

PROCEEDINGS.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 28, 1886, AT THE HALL OF THE
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, BOSTON.

THE following members were present (the names being arranged in order of seniority of membership): Edward E. Hale, Andrew P. Peabody, Nathaniel Paine, Joseph Sargent, Stephen Salisbury, Samuel A. Green, Francis Parkman, George S. Paine, Edward L. Davis, James F. Hunnewell, John D. Washburn, Thomas W. Higginson, Albert H. Hoyt, Charles C. Smith, Hamilton B. Staples, Edmund M. Barton, Lucius R. Paige, John J. Bell, Joseph B. Walker, Samuel S. Green, Edward I. Thomas, Frederick W. Putnam, Solomon Lincoln, J. Evarts Greene, Henry S. Nourse, William B. Weeden, Reuben Colton, Robert N. Toppan, Henry H. Edes, Grindall Reynolds.

The second Vice-President, STEPHEN SALISBURY, A.M., was in the chair.

The Recording Secretary read the records of the last meeting which were approved.

The same officer communicated the recommendation of the Council that the gentlemen named below be elected to membership in the Society, each of whom was chosen by a separate ballot on his name:—

FREDERICK JOHN KINGSBURY, A.M., of Waterbury, Conn.

GEORGE EBENEZER FRANCIS, M.D., of Worcester, Mass.

SAMUEL S. GREEN, A.M., read a report which had been prepared by him and adopted by the Council as a part of their report to the Society.

NATHANIEL PAINE, Esq., Treasurer, and EDMUND M. BARTON, Esq., Librarian, read their semi-annual reports. These reports, as together constituting the report of the Council, were on motion of FRANCIS PARKMAN, LL.D., seconded by Rev. ANDREW P. PEABODY, D.D., accepted and referred to the Committee of Publication.

Rev. Dr. PEABODY and Rev. EDWARD E. HALE, D.D., made a few remarks suggested by certain portions of Mr. GREEN'S report.

Mr. FREDERICK W. PUTNAM exhibited a collection of celts, axes and ornaments made of various stones known under the general term of jade. Some of these were from the ancient pile-dwellings of the Swiss lakes; one large celt was from New Zealand; another, with a cutting edge at each end, from a mound in Michigan, and twelve other specimens were from Nicaragua and Costa Rica. The latter consisted of a large four-sided celt; a half of a celt of a peculiar light color for jadeite; while all the others, ten in number, were ornaments made by cutting celts into halves, quarters or thirds. A portion of the cutting edge of the celt remains on each of these pieces. Each piece is perforated by one or two drilled holes, and three are more or less elaborately carved. Two of the specimens fit together to make half a celt, which had been perforated in the centre of the upper end. When this half-celt was again cut a portion of the original perforation was left on each piece.

The questions proposed were: Where did these specimens come from? Why were such important implements as axes and chisels first made of this hard material and afterwards cut up for ornaments?

In answer, he stated that up to this time, jadeite, varying from almost a milk-white color with a slight shade of green to that of a beautiful emerald-green had not been found *in situ* in America. So far as known, all such varieties of jadeite had come from Asia. Had this material been

obtained from any locality within immediate reach of the ancient people of Central America (from whose burial mounds these specimens had been taken, principally by Dr. Earl Flint while exploring for the Peabody Museum), it would not have been considered so valuable; and these people would not have spent so much time and labor in cutting up these useful and highly polished implements if they could have obtained the stone in the rough. Such labor, it seemed to him, was evidence of the scarcity of the stone, and of the regard in which it was held, probably as a stone no longer to be obtained. Is it not, therefore, reasonable to believe that the stone was brought from Asia in the form of implements by the early migrants to this country, and that as the supply was not kept up, and most likely even its source became unknown, the pieces among the people were cut and re-cut and preserved as sacred relics of the past, to be, one after the other, finally buried with their owners?

Is it not one of the most important facts yet known tending to show that the original possessors of the implements brought them from Asia, and that at least one portion of America was settled by people from that continent?

On motion of the Rev. LUCIUS R. PAIGE, D.D., the thanks of the Society were voted to Mr. PUTNAM, and he was requested to furnish his remarks to the Committee of Publication.

In reply Mr. PUTNAM stated that he was still at work on the subject in all its bearings, and that it would be some time yet before he would be ready to publish all the evidence he had to offer, showing that these specimens indicate a migration from Asia. Much remained to be done in comparing the specimens from Central America with specimens of jadeite from known localities in Asia, and for this purpose microscopical sections and chemical analyses were yet to be made. In due time he hoped to offer a paper in complete form. At present, he brought the subject forward

for such discussion as its great importance seemed to merit.¹

Mr. SALISBURY, from the chair, in accordance with the general desire of the members present, gave a brief extem-

¹Since the above was put in type I have obtained the following important information substantiating the conclusions expressed above. — F. W. P.

Mr. Oliver W. Huntington, Instructor in Mineralogy in Harvard University, has been so kind as to make a careful examination of three of the Central American specimens, varying greatly in color, about which he makes the following report:—

“CHEMICAL LABORATORY OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., May 31, 1886.

MY DEAR MR. PUTNAM:

The three specimens which you left with me are unquestionably Chinese Jade, having all the characters of that mineral, although the largest specimen from Costa Rica is rather unusual in its color and would not be taken for jadeite at sight.

The result of my examination is as follows:—

No. 33395. Costa Rica specimen. H.=7. Sp. gr. taken on a mass weighing 166^{grammes} is 3.281. A small fragment before the blowpipe fused readily below 3 to a glassy bead.

No. 33391. The specimen from Costa Rica, cut in form of a bird. H. a little under 7. Sp. gr. taken on a specimen weighing 54^{grammes} is 3.341. Before the blowpipe it fused quietly below 3 to a transparent glass, not acted on by acid.

No. 32794. Smallest specimen from Costa Rica. H. a little under 7. Sp. gr. taken on a specimen weighing 13^{grammes} is 3.326. Before the blowpipe it fused quietly below 3 to a transparent glass, not acted on by acid.

I have given above the approximate weights, to show that the specimens were large enough for an accurate determination of the specific gravity.

Very sincerely yours.

OLIVER W. HUNTINGTON.”

Dr. Willis E. Everette, who has recently returned from an extended trip in Alaska, wrote me that he had obtained from the natives of the interior a number of ornaments and crude pieces of jade. In reply to my request he has been so kind as to send me the only specimen he had with him at the East. This piece has the appearance of a water-worn pebble, five inches long and an inch thick in its central portion, from which a piece has been removed by some primitive method (probably by sawing with a cord and sand), in the same manner as the specimens from Central America and hard stones from various other regions were cut. It is of a deep green color, very much like a large nephrite celt from New Zealand, now in the Peabody Museum. Dr. Everette writes that “this specimen was given me by an Eskimo from the Kúwúk river, north of the Arctic circle, and which flows into Kotzebue Sound.” (I suppose this to be the same as the Kowak river.)

This is probably the “jade” which has been reported as occurring *in situ* in Alaska. To the eye it has the general appearance of jadeite and nephrite, but the following report from Mr. Huntington, to whom, and to Prof. Cooke, I at

poraneous account of a recent visit he had made to Mexico and more especially to the province of Yucatan, with comparisons of the present civilization with that of a period twenty-five years ago, when he had visited the same region. His remarks were listened to with great interest, and found favor with all who heard them.

After the formal adjournment the members were entertained at dinner by their associate, Hon. EDWARD ISAAH THOMAS. At the table Col. THOMAS W. HIGGINSON, who had been prevented from attending the morning session, read a paper, which, on motion of the Recording Secretary, was received, with thanks, as of the regular order of the meeting, and referred to the Committee of Publication.

It was also voted that a despatch of congratulation be sent to Dr. GEORGE CHANDLER, an honored associate, who was celebrating his eightieth birthday in Worcester.

The meeting was then dissolved.

JOHN D. WASHBURN,

Recording Secretary.

once submitted the specimen for examination, is conclusive as to its being a different mineral from the Central American specimens.

“CHEMICAL LABORATORY OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., May 31, 1886.

MY DEAR MR. PUTNAM:

The compact green mineral submitted to my examination appears to be a portion of a worn pebble, and has a fine dark green color, breaking with a splintery fracture, and having a glistening lustre. H.=6. Sp. Gr. carefully taken on a specimen weighing over 100^{grammes}, at a temperature of 24.1° is 2.9942. A small splinter before the blowpipe fused below 3 with intumescence and spirting, to a transparent blebby glass, and after fusion was insoluble in acid.

The blowpipe characters indicate Jadeite, but the low specific gravity and hardness are inconsistent with this supposition, and it is certainly not the Chinese Jadeite nor like the specimens from Central America which I examined for you.

Very truly yours.

OLIVER W. HUNTINGTON.”

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