

REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

REPORT

PRESENTED TO THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

AT ITS THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,

MAY 26, 1879,

WITH AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY,
1878—1879.

ALSO

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXI.

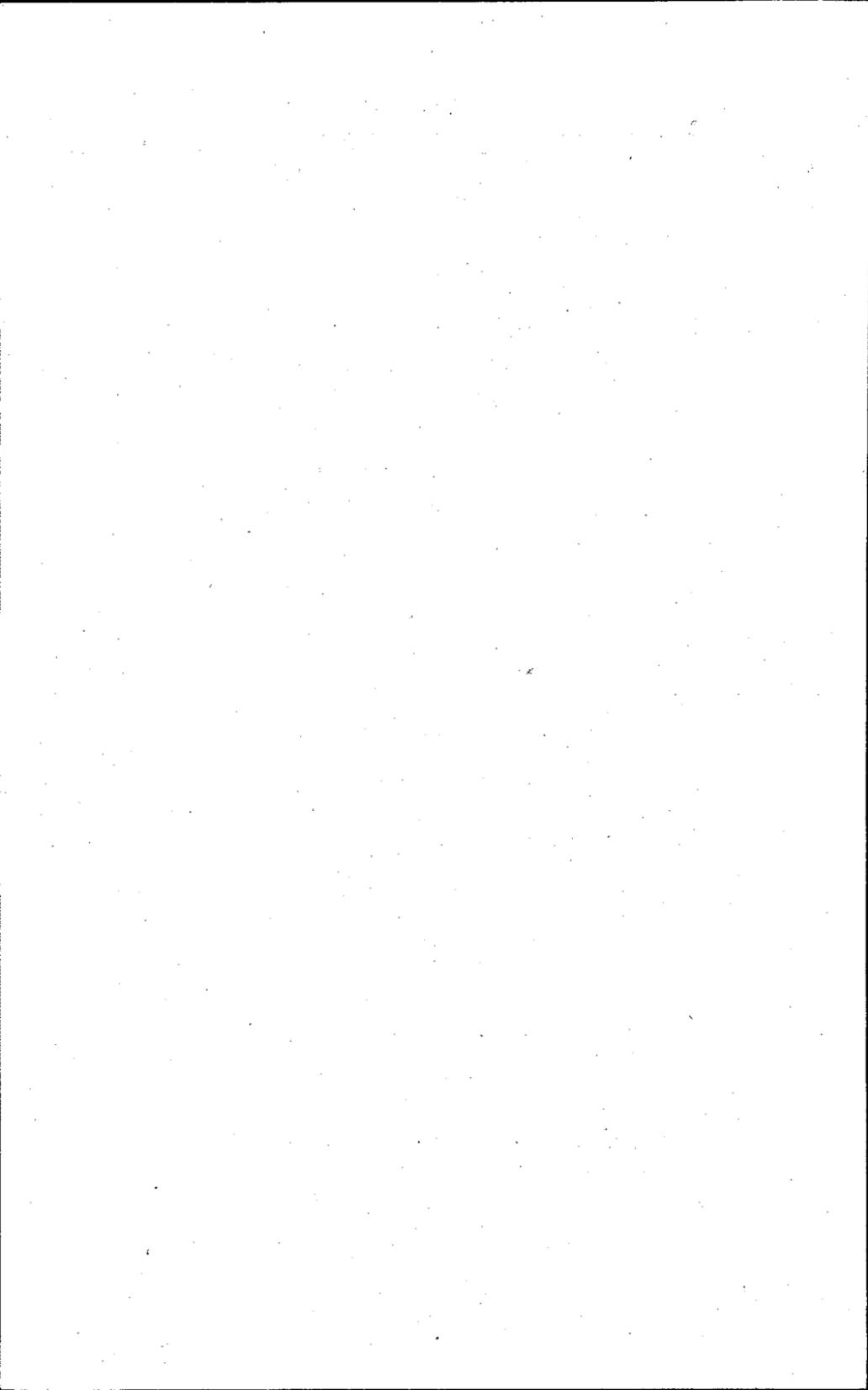
BEING No. 3 OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

CAMBRIDGE :

PRINTED FOR THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.
SOLD BY DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO.,
AND MACMILLAN AND CO.
GEORGE BELL AND SONS, LONDON.

1881

Price Four Shillings.



CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
COMMUNICATIONS,

BEING

PAPERS PRESENTED AT THE MEETINGS

OF THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society.

No. XXI.

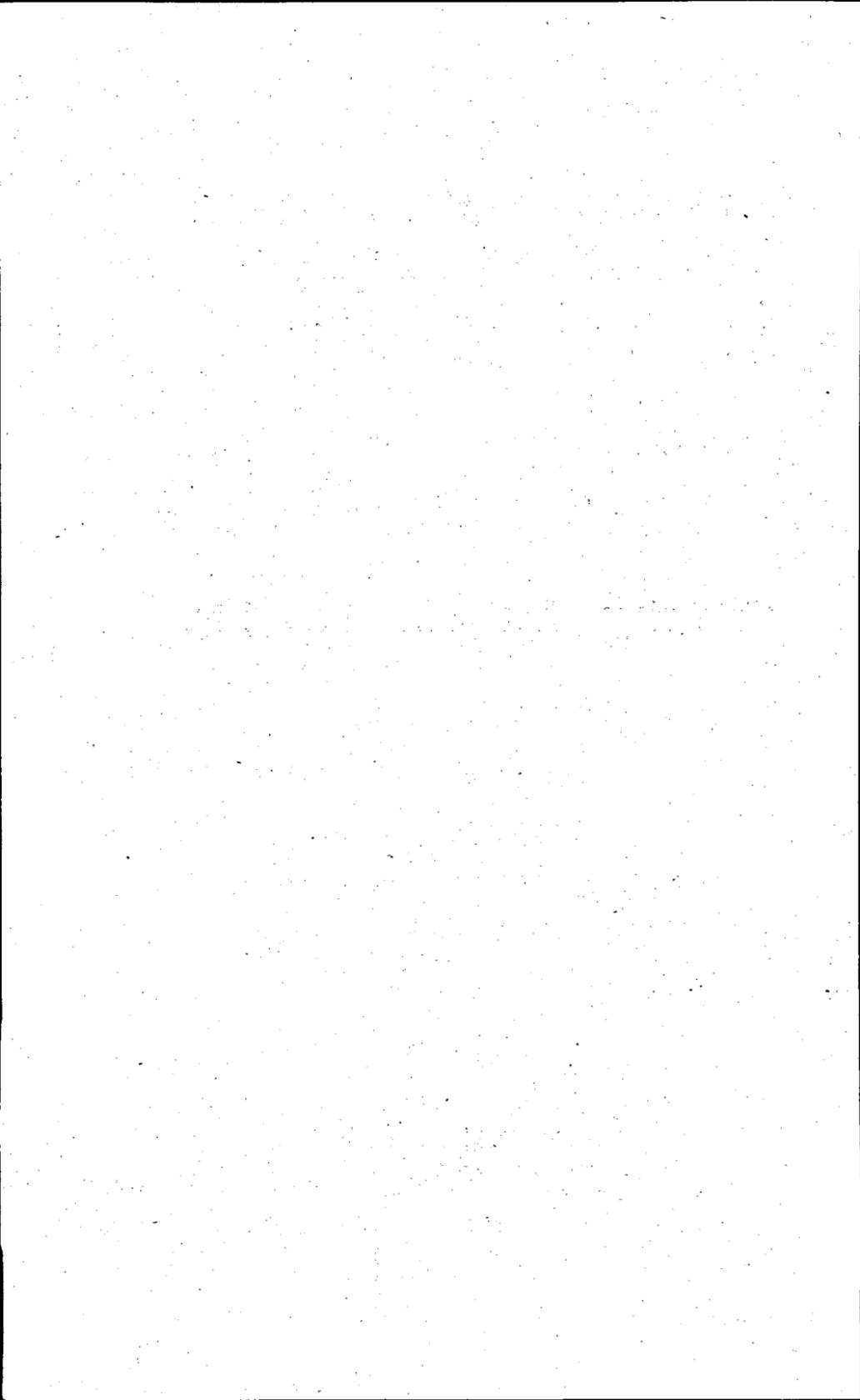
BEING No. 3 OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

1878—1879.

CAMBRIDGE:

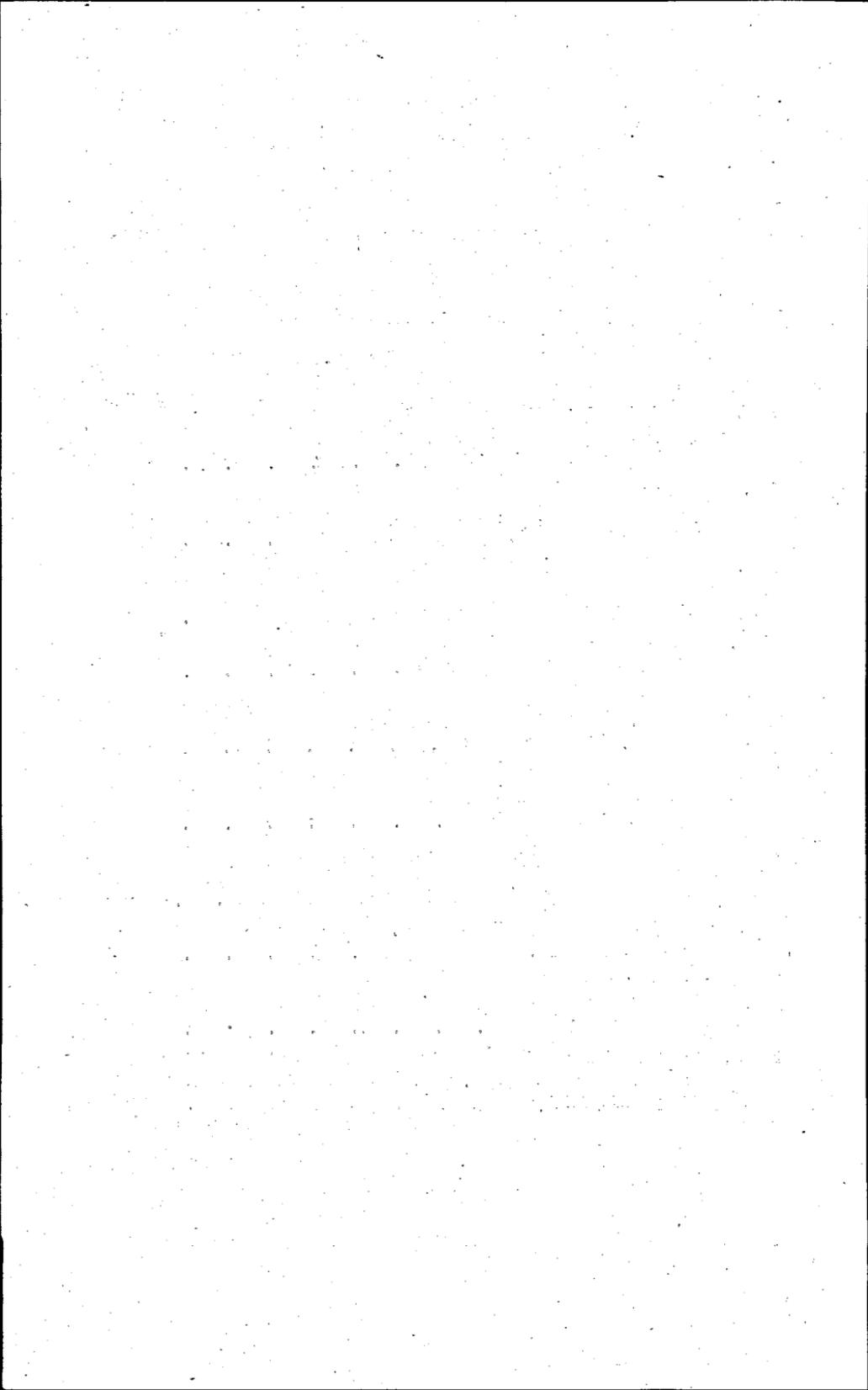
PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A.
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

1881



CONTENTS.

		PAGE
XIV.	Description of a Mediæval Merchant's Mark, and some Remarks upon Seals of the same period. Communicated by REGINALD DUTTON, Esq., Trinity College	187
XV.	On an Ancient Canoe found imbedded in the Fen-Peat near Magdalen Bend, on the River Ouse, in the County of Norfolk. Communicated by W. MARSHALL, Esq., of Ely	195
XVI.	On the Maces of the Esquire Bedells, and the Mace formerly borne by the Yeoman Bedell. Communicated by A. P. HUMPHRY, Esq., M.A., Trinity College. (With one Plate.)	207
XVII.	Description of an Old Wooden Tankard. Communicated by Dr G. MACKENZIE BACON, M.A.	219
XVIII.	History of the Peal of Bells belonging to King's College, Cambridge. Communicated by J. W. CLARK, Esq., M.A., Trinity College. (With one Plate.)	223
XIX.	Notes upon Discoveries made during the recent restoration of Landbeach Church, by the Rev. BRYAN WALKER, LL.D., Rector. (With two Plates.)	245
XX.	On the Table of Distances between different Towns given by Holinshed in his description of England. Communicated by the Rev. J. B. PEARSON, D.D., Emmanuel College	259
XXI.	On "La Maison Plantin" at Antwerp. Communicated by J. E. FOSTER, Esq., M.A., Trinity College	271
XXII.	On nine Roman signets lately found in the lead-mines at Charterhouse on Mendip. By the Rev. S. S. LEWIS, M.A., Corpus Christi College	277
XXIII.	On the Old Provost's Lodge of King's College, with special reference to the Furniture. Communicated by J. W. CLARK, Esq., M.A., Trinity College	285



XVII. DESCRIPTION OF AN OLD WOODEN TANKARD.
Communicated by DR G. MACKENZIE BACON, M.A.

[March 3, 1879.]

THE tankard, figured in the annexed wood-cut, has recently come into my possession without any history, and I do not know its age, but this is, evidently, considerable.



One-third of the original size.

It is of rude construction, but perhaps much of the interest attached to it may be derived from the nature of the materials of which it is made.

Its diameter at the bottom is $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches, that at the top $3\frac{1}{2}$, and its height $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches; and its cubic capacity is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ pint.

The body of it is composed of narrow staves of *yew*, and these are bound with three series of hoops made of the younger branches of the *yew*. The highest series of the three has fallen off. The handle and lid are made of *African mahogany*. The bottom is of *oak* and of more recent date.

The use of metals and of earthenware has long superseded that of wooden vessels for ordinary purposes, and this fact would indicate a distant date for this wooden tankard.

The wood of the *yew* has now practically ceased to be used in this country, but it is curious to note how much it was employed in olden times. Since the use of the bow ceased the *yew* was not cultivated for any great practical purpose; but the wood was used long after for axles, for the "bodies of lutes, theorboes, bowls, and wheels," and, as John Evelyn informs us, in his *Silva* (1664)—"*Yea for tankards to drink out of!*"

There is even much earlier testimony to the use of the *yew* for such purposes, for Pliny (lib. xvi.) says of it, "*Vasa etiam viatoria ex eâ vinis in Galliâ facta, mortifera fuisse compertum est.*" It seems odd that, considering the evil reputation the *yew* has borne for so many centuries, it should have been used for drinking vessels, but despite the superstitions about it, it may be explained that the poisonous effect is derived from consuming the fresh leaflets, &c., and that in the dried state no harm is experienced.

The wood of which the lid and handle are made is a species of mahogany now out of use in this country. It is from a tree known to botanists as *Khaya Senegalensis*. It is a genus of the *Cedrelaceæ* and grows along the banks of the *Gambia*, flourishing in the district enclosed between the rivers *Gambia* and *Senegal*. The negroes call it *Cail* and the

Europeans Cail Cedra. The wood is very dark and dense, bitter in taste, liable to warp, and difficult to work. Hence it has been set aside by cabinet-makers, &c., in favour of the Spanish and American varieties of mahogany, which have been so much more available for the last fifty years.

Wooden tankards are said to be common in the Scandinavian countries, and there is a Danish one in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. In Ireland such things are still preserved, and are known as "methers" (vide *Kilkenny Archæol. Soc.* Vol. III.).

The most celebrated of the historical wooden tankards are those known as the "Dunvegan" and "Glastonbury" Cups, and though my humble vessel cannot compare in interest with such as these it may not be out of place here to refer briefly to these interesting relics.

The "Dunvegan Cup" is an heirloom of the MacLeod family, and is preserved at Dunvegan Castle, in the Isle of Skye. It is referred to by Sir Walter Scott in his introduction to the *Lord of the Isles*, and also by Dr Wilson in his *Prehistoric Annals*, in 1815, p. 670, who says, "It is a cup of wood, either yew or alder, such as in Ireland is called a 'Mether,' square above and rounded below, placed on four legs and almost covered with a mounting of silver, decorated with niello and gilding. The whole measures $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height, $4\frac{1}{4}$ in breadth at the mouth, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ at the broadest point, which is somewhat below the middle." The date on the silver rim is 1493, but the cup is supposed to be older, and its date was fixed by Sir W. Scott as 993, in consequence of some inscription which he deciphered to this effect.

The "Glastonbury Cup" is of Oak. It is a "peg" tankard, and had 8 pegs originally, each marking half a pint. King Edgar, an early advocate of Temperance (about 960), is said to have invented these "pegs" as a check on excessive imbibition. The cup is carved with the effigies of the Apostles and

a representation of the Crucifixion, and was lackered inside with some strong varnish to which protection its good preservation is ascribed. It was used as a loving cup at the feasts of the Abbey. When evil times came and the Puritans surrounded the glorious old Abbey, Blanche, Lady Arundell and Wardour, after sustaining a siege of nine days, surrendered in May, 1633, to Sir Ed. Hungerford, and herself removed the famous Cup in safety, and it has since then been preserved by the Lords of Arundell and Wardour to this day. It is ascribed to Saxon times, the 8th or 9th century, and the presence on it of the Saints' emblems would seem to indicate a date not later than the 11th century. It was described by J. Milner (of Winchester) in 1794, and the details with an illustration may be found in Vol. XI. of the *Archæologia*.

In the Catalogue of the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland (1876) at page 149 I find a reference to wooden tankards as follows, under the head of Ireland:

"259—281. The *Bell Collection* of Wooden Vessels, comprising 23 Methers or Drinking vessels of Wood, with handles; two round wooden vessels or tankards with handles; two round wooden vessels with foot and stalk; six large shallow wooden dishes," &c.

There is also an illustration given of a "mether or drinking cup of wood" (J. 259), apparently a very rude vessel, with three handles, and not much unlike that figured in this communication.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
XIV.	Description of a Mediæval Merchant's Mark, and some Remarks upon Seals of the same period. Communicated by REGINALD DURTON, Esq., Trinity College	187
XV.	On an Ancient Canoe found imbedded in the Fen-Peat near Magdalen Bend, on the River Ouse, in the County of Norfolk. Communicated by W. MARSHALL, Esq., of Ely	195
XVI.	On the Maces of the Esquire Bedells, and the Mace formerly borne by the Yeoman Bedell. Communicated by A. P. HUMPHRY, Esq., M.A., Trinity College. (With one Plate.)	207
XVII.	Description of an Old Wooden Tankard. Communicated by Dr G. MACKENZIE BACON, M.A.	219
XVIII.	History of the Peal of Bells belonging to King's College, Cambridge. Communicated by J. W. CLARK, Esq., M.A., Trinity College. (With one Plate.)	223
XIX.	Notes upon Discoveries made during the recent restoration of Landbeach Church, by the Rev. BRYAN WALKER, LL.D., Rector. (With two Plates.)	245
XX.	On the Table of Distances between different Towns given by Holinshed in his description of England. Communicated by the Rev. J. B. PEARSON, D.D., Emmanuel College	259
XXI.	On "La Maison Plantin" at Antwerp. Communicated by J. E. FOSTER, Esq., M.A., Trinity College	271
XXII.	On nine Roman signets lately found in the lead-mines at Charterhouse on Mendip. By the Rev. S. S. LEWIS, M.A., Corpus Christi College	277
XXIII.	On the Old Provost's Lodge of King's College, with special reference to the Furniture. Communicated by J. W. CLARK, Esq., M.A., Trinity College	285