

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

OCTOBER 29, 1888, TO MAY 27, 1889.

WITH

Communications

MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

No. XXXI.

BEING No. 1 OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.



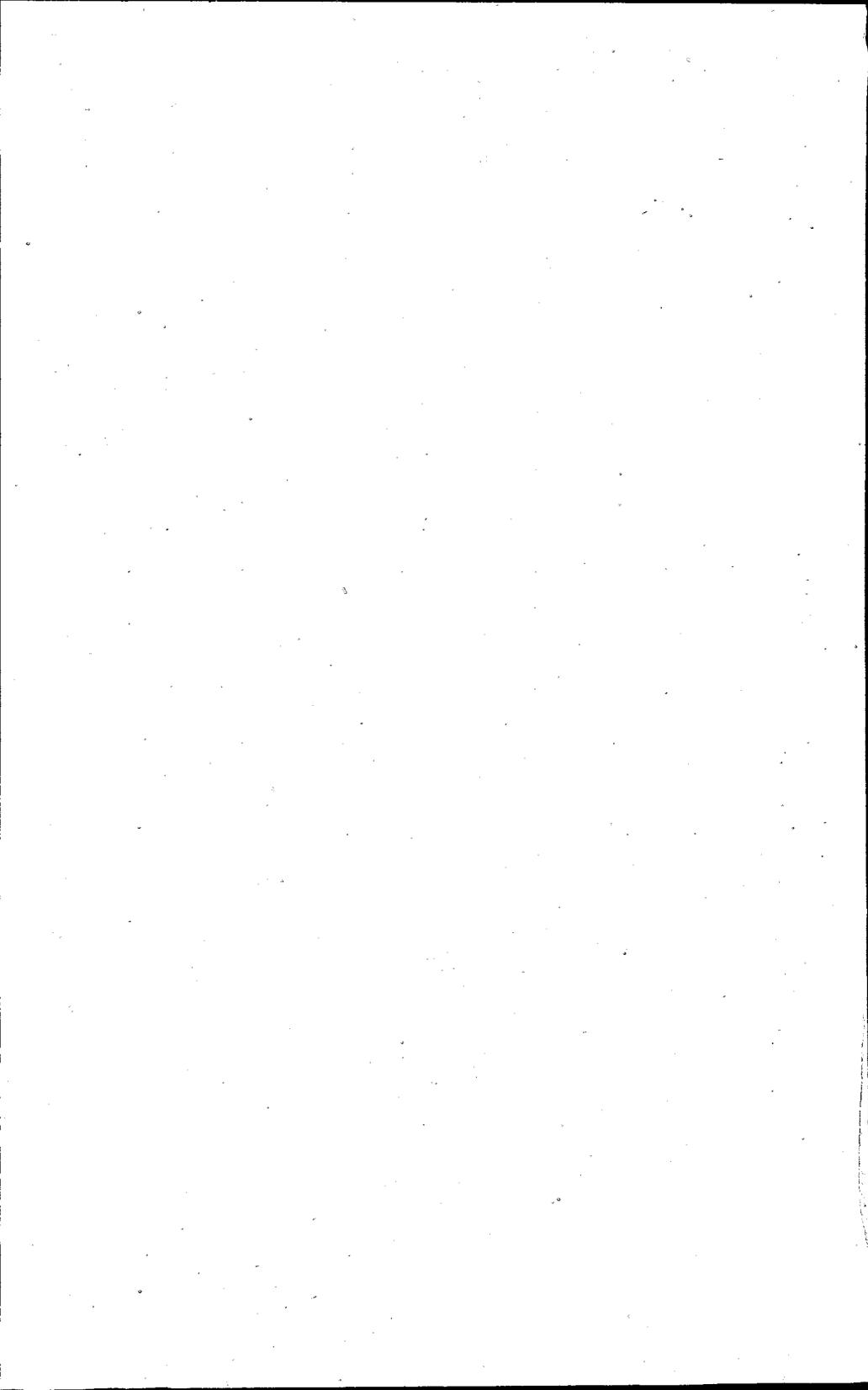
Cambridge :

DEIGHTON BELL & CO.; MACMILLAN & BOWES.

LONDON : G. BELL AND SONS,

1891.

Price 7s. 6d.



Sebekaa, and had a son Maxiba and a daughter Amenesa. Another priest, who lived in the 28th year of Amenemha, was the son of Setu and Asa. This Mentuhetep may have been either of these.

Professor MIDDLETON made the following communication :

NOTES ON AN ALTAR-CLOTH FROM LYG CHURCH, NORFOLK, LENT BY THE REV. C. JEX-BLAKE, RECTOR.

THIS is a very interesting example of what was frequently done in Parish Churches during the Reformation ; namely, the conversion of priests' vestments into hangings for the altar or pulpit.

This altar-cloth, which measures 6'. 9" x 3'. 8", consists of a sort of patch-work made up from pieces of three different copes, all dating from the latter part of the 15th century.

No. I. The greater part is made of a cope of blue velvet, which was ornamented with a *semé* pattern of cherubim, seraphim, double-headed eagles displayed, and conventional flowers. Of the seraphim (distinguished by having *six* wings) only one remains, holding a scroll inscribed *Da gloriam Deo*, and standing on a wheel. The cherubim, of which there are two, are similar in treatment, except that they have only *four* wings.

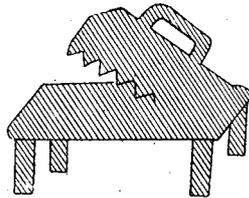
Traces of the hood of the cope remain, cut up into two separate patches.

The orphreys of this cope were ornamented with a series of single figures of saints under arches, alternating with square conventional patterns. These have been cut into separate patches, and are arranged side by side to form borders to the cloth ; instead of being, as originally worked, one over another. The subjects are these : (i) a Prophet holding a scroll ; (ii) St Olave crowned, holding a halbert and sceptre ;

(iii) St Paul holding a sword; (iv) On the other border, St John Evangelist holding a golden chalice; (v) and (vi) two other Prophets; (vii) the Apostle St Philip holding three loaves.

No. II. was a cope of crimson velvet, ornamented with half-length figures of Prophets. Only one remains holding a scroll with his name, "Daniel."

On the fragments of this cope marks are still visible where a curious heraldic badge (twice repeated) was sewn on—possibly the badge of the donor. This was a "hemp-break," used to crush the stalks of the hemp-plant, a preliminary process in the manufacture of rope. It consisted of a heavy toothed block, hinged to a table, and worked by a handle. Though only its outline is now visible, the *appliqué* needle-work being lost, its general form can be made out: see annexed wood-cut.



Hemp-break.

No. III. A vestment of orange velvet, ornamented with the common *semé* pattern of conventional flowers, of which four exist, cut into square patches.

One piece only of the orphrey remains, with a fine representation of the Crucifixion between St Mary and St John.

The three sorts of velvet are all from foreign, probably Italian, looms; but the needlework ornaments in silk and gold are of purely English work and design.

All the ornaments are worked on linen tightly stretched on a small frame; when the needlework was finished, stout paper

was fixed with size to the back of the linen to prevent fraying of its edges, and it was then cut out to the required outline, and sewn on (*appliqué*) to the ground. The figures on the orphreys consist of two thicknesses of linen—the ground being worked with silk on a long strip of linen, and the figures *appliqués* in a similar way, thus giving greater richness of effect by the slight relief produced by the double thickness of linen. The gold thread is made in the usual way by twisting tightly round a silk thread a thin ribbon of silver gilt. The spangles and the crown of St Olave are of pure gold. The crown is beautifully made by sewing small bits of shaped gold on to the stuff, making a sort of gold mosaic. All the gold has a slightly rounded surface, giving great richness of effect; by the way in which it catches the light, and conceals the thinness of the metal. The dyes used for the silks are very rich in colour, especially the *kermes* crimson, the *indigo* blue, and the fine orange *weld*.

Though very decorative in effect, and rich in colour, this needlework, like most English work of the same date, is poor in drawing, and rather coarse in execution—a very striking contrast to the needlework of England in the latter part of the 13th century, which was quite unrivalled by that of any other country.

In design too a curious want of invention is shewn; the same patterns being used again and again in vestments, frontals, dossals, "riddles" and other pieces of embroidered work.

Cherubim, double-headed eagles and conventional flowers of precisely similar design to those on this piece of work occur on many others of the same date; as, for example, on frontals and vestments at Hardwick Hall, at Chipping Camden Church, in Carlisle Cathedral, in the Church of St Thomas at Salisbury, at Alveley Church, and elsewhere. A similar monotony of design is to be seen in the needle-work figures of saints on the orphreys.

Mr Wood suggested that the copes might have come from the Benedictine Nunnery at Thetford, which was removed in 1137 from Lyng, where however the nuns continued to possess a chapel dedicated to St Edmund. There is, however, no reason to suppose that such vestments as these originally belonged to a *monastic* rather than to a *parochial* church. In style they closely resemble other examples which are known to have been the property of Parish Churches.

Mr GADOW made the following observations upon an early Christian Inscription, found at Mertola in Portugal, which had been kindly presented to the Society by Mr T. M. Warden, an official of the Mina de Sao Domingos, South Portugal.



BRITTO PRESB
 VIXIT ANNOS
 LXV REQVIEVIT
 IN PACE DNI D
 NONAS AG^VSTAS
 ERA OL^{XXX}IIII

“Mr Warden discovered this stone in a garden near Mertola, 2 feet below the surface. Nothing, not even the remains of bones, were found in this grave. In the immediate neighbourhood of Mertola, the old *Myrtilis Romanorum*, on the right bank of the Guadiana, is an extensive burial-ground, containing many graves, some of which are hewn into the rock. They all point east to west, and are, as a rule, covered over by some rudely shaped stone slabs; most of them contain bones in a rather bad state of preservation, but very rarely ornaments and specimens of pottery. On this ground stands an old church, no longer in use, and not far from it a modern church and cemetery. The inhabitants of Mertolia have no traditions about the old graves, but they call them *Sepulturas dos Gothonos*, Gothic Graves, and are rather indifferent as to their treatment. The present stone is very similar to another

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