

*Proceedings
of the
Somersetshire Archæological and
Natural History Society,
during the year 1892.*

ON August 20th, 1862, the Annual Meeting of the Society was held at Wellington, under the presidency of the late Mr. E. A. Sanford: and now, on August 16th, 1892, after a lapse of thirty years, Wellington has again been visited.

The proceedings were opened at the Town Hall. At noon the outgoing President (Col. A. R. HOSKINS), took the chair, merely for the purpose, as he said, of handing over the seals of office to his successor. He desired to refer to the work of their secretaries, who were newly elected at the beginning of the past year. He had thought the field of research at the last meeting had been already so well reaped that there was nothing more to be got; but when the book came out he was pleased and surprised to see how full of meat it was, and extremely well cooked. With respect to their meeting at Wellington, he was at a loss to know what they had of interest. There was the Wellington monument, and there was the tomb in the church, but he thought those would hardly interest them for three days. Mr. Elworthy, however, told him that the excursions in the neighbourhood would be as satisfactory as some in

other places, of greater pretension. He then moved that the President-Elect, Mr. W. A. SANFORD, take the chair.

The PRESIDENT, having taken the chair, called on Col. BRAMBLE to read the

Report of the Council.

“In presenting their forty-fourth Annual Report the Council are again able to congratulate the Members on the continued progress made by the Society. If measured by numbers alone, there is apparently a trifling falling off (say of eleven or twelve); but this is accounted for by an unusual number of deaths, or removals from the county. It is, however, expected that before the end of the year the losses will be entirely recovered. There are at present about 530 members.

“The Balance of the General Fund in hand at the end of 1891 amounted to £103 4s. 4d., as against £78 8s. 6d. in the previous year. The Castle Purchase Debt was reduced from £212 18s. 0d. to £164 19s. 4d., which is really an insignificant amount of liability against so valuable a property as that of your Society. But the Members must bear in mind that many improvements and repairs to the buildings are and will be needed; among those pressing at the present moment may be mentioned, a new roof to the Exchequer chamber, and sundry repairs to the School House premises, which have recently become vacant; so that no effort should be spared to maintain and to increase the funds at the disposal of the Society. In April of the present year a bequest of £100, by the late Mrs. Robberds, of Cheltenham, was received: bringing the entire debt, at the present moment, to about £40 only. In paying the legacy it was suggested by her executors that an effort should be made to clear off this small sum at once, by specially bringing the subject before the Members and the public at the Annual Meeting.

“During the past year your Museum has been enriched by two valuable gifts, first—a large collection of Botanical speci-

mens, gathered by Miss Isabella Gifford, late of Minehead, and including a well-mounted series of Peat Mosses, together with a great number of Marine Algae. These were prepared by Miss Gifford herself, the author of a work on Marine Botany, and an acknowledged authority. For all this your Society is indebted to her executor, Mr. H. Southwood Smith. Secondly —the late Hon. Secretary, Mr. O. W. Malet, who conferred such great and lasting benefit on your Society by his strenuous and unwearied exertions in the purchase of the Castle, and whose death was recorded by a short obituary in the last volume of *Proceedings*, has by his will bequeathed to the Society his fine collection of weapons, acquired by him during his service in India. These have been received and arranged in one of the upper rooms.

“Although no exceptional addition has been made to your Library during the past year, yet it is steadily growing, and bids fair to become of such value and importance as probably to constitute, at no distant date, one of the most noteworthy features of your Society’s Museum.

“The past year has been marked by the deplorable loss of one of your oldest and most distinguished Members—Professor E. A. Freeman, who fell a victim to smallpox, while gathering fresh materials at Alicante, in Spain, for his “History of Sicily.” None who have been present at the earlier meetings of the Society will fail to recollect the prominent part and the deep interest he took in describing and comparing the architecture of the County. The death of Sir Alexander Acland-Hood has also left a gap in the ranks of your distinguished Members. As one of your Vice-Presidents, and as a Trustee, he took a lively interest in the work of your Society.

“The Council are unable to report any substantial advance in the work of preparing a County History. The difficulty is to find an editor at once capable, willing, and with leisure to devote himself to the work. Until the right man appears there seems to be little hope of real progress.

“The prospectus issued of Mr. Green’s ‘Bibliotheca Somersetensis’ is in fact the first step, and it is urged upon all Members to do their utmost to obtain subscriptions to this most important work, which will be invaluable as a foundation for the historical superstructure which all hope to see raised.

“Your Council regret to say that no progress has been made during the past year in the matter of the Photographic Survey of the County, mentioned at the last Annual Meeting; but they desire to keep it before the minds of the Members, in the hope that some practical steps may be taken this year.

“The Council are glad to report that the Axbridge Branch of the Society has been duly established in accordance with the rules applicable to Branches, and that this, with the Northern Branch previously formed, are prospering, and already doing good work in their respective localities.”

Mr. CHISHOLM-BATTEN proposed the adoption of the report.

Rev. T. S. HOLMES, in seconding, said he was sure the Meeting would receive with great pleasure the statement that the County History was being postponed; that for the present, the quarries, from which county history was made, were being well worked on all sides.

Mr. BOTHAMLEY supposed that the Society was agreed on the importance and desirability of the photographic survey of the county, and that it should be proceeded with as quickly as possible. With regard to funds, he thought the work ought not to be expensive, because a good deal of it could be done by amateurs. Organisation was more difficult, but they had much experience to draw upon, as a good deal of work had been done in other counties. He rose chiefly for the purpose of suggesting that it was desirable to refer this matter to a small sub-committee, containing both photographers and archæologists.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that Mr. Bothamley should hand in a proposition to that effect.

The Treasurer’s Report was next read by Mr. BADCOCK.

Treasurer's Account.

The Treasurer in Account with the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, from January 1st to December 31st, 1891.

DR.	CR.
1890, Dec. 31st.	1891.
By Balance of former Account ... 78 8 6	To Expenses attending Annual Meeting ... 21 5 4
" Members' Entrance Fees ... 12 12 0	" Stationery, Printing, etc. ... 16 19 5
" Members' Subscriptions in arrear 9 19 6	" Purchase of Books, Specimens, etc. ... 6 0 4
" Members' Subscriptions for the year 1891 ... 264 10 0	" Cases, Fittings, Repairs, etc. ... 15 8 5
" Members' Subscriptions in advance ... 6 5 6	" Coal and Gas ... 25 7 3
" Excursion Tickets ... 14 10 0	" Printing and Binding vol. xxxvi. 76 5 10
" Sale of Publications ... 7 18 6	" Illustrations ... 23 17 6
" Museum Admission Fees ... 27 8 4	" Postage and Carriage of vols. ... 9 17 5
	" Curator's Salary, 1 year to Christmas, 1890 ... 85 0 0
	" Errand Boy ... 0 18 0
	" Subscriptions to Publications of Societies ... 8 8 0
	" Insurance ... 4 10 6
	" Rates ... 10 9 0
	" Postage, Carriage, etc. ... 11 9 11
	" Sundries ... 2 11 1
	" Balance ... 103 4 4
£421 12 4	£421 12 4
1891, Dec. 31st.	H. J. BADCOCK,
Balance £103 4 4	Treasurer.

August 5th, 1892. Examined and compared with the Vouchers and Bank Book, and found correct. } W. M. KELLY
THOS. MEYLER

Taunton Castle Purchase Fund.

Treasurer's Account from 1st January to 31st December, 1891.

RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.
By Donation from Mr. Goodland ... 0 10 6	1890, Dec. 31st. £ s d
" Mrs. Dobson ... 1 0 0	To Balance ... 212 18 0
" The Very Rev. T. W. Jex-Blake ... 1 1 0	" Repairs to Buildings, etc. ... 44 1 8
" Rents of Premises ... 64 4 9	" Rates and Taxes ... 6 13 1
" Rents of Castle Hall ... 44 17 0	" Castle Hall Expenses and Sundries ... 3 19 3
" Mr. Sloman, towards cost of new range ... 2 0 0	" Gas ... 4 9 6
" Proceeds of Fancy Ball, held at Taunton, Dec., 1891 ... 8 14 2	" Insurance ... 4 6 6
" Balance 164 19 4	" Interest on Loan ... 10 18 9
£287 6 9	£287 6 9

1891. Dec. 31st
Balance 164 19 4

H. J. BADCOCK,
Treasurer.

August 5th, 1892. Examined and compared with the Vouchers and Bank Book, and found correct. } W. M. KELLY
THOS. MEYLER

The adoption of the Report was moved by CANON BUCKLE.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER seconded, and suggested that as the volumes of the Society's *Proceedings* are very valuable, it would be well to have an alternative volume bound in cloth; those who took the volumes in cloth to pay the additional cost.

Votes of condolence with the families of the late Professor Freeman, and the late Sir A. Acland-Hood were proposed in feeling terms by the PRESIDENT.

The Rev. G. D. OMMANEY seconded. Dr. Freeman, he said, had a special claim on the grateful memory of the Society. For many years he was one of the most prominent attendants at its meetings, and he used to lecture in the most interesting and learned manner on the churches they visited.

The PRESIDENT proposed the re-election of the Officers of the Society, and spoke in high terms of the good work done by Mr. C. Tite, as Hon. Local Secretary, in connection with the visit of the Society to Wellington.

Also a list of thirty-five candidates for election as Members was submitted to the Meeting, and all were elected.

Somerset Record Society.

Rev. T. S. HOLMES said the numbers at present were very small, viz.: 138. A special effort ought to be made to procure new Subscribers. They had only 100 among the Members of this Society, and, considering the work they were doing, and the scheme of work before them, he felt that they should be more liberally supported. They were now engaged on a volume of extreme value, and he hoped that in a few weeks time it would be issued. Plans for the future were still indefinite; they were hampered both by the want of subscribers and of honorary editors. They were looking for an historical barrister to deal with the Assize Inquests for Somerset, and they also had their eyes on three Bishop's Registers, but with the present number of members they could not issue more than one volume a year.