The Annual Excursion and Meeting of the Bucks Archwological Society for 1883.

THE annual excursion of the Members of this Society took place on Thursday, July 19th. They first visited Beaconsfield, where the Church was inspected. They were met at the entrance to the edifice by the Rev. S. V. Bowles and Mr. Edward L. Lawson, the Lord of the Manor. The grave of Edmund Burke was, of course, the great attraction here. The slab which covers the grave bears an inscription stating that it was placed there in 1862, under the auspices of the Rev. John Gould, B.D., rector of Beaconsfield, by Edmund Haviland Burke, Esq. The Rev. S. V. Bowles, in giving some account of the parish and its name, pointed out that the "a" was a modern importation into the name. In old registers and records the name was spelt without the "a." The word, therefore, had nothing to do with Beacon, as was supposed by many, nor was it pronounced Beaconsfield by the inhabitants of the place, so he had no noubt that the original word meant a field or open space in the beech trees. He had written to Mr. Hearn, professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford, requesting him to inform him, and he agreed with him that the name was derived from the Saxon "becken," so there was no doubt it meant a place in the beech woods. It was a question when it became a parish. In 1265 Burnham Abbey was founded, and in the time of Edward the Confessor the Manor of Beaconsfield was in the possession of a certain family. Of the old Church only the nave remained, and the windows on one side were exactly as they were. The Church contains Burke's tomb, the tomb belonging to the Bulstrode family, and an interesting object in the vestry was a chest which had been manufactured out of Burke's square pew. Having inspected the Church, the party viewed the tomb of Waller, the poet, which occupies a large space of ground beneath a spreading tree in the churchyard. The old Rectory House, which contains some curious specimens of ancient wainscoted walls, was next visited, after which the members drove to "The Gregories," where the house of Edmund Burke formerly stood. No trace of the mansion, which was destroyed by fire, remains, but a portion of the stables, to which some additions have been made, still remains.

A pleasant drive through the tree-shaded avenues of Wilton Park, brought the members to the mansion of Mr. C. G. Du Pré, by whom they were cordially welcomed. Mr. Du Pré entertained them to lunch. On the conclusion of the luncheon, the Rev. Canon Evetts, as the oldest member of the society, thanked Mr. Du Pré on behalf of the members for the hospitality he had shown them. Mr. Du Pré, in replying, assured his visitors that it gave him much pleasure to entertain them. A short drive from Wilton Park brought the members to Bulstrode House, the seat of the Duke of Somerset. Owing to the time occupied in the perambulations of the morning, a contemplated visit to Jordans to view the grave of Penn was abandoned. A paper on the subject, by Mr. Robert Gibbs, was therefore taken as read.

Arrived at Bulstrode House, Mr. J. C. King (by kind permission of His Grace the Duke of Somerset) escorted the members over the mansion and grounds, after which the camp was visited. The Rev. B. Burgess then read a paper on this interesting relic of bygone years, which appears in this number of the RECORDS.

Atter this the Church of Gerrard's Cross was visited. The members

then drove to Hedgerley, where they were received by Mr. Henry Liggins, brother-in-law of the rector (the Rev. E. Baylis), who was prevented receiving them as had been arranged, being unwell. They then proceeded to inspect the Church, a Gothic building, which stands on a slight elevation, and Mr. Liggins kindly favoured them with a short historical retrospect of the edifice. It was erected in 1852 by the rector, about fifty yards from the old Church, which was in a very dilapidated condition at the time. The walls, which were merely constructed of clay and chalk, were not preserved. The altar rail, brasses, and other features were, however, removed, and were placed in the newly-erected Church. One of the brasses is in memory of Margaret, wife of Edward Bulstrode, who died in 1540, and during the process of removal it was found that the reverse side had been previously used for a memorial to an abbot of St. Edmundsbury, who died two centuries before. The brass shows the figure of a lady attired in a dress of the period of Henry VIII., together with her ten sons and three daughters. The pulpit rail and other woodwork were, it is stated, taken from a Church at Antigua, where Mr. Liggins has an estate.

From Hedgerley the members drove to Hall Barn, the estate of Mr. Edward L. Lawson. Mr. and Mrs. Lawson received them very cordially, and they were shown many interesting relics of Edmund Burke, concerning which Mr. Lawson kindly addressed them. Having promised to escort them to the grotto where it is supposed Waller composed many of his poems, and where Milton occasionally resorted, he referred to the house itself. The large rooms were built by Sir Gore Ouseley, for the reception of Queen Adelaide. Many of the articles which those rooms formerly contained had passed into the possession of Mr. C. G. Du Pré, and his predecessors sold a portion of the estate of Hall Barn to Edmund Burke. It seemed to him (Mr. Lawson) that the more they studied that part of history, on the threshold of which they stood, the more they would admire the genius of that great man, and respect the work which he did, and therefore the interest which centred in Beaconsfield was likely to grow greater in the future. It was especially worthy of the attention of a society like that, because it was the spot on which the few happy years of Burke's life were spent. He did not refer to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke the statesman, but rather to the characteristics of one whom he had found commonly talked about in the neighbourhood as 'squire Burke. It did not seem to him that Burke was ever particularly desirous to own land for the sake of the dignity and position it gave him; his genius soared above considerations of that kind. He was an enthusiastic lover of fresh air. In 1750 he went up to the Temple as a student, without knowing a soul in London. In three years his health gave way, and he was compelled to leave town and go into the fresh air. He went to Bristol, which he represented; but having a craving for life in the country, he became proprietor of a part of the Hall Barn Estate, which was commonly known as "The Gregories," in 1768. The manner in which he became possessed of the property had given rise to a good deal of discussion; his enemies asserted that he was not entitled to possession, as he could not afford to purchase it, and endeavoured to ascertain how he could have become possessed of the sum of £20,000, which was the amount of the purchase money. There was a story that it was given him by Lord Verney, to whom he had been of great service, and who was said to have brought it to the hall in bags, and the expression of Burke's countenance when he saw the money bags had been vividly described. He (the speaker) did not place any reliance on that story. The more probable narrative was that Lord Rockingham, in 1767, thought the time

had arrived when he should do something for the man whose brain had always been at his disposal, and who had been the most faithful of all servants, and had done work which money could not pay for. Lord Rockingham gave Burke £10,000. There was a bond given for that sum, which was cancelled by Lord Rockingham on his death-bed. Burke raised £5,000 more upon a mortgage from Dr. Saunders, a friend of his, and the rest was probably contributed by his brother Richard. With the money thus obtained Burke established himself at The Gregories. The actual name of Burke's house was, he believed, not The Gregories, but Butler's Court, as letters from visitors who stayed with him were dated in that name. He referred to Burke's domestic life, and submitted to the inspection of the party a tea tray which had formerly been Burke's property, which had been bought by the father of a very old man who had worked on the estate for many years, and presented to him. They could imagine how many eminent men and women had been gathered round that tray in past years; amongst them would be Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the beautiful Miss Palmer, who afterwards wedded Lord Inchiquin, Miss Verney, Charles Fox, Wyndham, and Oliver Goldsmith. Lord Chatham's coach frequently passed the estate on its way to his lordship's brother-in-law, Lord Temple, at Stowe. In the course of his rural life Burke became one of the most practical farmers in the county. In 1792 shadows fell over the house. Richard Burke, Edmund Burke's brother, died, and shortly afterwards Burke's son fell very ill, and on the day following a dinner to celebrate the return of Burke for Malton, his son died. So intense was the grief of Edmund Burke and his wife, that Dr. Brocklesby, an intimate friend, and the family medical adviser, said it was the most awful scene he had ever witnessed. Burke applied for the Chiltern Hundreds, and with the exception of occasional visits to London, he passed his life in the country in great melancholy, wandering aimlessly about the place, except when he devoted his time and attention to the poor people in the neighbourhood. In 1795 a bad harvest aroused him from his stupor. He put up a mill in one of the fields which had been visited that day, in which the corn was ground for the poor to eat. His efforts to fight against his sorrow and the malady which had attacked him proved unavailing, and in 1797 he died. From 1797 to 1812 Mrs. Burke continued to live in that house, her efforts being directed to paying the debts which Burke had left behind him. With the exception of the house, and the garden which surrounded it, the property was sold to Mr. Du Pré's family. In 1812 Mrs. Burke died. Very shortly afterwards a fire occurred by which the house was nearly consumed, little or nothing of it being left except the stable which the company had seen. He explained that he had thus entered into detail in order that those present might be able to refute those rumours which enemies of Burke were prompted by exaggerated political feeling to circulate. He then called the attention of the company to the relics on the table, including a letter to Burke from William Pitt, a few notes written in Burke's handwriting, of Parliamentary speeches, which included one relating to the impeachment of Warren Hastings, which read as follows :-

"Hastings worth nothing; he has left nobody else worth anything." Mr. Lawson also exhibited a dagger which formerly belonged to Burke. Much, he said, had been said about Burke throwing down a dagger on the House of Commons floor, and Mr. John Morley had written that the story was not worth credence, but he (the speaker) ventured to think that that idea was founded upon a misconception. What really did happen was this—an Alien Bill was introduced into the House at the time of the French excesses, when Burke's mind was excited. He was going down to

the House to support the Bill, and on his way he called at the Foreign Office and had a chat with an under-secretary, who in talking over these matters said, "An order has been given in Birmingham for ever so many thousand daggers; they are to be made according to sample, and I have one here." He pulled it out and showed it to Burke, who said, "I wish you would let me have it." He took it down to the House of Commons with him, and when he came to that portion of his speech relating to the deeds of the French, he told the story he had heard at the Foreign Office to enforce his argument, and producing the dagger threw it down on the floor, so that the members might see the sort of weapon that had been ordered, saying that it must have been intended for murderous purposes and not for open war. He protested at the same time against French principles and French daggers. The dagger was brought from London to Beaconsfield by William Webster, Burke's confidential servant. It was given by Webster to the head carpenter of the estate, by whose mother it was given to the father of Messrs. J. and R. Rolfe, his (Mr. Lawson's) agents; so the story was pretty well authenticated. Mr. Lawson also submitted to the inspection of the company a portion of Burke's dinner service and other articles possessing an historical interest. If (Mr. Lawson added) there was a moral to this story of a quiet life and its tragic end, it must be this, that they might perhaps profitably view in a spirit of greater charity, greater generosity, and with more gratitude than was frequently shown, the lives and conduct of those public men who devoted their brains and their very lives, and everything that was dearest to them, to the service of their country. (Applause.)

The members then examined with much interest the collection of relics which Mr. Lawson had shown them. The letter from William Pitt to Burke was written in a clear flowing hand. In it Mr. Pitt presented his compliments to Mr. Burke, and took the liberty of enclosing an amended copy of the Forest Bill, to which he urged a fair trial should be given. The letter continued—

"Many very well-informed persons honour this scheme with their approbation. Mr. Burke's is most heartily wished for."

A second letter addressed by the Duke of Manchester to Burke when the latter was secretary to Lord Rockingham, gave a curious insight to the corrupt patronage which was prevalent at the period; the Duke promised his co-operation in a scheme of reform which was being mooted at the time, and as some additional work was about to be thrown on the Lord Chamberlain's department, he enclosed a list of persons whom he wished to see appointed to the new offices.

An adjournment was then made to the mansion, where a collation was provided. About a hundred guests sat down, and were most hospitably entertained by Mr. Lawson and Mrs. Lawson. On its conclusion, the Annual Meeting of the Society was held, the Rev. Canon Evetts in the chair. The report showed that the total receipts for the year had been £52 17s. 9d., and that there was a balance owing to the Treasurer of £1 1s. 5d. One of the Hon. Secretaries, the Rev. C. Lowndes, had intimated his intention of retiring, but the Chairman referred to his efforts in the past on behalf of the Society, and urged him to retain his office with some assistance. He moved that he be requested to continue as hon. secretary, and that a layman be appointed to assist him. This proposition was unanimously carried, and the Rev. Charles Lowndes consented to hold office for a further term. The other two hon. secretaries, the Rev. Bryant Burgess and Rev. J. Wood, were also unanimously re-elected. Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Horwood, the auditors, were also re-appointed on the motion of Mr. W. Ward (Aylesbury), and several

new members were elected. Mr. Lowndes moved, and Mr. J. K. Fowler seconded, a vote of thanks to the chairman. Canon Evetts having acknowledged it, and expressed the pleasure it gave him to be of assistance to the Society, tendered a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Lawson for having so hospitably entertained them. This was seconded by the Rev. R. H. Pigott, who also congratulated the Society on retaining the services of the Rev. C. Lowndes, as hon. secretary.

Report of General Meeting, 1884.

A GENERAL MEETING of the members of the Bucks Architectural and Archeeological Society was held on Monday, the 7th April, at the Society's Rooms, Ohurch Street, Aylesbury. The Hon. T. F. Fremantle, M.P., presided during the first part of the meeting, and on his having to leave, the Hon. Percy Barrington was voted to the chair. There were also present—Sir Philip Duncombe, Bart., Capt. the Hon. E R. Fremantle, R.N., the Rev. R. H. Pigott, Mr. Egerton Hubbard, Mr. F. Verney, Mr. John Parker, Mr. J. Williams, Mr. R. Gibbs, and Mr. G. T. De Fraine.

The Chairman said the Hon. Secretary, the Rev. R. H. Pigott, would explain the objects of this meeting, but before they proceeded further, he thought they should express their regret at the fact that their former Hon. Secretary, the Rev. Charles Lowndes, had been obliged to vacate that position, and was unable to attend that day. They wished him a speedy restoration to health; and, when a better opportunity arrived, perhaps at their next annual excursion, they would no doubt record in a more formal manner their sense of his services.

The Rev. R. H. Pigott stated that for many years this Society had been under the general management of Mr. Lowndes, and, as most of them knew, he had met with a severe accident, which had left little hope of his taking any prominent part in the Society in the future. He had asked him (the speaker) to undertake some of the work which he formerly discharged, and a short time ago a committee meeting of the Society was held, which was well attended, and he was asked to be the organizing secretary. At the same time, Mr. Williams kindly undertook to act as treasurer. He need hardly tell them that, seeing the subscriptions were chiefly in small sums of 6s. each, it entsiled a great deal of work upon the Treasurer. The Society was one of long standing ; it had for its President the Bishop of the Diocese, while the Lord Lieutenant of the county and nearly all the large landed proprietors were Vice-Presidents; and in its time it had done a good deal of good work. In the future its work would not be so important, because so many of the churches had been restored, but they still hoped that the Society would be useful in preventing the removal of the old landmarks, which had been often done. The Society published a very valuable jo urnal-the BUCKS ARCHÆOLOGICAL RECORDS-which had gone on for many years, and formed a record of the county. It required considerable literary ability to keep it going, and Mr. Parker, a fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries, and a very good antiquarian, had accepted the editorship of the journal. The present meeting was called in order that these appointments might be confirmed. He asked His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos to take the chair, and he regretted that he could not do so, but desired him to tell the meeting how very pleased he would be if the Society would hold their next annual meeting at Stowe, and he would leave it with them to fix a day, and he would see whether it was convenient. The Duke took a great deal of interest in the Society, and a more accurate or better antiquarian than his Grace it would be difficult to find. Mr. Pigott then asked the meeting to confirm the appointments of Mr. Williams as hop. treasurer, Mr. Parker as hop. literary secretary, Mr. Gibbs as hon. librarian and curator, and himself as hon. secretary.

Mr. Parker, in the course of some comments on the position of the

Society, expressed his anxiety to see it carried on efficiently. The present RECORDS were almost ready for publication, and he thought, in the future, they should come out annually. He hoped that gentlemen of position in the county would take a real interest in the Society. This was a very historic county, and it would be a disgrace to Buckinghamshire men if they could not keep up their Archæologicai Society. So far as he was concerned, he was very glad to do what he could to promote the objects of the Society, and he trusted the officers to be elected would have the support of men of education and position in the county.

The Chairman said he thought there was not a sufficiently wide knowledge of the work the Society was doing. He also drew attention to the fact that, in that room, they had the nucleus of a very valuable museum, to which objects of interest might be sent.

The appointments were then confirmed; and on the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Egerton Hubbard, the Rev. Bryant Burgess and the Rev. John Wood, the late assistant honorary secretaries, were placed upon the committee.

Sir Philip Duncombe proposed that the Rev. Charles Lowndes, of Hartwell, who had for so many years conducted the affairs of the Society, and who was now incapacitated by an accident from rendering further services as their honorary secretary, be elected a vice-president.

Mr. Egerton Hubbard seconded, and it was carried unanimously.

Mr. Parker then submitted several amendments to the constitution of the Society, which were discussed.

A long conversation took place as to the presidentship, it appearing that, from the rules of the Society, the Bishop of the Diocese occupied that position *ex officio*, but it was doubtful if he was aware of the fact. Ultimately, Captain Fremantle proposed the following resolution, which Sir Philip Duncombe seconded, and it was carried :—" That this meeting being informed that it is doubtful whether the Bishop of the Diocese, who is nominally the president, has ever been communicated with on the subject, or is aware of his position, his son, the Rev. C. C. Mackarness, vicar of Aylesbury, be asked to communicate with his father to ascertain whether the Bishop would consent to act as a working president of the Society; in the case of his declining to do so, that the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos be asked to accept the presidentship of the Society; and that the rule be revised accordingly."

The Rev. R. H Pigott proposed, and Mr. De Fraine seconded, the proposition, that the following gentlemen be elected members of that Society: --Mr. Springall Thompson, Major Simpson Carson, Mr. Henry Cazenove, Captain Fremantle, the Rev. A. Newcombe, the Rev. Lewin Dickson, Mr. A. Dalgleish, Captain E. H. Verney, and Captain Cullen Mansell; and they were accordingly unanimously elected.

It was resolved that, in the future, the rule as to election by ballot be strictly adhered to, and it appearing that there was no ballot box, it was decided to buy one.

In reply to a question, the hon. Treasurer stated that they had about $\pounds 4$ in hand, and owed some $\pounds 17$. There were nearly 200 members.

It was decided that any member who should be three years in arrear with his subscription be deemed to have ceased membership.

On the motion of Captain Fremantle, seconded by Mr. Williams, it was resolved that the hon. secretary be empowered to alter the rules in accordance with the resolutions.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman closed the proceedings.

RULES

OF THE

Architectural & Archæological Society

FOR THE COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAM.

(Established Nov. 16th, 1847.)

I. OBJECT.—That the object of this Society shall be, to promote the study of Architecture and Antiquities, by the collection of books, drawings, models, casts, brass-rubbings, notes, and local information, and by mutual instruction at meetings of the Society in the way of conversation and by reading original papers on subjects connected with its designs.

II. CONSTITUTION.—That the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, two Secretaries, a Treasurer, two Auditors, Honorary and Ordinary Members; of whom the Archdeacon of the County, being a Subscriber, shall be considered *ex officio* one of the Vice-Presidents; and that the remaining Vice-Presidents shall be nominated by the Committee, and with the other Officers be elected by a Majority of the Members present at an Annual Meeting of the Society; and that every candidate for admission to the Society shall be proposed and seconded at a General Meeting or at a Committee Meeting, and balloted for at the next General Meeting, one black ball in five to exclude; and that on the election of a Member, one of the Secretaries shall send him notice of it and a copy of the Rules.

III. GOVERNMENT.—That the affairs of the Society be transacted by a Committee consisting of the President, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurer, and Twelve Ordinary Members, elected annually at a General Meeting of the Subscribers; and that three do constitute a quorum; further, that all Rural Deans in the County, being Subscribers, be considered *ex officio* Members of the Committee, exclusive of the twelve elected; and that Members of the Committee in any neighbourhood may associate other Members of the Society with themselves for local purposes in communication with the Central Committee.

IV. FINANCES.—That each Member shall pay an Annual Subscription of not less than Six Shillings, to be due on the first of January for the current year, or shall compound for the same for five years by one payment of One Pound Five Shilliogs, or for life by one payment of Five Pounds. And that if any Member's Subscription be in arrear for one year, he may be removed from the Society after three months' notice to him from the Treasurer, at the discretion of the Committee. Excepting that all persons holding the office of Churchwarden in any Parish of the County be placed, on the recommendation of the Clergyman of their respective Parish, and with the sanction of the Committee, on the list of Members, without payment; and also that when extraordinary talent in Architectural

or Archæological pursuits is shown by any person, it shall be competent for a majority of the Committee to elect such person an Honorary Member without Subscription.

V. MEETINGS.—That a General Meeting of the Society be held at least once a year, at such time or times as the Committee shall fix, of which due notice shall be given; and that each Member be allowed to introduce Visitors at all General Meetings, except during the transaction of private business.

VI. PROFERTY.—That all Books, Drawings, Papers, and other property of the Society, be kept by the Secretaries for the use of Members, subject to the regulations of the Committee, and that no Books be taken from the rooms except with the sanction of the Librarian.

VII. RULES.—That no new Rule shall be passed, and no alteration made in any existing rule, unless notice of the proposed new Rule or alteration shall have been given at the preceding General Meeting.

N.B.—The RECORDS are only issued annually. All communications relating to this publication should be addressed to the Editor, whether from Members or Contributors.

Aylesbury, June, 1884.

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LIST OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS, 1884.

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- HUSSEY, Mr. G. H. C., Harrow-onthe-Hill
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- ISHAM, Rev. A., Cawood House, Reigate

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- LOWNDES, Mr. W. L., Linley Hall, Broseley, Salop
- LUCAS, Mr. T., High Wycombe
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- TAYLOR, Mr. T., Newport Pagnell
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- WELLER, Mrs., The Plantation, Amersham
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