

TO DIG UP TREASURES

Society Organized for Excavating Herculaneum.

PLAN CHECKED BY ITALY

National Pride Resents Participation by Foreigners.

MAY KILL THE UNDERTAKING

Steady Demand for Red Cedar Used for Lead Pencils—Process of Their Manufacture Described.

BY WILLIAM E. CURTIS.

Written for The Star and the Chicago Record-Herald.

Last winter Dr. Charles Waldstein, professor of archeology in Cambridge University, England, formerly of the faculty of Columbia University, New York, and for several years director of the American School of Classical Study at Athens, made a tour of the United States for the purpose of organizing a society for the excavation of Herculaneum. He conducted his propaganda under the auspices of the American Institute of Archeology, delivered addresses before the branches of that society in New York, Washington, Chicago and elsewhere, was cordially received at the White House, excited the sympathy and secured the cooperation of the President and many other distinguished men. He made a tour of Europe on the same errand and with the same success. The King of England, the President of France, the Emperor of Germany and the King of Italy all promised their active cooperation, which gave the movement greater strength, perhaps than any similar undertaking ever acquired. All this was very necessary, however, because the scheme required the consent of the Italian parliament and a large sum of money estimated all the way from half a million to two millions of dollars.

There is no more exciting problem in archeology and none more expensive. Herculaneum is situated on the shore of the Bay of Naples at the foot of Vesuvius, and is a part of the city known as Resina. Its inhabitants are engaged very largely in the manufacture of macaroni. In the middle of the century a resort for the literary, scientific and artistic circles of Italy and the home of many rich patriots who were collectors of works of art and had large libraries.

Pompeii is situated on the mountain-side about three miles above Herculaneum. It was a commercial and manufacturing community whose inhabitants were not so wealthy nor so much interested in art and literature. Their residences were not so costly or expensive and their contents were not so valuable.

The Eruption of 79.

Both cities were totally overwhelmed during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in the year 79 A. D. Pompeii, being nearer the crater, was buried under a stream of molten lava and was destroyed by fire, Herculaneum, being a considerable distance beyond, was not burned to any serious extent, but was buried under ashes and cold lava to a depth of from 70 to 112 feet—so deep that no attempt was made to uncover it. The city and all it contained were allowed to lie undisturbed until the next generation built their homes upon the surface of its tomb. In 1700, while sinking a well near the present site, workmen discovered a theater containing several beautiful pieces of sculpture and carved marble walling. This excited so much interest that the government of Naples undertook excavations, but they were conducted without skill or care and the results were not important. The notes were filed and nothing further was done until the French occupation from 1806 to 1815, when the first directed systematic explorations. In 1828, in 1837 and again in 1839 the attempt was renewed. Several strata were reached by shafts of the French workers dug along them which disclosed the remains of a theater, a temple, a prison and other important structures. The most important examples of statuary in the famous museum at Naples, including statues of Aristides, the Just and Agrippina, Demosthenes and others, and the Marble Faun which gave Hawthorne the idea of his famous story, also many papyrus manuscripts.

Checked by Italian Pride.

Nothing has been done there since, although all the great archeologists of the world have been looking with envy upon Herculaneum, because beneath that buried city of ashes are supposed to be many other works of art and literature equal, if not superior, to those that have already been found. The ashes preserved rather than destroyed them and through the centuries and have since protected them from "gnawing tooth of time." It is confidently believed that marbles and manuscripts might be found of value and interest. It would not allow any foreign interference, and much less, control of the work. The made an outcry, the newspapers financial assistance. "L'Italia pao fare da se." Italy can do for herself) was the motto and Dr. Waldstein's scheme was thrown overboard.

Those who are familiar with the habits and disposition of the Italians regret this decision, because it is likely that some foreign money will be contributed for them to spend, and it is still less likely that so large a sum will be contributed to uncover Herculaneum can be raised there. It may be assumed that nothing whatever will be done, and the mysteries of the buried city will not be solved in this generation. It is not probable that they ever will be solved by the Italians.

Gigantic and Costly Plan.

The desk of the Italian minister of public instruction, who has jurisdiction over such matters, is covered with archeological and ethnological schemes that are more or less fantastic. The Italians are fertile in invention, but are not always competent or successful in carrying them out. The propositions is a gigantic plan called the "Passeggiata Archeologica," which has excited considerable discussion in the newspapers and among scholars. The idea is to create a sort of Appian way or boulevard, starting from the Palatine, and leading out into the country to connect with the ancient Appian way. This boulevard is to be constructed after the ancient Roman design, with numerous triumphal arches commemorating historical events, and to be lined by ancient statues from the museums and modern monuments to commemorate the achievements of Italian heroes of the present age. This "Passeggiata Archeologica" is to be completed for inauguration in the centennial year of the unification of Italy, which will give plenty of time for the work, if the funds could be forthcoming. But the practical minds in the government argue that the millions of dollars which the scheme would cost could be expended to much greater advantage upon useful public works, and there is not the slightest possibility that the gorgeous enterprise will ever be carried out. The monument to the Emperor Trajan at the head of the Corso in Rome, which is

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