

The President then called upon Major THOMAS AUSTIN F.G.S., who, after a few introductory remarks, read the following document, copied from an unpublished State Paper, endorsed

21st October, 1586. "*Samuel Norton to my Lady Cobham.*"

"Good Madam—As I have not often, I hope, byne troublesome unto youre honnor in requests, so I beseeche you, cast me not of in this for I have presumed herein to taste the benefytt of youre ffrendshippe—soe hit is that whether through the envy of Sir Henry Barkeley, or my Lord of Pembroke's discourtesy, my chardge of horsemen, which were appoynted unto me in my Lord of Bedford's tyme, is taken from me and bestowed I hope in showe far meaner. Although I know myself on being a horseman as able as Somersetshire hath anye—I crave not that again which I then possessed in my father's lyfe time, Less able then now I am—But I beseeche you be a meane to my Lorde of Pembroke to preferr me to a chardge a littell higher,—that under hym—I may be the Leftenant Generall of the horsemen in Somersetshire and Leader of the late increased Companye of Petronells*—to which Effect, I have, by rude Lynes trubled my Lorde Cobham; and am veary sure that yf youre Ladyshippe move my Lady Pembroke herein, the speed will be the better, and my Lorde of Pembroke the easier to graunt—good Madam—I hope my earnest letters shall not be offensive to youre good La: And soe in humble wyse—my wyff's humble dutye remembered—I comyt youre honor to the Tuition of the Almighty.

Leigh † October the 21st, 1586.

Your Ladyshippe's to Command,

SAMUEL NORTON. ‡"

"To the honourable and his veary good Ladye—
the Lady Cobham—geve thes."

* Petronel—An ancient firearm, intermediate in size between an ancient pistol and a modern carbine.

† Abbott's Leigh.

‡ Samuel Norton was grandfather of the preserver of Charles the Second.

Major AUSTIN then read from State Papers the following list of martial men in the county of Somerset at the time of the threatened Spanish invasion, who had not been called into service then, which was an interesting relic.

“June 29, 1588, Spanish Armada.

“The names of Martial Men restant (*i.e.* remaining unemployed) in the County of Somerset.

Roger Sydenham, who hath served in Flanders, and sithence with charge in Ireland under the Earl of Essex. A gentleman for that skill very well accompted of in this county.

Mas'er J. Maye hath served in Flanders.

Master Rich. Pollard, an ancient soldier, but not lately employed.

Mr. Rich. Phillipis hathe served in Spaine.

Mr. Gregorie Morgan, a Lieut. in Ireland.

Mr. Roger Issham, a servitor in Ireland.

Mr. Simon Vynecombe, a Lieut. in the Lowe Countries.”

These are the names of persons in Somersetshire who had not been called into service on the threatened Spanish invasion, and who were still available for military duty, if required. We may imagine that Somerset, with these exceptions, had sent forth all her armed warriors to repel the threatened invasion; and that Somerset men of the olden time were as ready to hazard their lives and fortunes in defence of their country as are the men of the present day.