

Rev. D. P. Alford.

THE REV. DANIEL PRING ALFORD, M.A., of Taunton, who was for some years a member of our Council and President of the Taunton Field Club, died on August 3rd, 1911, in his 73rd year. The Alford family came from the North of England, and are mentioned in the Cheshire Domesday Book; but they have spread over several counties, including Somerset, Dorset and Devon. The Rev. D. P. Alford was a member of the Somerset branch, which has been settled in the county some centuries. He was the son of Mr. Henry Alford, F.R.C.S., who practised in Taunton more than fifty years, and who was one of the original members of our Society and an active member of the Committee for a long period.

The Rev. D. P. Alford, after holding livings in Bedfordshire, became Vicar of Tavistock, Devon, in 1883, but retired in 1895 in consequence of the failure of his voice. He then returned to Taunton, where he was very useful in many ways. He was a zealous student of English history and literature, and revelled in the early historic associations of the county of Somerset. Consequently, he was in much request as a contributor to local publications and literary societies. As President of the Taunton Reading Society, he prepared a series of lectures dealing with English literature from the time of Chaucer to the early part of the present century, and thoroughly enjoyed the work, although he had not the strength to deliver them personally. For the Taunton Field Club he wrote interesting papers on certain aspects of local



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Chaffin, photographer, Taunton.



history not usually dealt with; and also gave valuable help to the Taunton Literary and Philosophical Society.

Mr. Alford's principal publications were:—"The Abbots of Tavistock," "The Retreat," "Tavistock Registers," and "A Tale of Tresco and other Poems." He also contributed freely to various magazines and other periodicals, both in prose and verse. Several of these contributions dealt with Somerset topics. During his residence in Devon, he wrote on local history and literature for the *Transactions* of the Devonshire Association. He also contributed to the *Proceedings* of our own Society a paper on "Alfred in Athelney," and "Notes on St. James's Church, Taunton." Moreover, he prepared "A Short History of Taunton Castle," to be used as a handbook, and this is now running through a second edition. Quite recently, when there was some talk of holding a pageant at Taunton, Mr. Alford wrote a series of episodes suitable for such an occasion. These were in blank verse, and dealt with the principal events connected with the history of his native town and county in a scholarly and poetic style. The pageant did not take place, but the episodes were read at a meeting of the members of the Taunton Literary and Philosophical Society, and will, no doubt, be taken care of in view of possible use in the future.

Mr. Alford was for some years a keen student of natural history, being especially interested in ornithology and botany; and he had a collection of birds which he had shot in his early days. While he was living in the Scilly Isles, he took up the study of zoology, and discovered a new kind of sea-anemone, which was named after him, *Ægeon Alfordii*. This was fully described and illustrated in the "Annals and Magazine of Natural History" for July, 1865.

C. T.

William Macmillan.

MR. WILLIAM MACMILLAN, of Castle Cary, who passed away on July 1st, 1911, was one of our local secretaries and was also President of the Entomological Section of the Society. He had an intense love for many departments of Nature, but confined his attention principally to entomology and botany. Some years ago he published "A List of Butterflies and Moths found in or near Castle Cary, 1871-1895." This was a record of several hundred species, of which he gave the scientific and popular names, with a few introductory notes on each group, and sundry hints likely to be useful to students. Mr. Macmillan was well known to entomologists in Somerset and the adjoining counties as a shrewd and careful observer, and as a delightful correspondent. Few men took a greater share in local public work than he did, as he was deeply interested in every movement likely to promote the mental, moral and spiritual well-being of those amongst whom he lived. As some acknowledgment of his zeal and abilities in this direction, he was appointed a Justice of the Peace and a County Alderman. For more than twenty years he edited and published a magazine entitled "The Somerset Visitor," the main object of which was the promotion of temperance. This was followed by "The Castle Cary Visitor," a little monthly of eight pages, in which things new and old were skilfully blended. This was sent to readers in all parts of the world for a shilling a year, postage included. During the fifteen years

of its existence Mr. Macmillan had got together a considerable store of local history, legend, folk-lore and biography ; and his readers marked their appreciation of his efforts in 1909 by making him a handsome presentation. The little magazine is so much appreciated, that a son and daughter of Mr. Macmillan have been induced to continue the labour of love, and will thus keep hundreds of people who have left the Cary district in pleasant touch with the old home-land.

C. T.