

Proceedings
of the
Somersetshire Archæological and
Natural History Society,
during the year 1876.

THE Twenty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Society was opened in the Banqueting room of the Guildhall of BATH, on Tuesday, July 18th, at 12 noon. The Chair was taken by the President, the Right Honourable THE EARL OF CORK AND ORRERY.

The PRESIDENT in opening the meeting said that he had great pleasure in having to propose Mr. JEROM MURCH as his successor in office. He ventured to say that the Society could not select any one more fitted to fill the chair on the present occasion. Mr. Murch had shown himself deeply interested in everything connected with the city of Bath, and was thoroughly acquainted with all the ancient and modern associations of the place, and no movement, either for the benefit of the Society or for the advantage of the city, had been proposed without his taking a leading part. He was happy in being able to congratulate the Society on the prospect of having as fine a week as they enjoyed last year. He proposed Mr. Jerom Murch as President of the Society for the ensuing year.

The proposition was carried with acclamation. Lord Cork then left the chair which was taken by Mr. Murch, who acknowledged the great obligation of the Society and himself to Lord Cork for coming to the meeting that day at the cost of considerable personal inconvenience.

The Rev. G. WILLIAMS said that they ought not to allow Lord Cork to leave the chair without offering the thanks of the Society to him for the way in which he had fulfilled the office of President, and for the great help which he had given them at the last Annual Meeting. He proposed that the thanks of the Society be voted to Lord Cork for so admirably performing the duties of the presidency.

Col. PINNEY seconded the resolution, which was carried with acclamation.

The Earl of CORK expressed the gratification which he felt in doing what he was able to do last year for the welfare of the Society, and also in being present that day.

The PRESIDENT then called upon the Rev. W. Hunt, Honorary Secretary, to read the

Report of the Council.

“The Council of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society have the honour of presenting to you their Twenty-eighth Annual Report, and beg to congratulate you on the progress made by the Society during the past year.

“Since July, 1875, the number of subscribers has increased from 434 to 453.

“The actual receipts have been in about the same proportion. The Council regret to announce that the amount of unpaid subscriptions is still so great that they think it their duty to call especial attention to it. The amount due at the end of last year was £110. A strong reminder has been sent to each defaulter, with a printed order on a banker enclosed, and a

request that members will kindly sign it and send it to their bankers, to ensure a greater punctuality for the future.

“The Council have to report that their Museum has been largely increased during the past year. They have no doubt but that the spacious accommodation afforded by their noble old Castle begins to be appreciated by the public. Besides minor gifts by Miss Vicentia Tynte and others, they have to record the presentation by Mrs. Quekett of the Museum of Natural History and Ethnological objects, collected by Professor Quekett and Mr. Edward Quekett, of Langport. They have also to report the important acquisition of 141 vols. of the publications of the Record Commissioners. These were formerly held by the Taunton and Somerset Institution, but by consent of the Committee of the Institution and with the sanction of the Master of the Rolls, they have been transferred to the library of this Society.

“Since the last annual meeting an important addition has been made to the property of the Society. A dwelling house and garden, with a large frontage to the river, extending to the outer moat and immediately adjoining the Castle garden, were offered for sale, and the question of purchasing them for the Society was considered at a special general meeting of the members on the 17th of March last. The meeting was largely attended, and was unanimous in its determination to buy the property for the sum of £460.

“The Council desire to express their satisfaction at the purchase, and to endorse the opinion that its possession will be of great importance, both in preventing any obnoxious business being carried on so near the Museum, and also in its direct future utility to the Society.

“In making this report the Council wish particularly to convey their thanks to Mr. Sloper, by whose forethought and friendly assistance they were alone able to make the purchase. This sum of £460 will be met in part by a fund now amounting to about £120, raised as a memorial to your late Secretary,

Mr. Wm. Arthur Jones, and which the subscribers have undertaken to make over to the Society on condition that some record of the gifts be placed on the premises.

“Appended to their report the Council present a balance-sheet of the costs of the whole Castle property, and of the contributions and collections made in its behalf. It will be seen that the sum still due amounts to £1,123 12s. 1d. Some gentlemen who attended the general meeting convened to consider the question of the new purchase, generously set on foot a new subscription, which in a few days reached the sum of £71. The Council are not however confident that a second appeal to the county for further funds at the present moment would be generally acceptable. They would gladly invite the opinion of Members of the Society upon this subject, and hope, before they separate, that something definite and popular may be set on foot. The plan of yearly subscriptions for this special purpose has been strongly recommended and backed up by a promise of liberal support by Mr. Sanford, of Nynehead Court, and other gentlemen.

“It should be remembered that the one great object kept in view by the Council in their desire to pay off the debt, is that of enabling them to appropriate the Castle Hall to the purposes of the Museum, which they are now prevented from doing by want of funds.

“Nothing has been expended on the Castle itself during the past year, beyond the cost of a few necessary repairs and fittings. All restorations have been postponed until the Building Committee, appointed in 1875, shall have examined and reported upon the fabric. But the Council are of opinion that before long certain out-buildings of modern construction, which deface the appearance of the Castle court, ought to be removed.

“The yearly income, from letting the Castle Hall and the School premises amounts to about £85. The interest of the debt connected with the original purchase will be about £35. It will be seen therefore that the Society holds a yearly balance

in their current account, sufficient to allay any fears of the soundness of their finances.

“The present rental of the house just purchased is £23. The interest of the money borrowed for the purchase will be about £18.

“As it was desirable that additional Trustees should be appointed, a special general meeting of the Members of the Society was held on the 16th of September for that purpose, when the following four gentlemen were appointed :—Sir Alexander Acland Hood, Bart., Messrs. Henry Danby Seymour, William Stephen Gore Langton, and Edward J. Stanley.

“The Council are happy to be able to report the completion of an Index to the first 20 vols. of the Society’s Proceedings. The Index is published as a separate volume, and offered for sale at the same price as the other volumes, viz., 6s. 6d. This volume contains in addition to the Index of the Society’s Proceedings, the Indexes of the Records of the Dean and Chapter of Wells, edited by Mr. F. H. Dickinson, and the Rev. W. Hunt, with a Preface on the nature and importance of these documents by Mr. Dickinson. It will be gratifying to the Society to hear that these objects (so long desired) have been at length attained.

“The Committee report the want of an Honorary Secretary residing near the head quarters of the Society at Taunton, and beg to recommend the appointment of Mr. Turner, who has kindly conducted the business for several months.

“The Council recommend the adoption of this course.

“The following Members of the Committee go out by rotation :—Messrs. W. Meade King, T. Meyler, J. F. Norman, W. P. Pinchard, Rev. J. W. Ward, and Mr. Charles J. Turner.”

The Report was duly adopted.

Mr. O. W. MALET, Honorary Secretary, said that it gave him great pleasure to be able to lay before the Society a

detailed statement of the receipts and expenditure connected with the purchase of the Castle of Taunton. He then read the following balance sheet :—

Taunton Castle Purchase Account.

DR.		£	s	d
To Purchase Money of Taunton Castle	£ 2,850	0	0
„ Legal expenses	52	0	0
		<hr/>		2,902 0 0
„ Purchase of House and Garden adjoining the Castle, with Interest	£ 456	11	5
„ Legal expenses	23	12	0
		<hr/>		490 8 5
„ Fixtures, Furniture, &c., of Great Hall, at a valuation			87 9 0
„ Repairs to Buildings, Alterations to Museum, Great Hall, and Curator's Apartments			312 13 0
„ Painting and Decorating			62 7 2
„ Expenses attending removal of the Society's Collection			24 16 6
„ Removal of Buildings, making and repairing of Paths, &c.			30 10 0
„ Ironmonger and Gasfitter			49 18 0
„ Altering, re-fixing, and purchasing Specimen and Book Cases			103 5 9
„ Rates, Taxes, and Insurance			32 5 0
„ Great Hall Expenses :—				
Gas	£ 96	14	4
Attendance and cleaning	9	12	0
		<hr/>		36 6 4
„ Printing, Stationery, and Postages			46 3 3
„ Architect's charges			19 6 6
„ Interest on Money borrowed			125 12 4
„ Sundry disbursements			6 0 9
				<hr/> <hr/>
				£ 4,329 3 0
CR.		£	s	d
By Donations	2,263	9	0
„ Proceeds of "Castle Week," August, 1875	665	2	6
„ Ditto of Fancy Ball, 23rd December, 1875	53	18	0
„ Ditto of Spelling Bee, 29th February, 1876	24	0	0
„ Interest on Deposits at Stuckey's Bank	5	19	8
„ Rents from Midsummer, 1874 :—				/
Mr. Veysey	58	2	9
Mr. Gillett	15	0	0
Castle Hall	119	19	0
„ Balance due to Stuckey's Banking Co.	1,123	12	1
				<hr/> <hr/>
				£ 4,329 3 0

The PRESIDENT then called upon Mr. O. W. Malet, in the absence of the Treasurers, to read the following

Financial Statement.

The Treasurers in Account with the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.

DR.	£ s d	CR.	£ s d
1875. Aug. 6.		1875-6.	
By Balance of former Account	24 15 2	To Expenses attending Annual Meetings	
" Subscriptions	310 11 0	&c.	12 16 1
" Entrance Fees	20 0 0	" Stationery, Printing, &c.	18 9 3
" Excursion Tickets	20 5 0	" Coal, Gas, Water	22 0 2
" Sale of Fixtures at old		" Repairs, Cases, &c.	4 6 1
Museum	16 0 0	" Curator's Salary to June 24th, 1876	85 0 0
" Sale of Volumes of Pro-		" Balance of Account for Printing	
ceedings	1 19 0	Vol. XX.	64 7 6
" Museum Admission Fees..	19 9 7	" Illustrations	42 9 0
" Transferred from Castle		" Insurance	7 6 0
Purchase Fund, on ac-		" Reporting	3 2 0
count of Printing, &c. ...	5 0 0	" Purchase of Books, Specimens, &c. ...	14 17 6
		" Subscription to Harleian Society, 1876	1 1 0
		" Ditto, to Palaeontographical Society,	
		1876	1 1 0
		" Ditto, to Bay Society, 1876	1 1 0
		" Transferred to Castle Purchase	
		Fund from Capt. Newnham, Feb.	
		16th, credited in error	1 1 0
		" Expenses attending removal of the	
		Quekett collection	7 15 0
		" Postages, Carriage, &c.	7 10 4
		" Sundries	17 4
		" Balance	16 18 0
	£ 310 19 9		£ 310 19 9

H., H. J., & D. BADCOCK, Treasurers.

Examined, compared with the vouchers, and found correct, July 14th, 1876.

W. M. KELLY.

W. MEADE KING.

These accounts were declared adopted.

The Vice-Presidents were re-elected, with the addition of the Earl of Cork.

The Treasurers were re-elected, and a cordial acknowledgment made of the efficient manner in which they performed the duties of the office, and the kindness with which they devoted time to the interests of the Society.

Mr. E. A. FREEMAN, D.C.L., proposed the election of the Honorary Secretaries. It was somewhat difficult to say anything on an annual motion which people had not heard before in some fashion or another. Now however an idea had come into his head which he believed was quite new. There was a singular likeness which he hoped to establish between their excellent Secretaries and King Harry the Eighth. He did not mean in personal appearance, nor in all their ways of going on. As the Members might remember, and it was to be hoped that they

did know and remember it, King Henry the Eighth was the last elected King of England. He was elected in a remarkable manner, for he wrote with his own hand the plan for his own election. He did not suggest the possibility of any other candidate, and ordered that at a certain stage of the proceedings the people were to shout with a loud voice, "Yea, yea, King Harry." In the same way the Secretaries had drawn a device for their re-election, which had been put into his hand, and when he came to the end of his little speech his hearers were to cry out, "Yea, yea, Hunt and Malet." The Secretaries however proposed that they should receive a colleague, a course which King Henry would scarcely have taken. The way in which Mr. Malet had conducted and carried through the purchase of the Castle had conferred a great benefit on the Society. As regarded the work of their other Secretary, he considered that great improvements had been made in the form and matter of the Annual Volume. He had been pleased to see a specimen copy of the Index to the Society's Proceedings. It was a work which had been long wanted, and he was happy to think that that want was now well supplied. He knew that there was an idea that any one could make an index ; he could tell them from his own experience that it was one of the most difficult things to do well. A large number of indexes were really useless, or worse than useless ; they contained references to subjects or events which everybody knew about, and left out all the special points which you wanted to look up. He had examined this index, and he was glad to find that it took notice of things which were really of interest and importance, and though there must be some slips in a work of this kind, he believed that but very few would be found. Mr. Hunt and Mr. Malet each had their own sphere of work for the Society. Neither of them lived at head quarters, and he understood that the presence of a Secretary at the Castle to look after the many little matters which arose day by day would be beneficial to the Society and was much wished at Taunton. He begged to propose the re-

election of Messrs. Hunt and Malet, and the election, as a third Secretary, of Mr. C. J. Turner, of Taunton.

Mr. J. BATTEN seconded the proposition, and it was carried unanimously.

The following gentlemen were elected Members of the Committee :—Messrs. R. Meade King, T. Meyler, J. F. Norman, W. Pinchard, Chas. Eden, and F. Smith.

The Local Secretaries were re-elected, with the addition of Mr. Fox, of Wellington.

Mr. HUNT proposed the re-appointment of Mr. W. Bidgood as Assistant Secretary and Curator. He spoke of the valuable services which Mr. Bidgood performed for the Society, and mentioned that he had been of the greatest help to him in the preparation of the Index volume, and had made the Natural History references his special care. The proposition was seconded by Mr. C. MOORE, who spoke of the talent which Mr. Bidgood displayed in the illustrations which he had done for the Society. The proposition was carried unanimously.

Mr. HUNT desired to draw forth some expression of opinion as to the place of the next Annual Meeting. It would be remembered that Dulverton had been suggested more than once; and there were many things to recommend it, but he thought that it would not be an easy matter to arrange for the entertainment and conveyance of a large party in so small a town. It was a long time since the Society had met at Glastonbury, and the record of the proceedings there left much to be desired. A meeting at Glastonbury would give them an opportunity of hearing the conclusion of Mr. Freeman's King Ine, and this would complete a most valuable part of their Journal. At the same time he would cheerfully undertake to do his best to arrange a meeting at any place which the Members might choose.

Mr. J. BATTEN considered that the place of meeting should always be left to the Council.

Mr. HUNT quite agreed with Mr. Batten, though at the same

time he believed that it would be well to follow the precedent of the last few years by making it a subject of discussion at the annual meeting, in order that the Council might be informed of the wishes of those Members of the Society who were most constant in their attendance at these meetings; and might also gain some hints which would assist them in making their selection.

Mr. FREEMAN said that he certainly hoped, before long, to finish what he had to say about King Ine at Glastonbury, for that was the most fitting spot in which they could discuss the character of his laws. This year, however, he must beg to be let off, as he had much other work on hand. He thought that the claims of Bridgwater as a place of meeting had been most strangely overlooked by the Society; he did not remember that they had ever visited that town.

The Rev. H. M. SCARTH said that the second meeting of the Society was held at Bridgwater.

Mr. HUNT said that the meeting to which Mr. Scarth referred was a quarterly meeting, and that the report of it occupied little more than a single page of their Journal. In 1856, the Members of the Society, instead of independent proceedings, joined the Congress of the British Archæological Association, which was held at that place. In 1858, a meeting was held in Bridgwater, under the presidency of Mr. P. Bouverie, but the excursions were stopped by the rain. He thought that the Society might well hold another meeting there next year, in case it proved difficult to make proper arrangements at Dulverton. The matter might now be referred to the Council. He thought that what had passed justified the course he had taken in bringing the question before the meeting, as the Council would now have before them the claims of Bridgwater in case it was necessary to abandon Dulverton. If Bridgwater was not taken this year, it ought no doubt to be chosen before long.

Eight new Members were elected.