

which are worked into "jade" implements and ornaments, their hardness and tenacity being equal. The majority of jade carvings from China are, analytically, jadeite or anhydrous silicate of alumina. Silicates in which either magnesia or alumina forms the principal constituent, and which contain, in varying quantities, lime, iron, with sometimes natron and traces of some other minerals (and the hardness of which is 6-7), are "true jades". But when an analysis is given under the name of jade, as, for instance, in Professor Dieulafait's *Pierres Precieuses*, we may expect to find the silicate of magnesia (nephrite) described on account of the superior beauty of some specimens of that mineral.

Before we decide that jadeite does not occur geologically in Europe, we have a serious difficulty to overcome in the presence of the mineral called "Saussurite", which is simply a jadeite. This was discovered originally near Monte Rosa, and described by the great geologist whose name it bears. The borders of the Lake of Geneva, Gabbro, near Genoa, and Corsica, are accepted localities; and specimens from the south of France are among the analyses of Damour. The apocryphal jadeite of Schwemsal, near Düben, in Saxony, Zirkel mentions as an "erratic block".

That the Mentone specimens are jadeite is certain; and their discovery among vestiges which can denote the occupation of the caves by palæolithic man only, seems to raise a question even superior in interest to the discovery of neolithic jade implements. Until the geological occurrence of jadeite suitable for implements in Europe can be substantiated, all the questions which have been asked relative to the possession of the mineral by men of the neolithic period, may be pertinently demanded as regards a still more ancient and palæolithic age; unless, indeed, the Mentone fragments be placed under the somewhat arbitrary and general denomination of Saussurite, and proved to be strays from the Alps, Corsica, or elsewhere. But this can only be done on proof that there is a clear distinction between the form of jadeite they present, and that of the implements from the Swiss lake-dwellings, etc., which have been analysed. Should the Mentone fragments be thus dealt with, they would still remain as interesting evidence of the local movements or traffic of some of the earliest inhabitants of the Mediterranean sea-board.

In the discussion which ensued, Mr. W. H. Cope, Mr. Brock, Mr. Brent, and the Chairman, took part.

The following paper was then read on

A ROMAN VILLA LATELY DISCOVERED AT BRADING.

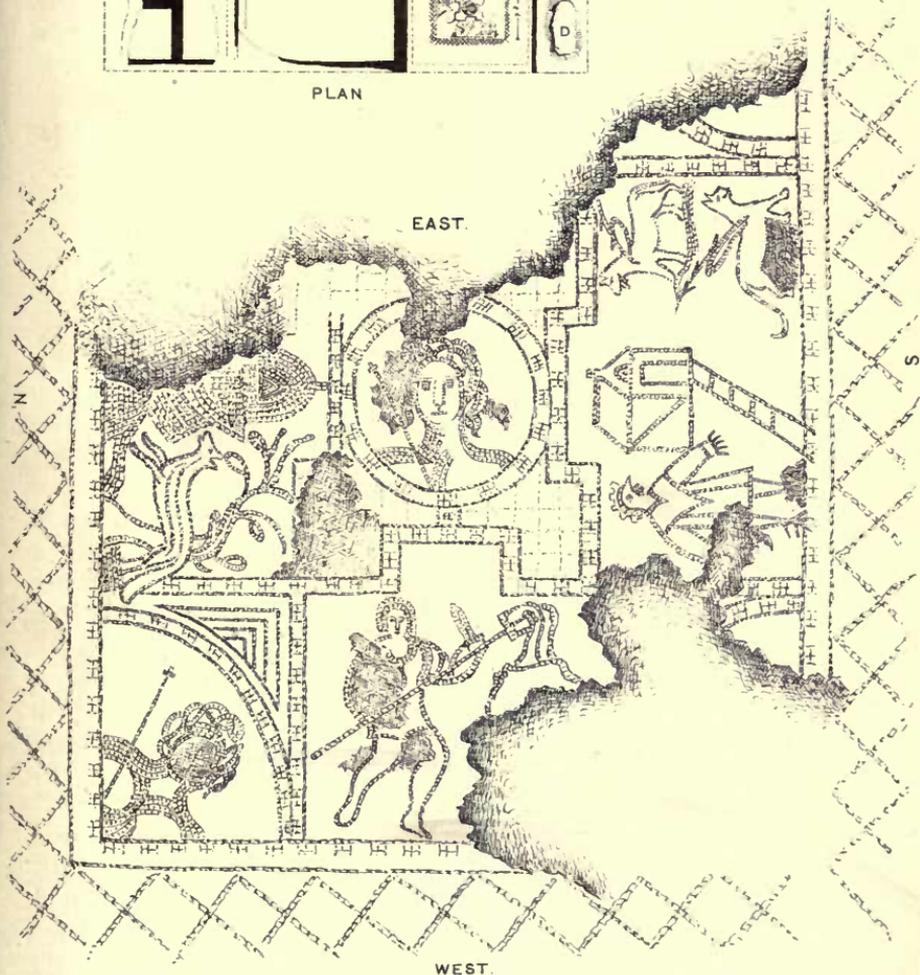
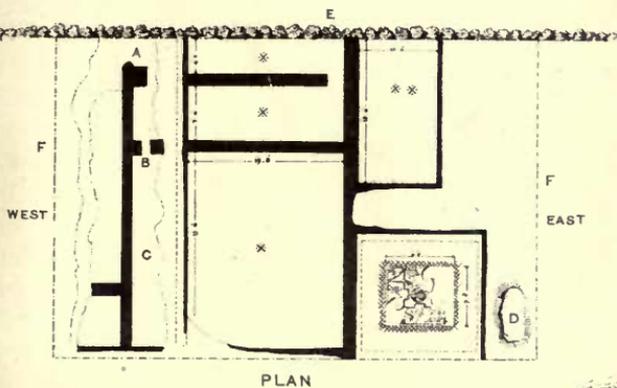
BY THE REV. S. M. MAYHEW, M.A., V.P.

In 1866 a paper was communicated to the Association on the discovery of a Roman house in Gurnard Bay, Isle of Wight. Although

much had been obliterated by the action of the waves, a length of wall remained, of some 40 feet; and within, from the coarsely tessellated floors, were picked a coin of Hadrian and Sabina, fragments of Samian ware, a cutting instrument, and some other remains. This house appeared to have stood on the Rue Street, terminating at Puckaster Cove, and one of the Roman intersecting roads leading to the shipping-place for Cornish tin, near or about Puckaster. Subsequent to this discovery was that of the Roman villa near Carisbrook, of which I cannot now speak particularly. It is my pleasing duty to lay before the Association some account of another, larger, and more interesting building, brought to light by the indefatigable research of Captain Thorp of St. Wilfrid's, Brading, who not only discovered and excavated, but has roofed and secured the prize; and to the kindness, talent, and perseverance, of Mrs. Thorp we are indebted for the drawings now before you.

About three quarters of a mile out of Brading is a gently rising ground, from which an undulating landscape is terminated by the sea, having the Culver Cliff to the left, Sandown to the right. The eminence has a semicircular sweep; and here, on the surface of the cornfield, Captain Thorp last year observed *tesserae* and broken tile. Probing the ground, very distinct evidences were felt of a pavement beneath. This spring the ground was excavated by Captain Thorp and Mr. Munn, freeholder, with results seldom enough achieved. An area of 40 feet square has been uncovered; but this measurement does not express the actual area of this building, as walls and floors extend evidently beneath a bank into the adjoining property of Lady Oglander; and on one side, upon both wings of the building, the probe assures us of much yet in reserve. The floors and walls lay from 18 inches to 3 feet 6 inches beneath the surface; and now, standing to the north, on the right, we have a tessellated, figured floor of 15 feet 3 inches square. Beyond this the floor of a larger apartment, or atrium perhaps, as yet but partly uncovered, 19 feet by 10, in chequers of red and white, beautifully perfect. A dividing wall, of 2 feet thickness, edges both apartments, separating from those on the left, viz., a floor of pure white *tesserae*, 19 ft. 8 ins. by 19 ft., edged by a wall, 2 ft. thick, at a right angle to that just mentioned. Then another, tessellated with grey stone, 19 ft. 8 ins. by 7 ft., probably a sleeping apartment; then another, of 19 ft. 8 ins., of the floor of which 4 ft. only are visible; the remainder, like that of its equivalent and complementary room, lying beneath the hedge-bank. These floors are terminated (left) by a thick wall, 36 ft. long; *i.e.*, to the bank. Two parallel trenches have been run, still to the left, disclosing foundation-walls and heaps of bones; but Captain Thorp writes to me that the points on the plan, marked A BB, seem to indicate he is close upon the hypocaust, remains of flue-

MORTON FARM, BRADING, I. W.
ROMAN PAVEMENT.



Reference to Plan.

A Freestone Piers.

B Door down to Hypocaust.

C Position of Hypocaust.

D Refuse Hole.

E Hedge dividing Morton Farm from
Lady Olander's Estate.
(Walls & pavements extend under it.)

F Walls etc. exist beneath the
surface here.

* Pavements of Grey & Stone Tesserae. ** Pavement in Chequers.

tiles and fuel being numerous. But few fragments have come to light tending to fix the date of the building. We might, perhaps, assign it to the second century. A coin of (supposed) Allectus, with reverse, a galley, and others of Victorinus or Tetricus, were found, with fragments of New Forest, Caistor, and Samian pottery; the neck of a wine or oil-flask with painted lettering; a piece or two of bronze and iron; little beside. The building had been swept clean of its contents, burned, and the massive walls falling inwards completed the wreck.

The arrangement and design of the tessellated pavements were by no apprentice hand. The general care and neatness of execution speak of an artist's work, and probably the Roman occupier was a man of both taste and wealth. The pavement of the first apartment to the right may well be pronounced unique in design and execution, whilst its pictures will assuredly give wide scope for speculation, and matter interesting enough for discussion. This floor, of all, is most damaged by the impact of the massive side-walls. Around this apartment runs a crossed pattern on a white ground, enclosing a squared and most elaborate tessaliation. A large double circle occupies the centre of the square, and quadrates, the corners, also doubly lined and patterned. Only one of these is perfect. A pattern somewhat resembling the "Greek key" frames in four pictures, of which three are more or less perfect. That to the west represents, in colours, the combat of two gladiators, one of whom, helmeted and bearing the short gladiatorial sword and *tridens*, has enveloped in the *rete* his adversary, the edge of whose shield just appears. The figure is full of spirit. The quadrant beyond bears a Bacchic male head beautifully inlaid (perhaps the young Bacchus), filleted with white and a dark colour, with *thyrsus*, in the form of a small cross. The central circle is filled by a female head (a Bacchant), with eyes uplifted and hair streaming, accompanied also with a cruciform *thyrsus*. This head in its execution is wonderfully fine. The square picture to the north has a fox of natural size and colour, leaping at and beneath a vine in front of a dome-shaped building partly destroyed, which may be the representation of a wine-press.

The eastern picture is, I fear, destroyed; and it is much to be regretted, as it might have assisted in the interpretation of the mysterious southern figures. In the centre is a small *raised* building with red tiled roof, square headed door, and somewhat ornamental front, reached by a ladder of four rounds laid in black *tesserae*. To the right are two winged leopards looking in different directions; and on the left, towards the building and the leopards, is a human figure, draped, the arms extended; and a cock's head with wattles and comb cut into five turrets, the legs terminating in claws, and armed with most formidable spurs. What is its meaning? Two explanations have

been hazarded. That the heads within the quadrant and circle are those of Gnostic divinities, and the standing figure represents Abraxes; but, as Mr. Cuming points out, whatever partial analogy there may be, the failure in one very important particular is evident. Abraxes is represented with a cock's head and *serpent* legs. Could the figure be identified with Abraxes, then the *building* would probably become a temple, and the former proprietor of the house, a Gnostic. Can the figures bear on the mythical vintage, and is the whole sentiment Bacchic? Then the winged leopards, as sometimes figured on gems in connection with bacchanalian processions, find their place. This building is an elevated lodge or watch-tower, and the mystic figures emblematic of Watchfulness and Courage. Students will be reminded of the watch-lodge in the melon plantation, mentioned by Isaiah, i, 8; and the tower spoken of by St. Mark, xii, 1, raised within the vineyard. It is worthy of remembrance, that a lady just returned from India, on viewing this pavement at the first time, said "We often have seen *that* in India, it is a watch-house or lodge." The cruciform thyrsus is also a Bacchic emblem, this cross being found on the wine jars excavated in Cyprus, of which a fine example is in my collection. Neither of the proposed interpretations of the pavement can be hastily rejected, and perhaps the greater weight may lie with the latter than with the former interpretation. Certainly, two other Roman villas are in the immediate vicinity; and although Captain and Mrs. Thorp should have, and do receive, the sincere acknowledgments of archæologists—thanks hardly meet the requirements of the case. The keen experience gathered in many years' service enables Captain Thorp to show us where lies buried a tempting treasure—he has unveiled a portion—and surely 'tis hardly fair the discoverer should bear the expenses of excavating and securing. Cannot the Isle of Wight produce a helper, who, in the interest of science, may now associate his or her name and effort, and together secure the noble prize?

Mr. Morgan read a paper by Henry Bradley, Esq., on "Ptolemy's Measurement of the South Coast," and Mr. Birch read a reply to the paper by Mr. Hills. These papers will, it is hoped, be printed hereafter in the *Journal*.

Mr. Brock read a paper by W. C. Dymond, Esq., on "Worlebury, Weston-super-Mare." This paper was accompanied with a very careful plan of the extensive works of defence on that well-known site.