Read More about Eadweard Muybridge

The list of those present includes the name of Mr John Mess who was to be the Treasurer of the Mars Institution and Dundee High School, as he was involved in many literary and charitable organisations in Dundee this is more than likely the same man. Unfortunately he was to die on the 17 th January, 1902, aged 41.

In the Chairman's address at the beginning of this lecture he seems to be giving more than a simple pre-amble to the main speaker. There is an element of attempting to encourage other Universities to be as far sighted as Pennsylvania to encourage research in fields not normally associated with Academia.-

Dundee Advertiser, Friday, November 28th, 1890

ARMISTEAD LECTURE

The third of the Armistead course was delivered in the Kinnaird Hall, Dundee, last evening by Mr Eadweard Muybridge, of the University of Pennsylvania, his subject being – "The Science of Animal Locomotion in its Relation to Design in Art." There was a large audience. Mr J.D. Cox, President of the Dundee and East Photographic Association, presided, and amongst those present were: Lord Dean of Guild McGrady, Councillor Ferrier, Professor D'Arcy Thomson, Dr Templeman, Mr William Salmond, Mr G.D. Macdougald, Mr W.M. Martin, Mr John Robertson of Elmslee, Mr W.F. Hill, Mr W. Bertie, Mr James Low, Mr John Mess, and others.

The Chairman, in his introductory remarks,...

Since then (1872) photography had made great strides, and Mr Muybridge was now enabled, by using the fastest plates and the most improved apparatus, to make exposures of about the 5000 th

part of a second. The University of Pennsylvania, realising the importance of Mr Muybridge's researches, placed a sum of 30,000 dollars at his disposal, and the words of Dr Pepper, "is not limited to the mere instruction of students. Researches and original investigations, conducted by the mature scholars composing its faculties, are an important part of its work; and in a larger conception of its duty should be included the aid which it can extend to investigators engaged in researches too costly or elaborate to be accomplished by private means. When ample provision is made in these several directions, we shall have the University adequately equipped, and prepared to exert fully her great function as a discoverer and teacher of truth." (Applause.)

Mr Muybridge, was cordially received, began his lecture by remarking that in coming into a large city one thing that attracted the attention of the visitor was the constant stream of animated action flowing in all directions; but how few, he asked, had given any attention to the manner in which so well known a quadruped as the horse placed its feet successively upon the ground, even in such a deliberately formed action as the walk. When Europe was overrun by the mammoth and the reindeer there lived in the South of France a people called the cave-dwellers. These people made drawings of animals. What their object was in making these drawings he did not know. It might have been for the sake of conveying information; but whatever it was they had keenness of perception enough to know that the animals they engraved moved their legs in a certain way. They were thoroughly acquainted with the fact of motion. The primitive art of every country exhibited a closeness of observation and a fidelity that was strangely at variance with the artists' powers of execution. He mentioned that the object of the University of Pennsylvania was to demonstrate the facts of motion in order not merely that the scientist and artist might familiarise themselves with the details of things going round about them, but to make the general public critics. (Applause.)

Their investigations had proved that the motion of all terrestrial vertebrates was essentially the same, with the exception of those belonging to the monkey tribe. That matter was now puzzling some of the ablest biologists, as to why that class of animals moved their limbs differently from others. Mr Muybridge then, by means of a series analysed the methods of locomotion in the horse, ox, elk, goat, buffalo, and other cloven hoofed animals; lion, elephant, camel, cat, and dog amongst the soft-footed animals; of the sloth while suspended by its claws, and of the child while crawling on the floor.

By the aid of an apparatus which he called the zoopraxiscope the horses were represented as walking, ambling, ambling, cantering, galloping, and leaping across hurdles in a perfectly natural manner, and by slowing the machinery of the apparatus the audience had the opportunity of studying the different phases while the representations of the animals were in motion. Mr

Muybridge also showed a picture of the statue of Marcus Aurelius, which, he said, had been the source of many modern errors. There were a greater number of Marcus Aureliuses. (Laughter.) There was one in London, another in Edinburgh, another in Glasgow, and he did not know how many of them were on the Continent. (Laughter.)

The errors in art arose simply from ignorance of the facts of motion. He mentioned that he noticed in a London illustrated paper some time ago a picture of a funeral of Lord Napier. The body was being drawn along on a gun carriage, and the deceased' horse was supposed to be walking immediately behind the coffin. In all probability it did walk in the procession, but the artist behaved so badly in disposing of the legs of the horse that one who knew anything about an animal locomotion at all would have said that it was trotting at the rate of ten miles an hour. (Laughter.) It was of the highest importance that the artist should have a keen eye and be acquainted with every detail connected with the subject he was to pourtray, [sic] otherwise he would go on making mistakes. He must conform to nature and be governed by her laws, as a truthful interpretation of nature could not be rendered unless her laws were understood. (Applause.)

Mr Muybridge is a very successful lecturer, has a pleasant voice, and seems never to tire of the theme to which he has given so much thought. The pictures illustrative of the lecture were of great beauty, and were of value as showing minutely the successive phases of ordinary acts of locomotion. Mr John Lowdon, of Messrs Lowden Brothers, electrical engineers, Dundee, very successfully manipulated the zoopraxiscope.

On the motion of the Chairman a very hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr Muybridge for his lecture.