

Proceedings
of the
Somersetshire Archæological and
Natural History Society,
During the Year 1889.

THE Forty-first Meeting of the Society was held at Minehead, on Tuesday, July 30th, and the following days, in the handsome and spacious new Town Hall, which had been kindly lent to the Society for the occasion.

In the absence of the outgoing President, the Lord Bishop of the Diocese (who was detained at Wells for the celebration of his golden wedding day), the Chair was taken by Mr. E. CHISHOLM-BATTEN, who briefly introduced Mr. G. F. Luttrell as the President of the year.

The PRESIDENT first called upon the Rev. J. A. BENNETT, *Hon. Secretary*, to read the

Report of the Council.

“Your Council are glad to be able to say they have nothing but good to report of the Society during the past year.

“The number of your Members has increased from 520 to 550, and new Members are continually being added.

“The Funds of the Society are also in a satisfactory state ; the balance in hand on the General Fund being £91 17s. 5d. ; and the balance on the Castle Purchase Fund debt has been reduced from £431 17s. 5d. last year, to £329 19s. 3d.

“Your Library has been greatly enriched during the year, especially by the munificent gift of the late Mr. Surtees’s Library, presented to the Society by the kindness of his widow, Lady Chapman. This Library amounts to about 3,000 volumes, and is the most extensive and valuable present the Society has ever received. The manuscript collections of the late Rev. F. Brown, consisting of more than 100 volumes of abstracts of Somerset wills, have also been presented to the Society by his son, Mr. F. Latham Brown ; and a very valuable illuminated MS. copy of Higden’s Polychronicon, written by the Monks at Keynsham, about 1377, has been presented by Mr. Kerslake.

“Your Council have also to report the presentation to the Museum of the magnificent collection of Red Deer heads belonging to the late Mr. Fenwick Bisset, killed on Exmoor, and given to the Society by the kindness of Mrs. Fenwick Bisset. It has been remarked by persons capable of judging, that there is no such collection of horns in any local Museum in the country.

“In accordance with the resolution of the Society at the General Meeting held at Wells last year, your Council have inquired into the subject of the motion then made by the Rev. Prebendary Coleman, and find that the book in question is a book of accounts of the parish of Cheddar, and that it came into possession of the Society in the ordinary course, amongst a large collection of miscellaneous papers bought by the Society. Such books are not considered as parish property, but Mr. Colman has been informed that he is at liberty to take a copy of it if he thinks fit.

“The Council beg to call your attention to the meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, to which you sent delegates last year. It will be the duty of the Society to say if they accept the terms of union, and approve of the programme agreed upon by the delegates, so far as it applies to this county. Two delegates should also be appointed to attend the next meeting of the Society of Antiquaries.

“Your Council have to report the acquisition of a valuable piece of land adjoining the Castle wall, and including ground formerly a bastion attached to the Castle. It has just been purchased by the kindness of Colonel Pinney, and at his expense, and conveyed to the Trustees as part of the Taunton Castle property.

“Your Council beg to submit the name of the Right Hon. Lord Carlingford, to be Patron of the Society, in the place of Viscount Portman, deceased.

“Your Council regret to have to announce the loss, by death, of W. E. Surtees, Esq., long a valuable Member of the Society, and one of your Vice-Presidents; also of J. H. Pring, Esq., M.D., for some years an active Member of your Council.

“Among the contributions to Somerset history recently published, mention should be made of the Rev. F. Weaver’s *Incumbents of Somerset*; a third volume of *Somerset Wills*, printed from the Rev. F. Brown’s collections; a volume by Mr. E. Green, on *The Preparations in Somerset Against the Spanish Armada*; and *Bishop Fox’s Register*, by Mr. Chisholm-Batten.

“The Catalogue of your Library is printed, and will shortly be ready for issue. It is proposed to prepare and print a Catalogue of the Surtees Library as a supplement.

“Signed, by order of the Council,

“E. CHISHOLM-BATTEN.

“30th July, 1889.”

Dr. PRIOR moved the adoption of the Report, which was seconded by Mr. GREENWAY, and carried.

The Treasurer's Account was also passed, on the motion of Canon BUCKLE, seconded by Colonel BRAMBLE.

Bishop HOBHOUSE wished to ask a question about the publication of the annual volume. He said that inconvenience was caused by the very late appearance of the printed report, sometimes eight months after the close of the Society's meeting for the year, and he wished to ask why it was so late. He was not putting any blame on the Secretary, because this thing had been going on for several years, before their Secretary was in office. There were clearly some reasons why he was hampered, and he did not impute any blame to the Secretary, on whom, *primâ facie*, it fell.

The HON. SECRETARY explained that the delay was due to the fact that the work of printing the report was let to a firm which had not a large number of hands. With a view to remedy this delay, they had invited tenders from other firms, but they found that it was, on the whole, better to allow the printing to remain as it was.

On the motion of the PRESIDENT, Lord Carlingford was elected Patron of the Society by a unanimous vote; the President pointing out that he had always shown great interest in the Society, and had been President for two successive years.

Mr. E. CHISHOLM-BATTEN proposed the re-election of the Vice-Presidents, the Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Secretaries, Committee, and the Curator (Mr. Bidgood).

The Rev. G. THRING, who seconded, said that Mr. Bidgood had for many years taken a great deal of trouble in connection with those meetings. He had shown unvaried courtesy to every Member, even when asked what might be regarded as impertinent questions.

The resolution was carried.

The Report of the Somerset Record Society

was then read by the HON. SECRETARY (the Rev. J. A. Bennett):—

“Again, in this, the third year of its existence, I have the pleasure of being able to give a good report of the state and prospects of our Society. The number of its Members has increased from 121 to 134, and the finances are in a satisfactory state. It may be as well, however, to note that it will probably be necessary, as time goes on, to spend more money for transcriptions than has been the case hitherto. Through the generosity of our editors, who have given not only their time and labour to the usual work of an editor, but have also provided the texts, the Society has been saved very heavy expenses; but it can hardly be expected that this will always be so. Our next volume will be a set of Churchwardens’ Accounts from several parishes, chiefly between the years 1450 and 1570. It is already in progress, under the editorship of Bishop Hobhouse, and promises to be a volume of peculiar interest in the vivid picture it will give of the actual life of our country parishes in past times. The accounts of the Record Society showed that the balance in the bank per last account was £104 0s. 6d. Additional subscriptions for 1887 amounted to £17 17s.; the subscriptions for 1888 were £124 16s.; subscriptions from new Members, £19 19s.; total receipts, £270 13s. 9d. The expenses were mainly for printing and transcribing, the balance remaining being £135 11s. 4d.”

The Hon. Secretary added that he thought that this was the best time to correct an error which he had inadvertantly allowed to pass in the Presidential address of last year. It is there stated that the *Register of Bishop Fox* would be brought out under the auspices of the Record Society. The Society cannot claim this honour. The work, he understands, is due entirely to Mr. E. Chisholm-Batten.

MR. H. HOBHOUSE, M.P., in moving the adoption of the

report and accounts, said the Society had gone steadily onwards in prosperity, but on looking through the list of subscribers he missed a good many names which he would have expected to see there. The Society was doing a very good work, and deserved the support of all who care for the history of the county.

Mr. FOXCROFT seconded, and expressed the hope that Members of the Archæological Society who were not Members of the Record Society would not only subscribe to the latter, but urge their friends to do so.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. H. G. MOYSEY moved a vote of thanks to Lady Chapman for her noble present of nearly 3,000 volumes. Most Members, he said, would remember the assiduous attention, the great ability, and the kindly manner of the late Mr. Surtees, and it was pleasing to them that his widow had done something which would perpetuate his memory in that Society. Mr. Moysey also asked the Meeting to record the thanks of the Members to Colonel Pinney, who had presented the Society with a piece of freehold ground, containing the foundations of one of the bastions of the old Castle. He hoped other Members of the Society would follow Colonel Pinney's example. Colonel Pinney was free to do what he pleased, and he had done something for which the Society had reason to be grateful.

The resolution was heartily agreed to.

Thirteen new Members were next elected, and the HON. SECRETARY read the following proposals, which had been received from the Society of Antiquaries, London:—

Conference of Archæological Societies.

“At an adjourned Meeting of the Conference of Archæo-Societies, held at Burlington House, on May 7th, 1889, it was agreed that the following recommendations be submitted to the President and Council of the Society of Antiquaries,

with a request that they should receive their favourable consideration:—

“ I.—That a Register of Antiquarian and Archæological Societies, hereinafter termed ‘ Societies in Union,’ be kept at the Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, and that any Society desiring to be placed on the Register should submit its application to the Council of the Society of Antiquaries, who shall grant or refuse it as they think fit.

“ II.—That every Society in Union shall send its Publications and the Programmes of its Meetings, to the Society of Antiquaries, and in return shall receive a free copy of the Society of Antiquaries’ *Proceedings*, and, should they desire it, a copy of *Archæologia* at the same price as that at which it is sold to Fellows.

“ III.—That if, on any discovery being made of exceptional interest, a Society in Union shall elect to communicate it to the Society of Antiquaries before themselves making it matter of discussion, the Society of Antiquaries, if it adopts it as the subject of a paper at one of its Ordinary Meetings, shall allow the Society in Union to make use of any Illustrations that the Society of Antiquaries may prepare.

“ IV.—That any Officer of a Society in Union, or any person recommended by the President, Vice-President, Chairman, or Secretary, or by two of the Members of the Council of a Society in Union, shall, on the production of proper vouchers, be allowed to use the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, but without the power of removing books, except by the express permission of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries.

“ V.—That from time to time a Congress shall be held in London, the first to be summoned during the present year. The Council of the Society of Antiquaries shall be *Ex-officio* Members, and the President (or in his absence one of the Vice-presidents) of the Society of Antiquaries shall be President of the Congress. Six Members of the Council

of the Royal Archæological Institute, six of the Council of the British Archæological Association, and four of the Council of the Cambrian Archæological Association, may be nominated by these Societies to represent them at the Congress. Each Society in Union may send two Delegates to the Congress.

“ VI.—That the object of the Congress be to promote the better organization of Antiquarian research, and to strengthen the hands of the local Societies in securing the preservation of ancient monuments, records, and all objects of Antiquarian interest.

“ VII.—That for this purpose it shall promote the foundation of new Societies where such appear necessary, and the improvement and consolidation of existing Societies where advisable, and suggest the limits within which each local Society can most advantageously work, and the direction in which it appears most desirable at the moment that the efforts of the Societies in Union should be exerted.

“ VIII.—That the Societies in Union be invited to furnish reports from time to time with reference to their action in these directions. That the Royal Archæological Institute, the British Archæological Association, and the Cambrian Archæological Association, be requested to offer to the Congress any remarks which may be suggested by their Annual General Meetings or otherwise.

“ IX.—That the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries be requested to act as Secretary of the Congress, with whom the Secretaries of the Societies in Union can correspond, and that the Council of the Society of Antiquaries be requested to advise on any matters which may arise in the interval between one meeting of the Congress and another.”

Upon the motion of Bishop HOBHOUSE, seconded by Mr. H. J. BADCOCK, the Society accepted the proposals. Rev. W. Hunt and Rev. J. A. Bennett were appointed delegates.

Colonel BRAMBLE said that it would be a good thing if the

Society could follow the example of the Society of Antiquaries, London, and invite local Societies in the county to affiliate themselves with the county Society, and read some rules which he thought would be applicable.

After some discussion it was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Committee, with power to act.

Since the meeting the following paper has been received from the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries:—

“ Soc. Antiq. Lond.,
 “ Burlington House, Picadilly,
 “ London, W., July 31st, 1889.

“ CONFERENCE OF ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETIES.

“ Dear Sir,

“ I beg to inform you that the first Congress of Archæological Societies in Union with the Society of Antiquaries, was held here on Wednesday, July 17th, John Evans, Esq., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., President of the Society of Antiquaries, in the Chair, when delegates from the following Societies attended: the Archæological Societies of Berkshire, Bristol and Gloucestershire, Buckinghamshire, Cumberland and Westmoreland, Derbyshire, Surrey, Sussex, Wilts, and Yorkshire; the Royal Archæological Institute; the British Archæological Association, and the Huguenot Society of London. The delegates from a number of other Societies were unfortunately prevented from attending.

“ The following resolutions were discussed and agreed to:—

“ I.—That each local Secretary be requested to take into consideration the desirability of placing on record, on the 6-inch scale maps of the county with which they are concerned, all the local names of fields, and all relics of antiquity for which a locality can be fixed.

“ That such maps should be kept in duplicate, so that eventually a copy may be deposited with the Society of Antiquaries.

“ II.—That all local Societies be requested to be on the watch against any wilful or injudicious destruction of ancient monuments or buildings, so as at once to bring local public opinion to bear against the destroyers; and that in cases of what appears to be national importance, the aid of the Society of Antiquaries, or the Inspector of Ancient Monuments be invoked.

“ III.—That a Committee (consisting of Rev. Canon Benham, F.S.A., Messrs. R. S. Faber, Edwin Freshfield, LL.D., V.P.S.A.; W. J. Hardy, F.S.A., and Ralph Nevill, F.S.A., with power to add to their number) be appointed to draw up a scheme for the uniform transcription of Parish Registers and Records, showing the best form of arrangement, etc., and in the case of their being printed, the best form of size, type, etc.

“ That the Report of such scheme should give as much information as possible in regard to printing and publishing, and such other information as may be likely to be useful to inexperienced people, who may be willing to undertake the work of transcribing.

“ IV.—That in the case of extracts from Parish Registers and Records being printed in Parish Magazines, the Incumbents be requested to communicate copies to the Local Societies, and to the Society of Antiquaries.

“ V.—That the attention of the Local Societies be called to the proposed Bill, entitled an Act for the Preservation of Public and Private Records, which it appears may provide for a long recognised want.

“ It was also resolved that the Council of the Society of Antiquaries be asked to summon the next Conference in July, 1890.

“ I append a list of the Societies already in Union with the Society of Antiquaries.

“ I have the honour to be, yours faithfully,

“ HAROLD ARTHUR DILLON, *Secretary, S.A.*”

The PRESIDENT then delivered his address.