

By Mr. Henderson. A Spanish Bible, printed in 1569. A presentation copy from the translator, Cassiodorus Reimus, 1588.

By Mr. James Reay. Preston in the Olden Time, by W. Dobson, 1857.

By Mr. James Boardman. Mementos of Roscoe. 1. View of Old Bowling Green House. 2. New Bowling Green House. 3. Allerton Hall.

By Mr. Keith. A miniature photographic copy on glass of six 4to. pages of writing, being a paper read before the Photographic Society.

The papers for the evening were:—

1. A VISIT TO THE TOMB OF THEODORO PALEOLOGUS,* *by J. T. Towson, Esq.*
2. THE CHARACTERS OF MACBETH AND RICHARD THE THIRD, ACCORDING TO SHAKSPEARE, COMPARED,† *by James Stonehouse, Esq.*
3. ON THE PERFECT r -PARTITIONS OF $r^2 - r + 1$,‡ *by Rev. T. P. Kirkman, A.M., F.R.S.*
4. ADDRESS AT THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD TRIENNIAL PERIOD OF THE SOCIETY'S EXISTENCE, *by Rev. A. Hume, D.C.L.*

CONCLUDING ADDRESS. *By the Rev. A. Hume, D.C.L., Honorary Secretary.*

In complying with the request of the Council, to address to you a few remarks at the close of another Session, my task is on the whole an easy and agreeable one. I might quote the proceedings, not yet closed, of this very evening; probably without a parallel at any time in the two counties. On this last evening of the Session, we elect fourteen new members, one of whom has read our Transactions with interest at the Antipodes; and we restore another to the roll who will thus obtain the volumes for Sessions VIII and IX. New donations come in to the last moment, and numerous objects are forwarded to us for exhibition. We have four papers also;—one on Archaeology, one on Literature, one on Science, and one of a miscellaneous character. Of the writers, two are members of the Society and two are not.

There have been eighteen Sectional meetings, two Miscellaneous, and the Annual General meeting,—in all twenty-one. At these twenty-nine papers have been read;—eight on Archaeology, nine on Literature, nine on Science, and three of a miscellaneous character. The authors have been twenty-four in number; of whom it is interesting to see that so many as one-third are unconnected with the Society; while of the remaining two-thirds, fourteen are ordinary and two honorary members. The papers have been in general of a higher character than usual; so that the Council will feel some difficulty in doing justice to all, and yet restricting their volume within convenient limits.

The donations received during the Session have made some interesting and valuable additions to both portions of our collection. The most interesting of the miscellaneous objects by which our Museum has been enriched, is the large and beautiful guidon presented by Mr. French of Bolton. The gift was suggested on the occasion of our Excursion to Preston last summer; and on all future occasions of that kind, it will be a becoming and characteristic object. Our Library has been increased by about one hundred volumes of donations, so many as seventy being from other learned Societies with which we maintain friendly relations. The continuous portions of such publications, and the separate pamphlets received, would be equivalent to about twenty volumes more.

In connexion with this subject it may be noticed that the Catalogue of our collection, extending over thirty-six pages, has been printed and issued; and that a large number of volumes has been bound and put in perfect order. The whole collection is at present accessible to the members. Hitherto, the collection has not been a very important feature of the Society, but the intention is that it shall be so. With a due amount of attention and care, its value may increase very rapidly.

* Transactions, p. 213. † Transactions, p. 227. ‡ Transactions, p. 127.

The number of members added to the roll during the Session, including this evening, is a satisfactory evidence of the firm position which the Society has already attained. At the commencement of the Session, I ventured to anticipate an increase of forty to supply the usual vacancies and to add to the standing number; and my expectations have been much more than realised, as we have enrolled sixty-three. These include the Lord-Lieutenant of the County, a Bishop, a Judge, several members of Parliament, and others of distinction for their social position, public usefulness, or high attainments. Viewed locally, twenty-nine are resident, and thirty-five non-resident. So many as fifty-nine were elected in the usual way; three were enrolled without election or entrance fee, as they had been Vice-Presidents by right of office; and two who had resigned were restored again, each paying his subscription from the point at which he had left off.

To place this number in its proper light, it ought to be stated that learned Societies have at several times existed in Liverpool whose entire members have not reached sixty-four. Yet they did not profess to be private clubs; but claimed attention as institutions with public characters and objects. The oldest Society in the town had only fifty-six members during its first session; it was occupied nearly eighteen years in enrolling sixty-four new members; and it was about twenty sessions old before its entire list comprised that number.

During the past Session, the Society gave expression to its views in reference to the munificent offer of an individual to present a Library and Museum to the town; and the President and members had the gratification to see that the mode in which they expressed their sentiments was adopted by several other public bodies. Perhaps I may be allowed to say in connexion with this subject, that I had the honour to advocate the establishment of a public Library in Liverpool on the 1st of February, 1848;—more than two years before Mr. William Ewart's first Bill on the subject had passed, and two years and a quarter before the first motion on the subject had been made in the Town Council.

The results of a single Session, however, though gratifying as in the present instance, must be expected to be generally uniform, and therefore seldom presenting points of peculiar interest. A provincial Society, cultivating the whole field of intellectual inquiry, cannot be expected to give an annual statement of the position of knowledge in its several departments; especially as there are Metropolitan Societies which do that work specially and in detail. And on the other hand, a mere analysis of the papers read would be comparatively useless; for any intelligent reader can see it for himself, at a glance, in the Table of Contents. At the present moment, however, we have reached the close of another triennial period; and it is in recollection of the more formal statements delivered on two previous occasions, that these remarks have been requested by the Council.

During three Sessions we have existed in our enlarged condition; during that time only have we practically cultivated science; or worked in sections; or made a distinction between resident and non-resident members; or met within these walls; or published an enlarged volume; or made its annual issue indispensable; or cultivated extended relations with other Societies. At the close of the sixth Session, there were 340 members connected with the Society, at the close of the ninth there are about 470. At that time, the idea of a large Society working in sections was considered practicable, provided two or more of the existing ones united to form its nucleus; the plan is in successful operation at this moment, from our own materials exclusively. We ventured then to hope that a Society with 500 members might eventually be called into existence; we now know, that whenever we consider the effort worth being made, we can raise our own Society to 500 in a single Session.

From the first hour, our Society included Scientific subjects, but only so far as they applied to the district. Indeed it only included Literature and Archæology to the same limited extent; but as the laws of nature and their application in the arts, have generally very little of a local application, in practice we declined papers on Science in favour of those Societies which gave it more prominence. This led to several erroneous inferences, e.g. that the Society was for six years merely Archæological, (in theory as well as in

practice), that we had no Scientific members, and that our attempts in that section would be unsuccessful. The following analysis, therefore, is not without interest to the members. During the three Sessions, we have had twenty-six papers in the Section of Science; and of these, six have been on Zoology, two on Botany, one on Physical Geography, four on Practical Mechanics, one on Geology, three on Mathematics, four on Meteorology in theory and practice, two on Optics, two on the higher department of Ethnology, and one on the application of Chemistry to the Arts. The papers on Archæology and Literature have also been very varied, but they need not be examined so minutely.

It is proper to state, however, that our position is not one of our own seeking; but that the result was brought about by causes external to us. To these it is now unnecessary to allude. We believed, naturally enough, that in a town where a Learned Society,—using the term in a high sense,—had scarcely existed, a union of existing elements was indispensable to success; but the result has shown that this was a mistake. In the triennial addresses delivered in 1851 and 1854, the propriety of this course was suggested; but the question has now been set at rest, in a manner most satisfactory to us. Farther, it can never be re-opened on the same grounds;—for the end has been gained already, and the proposed means are therefore obsolete.

In short, our duties are now clearly defined; we have an ample supply of competent labourers; our detailed operations have in almost everything assumed a permanent form, to constitute future precedents; and our means are amply sufficient to secure the ends. A Society in this condition, and able in an ordinary Session to enrol 63 desirable members, has little to fear if it be only true to its great principles and declared objects.