

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
DURING THE YEAR
1895.

THE forty-seventh annual meeting of the Society was held at Bath on Tuesday, July 23rd, in the lecture room of the Bath Institution. At the commencement of the proceedings, owing to the President (Mr. E. B. CELY TREVILIAN), being unavoidably absent, Mr. F. T. ELWORTHY, one of the hon. general secretaries, explained the circumstances of the case, and the President-Elect (Mr. H. DUNCAN SKRINE, of Claverton Manor) then took the chair. Mr. Skrine is one of the best-known figures in Bath, and he has for many years taken such an interest in the affairs of the Society that it was only a fitting tribute to his abilities to see him in the honourable position of President.

Notwithstanding the distractions of the General Election, then actively progressing in the neighbourhood, there was a large attendance of members.

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

Report.

“Except upon one point the forty-seventh annual report of your society is again satisfactory.

“The number of members is now 559, showing no material change.

“At the end of the year 1894, there was a balance against the society of 17s. 2d., instead of one in hand of £49 14s. 2d. in 1893, and of £89 17s. 6d. in 1892.

“The steady diminution of the funds in hand was discussed at the last annual meeting, and a very general opinion was expressed that the volume of *Proceedings* should not be curtailed; at the same time, it was not contemplated that the volume then in preparation should be abnormally bulky and costly; such has, however, proved to be the case, partly against, rather than with, the consent of the Editor. Your committee have placed a minute upon record, ‘That the attention of the editorial secretary be directed to the growing cost of the annual volume of *Proceedings*, which is now in the opinion of this council considerably beyond the financial resources of the society.’ While thus making known to the society that the volume must be curtailed, it is right to point out that there are other reasons for an adverse balance besides the cost of printing. Considerable augmentation has arisen in the fixed expenses of the Museum, and further from the supply of assistance to the Curator, who has thus been able to make good progress in the arrangement of the large collections.

“On the Castle Purchase Fund there is a small debt of £4 2s. 7d. This account has now been closed, and a new Restoration Fund has been opened, as arranged at the last annual meeting; but inasmuch as no public appeal has yet been made, one kind gift of £5 is all that can be announced as received during the year.

“During the past year 5317 persons visited the Museum.

“Early in the autumn of 1894, Mr. Buckle was invited to inspect and to report upon the needful repairs, and upon the proposed restoration of the Castle buildings. After a careful examination, Mr. Buckle sent an elaborate and exhaustive exposition of his views, accompanied by full drawings and measurements. This document was submitted to each member of the council in succession and a number of individual opinions

were expressed in writing thereon. A special meeting of the council was held on January 18th, 1895, to consider the scheme put forward and the various criticisms upon it. The result was the following resolution:—‘That the best and hearty thanks of the council be accorded to Mr. Buckle for the trouble he has taken, and that such special thanks for his valuable report and plans be entered on the minutes of the society, but the council deeply regret his scheme is beyond the power of the society to entertain with any hope of success, and that they see no possibility of carrying it out at present, even in its most modified form.’ At the same meeting a sub-committee was appointed to consider the best lines on which to proceed, and their report is annexed.* Further, the secretaries were empowered to restore the roof of the Muniment room, which was in a ruinous condition, in the same form as before. This latter has been done in a plain substantial manner, but the recommendations of the sub-committee have necessarily remained in abeyance for want of funds.

“The Index to Collinson, which it was hoped to present complete at this meeting, though in a forward state, is not ready, but it is promised during the current year, and it is hoped may be in type by Christmas.

“The County History remains *in statu quo*, but is by no means lost sight of.

“The *Proceedings* of this Society have been sought by many others. Fresh agreements for exchange have, however, been concluded only with the Bureau of American Ethnology, the Geological Survey of the United States, the Geological Institution of the University of Upsala, and the Guildhall Library of the Corporation of London.

“Again your Society has to record its loss by the death of two of its oldest and most valued members. Sir Jerom Murch, so well known in Bath, who presided over your Society’s gather-

* This Report can be seen by members on application to the Curator.

ing when last it visited this place in 1876, and Mr. Moysey, have gone to their rest. By the lamented death of Mr. Moysey the Society loses another of its original Trustees, whose number is thereby reduced to six.

“Within the past few days a further severe loss has fallen upon the Society in the unexpected death of Col. Ewing. During the past two years he has given great attention and much assistance as Honorary Superintendent of the Museum and Library, and the interest he has taken in them, together with his judgment and experience, have been of the utmost value.”

The Rev. Preb. BULLER, in moving the adoption of the report, said there was a fine old sentence from a saintly writer, “That no one safely speaks except one who willingly keeps silence.” He would not only willingly, but most thankfully keep silence that morning, because he was only a very humble learner in the school of archæology. But it was a great pleasure for him to attend those yearly gatherings, in order that he might gain instruction from other well-stored minds, and indulge his love of topography. A visit to the ancient and beautiful city of Bath could never be aught but a privilege to a Somersetshire man. He had looked forward with special interest to that meeting because they were to be taken somewhat beyond their own district, into that of Wilts and Gloucestershire, and he thought it an excellent arrangement now and again to visit spots in adjoining counties.

The Rev. J. WORTHINGTON seconded the resolution, and referred to the loss which the Society had sustained by the deaths of Sir Jerom Murch, Mr. H. G. Moysey, and Colonel Ewing. With regard to Sir Jerom Murch, he remarked that in the fine old city of Bath he need say little or nothing. He had been associated personally with the late Sir Jerom Murch, more or less, for a long series of years; in fact, he knew him almost ever since he was a boy, and he was one who was privileged to have an interview with him in his old age. All Bath

people knew how much he had done for their city, and they could not, on that occasion and on that spot, pass his name without this tribute which he had ventured to pay to his memory. With respect to Colonel Ewing, he had looked upon him as a valued friend; he could bear personal testimony to the interest he had taken, and the valuable work he had done for the Society up to within a few days of his death; now he was buried by the side of her who was the first partner of his joys and sorrows, and the authoress of some of the best children's books that had ever been written. They rested together at Trull, one of the most picturesque places in Somerset.

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, 1894.

DR.		CR.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
1893, Dec. 31st.		1893.	
By Balance of former Account ...	49 14 2	To Expenses attending Annual Meeting ...	21 6 1
„ Members' Entrance Fees ...	14 3 6	„ Stationery, Printing, etc. ...	13 8 11
„ Members' Subscriptions in arrear ...	5 5 0	„ Purchase of Books, Specimens, etc. ...	2 14 0
„ Members' Subscriptions for the year 1894 ...	245 3 0	„ New Cases, Fittings, etc. ...	11 0 6
„ Members' Subscriptions in advance ...	8 18 0	„ Coal and Gas ...	24 2 1
„ Excursion(Non-Members')Tickets ...	17 0 0	„ Printing and Binding vol. xxxix ...	81 11 0
„ Museum Admission Fees ...	27 7 4	„ Illustrations ...	50 19 4
„ Sale of Publications ...	3 15 4	„ Postage of Volumes ...	11 19 2
Balance ...	0 17 2	„ Curator's Salary, 1 year to Christmas, 1894 ...	105 0 0
		„ Errand Boy, 1 year to Christmas, 1894 ...	15 4 0
		„ Subscriptions to Publications of Societies ...	8 13 0
		„ Insurance ...	4 10 6
		„ Rates and Taxes ...	12 18 4
		„ Postage and Carriage, etc. ...	6 2 4
		„ Sundries (Scrubbing, etc.) ...	2 14 3
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	£372 3 6		£372 3 6
		1894, Dec. 31st.	
		Balance ...	0 17 2
		H. J. BADCOCK,	
		Treasurer.	

July 12th, 1895. Examined and compared with the Vouchers } W. M. KELLY,
and Bank Book and found correct. } J. E. W. WAKEFIELD.

Taunton Castle Purchase Fund.

Treasurer's Account from 1st January to 31st December, 1894.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
1893.		£ s. d.	1893, Dec. 31st.		£ s. d.
By Rents of Premises	...	70 16 7	To Balance	...	6 2 5
„ Rents of Castle Hall	...	69 12 8	„ Repairs and Improvements to	...	
„ Sale of old Stove	...	0 2 0	Property	...	81 10 3
			New Iron Entrance Gates	...	16 2 6
			New Iron Stove	...	8 6 7
			Rates and Taxes	...	20 19 10
			Castle Hall Expenses	...	1 8 7
			Gas	...	6 7 4
Balance	...	4 2 9	Insurance	...	3 16 6
		<u>£144 14 0</u>			<u>£144 14 0</u>

H. J. BADCOCK,
Treasurer.

July 12th, 1895. Examined and compared with the Vouchers } W. M. KELLY,
and Bank Book and found correct. } J. E. W. WAKEFIELD.

Mr. BADCOCK, referring to the accounts produced, said that stern economy would be necessary for some time to come in order to get them into shape again. The fact was, they had been getting far more for their half-guinea subscription than the Society could afford. He wished to remind their friends at Bath that the great want was more support in regular subscriptions; for when they remembered that these only amounted to £245 3s., representing the contributions of only five or six hundred persons out of the whole county, including Bath, they would see that for a society of this sort it was hardly the extent to which they ought to be supported, and he appealed earnestly to the people living in the largest city in Somerset for more regular subscribers.

The Rev. F. S. P. SEALE moved the adoption of the accounts. He criticised their finances, and thought it was a disgrace that they were compelled to eke out their income by letting the Castle Hall at Taunton for entertainments. They ought not to be obliged to look upon letting that hall—one of the most interesting in the kingdom—as a source of revenue, while they were unable to exhibit all their own archæological treasures for want of room. They had had, in the past year,

5,317 visitors to the Castle and Museum, but the interest of the whole would be immensely increased if they were able to display all the valuable specimens in the possession of the Society. The volume of the Society's transactions was an increasing source of expense as it increased in size, and it became a question whether the record should be curtailed.

The Rev. J. B. MEDLEY seconded the resolution.

Mr. ELWORTHY (Hon. Sec.) said that the minute of the Committee, which appeared in the report, certainly amounted to a censure upon the Editor, and he asked leave to say a word or two in self defence; but inasmuch as the censure was not (as in a recent instance) accompanied by a reduction of £100 a year in his salary, he did not consider it necessary to resign. There were other reasons which he specified for the insufficiency of the income, but he wished specially to remind the members that at the last meeting at Langport the question was put whether the volume of the *Proceedings* should be maintained in its integrity or cut down. They were then unanimous that the volume should not be pinched. It was his duty to tell them that unless further funds were forthcoming the book would have to be very much curtailed. The illustrations in the last volume cost over fifty pounds.

In the conversation which followed suggestions were made as to the desirability of raising the annual subscription to fifteen shillings or a guinea. It was also proposed to make an appeal for voluntary assistance from those members who take special interest in the Society's work; but nothing definite was determined.

The Rev. GILBERT SMITH proposed, and the Rev. A. CARTWRIGHT seconded, the re-election of the retiring officers, adding the names of the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, with that of the late President (Mr. E. B. Cely Trevilian) to the list of Vice-Presidents—and took the opportunity of calling attention to the very valuable *Flora of Somerset*, by the Rev. R. P. Murray, of which two instalments have been already

issued in the volumes of *Proceedings*. Mr. Smith expressed the opinion that the Natural History side of the Society's work had not hitherto received its fair share of attention, but that the *Flora* was a good step in the right direction.

On the motion of the Rev. F. W. WEAVER, seconded by Mr. AUSTIN KING, the selection of the next place of meeting and the appointment of the new President were left to the Council.

Nineteen new members were elected on the motion of Lieut.-Colonel J. R. BRAMBLE, seconded by Mr. T. MEYLER.

Somerset Record Society.

The Rev. T. H. HOLMES made a statement with regard to the work of the Somerset Record Society. He mentioned that of Mr. Hunt's valuable work on the "Priory Church of Bath," only four copies had been sold in Bath. The preface was published separately, and while a great many were sold at Langport last year, scarcely any copies had been sold in this city. The Society spent £200 in publishing the two cartularies of Bath. Towards this four guineas only had been received from this city. The cartularies of Bruton and Montacute would make up the next year's book. Bishop Ralph would be the subject of this year's volume, and there would be another on the same subject owing to the quantity of matter to be dealt with. He (Mr. Holmes) had gone through 2,000 documents. He had revised 500 pages of the book, and the first of these volumes and the two cartularies of Bruton and Montacute would be ready at the beginning of next year. An Assize Roll for the county had been undertaken by Mr. Chadwyck-Healey. Sir Edward Fry, who was first asked, almost consented to undertake the work. When the documents belonging to the Marquis of Ailesbury were sent to the Record Office for examination a cartulary of Muchelney Abbey was found, and a copy of it was taken. There was another cartulary somewhere. The one discovered would be the subject of a future volume.