

Proceedings
of the
Somersetshire Archæological and
Natural History Society,
During the Year 1886.

THE 38th Annual General Meeting of the Society was held in the Town Hall, YEOVIL, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of August, 1886, under the presidency of JOHN BATTEN, Esq., F.S.A.

It is thirty-three years since the Society met at Yeovil—the fifth Annual General Meeting having been held there in September, 1853, with Colonel Pinney as President; and although the district to the west and east has been visited during meetings at Crewkerne in 1871, and at Sherborne in 1875, Yeovil itself has not been the centre of the Society's annual gathering since the above date. Some old ground was necessarily gone over on the present occasion, for places of such antiquarian, historical, and architectural importance as Hamdon hill, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Montacute, Martock, and Brympton, could hardly have been omitted from the pro-

gramme; and the result has fully justified the action of the Council, for much interesting information has been added to our previous knowledge of those places.

In opening the proceedings, Mr. EMANUEL GREEN, *Hon. Secretary*, said he was very sorry to say that on account of ill-health, Lord Carlingford was unable to be present this year—a circumstance they must all very much regret. He thought it was *ex-officio* his duty to make this explanation, and he called upon Bishop Hobhouse kindly to propose the President for the year.

Bishop HOBHOUSE then proposed that Mr. John Batten, who had kindly consented to undertake the office, be elected President for the ensuing year.

Judge HOOPER seconded the proposition, which was carried by acclamation.

Mr. BATTEN then took the chair, and thanked the Meeting for the honour the Members had conferred upon him by electing him their President. He hoped he should not disappoint them by the way he discharged the duties of the office. He called upon

Mr. GREEN to read the following

Annual Report of the Council.

“The Council of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society have much pleasure in presenting to the Members their 38th Annual Report.

“The steady increase in the number of its Members, amounting at the present time to 520, is a proof that the Society continues to receive a cordial support.

“The state of the finances, although apparently not so favourable as that shown in the last report, is sound and satisfactory. The balance in the hands of the Treasurer at the close of 1885 was £9 9s. 11d., as compared with £76 10s. 11d. at the close of 1884. But this diminution is owing to the fact that the ‘extra expenses incurred in re-arranging the contents

of the Geological room, and in painting and fitting up the Ethnological room,' announced in the last year's report, have been paid for out of the year's income.

"The liability on the Castle Purchase Fund now amounts to £311 16s. 7d. To this must be added the deficit incurred in the re-construction of the Geological room, viz., £258 0s. 7d.—making the total debt £569 17s. 2d., as compared with £653 13s. 9d. at the end of 1884.

"Your Council considering that the Library having recently become of sufficient importance to warrant them in extending its usefulness, appointed a Sub-Committee to draw up a scheme for the loan of books to Members, and also to prepare a catalogue of the Library. The rules suggested by them are appended hereto.

"Your Council report that they have received a circular from the Society of Antiquaries of London, drawing their attention to the need of endeavours to preserve Court Rolls and other Deeds, both in public and private archives. In consequence of the receipt of this circular, besides communicating with those having charge of Manorial Rolls, your Council has addressed influential inhabitants of the two disfranchised boroughs of Axbridge and Langport, requesting their assistance in the endeavour to obtain the Society's safe custody of their valuable records.¹

"The attention of the public generally to this subject is invited by your Council, who beg to state that they are prepared to take charge of any Records worthy of preservation committed to their keeping, and have issued a circular to the Local Secretaries and others calling their attention thereto.

"Your Council have also received a notice from the Inspector of Ancient Monuments, General Pitt-Rivers, that the Commission whom he represents are ready to receive the names of any such monuments within the county of Somerset as do

(1). An interesting notice of the Charters of Axbridge was supplied by the Rev. W. Hunt, to the 15th volume of the Society's *Proceedings*.

not already appear upon the published list, with a view to their protection under the Act. Your Council has accordingly put itself in communication with their Local Secretaries on the subject.

“The Royal Historical Society has addressed an invitation to your Council to appoint delegates to a celebration they are about to hold of the 800th anniversary of the completion of the *Domesday* Survey. Your Council have accordingly appointed the Rev. W. Hunt, the Rev. J. A. Bennett, and their Honorary Secretary (Mr. Green), and these gentlemen have been pleased to accept the appointment.

“Your Council beg to report that they have received returns descriptive of their church plate, from about half the parishes in the diocese. They would suggest that a summary of the returns, with perhaps a few typical illustrations of different periods, should be published in the next year’s volume of *Proceedings*.

“It is with sincere regret that your Council refer to the recent death of two of the Society’s most valued Members—the Rev. F. Brown, and Wm. Long, Esq. Mr. Brown, who for a short time was one of the Society’s Honorary Secretaries, had made the genealogies of the county of Somerset his special study, and by his extensive and accurate knowledge of them, often enlivened by touches of anecdote, contributed much to the interest of the Society’s excursions, and furnished many valuable papers to its volumes. Mr. Long was President of the Society in the year 1869, and then instituted the custom of inaugurating his term of office by an address—a custom, the observance of which has so often prepared the audience for the objects of interest to be found during the Annual Meetings, and for the account of them subsequently published. Also, the Society must regret the death of Mr. J. B. Davidson of Secktor, who, although a Devonshire man, so kindly gave the Somerset Society much valuable time, and from his great store of learning much valuable information.”

Rules for the Government of the Library.

- 1.—The Library shall be open for the use of the Members of the Society daily (with the exception of Sundays, Good Friday, and Christmas Day), from Ten in the Morning till Five in the Afternoon, from April to August inclusive, and during the remaining months of the year until Four o'clock.
- 2.—Every Member of the Society whose annual subscription shall not be more than three months in arrear may borrow out of the Library not more than two volumes at a time, and may exchange any of the borrowed volumes for others as often as he may please, but so that he shall not have more than two in his possession at any one time.
- 3.—Every application by any Member who shall not attend in person for the loan of any book or books shall be in writing.
- 4.—So much of the title of every book borrowed as will suffice to distinguish it, the name of the borrower, and the time of borrowing it, shall be entered in a book to be called the "Library Delivery Book;" and such entry, except the application be by letter, shall be signed by the borrower; and the return of books borrowed shall be duly entered in the same book.
- 5.—The book or books borrowed may either be taken away by the borrower, or sent to him in any reasonable and recognised mode which he may request; and should no request be made, then the Curator shall send the same to the borrower by such mode as the Curator shall think fit.
- 6.—All costs of the packing, and of the transmission and return of the book or books borrowed, shall in every case be defrayed by the Member who shall have borrowed the same.
- 7.—No book borrowed out of the Library shall be retained for a longer period than one month, if the same be applied for in the mean time by any other Member; nor in any case shall any book be retained for a longer period than three months.

- 8.—Every Member who shall borrow any book out of the Library shall be responsible to the Society for its safety and good condition from the time of its leaving the Library ; also if he borrow any book or manuscript within the Library, till it shall be returned by him. And in case of loss or damage, he shall replace the same or make it good ; or, if required by the Committee, shall furnish another copy of the entire work of which it may be part.
- 9.—No manuscript, nor any drawing, nor any part of the Society's collection of prints or rubbings shall be lent out of the Library.
- 10.—The Committee shall prepare, and may from time to time add to or alter, a list of such works as shall not be lent out of the library, on account of their rarity, value, or peculiar liability to damage ; or on account of their being works of reference often needed by Members personally using the Library, and a copy of such list for the time being shall be kept in the Library.
- 11.—No book shall be lent out until one month after the acquisition of it for the Library.
- 12.—Extracts from the manuscripts or printed books are allowed to be made freely, but in case of a transcript being desired of a whole manuscript or printed book, the consent of the Committee must be previously obtained.
- 13.—Persons not being Members of the Society may be admitted for a period not exceeding one week, to consult printed books and manuscripts not of a private nature in the Society's Library, for any special purpose, on being introduced by a Member, either personally or by letter.
- 14.—No book shall be lent to any person not being a Member of the Society without a special order of the Committee.
- 15.—Before any Member can borrow a book from the Library, he must acknowledge that he consents to the printed Rules of the Society for the government of the Library.

Upon the motion of the Rev. H. H. WINWOOD, seconded by Mr. DAUBENY, the Report and the Rules relating to the Library were adopted.

The PRESIDENT said they must all be very much pleased at the Report, which showed they were advancing in their exertions. He was very glad to see the scheme adopted for allowing books to be lent out from the Library at Taunton. The Members were not all able to acquire the large and expensive volumes that the Library possessed, and as a similar plan had been a long time in operation in connection with the Society of Antiquaries, he was very glad to find it now adopted in their own county.

Mr. GREEN also read the following statements of accounts :

Treasurers' Account.

The Treasurers in Account with the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society, from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st, 1885.

DR.		CR.	
1884, Dec. 31st.	£ s d	1885.	£ s d
By Balance of former account	76 10 11	To Expenses attending Annual Meeting,	
„ Members' Entrance Fees...	17 6 0	Travelling, &c.	29 3 2
„ Members' Arrears of Sub-		„ Stationery, Printing, &c.	8 3 2
scriptions	9 9 0	„ Purchase of Books and Specimens,	
„ Members' Subscriptions		Binding, &c.	9 12 10
for the year 1885	252 8 6	„ Coal and Gas	26 12 3
„ Members' Subscriptions in		„ Cases, Repairs, &c.	72 11 8
advance	6 16 0	„ Printing and Binding Vol. XXX ...	97 7 3
„ Life Member	10 10 0	„ Illustrations for ditto... ..	24 16 0
„ Excursion Tickets... ..	6 10 0	„ Postage and Carriage of ditto ...	9 13 4
„ Sale of Volumes of Pro-		„ Curator's Salary, 1 year to Christ-	
ceedings	12 13 3	mas, 1885	85 0 0
„ Museum Admission Fees...	23 15 6	„ Subscription to Harleian Society,	
		1885	1 1 0
		„ Subscription to Harleian Society,	
		Registers, 1885	1 1 0
		„ Subscription to Palæontographical	
		Society, 1885	1 1 0
		„ Subscription to Ray Society, 1885 ...	1 1 0
		„ Subscription to the Early English	
		Text Society, 8 years	8 8 0
		„ Rates and Taxes	13 10 3
		„ Insurance	4 10 6
		„ Postage, Carriage, &c.	9 11 2½
		„ Sundries	3 5 7½
		„ Balance	9 9 11
	<u>£ 415 19 2</u>		<u>£ 415 19 2</u>

1885, Dec. 31st.

Balance £9 9 11

H. & H. J. BADCOCK, *Hon. Treasurers.*

1886, March 4th. Examined and compared with the vouchers, and found correct.

ALFRED MAYNARD,
EDWIN SLOPER.

Taunton Castle Purchase Fund.*Treasurers' Account from 1st January to 31st December, 1885.*

<i>Receipts.</i>	<i>£ s d</i>	<i>Expenditure.</i>	<i>£ s d</i>
By Donation from Mr. Adlam	1 1 0	1884, Dec., 31st.	
„ Rents of Premises	59 4 10	Loan	£400 0 0
„ Rent of Castle Hall	70 4 4	Debit Balance	13 11
„ Proceeds of Fancy Ball, held		To Balance	400 13 11
at Taunton, Dec., 1885	46 12 0	„ Alterations and Repairs to Buildings	46 1 4
„ Balance	311 16 7	„ Rates and Taxes	8 2 2
		„ Castle Hall Expenses and Sundries	4 5 5
		„ Gas	5 9 5
		„ Insurance	4 6 6
		„ Interest on Loan	20 0 0
	<u>£488 18 9</u>		<u>£488 18 9</u>
		1885, Dec. 31st.	
		Balance, viz :	
		Loan	400 0 0
		Less Balance in Bank	88 3 5
			<u>£311 16 7</u>

H. & H. J. BADCOCK, *Hon. Treasurers.*

1886, March 4th. Examined and compared with the vouchers and found correct,	}	ALFRED MAYNARD. EDWIN SLOPER.
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The PRESIDENT remarked that it was satisfactory to find that the expense of fitting up the Geological and Ethnological rooms had been paid out of the income—thus avoiding any addition to the Society's debt on the Castle property.

Mr. BOURDILLON proposed the re-election of the Vice-Presidents, and that the retiring President be added to the list. He remarked that Lord Carlingford had performed the duties of President for two successive years, and it was unnecessary to say with what ability, cordiality, and intelligence, and how much to the advantage of the Society, he had discharged those duties.

Mr. DAUBENY seconded the proposition, which was carried unanimously.

Captain BENNETT proposed the re-election of the Officers of the Society, with the addition of the Rev. Preb. W. E. Buller, of Chard, to the list of Local Secretaries, and the following to constitute the Committee:—Major Foster, Rev. J. W. Ward, Messrs. Wilfred G. Marshall, A. Maynard, T. Meyler, H. E. Murray-Anderdon, and E. Sloper.

Mr. DAUBENY seconded the motion, and it was carried.

The PRESIDENT said the next business was the selection

of a place for the meeting next year. It was usual to delegate this power to the Council, and he presumed that practice would not be departed from on the present occasion. Any suggestions that might be made, however, would receive the careful consideration of the Council.

Mr. E. GREEN read a list of candidates, and upon the motion of the PRESIDENT, the following were elected as Members:—E. Harbin Bates, Yeovil; Dr. Aldridge, Yeovil; W. H. M. Brown, Sherborne; E. J. Harry, Taunton; H. Cary Batten, Chetnole; W. C. VonBerg (Mayor of Wells); E. Helliar (Mayor of Yeovil); Rev. H. T. Beebe, Yeovil; H. P. Batten, W. Marsh, F. W. Raymond, Walter Raymond, A. J. Stanton, J. B. Paynter, J. Hill, Joseph Brutton, all of Yeovil; C. S. Jefferies, Clevedon; J. Brooking Rowe, Plympton; Rev. A. St. John Mildmay, Sparkford; Rev. W. L. Cotter, West Coker; Lieut.-Col. Mount Batten, Upcerne; Rev. J. B. Hyson, Tintinhull.

Taunton Grammar School.

Mr. E. GREEN said he had been requested to bring before their notice the fact that the Taunton Grammar School, which was situated within the precincts of the old Castle, had been advertised for sale by auction within eighteen days. This had caused some consternation at Taunton, especially amongst the Members of the Society, and it had been thought advisable that the Society should make a protest against the sale—at least until more notice had been given. To this end a memorial had been drawn up for presentation to the Charity Commissioners. He believed the result of the sale would be the destruction of the building in an archæological sense. The school was described as a good specimen of the architecture of its time, and one of the very few examples remaining of that period. The object of the postponement of the sale was to give the Society, or some individual, time to consider what steps could be taken to purchase the building

with the view of preserving it. There was no apparent possibility of anyone buying the place for scholastic purposes.

Bishop HOBHOUSE, in answer to Judge Hooper, said the time would expire on the 18th August, on which day the sale would take place. He did not see, at present, on what grounds the Society could interfere in the matter. If they were in a position to become the purchasers, or if they knew any gentleman who would come forward and purchase it after a postponement, they would have some grounds for asking for time. He did not see, under the present circumstances, however, how they could interfere; because, if time was allowed upon the strength of their memorial, they would be expected to become, or find, a purchaser for the place.

Mr. BOURDILLON said, without extra time nothing could be done by the Society to prevent the sale of this curious and interesting relic to private individuals, who might either pull the place down or convert it for their purposes in such a manner as to destroy its most interesting features. The object of a postponement of the sale was to give the Society time to enlist the sympathies of the people of Taunton and neighbourhood—or even the people of Somerset generally—in an attempt to prevent the destruction of the building. The School was founded in 1522, and stood within the precincts of the old Castle, and it would not do for the Society to sit down quietly and allow the sale or the destruction of the building to go on without an attempt to preserve it as it now stands.

After some further discussion, Mr. BOURDILLON read the final clause of the draft memorial, and proposed that it be sent to the Charity Commissioners on behalf of the Society.

Bishop HOBHOUSE seconded, and the PRESIDENT having remarked that he hoped the inhabitants of Taunton and the neighbourhood were too public-spirited to allow the ancient building to be destroyed, the resolution was put and carried.

The following is the memorial sent to the Charity Commissioners:—"That the Commissioners be requested to oblige

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by postponing the sale for a time. That possibly the necessity for the sale may be averted, or, if time be given, some arrangements may be made for preserving, or saving from destruction, this fine specimen of the buildings consecrated to education on the revival of learning.”¹