

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

SOMERSETSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

DURING THE YEAR

1905.

THE fifty-seventh annual meeting of the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society was held at Weston-super-Mare, July 18th.

The DEAN OF WELLS (the Very Rev. T. W. JEX-BLAKE, D.D., F.S.A.) took the chair at the opening of the proceedings, and said that he was there merely to introduce the new President of the Society, Lt.-Colonel J. R. Bramble, F.S.A. He thought that no man had done more for the general interests of the Society than Colonel Bramble, and his well-known business faculty, his knowledge of law, his peculiar grasp of all that belonged to armour and heraldry, his keen interest in our churches and ancient buildings, made him not only a fit, but a most distinguished President.

COLONEL BRAMBLE then took the chair, and, in returning thanks for his election as President, stated that he had been a member of the Society since 1867, and one of the Hon. Secretaries for fourteen years. Now that he was no longer able to do the work he had, it was a great satisfaction to him that they had conferred upon him that high honour by electing him as President.

The REV. F. W. WEAVER, F.S.A., Hon. Secretary, announced that letters of apology for not attending the meeting

had been received from Mr. T. H. M. Bailward (the outgoing President), Mr. E. J. Stanley, M.P., the Rev. C. S. Taylor, F.S.A., Mr. Hugh Norris, and Dr. J. H. Bryant.

The Rev. F. W. Weaver read

The Annual Report,

which was as follows:—

“Your Committee present their fifty-seventh annual report. Since their last report forty-eight new names have been added to the list of members. The loss by deaths and resignations has been twenty-six. Altogether the net gain has been twenty-two. The total membership of the Society at date is 663.

“The balance of your Society’s general account at the end of 1903 (your accounts being made up in each year to December 31st) was £171 17s. 8d. against the Society. At the close of 1904 there was a balance of £153 6s. 11d. against the Society. In neither case was the liability for the cost of the volume for the year then expired, or on the other hand any unpaid subscriptions,¹ taken into account. The total cost of Vol. L (for 1904), including printing, illustrations and delivery, has been £101 6s. 1d. The thanks of the Society are due to Mr. T. S. Bush, the Rev. H. H. Winwood, the Smalldown Excavation Fund and the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, for their assistance in defraying the cost of some of the illustrations; also to Dr. F. J. Allen, Mr. Arthur Bulleid, Mr. H. St. G. Gray, and Mr. J. R. H. Weaver, for their photographs and drawings.

“The necessity of making a special appeal to the members of your Society for the purpose of raising money to clear off outstanding liabilities, to carry out urgent repairs, and to provide additional cases for new gifts, was brought forward two years ago, at the Annual Meeting at Chard. In February, 1904, an appeal was issued, stating that not less than £600 must be raised for these purposes. Up to December 31st,

1. There were no arrears of subscriptions at the end of 1904.

1904, £370 18s. 0d. was contributed by a comparatively small number of members, leaving £229 2s. 0d. still to be raised. A list of subscribers was reprinted on April 22nd of the current year, which showed that £405 9s. 6d. had been contributed by 142 members, leaving £194 10s. 6d. before the £600 required would be realized. Your Secretaries again take this opportunity of reminding the members, and especially those who have not subscribed, that the list will be kept open, and that additional donations will be printed in the next volume of the *Proceedings*.

“Of the work of repair mentioned in last year’s Report as being very necessary, two items have been carried out, viz., (1) Five new oval windows with oak frames, replacing the old lead lights in the south wall of the Great Hall; and (2) the painting and decorating of the Entrance Hall and Staircase. In addition, the windows and woodwork on the roof of the Castle and some of the rain-water pipes have been painted, and certain parts of the leaden roof repaired. The coil inside the furnace of the larger stoke-hole for the heating of the Great Hall having been found to leak, it was found necessary to fit the furnace with a new one at a cost of about £20.

“In December last, your Museum was enriched by the generous gift by Mr. Hugh Norris, of South Petherton, of his well-known collection of archæological and ethnographical specimens, chiefly of local antiquities, in acknowledgment of which the donor was made an honorary life member of your Society, whilst retaining his office of Local Secretary for South Petherton. A plate-glass mahogany show-case was purchased for the reception of this valuable collection; several of the relics are of great rarity.

“Shortly after this, the Rev. H. H. Winwood, F.G.S., of Bath, kindly presented to your Society a portion of the Charles Moore Collection of Geological specimens. In consequence of these two important gifts, a General Meeting of your Society was held at Taunton Castle, on April 6th, which was attended by 120 members and friends, when the

collections were opened by the President, Mr. T. H. M. Bailward, and described by the Rev. H. H. Winwood and the Curator, Mr. H. St. George Gray. On this occasion Professor C. Lloyd Morgan, LL.D., F.R.S., Principal of the University College, Bristol, delivered a most interesting address on "Museums," laying particular stress on the improved condition of your Society's collections during the last few years. At this meeting it was announced that a member of your Society had that day offered to present a new show-case, costing £20; provided four other members would do the same.

"The miscellaneous acquisitions to your Museum during the past year have again been very numerous, and the Walter Collection has been added to considerably by Mr. Hensleigh Walter. Mr. C. Tite has greatly increased the collection of portraits of Somerset worthies, and has given a set of maps of the county, which have since been framed, after having been dated by Mr. Basil Soulsby, F.S.A., of the British Museum. Mr. F. J. Moore has presented an old drum of the 2nd Somerset Militia. The Rector and Churchwardens of Thornfalcon have deposited their disused pewter plate in your Museum. An unrecorded XVII Century Bath token, found in Bristol, has been given by Mr. J. E. Pritchard, F.S.A. Mr. W. A. Rixon has presented six of his water-colour drawings (framed), of Alfoxton, Kilve, etc., as well as a mammoth's tusk from the Kilve shore. Several original plans of Somerset earthworks have been given by the delineator, Mr. C. W. Dymond, F.S.A. The following are the donors of some of the other more important specimens up to May:—The Revs. S. J. M. Price, D.D., C. H. Heale and F. Sterry, Miss J. L. Woodward, Messrs. W. J. Cullen and E. Clatworthy. Mr. Haynes has presented two large glass shades for covering donations given by him previously.

"By the death of Mr. Edwin Sloper, a member since 1869, Local Secretary for London, and previously a member of the Committee, your Society has lost an energetic and useful

member. In his will he bequeathed to your Library such of his books as your Society did not already possess. A sub-Committee selected books from Mr. Sloper's catalogue to the number of about 250 volumes, and a complete list will be printed in due course. The collection includes several volumes which were much needed in your Society's Library. Mr. Rixon has presented the "Annual Register," 1758-1836, with Index to 1819. By purchase the "Archæologia" has been rendered complete for recent years, and only Vols. II to X inclusive are now required. Included amongst the donors to the Library this year are: the Revs. F. W. Weaver, E. H. Bates and S. O. Baker, Colonel Bramble, Prof. E. B. Tylor, Mr. Hugh Norris, Mr. C. Tite and Mr. R. J. W. Davison.

"In connection with the Library, which now contains over 13,000 volumes, the best thanks of your Society are due to the Rev. E. H. Bates for the manuscript catalogue which he has recently prepared, covering the whole Library up to date. The catalogue written by Mr. Bates has been based on Mr. Bidgood's printed catalogue of 1889, Mr. Gray's catalogue of the Surtees Library (1903), and the "Additions to the Library" in successive volumes of the *Proceedings* since 1889. It should be reported that two large bookcases are being made exclusively for all the Calendars of Rolls and other Records published by Government. Next autumn Mr. Bates and the Curator hope to undertake the task of introducing shelf-numbers for the whole Library; which will be a great boon to members who use the Library.

"A Remington typewriter has been purchased for your Society's work, and it has already been found very useful in connection with the Museum, and for correspondence and the copying of reports and other papers.

"We have to report with considerable regret the resignation, on July 14th last, of your Society's senior Hon. Genl. Sec., Lt.-Colonel J. R. Bramble, F.S.A., your new President. He has held office as one of the Secretaries of your Society for

fourteen years ; and the Committee desire to place on record their sense of the great value of Colonel Bramble's services in a post which has greatly increased in responsibility and labour of late years. The Committee have been so fortunate as to secure the services of the Rev. E. H. Bates, M.A., as one of the Secretaries.

“ Your Society has joined the Congress of Societies in union with the Society of Antiquaries, and the Rev. F. W. Weaver and Mr. E. A. Fry have been appointed as your representatives.

“ The Rev. E. H. Bates has been appointed as the late Mr. A. J. Goodford's successor as your Society's Representative Trustee on the Ilchester Town Trust.

“ A sub-Committee has met from time to time during last winter to consider the question of Protection against Fire and to revise the Insurance. The result has been that a fire-main has been laid from Castle Green to the Courtyard of the Castle at a cost of £50, which includes two hydrants to command the whole of the building, a stand-pipe, six lengths of hose and other appliances. The Castle and its contents have now been insured for £11,280 in one office at a premium of £9 19s. 6d. ; whereas your Society was previously insured in three companies for £9,750 at a total premium of £10 1s. 0d.

“ Your Curator was granted four weeks' leave-of-absence in May-June for the purpose of continuing the excavations at the Glastonbury Lake Village jointly with Mr. Arthur Bulleid, F.S.A. It is understood that some of the relics found this year are of considerable interest, and a paper on this season's work will appear in the next volume of the *Proceedings*. In this connection it should be reported that the Glastonbury Excavation Committee have given a small but representative collection of relics from the village, chiefly found in 1904, to your Museum and a similar one to the British Museum ; and there is some ground for expecting another distribution of duplicates next summer.

“ Your Museum was visited by 7,421 persons during 1904,

including 1,074 visits from members. This is the largest total that has been reached and it is $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more than in 1903 when the total was 6,844.

“During the past year your Society has lost by death the following members: the Right Honble. Lord Hobhouse, died Dec. 6th, 1904, aged 85; the Rev. R. B. Poole, R.D., died Dec. 1st, 1904, aged 65; Mr. Edwin Sloper, died Feb. 7th, 1905, aged 64; Mr. L. H. Ruegg, a member since 1860, died Feb. 18th, aged 82.”

MR. ERNEST E. BAKER, F.S.A., Hon. Sec. of the Axbridge Branch of the Society, moved the adoption of the report, and said that he was glad to see the Society at Weston-super-Mare again after an interval of twenty years. The average visitor to Weston regarded the town as a place of mushroom growth and that it had been born in the eighteenth century, but that was very far from the actual facts, for most English towns which were now large manufacturing centres were “furzy downs when Weston was a market town.” The Westonians of those days lived on the slopes of Worlebury and built a large and strong fortress for their protection against the wild marauders who sailed up the Severn Sea, burning and sacking and destroying. One remarkable incident was that these early Westonians cremated their dead and buried them in urns on the slopes of Worlebury. Later on a church was built in that locality, and the dead of course were buried by inhumation,—not cremated. Later again, this churchyard became full and was closed. Then a site for a cemetery had to be chosen, and in 1856, by a very strange coincidence, the authorities pitched on the same field that had been used for the burial of the cremation-urns. He mentioned that an Elizabethan silver chalice with cover, which formerly belonged to Weston Parish Church, had disappeared, and he trusted that publicity given to this occurrence would lead to the return of the chalice. With regard to the Annual Report he considered it most satisfactory in all its details. The Society was now one of the

Taunton Castle Restoration Fund.

Balance Sheet of Income and Expenditure for the year 1904.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
		£	s.	d.	
1904.					1903. Dec. 31st.
By Rent of Premises	...	57	6	9	To Balance of former Account...
" "The Brescians," Rent of	...				" Repairs to Castle
" Courtyard	...	14	0	0	" Repairs to Property
" the Donations to "Taunton	...				" Rates and Taxes
Castle Restoration and	...				" Fire Insurance
Deficit Fund," recorded in	...				" Interest on Overdrawn Ac-
the "Proceedings," Vol.	...				count
50, pt. i, pp. 84-5, except	...				
those included in the 1903	...				
Balance Sheet	...	330	8	0	
Balance	...	8	17	1	
		£410	11	10	
					£410 11 10
					" Balance brought down
					...
					£8 17 1

H. J. BADCOCK, Treasurer.

Feb. 16th, 1905. Audited and found correct.

ALEX. HAMMETT,
HOWARD MAYNARD, } Hon. Auditors.

The REV. D. P. ALFORD (President of the Taunton Field Club) seconded the adoption of the accounts, and hoped that the Society's visit to Weston-super-Mare would considerably increase the membership, as that was the natural way of meeting their liabilities. If it was only generally understood what good work the Society was doing, not only for the county but for the archæological world at large, a rapid increase of membership would not be merely a desire but a reality.

Election of Officers.

MR. E. A. FRY proposed the re-election of the Officers of the Society, with the addition of Mr. T. H. M. Bailward as a Vice-President, the Rev. E. H. Bates as one of the Hon. Secretaries, and Dr. J. H. Bryant and Mr. J. B. Paynter as Local Secretaries for London and Yeovil respectively. He said the Society would do well to re-elect the officers, and it would continue to benefit by the experience they had gained. He also tendered a hearty vote of thanks to the Secretaries and the Council for their services during the past year.

The REV. F. L. HUGHES seconded, and the motion was cordially agreed to.

On the proposition of MR. C. TITE (Hon. Sec.), seconded by MR. H. C. WARRY, the election of forty-eight new members by the Council was confirmed.

Somerset Record Society.

The REV. E. H. BATES presented a report of the Somerset Record Society, and said that although they were still in want of funds they had done good work during the past year. This year they were finishing off the last volume of the wills of by-gone Somerset individuals, and it was nearly ready, under the supervision of the Rev. F. W. Weaver. Last year he was able to state that the Somerset County Council had voted some money for the purpose of putting the county records, now preserved in the Shire Hall, in a rather better position than they were then. He was now able to say that those records were in a better condition than they had been for many years. They had been cleaned, sorted and ticketed, and they had suffered very little in the past. He was happy to make a further statement that, amid all the clamour about education and rising rates, the County Council had made the Society a grant to enable them to bring out a volume of the Quarter Sessions records of the early part of the XVII Century. Those records would enable them better to understand the reasons that led to the Civil War. The records went back almost as far as those of any county in England, and were practically complete from the beginning of the reign of James I. There were only three counties whose records went back further, and they were not so valuable, because they had not got the Quarter Sessions Minute Books. Somerset would be the first county to produce such a work, and the volume, when issued, would enable them to understand more of the social life of Somerset people in the XVII Century than they had ever done before. The Record Society had shown it was justified in continuing its career, and that it was also justified in asking for more support than it seemed possible to obtain.

THE REV. PREB. G. E. SMITH proposed a cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Bates, and bore testimony to the excellent work done by him, especially in regard to church plate. Referring to the remarks of Mr. Ernest Baker, he mentioned that he was at a market dinner one day when he was asked to whom the church at Brent Knoll was dedicated, and on mentioning St. Michael he was informed that the chalice of the church was in the possession of some one who had won it at Cardiff as a prize in a half-mile foot race! That seemed to him a scandalous fact. He also found the flagon, which had been presented to a lawyer as a wedding gift by the Corporation of one of the large towns of the county. The owner of the chalice was willing to let him have it back if the flagon were restored. The family possessing the latter were willing to give it up if they had a silver cup with a similar inscription on it. That would cost fourteen guineas, and he could not afford it, but the offers were still open, and would continue open for some time, so he lived in hope.¹

THE REV. F. W. WEAVER seconded the motion, which was cordially carried.