

*Proceedings*  
*of the*  
*Somersetshire Archæological and*  
*Natural History Society,*  
*during the year 1894.*

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THE annual meeting was held at Langport, on Tuesday, August the 15th, after an interval of thirty-three years since the last visit of the society. In the absence of LORD HYLTON, the President for the past year, the chair was taken in the Town Hall by the Very Reverend The DEAN OF WELLS, who merely opened the proceedings, and introduced the new President, Mr. E. B. CELY TREVILIAN.

The annual report, as follows, was read by the Hon. Sec., Mr. F. T. ELWORTHY :—

**Report.**

“ In presenting the forty-sixth annual report of your society, the council again rejoice in having to repeat the statements of many past years as to its steady maintenance and continued prosperity.

“ The number of members is almost stationary. There is no increase of new ones, nor any serious falling off of the old. The slight decrease in present numbers to 550, against 558, is no greater fluctuation than may be expected to occur in any similar body of persons, where no special efforts are made to recruit its strength. Your council are content to rest all claims on the county and the public, for support, upon the in-

trinsic merit of the work done by your society, and to this they venture to point with satisfaction.

“The Balance in hand at the end of the year, 1893, was £49 14s. 2d. on the General Account, against £89 17s. 6d. in 1892, and £103 4s. 4d. in 1891. The decrease of funds thus shown has not arisen from loss of income, but is to be accounted for by the increased bulk of the volume of *Proceedings*, by ever enlarging demands in connection with the Museum, and in the last year from a special grant of £10 to the Somerset Record Society, towards the printing of the Register of Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury.

“On the Castle Purchase Fund there is a small debt of £6 2s. 5d., against £5 5s. 4d. last year. Extensive repairs, which were absolutely necessary, have absorbed the entire income, while less has been received in consequence of a portion of the premises being still unoccupied. The subject of the restoration of the castle buildings was referred to in last year’s report: the council hope that this important matter will still be borne in mind, and that a fund for the purpose may be soon set on foot.

“The number of visitors to the Museum and Library during the year 1893 was 5539, against 5328 in 1892; showing that the interest of the public is well sustained, although there has been no great addition to either by way of special attraction.

“Since the last annual meeting your society has had to share with the county at large in lamenting the removal from amongst us of one of our most valued and accomplished Vice-Presidents—the Lord Bishop of the Diocese. Of his private worth, of his singular amiability, of his unfailling courtesy, it would be out of place to speak here; but the valuable help, the never failing interest he took in the work of this society, the learning and the wisdom he brought to all the meetings he was able to attend, demand a recognition far beyond any expression possible in this report. Although taken away at a ripe old age, yet his powers remained in full vigour to the

last, so that he may be said truly to have died in harness, and his loss, apart from the personal grief of individual members, is a reminder that the society is losing, one after another, its most eminent supporters.

“The index to ‘Collinson’ is proceeding, and it is hoped that it may be published before the meeting of 1895.

“The county history still awaits the coming editor; and Mr. Green’s bibliography needs more subscribers; but neither are forgotten. In the meantime materials continue to accumulate by the appearance of several new books dealing with local subjects. During the past year have been published Mr. C. W. Barrett’s ‘Somersetshire Highways, Byways, and Waterways’; Mr. E. J. Rawle’s ‘Annals of Exmoor Forest’; Mr. John Batten’s ‘Historical and Topographical Collections relating to South Somerset’; and last, but not least, Canon Church’s valuable ‘Chapters in the Early History of the Church of Wells.’ The latter has come at a most opportune moment, when renewed interest is being stimulated by the recent discoveries in the Eastern Cloister, and by the fact that the excavated ground had no sooner been replaced, than it had to be re-opened for the interment of the late much beloved bishop; while, further, the looks, the hopes, the prayers of the county are being fixed upon his successor.

“The council have with great pleasure to announce that Lieut.-Colonel Ewing has kindly undertaken the duties of Honorary Superintendent of the Museum and Library, and that arrangements have been made for the more rapid construction of a catalogue of the society’s very valuable collections.

“Recognising the long and faithful services of the curator, Mr. Bidgood, an addition of £20 per annum has been made to his salary.

“The Right Hon. Viscount Portman, to whom the society is indebted for a large and most important collection of geological specimens, has expressed his readiness to accept the position of Vice-President.

“The society is reminded that the time for which trustees on its behalf were appointed on the Axbridge and Ilchester Town Trusts, has expired, and that trustees must be again elected at this meeting.”

Mr. H. J. BADCOCK, in moving its adoption, remarked upon the excellent work being done by the society, and that such results could not be obtained without sufficient funds. He referred to a paragraph in last year's report, calling attention to the necessity for a proper restoration of the Castle of Taunton, and announced that in response to that intimation a kind and generous member of the society had sent him, as Treasurer, £25, as the beginning of a fund to be set apart for efficiently carrying out that important work. He moved as a rider to the report—“that the £25 towards a restoration fund be accepted with hearty thanks, and that the letter of the donor be referred to the Committee to be reported upon at a future meeting of the council.” It would be very desirable to have it made public that such a fund had been opened, and that subscriptions were invited for the very desirable object of restoring and maintaining those ancient and historical buildings. It took many years to pay for the Castle. That had now been done; but a great work was still before them, and much expenditure must be made, but before anything could be begun there must be considerable funds in hand.

The Rev. PREB. BULLER seconded the adoption of the report, and spoke of the pleasure afforded by these happy gatherings—but for which many nooks and corners of his native county would have been unknown to him—full, as they were, of kindly feeling and gracious hospitality, freed from all chance of interference from political or religious differences.

The report was adopted.

The Hon. Treasurer (Mr. H. J. BADCOCK), produced and read the balance sheets, as follows:—

Treasurer's Account.

The Treasurer in Account with the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society, from January 1st to December 31st, 1893.

DR.		CR.	
	£ s d		£ s d
1892, Dec. 31st.		1893	
By Balance of former Account ...	89 17 6	To Expenses attending Annual Meeting ...	18 6 8
„ Members' Entrance Fees ...	15 4 6	„ Stationery, Printing, etc. ...	16 10 9
„ Members' Subscriptions in arrear ...	2 12 6	„ Purchase of Books, Specimens, etc. and Bookbinding ...	24 14 4
„ Members' Subscriptions for the year 1893 ...	258 5 0	„ Repairs ...	0 5 6
„ Members' Subscriptions in advance ...	9 19 0	„ Coal and Gas ...	21 8 6
„ Excursion Tickets ...	15 0 0	„ Printing and Binding vol. xxxviii ...	123 0 0
„ Museum Admission Fees ...	28 11 11	„ Illustrations ...	18 18 3
„ Sale of Publications ...	8 4 2	„ Postage of Volumes ...	10 17 1
		„ Curator's Salary, 1 year to Christmas, 1893 ...	85 0 0
		„ Errand Boy ...	11 1 0
		„ Subscriptions to Publications of Societies ...	10 15 0
		„ Donation to Somerset Record Society ...	10 0 0
		„ Insurance ...	4 10 6
		„ Rates and Taxes ...	12 2 9
		„ Postage, Carriage, etc. ...	8 0 7
		„ Sundries ...	2 9 6
		„ Balance ...	49 14. 2
	<u>£427 14 7</u>		<u>£427 14 7</u>
1893, Dec. 31st.		H. J. BADCOCK,	
Balance ... ..	£49 14 2	Treasurer.	

August 8th, 1894. Examined and compared with the Vouchers and Bank Book, and found correct. } W. M. KELLY.  
 } J. E. W. WAKEFIELD.

Taunton Castle Purchase Fund.

Treasurer's Account from 1st January, to 31st December, 1893.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s d		£ s d
1893.		1892, Dec. 31st.	
By Rents of Premises ...	27 6 11	To Balance of former Account ...	5 5 4
„ Rents of Castle Hall ...	30 18 0	„ Repairs to Property ...	45 5 4
		„ Rates and Taxes ...	5 2 5
		„ Castle Hall Expenses ...	3 12 5
		„ Gas ...	1 3 4
		„ Insurance ...	3 16 6
		„ Cheque Book ...	0 2 0
			<u>£64 7 4</u>
Balance ... ..	6 2 5	1893. Dec. 31st.	
	<u>£64 7 4</u>	Balance ... ..	6 2 5
		H. J. BADCOCK,	
		Treasurer.	

August 8th, 1894. Examined and compared with the Vouchers and Bank Book, and found correct. } W. M. KELLY.  
 } J. E. W. WAKEFIELD.

The Rev. F. S. P. SEALE moved the receipt and adoption of the Treasurer's accounts, and said that there was no need to trouble at the decrease in the funds in hand, when we saw how much is gained by the increase of the valuable matter contained in the volume. The short paragraph in the report relating to the restoration was only inserted at the committee meeting on Friday last, but had already borne fruit in the starting of the fund spoken of by the Hon. Treasurer, by the kind gift of £25 to begin with. He hoped the publicity given to this generous, though anonymous act, would lead others to come forward and subscribe liberally. He gave his ideas as to the lines the restoration should take—that the ugly buildings in front of the Castle Hall should be removed, the grand old hall thoroughly restored, and rendered available for the museum.

Mr. C. H. FOX seconded, and speaking of the yearly decrease in the balance since 1891, enquired if the society wished the volume of *Proceedings* to be curtailed for want of funds. He suggested that every member should become a 'missionary' in his own neighbourhood, endeavouring to add to the number of permanent members.

After some remarks by the HON. SECRETARY as to the best mode of making the museum more attractive to visitors, and thus to compensate for loss of income in using the hall solely for that purpose, the Treasurer's accounts were received and adopted.

The Rev. CANON CHURCH proposed, and Mr. F. TUCKETT seconded, the re-election of the officers of the society, with the addition of Lord Hylton and Viscount Portman as Vice-Presidents; and of Lieut.-Col. Ewing as Hon. Superintendent of the Society's Museum and Library. Carried unanimously.

The Rev. CANON BUCKLE proposed, Mr. C. TITE seconded, and it was resolved, that Col. William Long be re-elected from October next to represent this society upon the Axbridge Town Trust, and Mr. A. J. Goodford upon the Ilchester Town Trust.

A long list of new members were elected, upon the motion of COL. BRAMBLE (Hon. Sec.)

The Rev. J. WORTHINGTON strongly supported the proposal for active steps towards restoration of the Castle, and for making the museum more attractive, as well as instructive, to the public.

The Rev. T. S. HOLMES gave a report of the work of the Somerset Record Society, and congratulated Canon Church that he had brought out his volume on "Wells Cathedral MSS." in advance of that due from his society, which was, however, in the binder's hands.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER, and Rev. PREB. GRAFTON strongly urged the claims of the Record Society for larger funds, and referred cordially to the work of the late Hon. Sec. (Rev. James Bennett), in starting so valuable an undertaking, as its volumes already issued, prove it to be.