

[*Observing that no accounts of the meetings held for some years past had been published in the printed 'Proceedings,' as was formerly the case, the present Editor has gathered up such records as he has been able, and they are now presented with every apology for their meagre character, and for the shortcomings of the Society in not offering better accounts at an earlier period.*]

LAKENHEATH MEETING 1875.

LAVENHAM AND COCKFIELD

GENERAL MEETING, *August 7, 1877.* The LORD JOHN HERVEY,
President.

On Tuesday, August 7, the hour of eleven found a large contingent of Suffolk Archæologists assembled at Lavenham Hall, where they were hospitably received by Mr. and Mrs. Biddell. After a welcome refreshment of fruit, cake, and wine, the party examined the old house of the De Veres which is situated within Mr. Biddell's grounds; little remains beyond the foundations from which however a plan of the house might probably be made out. From the site of the old house the party crossing the drive leading to the hall proceeded to examine a discovery lately made by Mr. Biddell. When raising gravel his men came upon a pair of potters ovens, not more than two feet below the surface of the ground. They are constructed of flat tiles and each measures 2 ft. 8 in. in height and 2' 10" in width. The tops are semicircular and the depth from front to back is about 9 feet. When these ovens were first discovered there was an impression that they might be assigned to the Romano British period, an impression strengthened by the abundance of oyster and whelk shells found when excavating the pit. But the better opinion and that which received the greater support at the meeting, is that the ovens are comparatively modern, constructed probably in connection with potters works; this view was confirmed by a statement of Mr. Biddell's that near by is a lane called "Pot-Lane." From the ovens the party proceeded to the Church, where the President and numerous friends joined. After a few minutes spent in glancing round the building, a descriptive paper was read by Mr. E. M. Dewing (see p. 105). Leaving the church, the visitors were conducted through the streets of Lavenham, observ-

ing by the way many interesting remnants of early domestic architecture, and having their attention directed to evidences of some revival of manufacturing industry, in the shape of looms, at which women might be seen through the open cottage-windows, busily engaged in weaving horsehair seating. It was stated that many more are occupied in this way than there were ten years ago, notwithstanding the competition of steam power. The company were invited into Mr. Barkway's garden, and saw there the remains of what is supposed to have been a bath, discovered a few years ago. In it is a spring, which keeps up a constant supply of water. At the back of Mr. Barkway's premises is a good example of the front of an old timber house no longer used as a habitation, and in another street is a large house, now unoccupied, which possesses some interesting features, the ceilings of the rooms being adorned with plaster-work decorations, in which the Tudor rose and the fleur-de-lis predominate. But the most interesting relic of old Lavenham is the Guildhall, now belonging to Mr. Hitchcock, and used by him as a granary. The company lingered for some time in and about this picturesque building, and it is to be hoped that some means will be adopted for its preservation from further decay. The principal apartment is spacious and lofty, and might well serve some useful purpose more dignified than that to which it is now devoted. Some of the members found their way into the kitchen, where many a good dinner has been prepared, and a few explored the cellar, in which it is said that Dr. Taylor was confined the night before he suffered at the stake on Aldham Common.

After luncheon at the Swan Inn the whole party consisting of some 35 to 40 ladies and gentlemen proceeded to Cockfield Church, where the rector, the Rev. Professor Churchill Babington, read the paper printed in vol. v. (p. 195), of the 'Proceedings.'

At the conclusion of his paper Professor Babington led the way to the Rectory, where the excursionists again met with a very kind and hospitable reception. After a welcome cup of tea or coffee Dr. Babington drew attention to some of the choice treasures with which his house is filled, speaking first of his superb collection of ancient vases, arranged in glass cases in the drawing-room. These include vases from Cyprus, the workmanship of which may be as early as 1,000 B.C., Dr. Babington stating that the earliest vessels of this pale clay were not adorned with figures. Another and later one was from Rhodes with waterfowl; others had plants or fishes. At first these figures were entirely brown or black, but about the 5th century B.C. some white or red was introduced, the flesh of the women being white. Human figures are now more common and are better drawn. A fine vase of this period was shown, on which was depicted a statue of Minerva, with Achilles and Ajax on either side, playing at dice. The two heroes have their names written against them, so that there can be no mistake as to whom they are intended for, and there are in existence vases on which are also recorded the numbers thrown, in illustration of a line of

Aristophanes. The later vases with black figures belong to "the Second Period," and these were succeeded by the red figure vases. These latter vases are of the fine-art period of the 4th century B.C., in which the figures are of the colour of the clay, with details in black lines upon them. As an example of this period, Dr. Babington exhibited a *cylix*—a saucer-shaped cup on a stem, about nine inches in diameter—showing, on the exterior a party of revellers, and on the inside a drunken man on a couch, attended by a physician, the design being probably introduced as a warning against excess. Dr. Babington next called attention to a *phiale* (a *patera* or saucer), which was the "vial" of Rev. xv., 7. Jeremy Taylor, ignorant of this, spoke of the patience of God being displayed by dropping vengeance out of a small-necked bottle, whereas it was precisely the contrary, for these vessels were used for pouring wine on the altar over the flaming sacrifice. A comparison was next drawn between the stiffness of the early styles and the grace of the fine-art period, in which the decoration is executed with all the delicacy of miniature painting. A vase of great beauty was shown as a fine example of the latter period. Allusion was next made to the period of decadence, in which the flesh-tint became redder, and accessory colours were more abundantly introduced than in the second and third periods. In this period not only did the art become degenerate, but the subjects were for the most part effeminate in character, and some examples were placed before the company in illustration of this criticism: the vases of the decadence came mostly from Italy. Two specimens of the *alabastron*, one of alabaster and the other of glass, were shown, and it was explained that what were generally known as lachrymatories ought to be called by the same name: they were simply vessels for holding perfumes. Having selected as many examples as were necessary for his purpose, Dr. Babington explained that none of them were later than about 150 B.C.: the art of painting vases was unknown to the Romans, but was continued by the Greeks. Proceeding to his library, Dr. Babington next called attention to some fine examples of early printed books, which had been already arranged for inspection. They included three leaves of Caxton's *Polychronicon* (published in 1482), another edition of the same work (1495) by Wynkyn de Worde; a very early Greek Grammar (1494) by Aldus; Apollonius Rhodius, the text printed in capitals, not dated, but ascribed to the end of the 15th century; a herbal (1485) by Peter Schaeffer, &c., &c. Dr. Babington remarked by the way that Caxton was a most unscrupulous editor, for when he found an obsolete word he "made no bones" about changing it; at the same time he had the greatest possible respect for him as the father of English printing. He also called attention to a fac-simile (edited by himself) of the *Beneficio di Christo*, which Lord Macaulay had spoken of as being as hopelessly lost as the second decade of Livy's history! Dr. Babington finally conducted his visitors to an upper room containing his coins, of which he possesses some thousands, and selected some of the choicest treasures of his

cabinets for inspection, dealing with them chronologically, and thus illustrating the various stages of the numismatic art. In this manner the time passed pleasantly and profitably until seven o'clock, when the visitors took leave of their entertainer, and a very enjoyable day was brought to a termination.

GENERAL MEETING—CLARE. *August 8, 1878.*

The members and their friends assembling at the Church in conjunction with the Essex Archæological Society, a paper was read by the Rev. T. Parkinson (formerly vicar of Clare). In the afternoon the party re-assembled at the Castle, where Mr. Parkinson read a paper on the general history of the Town, its Castle, Earls, Honor, &c., after which the company proceeded to the Priory, where a paper was read by the Rev. H. Jarvis, vicar of Poslingford, which is printed at p. 73.

The following day an excursion was made into Essex.

GENERAL MEETING—ASPALL, KENTON AND DEBENHAM.

July 18, 1879.

The party was entertained at Aspell Hall, by the Rev. Canon and Mrs. Chevallier, a paper being read by Canon Chevallier, on the Hall. The Rev. W. H. Sewell, Vicar of Yaxley, at the same time read a paper on "Church Hour Glasses." At Kenton, the Vicar, the Rev. R. Lawrence, read a paper on the Church and Parish. Kenton Hall and Crowe's Hall, Debenham, were also visited. At Debenham Church, the Vicar, the Rev. C. J. Cornish, read an interesting paper upon the building.

A second excursion was made on August 14th of the same year, when at the invitation of Lord Waveney, the members met the British Archæological Association, at Wingfield Castle. The party afterwards visited South Elmham and Flixton Hall, where they were kindly received by Lord Waveney.

GENERAL MEETING—WATTISFIELD, RICKINGHALL, AND REDGRAVE. *August 19, 1880.*

At the Rickinghall churches, the Rev. R. C. Maul, Rector, read papers, after which the members and their friends were entertained at luncheon at the Rectory. The Chapel of Ease at Botesdale, and Redgrave church, were next visited; the day's proceedings ending by a reception of the party at Redgrave Hall, by George Holt Wilson, Esq., and Mrs. Wilson.

No Meeting was held in the year 1881.