

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE SELECT COMMITTEE,

RESPECTING

THE EARL OF ELGIN'S MARBLES.

N. B.—*The THESEUS and HERCULES are used in the Evidence with reference to the same Statue, which was at first called THESEUS; and the appellation of ILLISSUS, or THE RIVER GOD, is also given indifferently to another Statue, which was sometimes called NEPTUNE.*

Jovis, 29^o die Februarii.

HENRY BANKES, Esq. *in the Chair.*

The EARL OF ELGIN, called in, and Examined.

YOUR Lordship will be pleased to state the circumstances under which you became possessed of this Collection, and the authority which you received for taking the Marbles from Athens?—The idea was suggested to me in the year 1799, at the period of my nomination to the Embassy at Constantinople, by Mr. Harrison, an architect, who was working for me in Scotland, and who had passed the greater part of his life in Rome; and his observation was, that though the Public was in possession of every thing to give them a general knowledge of the remains of Athens, yet they had nothing to convey to Artists, particularly to Students, that which the actual representation by cast would more effectually give them. Upon that suggestion, I communicated very fully with my acquaintances in London. I mentioned it to Lord Grenville, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Dundas, upon the idea that it was of such national importance as that the Government might be induced to take it up, not only to obtain the object, but also to obtain it by the means of the most able artists at that time in England. The answer of Government, which was entirely negative, was, that the Government would not have been justified in undertaking any expense of an indefinite nature, particularly under the little probability that then existed of the success of the undertaking. Upon that understanding, I applied to such artists here as were recommended to me as likely to answer the purpose, in particular to Mr. Turner, to go upon my own account. Mr. Turner's objection to my plan was, that as the object was of a general nature, and that the condition I insisted upon was, that the whole results of all the artists should be collected together and left with me; he objected, because he wished to retain a certain portion of his own labour for his own use; he moreover asked between seven and eight hundred pounds of salary, independently of his expenses being paid, which of course was out of my reach altogether; therefore nothing was done here preparatory to the undertaking at all. When I went to Sicily, I met Sir William Hamilton, to whom I explained my views: he encouraged my idea, and applied to the King of Naples for permission for me to engage his painter, Lusieri, who was at that time employed in picturesque views of Sicily for the Sicilian government; who went with Mr. Hamilton to Rome,

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and, upon the plan arranged with Sir William Hamilton, engaged the five other artists, who accompanied him ultimately to Turkey: those five persons were, two architects, two modellers, and one figure painter. Lusieri was a general painter. They reached Constantinople about the middle of May 1800, at the time when the French were in full possession of Egypt, and of course no attempts could be made with any prospect of general success. I sent them to Athens, however, as soon as an opportunity offered: for several months they had no access to the Acropolis, except for the purpose of drawing, and that at an expense of five guineas a day: that lasted from August 1800 till the month of April 1801.

That limited access lasted about nine months?—Yes.

The fee of five guineas was one usually demanded from strangers?—There were so few strangers there, I do not know; but in the instances which came to my knowledge, it was so. During that period, my artists were employed in the buildings in the low town of Athens. In proportion with the change of affairs in our relations towards Turkey, the facilities of access were increased to me, and to all English travellers: and about the middle of the summer of 1801, all difficulties were removed; we then had access for general purposes. The same facilities continued till my departure from Turkey in January 1803, at which period I withdrew five out of the six artists; and having sent home every thing that was in the collection, till the year 1812 Lusieri remained, with such instructions, and such means, and such powers, as enabled him to carry on the same operation to the extent that then remained to make it, as I concluded, more perfect: but from that period of 1803 till the present day, during my imprisonment in France, and during the remaining years, he has acted without any interruption, in the enjoyment of the same facilities, with a renewal of the same authorities: he has incurred the same expenses, and done the same as before.

Where is he now?—Remaining there still: he was not there during the war, but he has obtained a renewal of the same authorities since.

Your Lordship has stated, that when the change took place in the political relations between this country and Turkey, a facility of access was continued to you, and all your artists?—Yes.

And in 1801 all difficulties were removed which applied to the erecting scaffolding, and making excavations; was the same permission to erect scaffolding, and make excavations given to other persons at Athens at that time?—I do not know of any such instance: other persons made use of the same scaffolding of course. I do not know that any specific permission of this kind was applied for: I believe the permission granted to me was the same in substance and in purport as to any other person, with the difference of the extent of means, and an unlimited use of money. There was nobody there, I believe, who was doing any thing but draw.

Did the permission specifically refer to removing statues, or was that left to discretion?—No; it was executed by the means of those general permissions granted: in point of fact, permission issuing from the Porte for any of the distant provinces, is little better than an authority to make the best bargain you can with the local authorities. The permission was to draw, model, and remove; there was a specific permission to excavate in a particular place.

Was the permission in writing?—It was, and addressed by the Porte to the local authorities, to whom I delivered it; and I have retained none of them. In a letter I addressed to Mr. Long in the year 1811, I made use of these words:—“That the ministers of the Porte were prevailed upon, after much trouble and patient solicitation, to grant to me an authority to remove what I might discover, as well as draw and model.”

Does your Lordship suppose this to have been the same form of permission that had been given to other people; and that your Lordship employed it to a greater extent than other people?—It was so far different, that no other person had applied for permission to remove or model.

Does your Lordship know whether any permission had been granted to any other person to remove or model?—Monsieur de Choiseul had the same permission; and some of the things he removed are now in my collection.

He removed them while he was minister at the Porte?—Yes.

Had that permission ever been granted to excavate and remove, before Monsieur Choiseul had it?
—I do not know.

There seems to be a considerable difference between, to excavate and remove, and to remove and excavate: the question was not, whether your Lordship was permitted to remove what you should find on excavation, but whether your Lordship was permitted to remove from the walls?—I was at liberty to remove from the walls; the permission was to remove generally.

Was there any specific permission alluding to the statues particularly?—I do not know whether it specified the statues, or whether it was a general power to remove. I was obliged to send from Athens to Constantinople for permission to remove a house.

That was a house belonging to the Turkish government: did not your Lordship keep any copy of any of the written permissions that were given to your Lordship?—I kept no copies whatever; every paper that could be of use at Athens, was left there as a matter of course, because Lusieri continued there: the few papers I brought away with me, were burnt on my detention in France; my private papers I mean, and all my accounts, which I had brought away from Turkey.

In point of fact, your Lordship has not in England any copy of any of those written permissions?
—None.

Did the Committee understand you to say, that it is possible Lusieri has such copies?—Certainly; they will be at Athens, either in his possession, or in the possession of the authorities there.

Has your Lordship any distinct recollection of having had such copies of the authorities, and of having left them in Lusieri's possession?—I cannot speak to the fact so precisely as the Committee may wish; the authority itself was given over to the proper officer; and then Lusieri obtained from him any part of it that was necessary to be exhibited on any future occasion.

Did your Lordship, for your own satisfaction, keep any copy of the terms of those permissions?—No, I never did; and it never occurred to me that the question would arise; the thing was done publicly before the whole world. I employed three or four hundred people a day; and all the local authorities were concerned in it, as well as the Turkish government.

When your Lordship stated, that the permission granted to your Lordship was the same that had been granted to other individuals, with the difference only of the extent of means, did you mean to convey to the Committee, that permissions to remove Marbles and carry them away had been granted to other individuals?—No; what I meant to say was this, that as far as any application was made to the Turkish government through me, or to my knowledge, the same facilities were granted in all cases. I did not receive more as ambassador, than they received as travellers; but as I employed artists, those permissions were added to my leave. I am not aware of any particular application being made for a specific leave that was not granted, where a similar leave was granted to myself.

Your Lordship has stated, that no individual had applied for leave to remove?—To the best of my recollection, no application had been made to remove.

No application, either through you, or to your knowledge?—Yes; as far as I can recollect.

Of course your Lordship means to except the permission that you stated before had been long antecedently given to Monsieur Comte de Choiseul?—Yes.

Do you know, in point of fact, whether the same permission was granted to Monsieur Comte de Choiseul as was granted to you?—He exercised the same power.

But you do not know whether he had the same permission?—No.

Then, within your Lordship's knowledge, there is no instance of a private individual having obtained such permission?—I have no knowledge of any individual having applied for it, and I do not know whether it has been granted or not. I do not know that there was any difficulty in the way of removing, by anybody.

Was it necessary that those powers should be renewed after your Lordship came away, and that

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the artists already employed by you are employed ostensibly by the ministers there?—I do not know what distinction there is between Lusieri and any other artist.

Is he acting under the permission your Lordship obtained?—There has been war since.

Has it been renewed to your Lordship, or individually to themselves?—They have made the application through the channel they thought proper; what it was I do not know; but it was probably the same permission that Lord Aberdeen had, and many other travellers that have been there.

Your Lordship does not know whether it was renewed to your Lordship or to Mr. Liston, or whether they are acting under a permission granted to him, or individual permissions granted to the artists?—I do not know what the detail is; I conclude they are acting exactly as any other traveller there is: there is no advantage from the ambassadorial title that I had then, that can apply to them now, because there has been war since.

Have they power to excavate, model, and remove?—They have removed a great deal from thence.

And you do not know in what shape those powers have been renewed since the war?—No, I do not.

In the letter to Mr. Long, which you have stated, you speak as having obtained these permissions after much trouble and patient solicitation; what was the nature of the objections on the part of the Turkish government?—Their general jealousy and enmity to every Christian of every denomination, and every interference on their part. I believe, that from the period of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, the French government have been endeavouring to obtain similar advantages, and particularly the Sigean Marble.

They rested it upon that general objection?—Upon the general enmity to what they called Christian Dogs.

That was not the manner in which they stated their objection?—No; but that is the fact; it was always refused.

Without reasons?—Without reasons assigned; every body on the spot knew what those reasons were; that they would not give any facility to any thing that was not Turkish.

All your Lordship's communications with the Porte were verbal?—There was nothing in writing till an order was issued.

The objection disappeared from the moment of the decided success of our arms in Egypt?—Yes; the whole system of Turkish feeling met with a revolution; in the first place, from the invasion by the French, and afterwards by our conquest.

Your Lordship has stated in your Petition, that you directed your attention in an especial manner to the benefit of rescuing from danger the remains of Sculpture and Architecture; what steps did you take for that purpose?—My whole plan was to measure and to draw every thing that remained and could be traced of architecture, to model the peculiar features of architecture: I brought home a piece of each description of column for instance, and capitals and decorations of every description; friezes and moulds, and, in some instances, original specimens: and the architects not only went over the measurements that had been before traced, but, by removing the foundations, were enabled to extend them, and to open the way to further inquiries, which have been attended since with considerable success.

You state, that you have rescued the remains from danger?—From the period of Stuart's visit to Athens till the time I went to Turkey, a very great destruction had taken place. There was an old temple on the Ilissus had disappeared. There was, in the neighbourhood of Elis and Olympia, another temple, which had disappeared. At Corinth, I think Stuart gives thirteen columns, and there were only five when I got there: every traveller coming, added to the general defacement of the statuary in his reach; there are now in London pieces broken off within our day. And the Turks have been continually defacing the heads; and in some instances they have actually acknowledged to me, that they have pounded down the statues to convert them into mortar. It was upon these suggestions, and

with these feelings, that I proceeded to remove as much of the sculpture as I conveniently could : it was no part of my original plan to bring away any thing but my models.

Then your Lordship did not do any thing to rescue them, in any other way than to bring away such as you found? — No; it was impossible for me to do more than that; the Turkish Government attached no importance to them in the world; and in all the modern walls, these things are built up promiscuously with common stones.

It has been stated, that in a despatch from Turkey, at a very early period after your Lordship went out, that your Lordship had an occasion to write to His Majesty's Government concerning your public appointment as a minister, and that you stated some circumstances distinctly to them at that time, which showed your understanding and their understanding, that your proceedings in Greece were entirely upon your own private account; is that statement correct, that there is a document in existence, dated in the year 1803, which will prove that fact?—There is, precisely what is alluded to in a despatch at the period of my leaving Turkey.

In point of fact, did the Turkish Government know that your Lordship was removing these statues under the permission your Lordship had obtained from them?—No doubt was ever expressed to me of their knowledge of it; and as the operation has been going on these seventeen years without any such expression, so far as I have ever heard, I conclude they must have been in the intimate knowledge of every thing that was doing.

In point of fact, your Lordship does not know that they were ever apprised of it?—It is impossible for me to have any doubt about it.

Did your Lordship ever apprise any of the Government of it in conversation?—The chance is, that I have done it five hundred times, but I cannot answer specifically when or how.

Did not the Committee understand your Lordship to say, that they must have so well understood it, that in one instance your Lordship got a special order to remove a particular thing?—There was a special permission solicited for the house: when I did excavate in consequence of getting possession of that house, there was not a single fragment found: I excavated down to the rock, and that without finding any thing, when the Turk to whom the house belonged came to me, and laughingly told me, that they were made into the mortar with which he built his house.

Then the permission was to buy the house?—To pull it down.

Since 1803 has Lusieri continued to remove things?—I can answer that question by a fact of considerable importance. When I was in Paris a prisoner, in the year 1805, living in Paris perfectly tranquilly with my family, I received a letter from an English traveller, complaining of Lusieri's taking down part of the frieze of the Parthenon. The next morning a common gens d'arme came and took me out of bed, and sent me into close confinement, away from my family. Such was the influence exercised by the French to prevent this operation.

Your Lordship attributed it entirely to the French?—Yes; the French sent me in that way down to Melun.

In reference to what was stated in a passage of your Lordship's Petition, will your Lordship be so good as to say whether you have ever heard of the Turkish Government taking any care that the works of art should not be destroyed?—Certainly not; within my knowledge nothing of the sort was ever done; the military governor of the Acropolis endeavoured to keep them, after people had appeared anxious to get them away.

So that the hesitation on the part of the Government your Lordship attributes to a dislike to the Christians?—The general apprehension of doing any act displeasing to the French operated at the time the French were in Egypt.

Has your Lordship any knowledge of any particular application made to the Turkish Government by any individual, and granted, of an equal extent with your Lordship's?—I have not any knowledge of what has passed since, except the details of Lusieri's own operations.

The Earl of Elgin.
From an observation in part of your Lordship's evidence, the Committee concluded that your Lordship has, since 1812, received several of these Marbles? — In the year 1812 about eighty cases arrived.

Have there been any received subsequently? — I believe there have; but I am not very certain, having been out of the country myself.

Did Monsieur Choiseul take down any of the metopes and the frieze? — One piece of the metope and some of the frieze; the metope I bought at a public sale at the custom-house. It was at the time I returned from France; my things were dispersed all over the country; and my agent told me of some packages in the custom-house, without direction; and I gave four or five-and-twenty pounds for them at a lumber sale.

Thinking those packages to be your Lordship's? — Yes.

When your Lordship heard of those cases being to be sold at a rummage sale, did your Lordship make any application to the Government, stating that they had any interest in it, and that therefore you ought not to be obliged to purchase? — No; certainly not.

It was a matter of private purchase? — Yes; these things had been left at Athens during the whole of the French Revolution. Buonaparte allowed a corvette to call and bring these things for Monsieur Choiseul, who was an intimate acquaintance of Monsieur Talleyrand. From the delay which occurred, they did not get away in time to escape our cruisers. Monsieur Choiseul applied to me to make interest with Lord Nelson, and I wrote to him, and he directed them to be sent home; and applied to Lord Sidmouth and Sir Joseph Banks, wishing Government to make such a purchase as to secure the captors, but at the same time to restore the articles to Monsieur Choiseul. When I left Paris Monsieur Choiseul remained in the belief that they were still at Malta, consequently I had no clue to guess these were his at the time of the purchase in the year 1806; but I immediately wrote to him, to state what these things were, as I had no doubt they were his by the metope; and in the year 1810 he wrote to me, stating that his were still at Malta: when I went over to Paris last year I took a memorandum with me for him, and satisfied him they were his; but he has never yet sent about them, and I do not know what he means to do at all; but there they are, marked among my things as belonging to him.

Does your Lordship know, that subsequent to your coming away, and during the time we were at war, any similar permission was applied for, and obtained by the French? — I do not know any thing about that; but in point of fact, my cases were at the harbour during the whole of the war; and if the French Government had had any thing that they could have put afloat, they would have taken them.

Did that seizure apply to the property of all English characters; or, did it apply to your Lordship's as a public character, and therefore the property of the country? — Besides the boxes at the harbour, Lusieri's magazines were filled in the town of Athens; and immediately after his flight they broke those open, and sent them to Yanana, and from thence to Buonaparte.

Was not Lusieri considered as an agent of your Lordship's in your public character? — No; certainly not.

Your Lordship had applied for him to do what he was doing; and was he not in that way considered as your Lordship's agent, and therefore subject to the same liability as your Lordship was, to have whatever was in his possession seized? — He was considered as an English subject, as far as his connection with me went; but his property was stolen in fact: his property and mine was promiscuously taken, they did not do it officially.

Was any objection made by the chief magistrate of Athens, against taking away these Marbles, as exceeding the authority received from Constantinople? — There was no such objection ever made.

Was ever any representation made of any kind? — None that I ever heard of.

Does your Lordship believe, to the best of your judgment, that you obtained, in your character

of ambassador, any authority for removing these Marbles, which your Lordship would not have obtained in your private capacity, through the intervention of the British ambassador? — I certainly consider that I obtained no authority as given to me in my official capacity (I am speaking from my own impression;) the Turkish Government did not know how to express their obligation to us for the conquest of Egypt, and for the liberality that followed from Government, and of course I obtained what I wanted; whether I could have obtained it otherwise or not, I cannot say; Lusieri has obtained the same permission seventeen years, in the course of which time we have been at war with Turkey. Monsieur De Choiseul had permission, under very different circumstances; but, in point of fact, I did stand indebted to the general good-will we had ensured by our conduct towards the Porte, most distinctly I was indebted to that; whether Monsieur Choiseul's example could be quoted or not, is a matter of question.

In your Lordship's opinion, if Lord Aberdeen had been at Constantinople at the time your Lordship was ambassador there, could you have obtained the same permission for Lord Aberdeen as an individual, that you did as ambassador obtain for yourself? — I can only speak from conjecture. The Turkish Government, in return for our services in Egypt, did offer to the British Government every public concession that could be wished. They were in a disposition that I conceive they would have granted any thing that could have been asked: I entered upon the undertaking in the expectation that the result of our expedition for the relief of Egypt would furnish opportunities of this sort.

Then the result of the impression on your Lordship's mind would be, that other advantages granted by the Turkish Government were on the same principle as the permission to your Lordship to remove these Marbles, and rather out of public gratitude for the interference of England? — I believe it was entirely that, and nothing else; ~~I was not authorized to make any application in the name of Government for this;~~ but I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I looked forward to this, as that which was to enable me to execute the plan; and to that I am indebted for it. Whether under other circumstances I could have obtained the facilities Monsieur Choiseul had had before, I cannot answer.

When your Lordship received this, which you considered as a proof of the public gratitude of the Turkish Government to England, did your Lordship mention the circumstance in any of your despatches to Government? — I should suppose not in any other despatch than that which has been alluded to.

That was upon leaving Turkey, was not it? — Yes.

If your Lordship considers it as a mark of the public gratitude of the Porte to Great Britain, does not your Lordship consider that mark of gratitude essentially connected with your character of representative of the Court of Great Britain at the Porte? — I did not ask it in that character, nor did I ask it as a proof of the disposition of the Porte; but I availed myself of that disposition to make the application myself.

Does your Lordship suppose, that if that application had been made at that particular period by any other person than the ambassador of Great Britain, it would have been granted? — In my own mind I think it would, if he had had means of availing himself of it; that is to say, if he had determined to risk his whole private fortune in a pursuit of such a nature.

When your Lordship mentioned that general disposition of the Turkish Government, do you mean that it was as well to individuals in their private capacity, as to any demand made by the Government? To every body.

In short, it was a disposition of good-will towards Englishmen? — Of cordiality towards Englishmen, to an extent never known before.

In making the application to the Turkish Government for permission to remove these Marbles, did your Lordship state to them the objects you had in view in so removing them; whether for the purpose of collecting an assemblage of these things as matter of curiosity for yourself, or for the purpose of bringing them to this country for the improvement of the arts? — In explanation it must

The Earl of Elgin. have been so stated; whether there was any formal application bearing upon your question, I cannot undertake to say.

Was it or not stated to the Turkish Government, that it was for the purpose of forming a private museum, or for public uses? — I am afraid they would not have understood me, if I had attempted a distinction.

In what way did your Lordship distinguish, in your applications to the Turkish Government, between your private and public capacity? — I never named myself in my public capacity, not having any authority to do so: this was a personal favour, and it was granted quite extra officially to me.

And asked as such? — Asked as such, and granted as such.

The Fermauns granted to your Lordship, were not, as the Committee collect from your statement to day, permissions to take particular pieces, one from the city and one from the citadel, and so on? — No; I had never been at Athens, and could not specify any thing.

In point of fact, the Fermaun was not so? — It was not; there could not have been an application for specific things.

Suppose the transaction had passed in this way, that your Lordship was anxious to have some of these Marbles, the Government were willing to grant you a limited permission to take one or two pieces? — Certainly it was not so; it must have been quite general.

Your Lordship has no certain recollection how it was? — No; only that I did not know any thing of the state of Athens, and consequently my application must have been general.

Veneris, 1° die Martii, 1816.

HENRY BANKES, Esq. *in the Chair.*

The EARL of ELGIN, again called in, and Examined.

WILL your Lordship be pleased to state the view under which the Collection was made?

[The Earl of Elgin, in answer, delivered in the following papers, which were read.]

“ A Letter dated London, 14th February 1816, signed Elgin, addressed to the Right Honourable Nicholas Vansittart.”

“ A Memorandum as to his Lordship’s exclusive right of property in the Collection, dated February 1816.”

“ A Memorandum as to the delay in transferring the Earl of Elgin’s Collection to the Public.”

Has your Lordship any account from which you can state to the Committee the actual sums which your Lordship has paid in obtaining these Marbles, and in transporting them to this country?

[His Lordship handed in a copy of a Letter addressed to Mr. Long on the 6th of May 1811, with a Postscript dated 29th February 1816, addressed to the Chairman of this Committee; which was read.]

Has your Lordship any paper which exhibits the total? — No other than as it is stated in that letter, which I do not offer as a precise account, but it is merely to inform the Committee what was the nature of the expense.

Was any specific offer as to price, for obtaining those Marbles for the Public, made to your Lordship by Mr. Perceval, and in what year? — Yes; I believe it was a few days after the date of the above letter to Mr. Long, in the name of Mr. Perceval, he did intimate to me, as I understood,

that Mr. Perceval would be disposed to recommend the sum of £ 30,000 to be given for the Collection as it then stood.

What passed in consequence of that offer? — I believe it is mentioned in the memorandum which I have given in, accounting for the delay — paper marked No. 3 — and which exactly states the grounds on which I declined the offer: it follows immediately after the extract from the *Dilettanti* publication, in these words: — “ So that when Mr. Perceval, in 1811, proposed to purchase this Collection, not by proceeding to settle the price, upon a private examination into its merits and value, but by offering at once a specific sum for it; I declined the proposal as one which, under the above impressions, would be in the highest degree unsatisfactory to the Public, as well as wholly inadequate either in compensation of the outlay occasioned in procuring the Collection, or in reference to (what has since been established beyond all doubt) the excellence of the sculpture, and its authenticity as the work of the ablest artists of the age of Pericles.

Mr. Vansittart never made any specific offer on the part of the Public? — No, never, except in what passed last year, which was afterwards dropped.

What further has passed relating to the transfer of those Marbles to the Public, since 1811? — In the spring of 1815, Burlington House having been sold, Lord George Cavendish intimated a desire that I should remove the Marbles from thence in consequence. I applied to the Trustees of the British Museum to take them in deposit, considering that the circumstances of the times might not make it convenient for the Public to enter upon the transfer. In reply, the British Museum rejected my proposal, as not being consistent with their usual mode of proceedings, and they appointed three of their Members to enter into negotiation with me for the transfer; which nomination, after some discussion, led to the Petition which I presented to Parliament in the month of June following.

Is there any price, in your Lordship's estimation of these Marbles, lower than which you would not wish to part with them? — No; there is no standard fixed in my mind at all.

Are there any persons by whom this Collection has been valued? — Not any one, to my knowledge.

Are the gentlemen mentioned in the list you have delivered in, designed on your Lordship's part to be examined as to the value of the Collection? — I gave in that list as thinking them proper persons, without consulting them on the occasion; they are the individuals best acquainted with the subject; and I fancy it would be satisfactory to the Public that they should be examined.

Are there any and what additional articles now offered that were not included in the offer to Mr. Perceval in 1811? — To the best of my knowledge about eighty additional cases of Architecture and Sculpture have been added, and also a collection of Medals.