.² Philostratus enumerates a series of places where such heroic remains were found.³

One interesting relic of the past age was a Phoenician script said to have been brought by Kadmos to Greece. Herodotos mentions that he himself saw such *Καδμήια γράμματα* in the sanctuary of Ismenian Apollo at Thebes on three tripods dedicated by Amphitryon and his companions.⁴ Another tripod was the one which Hesiod, as he tells us himself, won at Chalcis and dedicated to the Muses of Helicon.⁵ Pausanias says: "Of all the tripods which stood on Helicon, the most ancient is that which Hesiod is said to have received at Chalcis for a song of love."⁶ He adds: "They showed me also beside the spring a leaden tablet, very timeworn, on which are engraved the works (of Hesiod)." What would we not give now to possess this tablet, which would be of almost greater interest than any papyrus from the dust heaps of Egypt! The same Mucianus who touched the corselet of Amasis in Lindos related that when he was Governor of Lycia he read in a Lycian temple a letter written home from the front by Homer's Sarpedon.⁷

In the Heraion at Olympia was an inscription even more archaic than the lead tablet of Helicon. This was the quoit of Iphitos, who again established the festival of Zeus

¹ Solinus, ix. 6 f. p. 63 κ.

² Plutarch, *Quest. Gr.*, 56; Eugaion, *Apud Phot. s.v. ῥηίς*; Euphorion, *Apud Ael.*, *repl. ἕβων*, xvii. 28.

³ Philostratus, *Her.*, p. 289 κ.

⁴ Herodotos, v. 58-60; Pausanias, ix. 10. 4.

⁵ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 650-59.

⁶ Pausanias, ix. 31. 3. ⁷ Pliny, *N.H.*, xiii. 88.

at Olympia, and the instructions were engraved on the quoit. We are told: "On the quoit of Iphitos is inscribed the truce which the Eleans proclaimed at the Olympic festival. The inscription is not in a straight line, but the letters run round the quoit in a circle."¹ Sir James Frazer comments: "If the tradition is to be trusted the inscription on the quoit could not be later than B.C. 776. It would thus be the oldest Greek inscription of which we have any record."

I do not know if it is legitimate to quote Trimalchio, a gentleman upon whose words one cannot place much reliance; but, discoursing at the celebrated banquet he offered to his guests and speaking apparently of Cumae, he related one story which, if it had any element of truth, would be poignant in its pathos. "Yes," he says, "and I myself with my own eyes saw the Sibyl hanging in a cage; and when the boys cried to her, 'Sibyl, Sibyl, what do you want?' 'I would that I were dead,' she used to answer."²

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¹ Aristotle, in Plutarch, *Lycur.*, i.; Pausanias, v. 20. 1.

² Petronius Arbiter, *Satyricon*, 48, tr. Heseltine, ed. Loeb.