

The Proceedings of the Society during the year 1924.

*By the courtesy of the Proprietors of the local Press we are able
to insert the following accounts:*

ANNUAL MEETING. The Annual Meeting of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society was held on June 5th in the Council Chamber at Norwich. The President of the Society, Mr. J. H. F. Walter, was unable to attend, the state of his health confining him to his room. In these circumstances the Lord Mayor (Miss Ethel Colman) was called to the chair.

The report is printed in full in our previous part. It was announced that the membership of the Society is now about 490, and that since Mr. Walter's presidency began the increase has been about 150.

NEW PRESIDENT. In place of Mr. J. H. F. Walter, who retired in accordance with rule, H.H. Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, F.S.A., was elected to the presidency. The Lord Mayor, by whom this proposition was moved, said the Society could not have a better successor to Mr. Walter. Everyone knew that Prince Frederick was a keen archaeologist, and had done a great deal in the interests of the Society.

Also on the proposition of the Lord Mayor, a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Walter for his services in the presidency. Mr. Walter had been no mere figure-head. He had thrown himself heartily into the work, a task for which he had great qualifications. He had great knowledge of the various provinces of archaeology, especially that of silver. Mr. Walter, moreover, had great enthusiasm, and was able to make other people keen. That was one of the reasons why the membership had so much increased during his presidency.

This was seconded by Mr. L. G. Bolingbroke, on whose suggestion it was further resolved to send to Mr. Walter a message of sympathy in his being unwell.

Mrs. Walter, in acknowledging this compliment, said Mr. Walter had greatly enjoyed his presidency, and felt that the attitude of the members to him had always been kindness itself; and he was greatly pleased that he was to be succeeded by Prince Frederick Duleep Singh.

The following were elected as Vice-Presidents:—

OFFICERSHIPS. Mr. E. M. Beloe, F.S.A., Mr. L. G. Bolingbroke, Mr. R. F. E. Ferrier, F.S.A. (Mayor of Great Yarmouth), Sir Eustace Gurney, Mr. H. N. Holmes, the Rev. G. H. Holley, and Mr. J. H. F. Walter.

Mr. Walter R. Rudd was elected Hon. General Secretary, in place of Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard, Bart., deceased.

Mr. L. G. Bolingbroke was re-elected Hon. Treasurer.

Mrs. Ivo Hood was re-elected Hon. Editorial Secretary.

Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy was re-elected Hon. Excursion Secretary, and Mr. Frank Barclay as Hon. Auditor.

The retiring members of the Committee were re-elected (Mr. F. H. Barclay, Miss Colman, Mr. E. A. Kent, and Mr. R. H. Teasdel), and there were elected in addition Mr. John Cator, Mr. H. O. Clark, Canon Gordon Roe, and Mr. E. B. Southwell.

Mr. R. H. Teasdel moved that Rule V. be amended by the substitution of the word "three" for the word "five." He said that under the present rule a President was elected annually, but could not serve for more than five years in succession. Before Mr. Walter was elected President, the position was held practically for life. This was all right when they had an energetic President, but it would be very undesirable when the President got lax. Some of the members felt that a person should not be President for more than three years in succession. The Society was now much more active than formerly, and there was much more work for the President to do, for he was expected to attend all the meetings, both of the Society and of the Committees, and this became a serious call upon his time.

Mr. A. Batchelor seconded the motion and it was carried.

Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy made a suggestion in favour of restricting the number of visitors that should be allowed to attend the excursions. This was supported by Mr. Rudd and several members, and finally it was agreed that the Hon. Secretaries should exercise their discretion in the matter.

Mr. W. T. F. Jarrold said that recently a number of tablets had been placed in Norwich, recording the birth-place or the dwelling-house of famous citizens. There were, however, many other famous citizens whose names had not yet been recorded, and he suggested that members of the Archaeological Society should contribute to a

fund to carry on the good work. Sarah Ann Glover, the inventor of the Tonic Sol-fa system, and Bishop Cosin, were names he would like to see recorded.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Lord Mayor on the motion of Mr. Ferrier, seconded by Mr. Jarrold.

EXCURSION IN SOUTH NORFOLK.

After the meeting an afternoon excursion was made to South Norfolk, under the direction of the Honorary Excursion Secretary, Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy. The first stopping place was the fine Church of Pulham St. Mary the Virgin. Then Thelveton Hall and Frenze Church were visited; and after tea had been taken at the King's Head Hotel, Diss, half an hour or more was devoted to the parish church of that pleasant town.

At the Church of Pulham St. Mary the Virgin, the Rector, Rev. E. W. Field, made the necessary explanations of a subject which has received so much attention from antiquaries as to be fairly well known. He pointed to the recent restoration of the singularly beautiful porch of the Church, a work which had been done under the careful supervision of the Secretary of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings.

At Thelveton Hall a paper was read by Mr. W. R. Rudd. He said that Blomefield curtly described it as "a good brick building and very uniform." The Rev. C. R. Manning, evidently more impressed, had spoken of it in a paper read before the Society nearly forty years ago, as "a good specimen of an Elizabethan mansion of moderate size. It was built about the year 1592 by Thomas Havers, of Winfarthing, who purchased the Manor in that year and died in 1605. . . . Between the ceiling of the entrance porch and the small chamber over it was a low secret room or hiding place. The Havers family were Roman Catholics down to the late possessor, Thomas Havers and his children. A pedigree of the family is given by Blomefield, who states that 'John Havers was gentleman of the horse to John, Duke of Norfolk, and attended him in the Battle of Bosworth Field, where that Duke was slain. John Havers, of Winfarthing, was steward to the House family, as was Thomas Havers, his son, who purchased the Manor and built the house.' Fourth in descent from the builder of the Hall was Thomas Havers, of Norwich, a goldsmith, many of whose pieces of church plate remain marked with his initials. The last possessor of the estate, Thomas Havers, a well-known magistrate, died October 12th, 1863, and several of his descendants survive, but the property was sold in the following year to the late Thomas Mann, to whose family it now belongs."

Sir Edward Mann, the present owner, had kindly furnished to Mr. Rudd the following particulars: "There was a Roman Catholic chapel in the east wing of the house when it was bought by my father. The interior of the house has been much altered, but most of the panelling is of great age: that in the small library is of oak, felled about 100 years since. Some of the bedrooms are also panelled, but unfortunately were painted many years before the property came to my family. There is a portion of the original staircase at the west end of the corridor (upstairs). The carved mantelpiece in the dining-room was carved by Mr. Thomas Havers, the last of that family to own the estate."

It was interesting to know that the daughter of this Thomas Havers was that talented artist whose "Virgin and Child" adorns the Castle Museum collection. Thus for nearly 300 years in unbroken sequence from the Thomas Havers of Elizabethan times to the Thomas Havers of the mid-Victorian era, from father to son, did this Roman Catholic family hold the Manor and reside at this Manor House at Thelveton.

The fourth in descent from the builder of the Hall, Thomas Havers, a goldsmith of Norwich, was like that immortal character, John Gilpin, "a citizen of credit and renown." "Born 1646, admitted freeman 1675, Sheriff 1701, Mayor 1708, he became notorious for alienating the Dukes of Norfolk from the city by not allowing Thomas, the then Duke, to have his comedians enter the gates, their trumpets blowing before them, with the result that the Duke pulled down his palace in St. John Maddermarket, to the great loss of the city." (*Vide Rye's Norfolk Families.*)

He married secondly Grace, daughter of Henry Berney. He died in 1732, aged 86, and was buried in St. Michael-at-Plea Church.

It is one of my fond imaginings, continued Mr. Rudd, that the humble Phoebe Berney, who lived in the parish of St. Mary Coslany, and who, at the parish church thereof married, October 2nd, 1792, a man known to fame as Old Crome, had mayhap for kinsman this rich and influential citizen. From this Thomas Havers, goldsmith, is most probably descended that worthy and respected citizen, the present Sheriff of Norwich. 'Tis true he and preceding generations of more recent times have not followed the trade of their probable forefather. Yet, more skilful, they have successfully solved the difficult problem of turning baser metals into gold.

Frenze Church occupies a secluded position in what was once the park of the Old Hall. It now consists of nave, south porch, and a wooden western bell-cote. The remains of the chancel are said to have been demolished about 1820. The original building was probably early English, as two lancets remain, but most of the old work remaining is of the 14th century. A paper was read by Mr. B. Cozens-Hardy. An interesting feature of the Church is

the profusion of its memorial brasses, which relate mainly to the important family of Blennerhasset, and cover five generations. On this branch of the subject a paper was read by Mr. H. O. Clark, who stated, on the authority of Mr. Walter Rye, that hardly a brass remains in its proper position. Undoubtedly, he said, there were many more. Near the south door, and also near the west end, were despoiled slabs. A brass to the memory of Sir Thomas Blennerhasset, who died in 1531, was represented in the coloured frontispiece to Cotman's brasses. It was in the Church in 1816 when this plate was published, and was missing in 1861 when Haines wrote his manual. I am informed, added Mr. Clark, that the figure has been recently discovered in a curio shop in Germany, and that there is hope that it may soon be replaced in the Church.

At Diss Church, the Rector, the Rev. R. L. Whytehead, read a paper, and concluded by asking one or two questions, as to which, he hoped, the Society might be able to give him information.

In the churchyard were two or three gravestones with the name of Sell Cotman on them. Did this indicate any relationship to the artist, John Sell Cotman? The main facts relating to the Church have been set forth in an excellent leaflet which the Rector has prepared, and is purchasable by visitors.

EXCURSION TO THE AYLSHAM DISTRICT.

On July 10th the Society made an afternoon excursion to the Aylsham district. A large party set out from St. Andrew's Plain, headed by the President of the Society (Prince Frederick Duleep Singh), and included also the Lord Mayor of Norwich (Miss Ethel Colman), the Mayor and Mayoress of Great Yarmouth (Mr. and Mrs. R. F. E. Ferrier), and the ex-President of the Society (Mr. J. H. F. Walter). Passing Bishop Hall's Palace, Haveringland Parish Stocks, and Brandeston Stump Cross, the magnificent Churches of Cawston and Salle were given detailed notice. Thence the party went on to Heydon Grange, by invitation of Colonel and Mrs. E. A. Bulwer, and next, by way of the Heydon Park route, they reached Mannington Hall, where Sir Charles and Lady Tomes offered them afternoon tea, a welcome refreshment, for the heat was great, and the clouds of dust thrown up from the roads was thirst-inspiring. The day was gloriously summer-like, and made a pleasing contrast to the weather that marked the previous visit of the Society to Mannington, when rain fell in sheets.

At the fine Church of Cawston a paper was read by Mr. C. G. R. Williams. He sketched the manorial history of the parish, and remarked that the chief glory of the Church is the fine hammer-beam roof of the nave. The full-length statues of angels standing

at the ends of the hammer-beams are unique. The beautiful tracery in the spandrils (no two of which are alike) should be noticed, and the cornice of demi-figures of angels. It is instructive to compare this with the arch-braced roof over the nave at Salle; the two are excellent examples of the principal types of 15th-century roofs in Norfolk. Hardly less admirable than the nave roof is the rood screen. It is one of the few examples in which the doors remain.

In the course of some further observations on the antiquities of the Church, Mr. Williams called attention to the carved ringers' gallery under the tower, corresponding with those of Salle, Aylsham, Worstead, and elsewhere in the county.

The antiquarian points of the wonderfully beautiful Church at Salle were discoursed on by the Rector, the Rev. W. L. E. Parsons. He said this was probably not the original church, but there were no remains of a previous one except perhaps a tombstone in the chancel of a rector of the time of the Black Death. Everything pointed to the conclusion that the present structure was built from 1420 to 1440. His opinion was that it was erected after the church at Cawston had been completed, and was intended to be a sort of rival to Cawston. At all events, the measurements were exactly the same, except that the chancel was two yards longer than that of Cawston, and consequently the nave was two yards shorter. There had been much speculation as to why such a magnificent church came to be built at Salle. Mr. Walter Rye had said he had evidence of Salle having been once an important town. The Rector thought a more reasonable explanation was that Salle, as he proceeded to show, was once the home of several important families. The stalls in the chancel were very remarkable, but he did not think they pointed to a collegiate foundation; they were probably for the use of several chaplains attached to the Church.

At Heydon Grange Colonel E. A. Bulwer gave HEYDON a short account of the history of this fine old GRANGE. house, and he and Mrs. Bulwer took the utmost trouble in conducting their visitors around and showing them its very remarkable treasures. One of these is a doll's house of about 1700. It may be regarded as an archetype of the still more elaborate Queen Mary's doll's house, which is now one of the wonders of Wembley. Just as this latter is designed with historical intent to exhibit the domestic and other appointments of the present day, Colonel and Mrs. Bulwer's possession exhibits what was customary in the latter years of William III. and Mary II. and the early years of Queen Anne. There are figures in the costume of the period, and a complete suite of rooms in what is intended to represent an opulent house. The bedrooms, the reception rooms, and the service quarters are

all well illustrated, with servants, table guests, and persons of the family, all shown in typical attitudes and occupations. The butler is at the door of the cellar, and the cooks are roasting a sucking pig. Another feature among Colonel Bulwer's possessions is a fine collection of teapots, 548 in number, and covering the hundred years from 1720 onwards. Queen Mary visited the Grange last year to see the doll's house and teapots, and a few days afterwards she added to the representative value of the latter by sending to her hosts two further teapots.

At that delightfully situate moated house,
 MANNINGTON Hall. Mannington Hall, Sir Charles Tomes gave an address. The facts were probably familiar to some of the visitors, for Mannington was visited by the Society when the Hall was occupied by the Earl of Orford, who lived there twenty years, in succession to the previous Earl, who lived there forty years.

The President, having warmly thanked Sir Charles and Lady Tomes for their hospitality, acknowledged his own election to office, and paid a tribute to the work of his predecessor, Mr. J. H. F. Walter. He remarked on Mr. Walter as a very great authority on old silver, and complimented him on bringing back to the county three ancient chalices, those of Booton, Rockland, and Drayton. Prince Frederick went on to mention regretfully the death of Sir Thomas Barrett-Lennard, Bart., who was elected a member in 1894, and was Hon. General Secretary in 1919. His decease had inflicted on the Society a severe loss. His service to it had been considerable; and his fine character had earned for him the respect and regard of all with whom he was associated. The Society had also to deplore the decease of Mr. C. H. Atthill, Clarenceaux King at Arms (member 1878), the Rev. B. H. Grigson (member 1879), and Mr. E. A. Field (member 1885).

EXCURSION TO THE MERTON DISTRICT.

September 4th was one of the rare occasions when an outing of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society was not favoured by the weather. The Committee had chosen for the purposes of an all-day excursion a beautiful and interesting district of which Merton Hall may be taken as the centre, an area that is little known to the majority of Norfolk people, but one nevertheless that comprises, in hidden-away places of poor approach, some fine churches that have suffered hardly at all from the hand of the restorer. Rain fell intermittently nearly all day; the air was chill; and nothing could less have resembled an exploration in the crown of the summer season. The party numbered about 150, of whom, roughly, a third set out in charrs-à-bancs from All Saints Green, while the remainder travelled by motor-car. The President of the Society, Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, was in supreme

charge. Mr. W. R. Rudd fulfilled his wonted duties as Secretary, and Mr. Basil Cozens-Hardy, as Excursion Secretary, saw to the working of the schedule, an onerous responsibility, seeing that the route covered some secluded places well away from the main routes, and reachable only by curly by-roads. The outgoing journey was made by way of Hingham, Carbrooke Church, Merton Church, and Merton Hall, and occupied all the morning. In the afternoon a call was made at Merton Rectory for the sake of its associations with Edward Fitzgerald, who died there, and is said to have written in the grounds some of the opening stanzas of "Omar Khayyam." Then Tottington and Tompson Churches were seen, and the round wound up with a visit to Breccles Hall, where the Right Hon. and Mrs. Edwin Montagu offered the members afternoon tea. Mr. Montagu was unable to be present, but a telegram was received from him bidding the Society a hearty welcome. The return journey was made by way of Attleborough and Wymondham, All Saints Green being reached at seven o'clock, when rain was falling smartly.

The spacious and beautifully proportioned Church of Carbrooke is one of the many churches of Norfolk which surprise by reason of being found in obscure and little populous places. A paper read by the Vicar, the Rev. A. R. Godfrey, contained the following:—

The name of this town is spelt in *Domesday* and other ancient records Kerebock, Kerbroke, and Carebroc. It seems to me but fanciful to connect the name with the brook and the soil carried down by it, seeing that the present brook, which ran along the same bed before the Conquest, has its rise but two or three miles away in Scoulton Mere. One of the most interesting facts in connexion with this Church is its connexion with the Knights Hospitallers. In 1173 a preceptory (or subordinate community) of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, or Knights Hospitallers, was founded here by Roger, Earl of Clare and Hertford. Roger died before the building and the endowment were completed, and the work which he began was finished by Maud, his wife. Interesting traces of this Hospital are still to be seen in the meadow south of the Church, including the moat, fish ponds, and the foundations of some of the walls. Two ancient coffin stones still remain in front of the high altar, and it is generally believed that they mark the last resting place of Maud, Countess of Clare, and her son Richard. No names are cut on the stones, which fact indicates that they cover the remains of notable people. The crosses on them are of a character which denotes that these notabilities belonged to the Order of Knights Hospitallers, and it is likely that Richard reached Jerusalem and was qualified to be Commander of the Order. I believe Blomefield's conjecture that

the Latin inscription was added in the 15th century has been discredited, and it is probable that the lettering is of the same date as the stones themselves, *i.e.*, the end of the 12th century. In vol. ix. of *Norfolk Archaeology*, Manning translates the inscription on the north stone thus: "Here lies buried a mother of the family of Clare, by a soldier of which (family) England boasts herself renowned." His translation of the other inscription is: "A son rests interred at the right hand of his mother. Returning to his own birth, he has sought this harbour." Blomefield says that at the Dissolution the Preceptory was valued at £65 2s. 9d., and in 1543 it was granted to Sir Rd. Gresham, Kt., and Sir Rd. Southwell and their heirs. One of these heirs, Sir Robert Southwell, fought as Admiral against the Spanish Armada in 1588. Shortly afterwards his widow seems to have been harassed by the behaviour of the poor of Carbrooke. She addressed a letter to Sir Basingbourne Gawdy, entreating him "to entertayne a widowes" complaint of the great disturbance (?) of the towne of Carbrooke, which cannot be reformed without the assistance of the . . . "justices of the . . ." Among other complaints "the pore are grown so unruly there that they have left neither hedge, nor gate, nor style unburned. And now they goe to my woode and fell and topp at their pleasure. The . . . (damage?) that they have done of late are (is?) not to be repayred with 20 li." She "is also exceedingly wronged by the malice of one Luke Anger (? Ainger), of Tottington who very dishonestly censured me at his pleasure . . . and animateth them that are prone enough to evil." In the middle ages (1000—1400) there were two vicarages here and two churches. The two benefices were consolidated by John Bishop of Norwich exactly 500 years ago. The Church of Carbrooke Parva, situated south of the brook and alongside the road to Ovington, was then pulled down. Perhaps the stone coffin lying at the west end of this Church was brought here at that time. The present Church was built about the middle of Henry VI.'s reign, and the chancel is the older portion. There are records of three guilds, each of which had its altar and image. The Guild of St. John the Baptist maintained masses for the living and departed in the chapel at the east end of the north aisle, and it is interesting to note that the original altar slab was found by my predecessor in the floor against the west door, and it is now used by us on Saints' days. Another slab belonging to the altar in the chapel of the Guild of the Blessed Virgin, which occupied the east end of the south aisle is at present let into the floor beneath the high altar. The piscina of this chapel will be seen in the priests' vestry behind the organ. The high altar in olden days was used by the biggest of the three guilds, that of St. Peter and St. Paul. The north porch has long been closed and converted into a choir vestry. It has an interesting groined roof with a quaint

carved figure at the apex. A visitor in 1913—the Rev. A. Cross, now, I believe, Rector of Brisley and Vicar of Gately—suggests that it represents the town beadle. Over the porch is a pavise which contains some armour, which was probably used by the aforesaid beadle, and an old chest referred to in an inventory made during the Commonwealth as a “chest with iron barres for the keeping of the evidences of the town.” I have an extract from another inventory dated 1552 made by Commissioners of King Edward VI. and some of the leading parishioners, amongst whom was one John Wase, a churchwarden, and possibly a forebear of Leonard John Wace, who lives on the farm adjoining the Church. One wonders where a certain pre-Reformation chalice, valued in 1552 at 56s. 10d., is now. The chalice we use to-day was probably made in 1654 and was given to the Church in 1823. The early history of the latter would doubtless be as interesting as the later history of the former chalice!

At the ancient and beautiful Church of Merton
 MERTON the Rector, the Rev. Charles Kent, pointed out
 CHURCH. various features of interest. In the sanctuary is
 a triple graduated sedilia and a double piscina,
 a mural effigy represents Robert de Gray, a recusant who was imprisoned in Norwich, Wisbech, and London, for refusing to attend the parish church. He died in France; and now, by a strange irony of fate, he was adorning by his effigy the very church he repudiated by refusing to attend. Anyhow, he was entitled to honour for being true to the old Faith. The altar rails are Laudian. The Bible was the first one used in this Church by order of James I. Having been long lost, it was found in the possession of a carpenter at Wotton. Lord Walsingham bought it back for a pound and restored it to the Church. The font is hexagonal and is of the Perpendicular period. Some vandal, probably in the Civil Wars, destroyed the figures which supported it, and which were supposed to have been angels. The exterior mouldings of the windows and south doorways are of great beauty.

The President said the Church was a perfect gem. The Laudian altar rails were extraordinarily interesting. They were there in the old way, as Archbishop Laud intended them to be, right round the altar, so as to keep the dogs away. It was then customary for people to take their dogs to church with them; and Laud did not think it was decent for dogs to go up to the altar table. Before the party left Merton Church, Mr. W. R.

Rudd called attention to a most interesting discovery at St. Faith's Abbey, where there was a fire a few weeks ago. He had written to Mr. Warner Cook, asking to be informed if anything of antiquarian interest was found. Mr. Cook had replied saying that an interesting fresco had been discovered.

Mr. Rudd went to see it, and noticed a gigantic figure, about 15 feet high, of a cleric. It was found at the end of what he took to have been the refectory of the Abbey. He suggested to the Committee and the members of the Society that an exploration of the fresco should be made. It was open now to all the elements. He had tried to uncover some of it, but the plaster peeled away. It would require skilled treatment at once.

The President said this was excellent news. Frescoes were most difficult to deal with. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings were always at a loss as to how to preserve them. Once exposed to the air they tended to disappear. His idea would be to take a photograph and then whitewash it so as to preserve it for ever. He thought it would be well to write to the Secretary of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, who might suggest something.

At Merton Hall the members made a round of the principal apartments, by kind permission of Lord Walsingham and of Sir Edward Edgar, Bart. Lord Walsingham was himself present, but he resigned to his second son, the Hon. Richard de Grey, the duty of making a short statement on the antiquities of the Hall. The main body of the house was built about 1580 by Robert de Grey, who had a lot of trouble because he was a recusant and had the misfortune to live in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The greater part of his life was spent in gaol. It was thus that the building of the house was very much delayed; it was not completed till about 1613, in the time of Robert de Grey's son, who became a Protestant. The two wings of the house are additions built within the last eighty years. The house replaced an older one, which some supposed to have stood on the same site, though he himself did not think so. Asked by the President why he had not said anything about the antiquity of the family, Mr. de Grey said he did not care to blow the family trumpet. But it was true that about 1350 one of the de Greys married an heiress of the Baynard family, so that through her the line of the family reached back to the Conquest.

The Rev. Charles Kent rightly described the next place of visitation as a grand Church, that of Tottington. It was a little out-of-the-way and seldom visited. The great Earl Mortimer had held land there, and a farm near by was still called after him. Some time ago his shield, bearing a fleur-de-lys, was dug up, and it was now exhibited on the south wall of the Church. But Tottington also boasted to be the birthplace of an even greater man, for Abbot Sampson, the strongest man in all East Anglia, was born there about 1132, and became Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds in A.D. 1182. The Church

is of the very late Decorated period, with the exception of three Perpendicular windows. It was partially repaired in 1885, but stands in great need to-day of further repairs. Its chief feature is a handsome and lofty rood screen of the Perpendicular period. A great treasure of the Church is the forty-nine bench-ends covered with elaborate Perpendicular panelling, surmounted by poppyheads, the elbow pieces being ornamented with animals in various postures. Probably this is 15th-century work, as the fashion of placing open benches came in then. Until then the people stood, only the invalids being allowed to sit on a bench against the wall. "Going to the wall" was formerly an ecclesiastical expression; now it was a secular one, and meant something totally different. In the course of some further details, Mr. Kent said he gathered from the annals of the Church that the vicars were all terribly poor; they chiefly subsisted on rabbits, the best product of the district. He added that the case of Tottington was a proof of the folly of being in haste to unite benefices. He held, with Merton, the united benefices of Tottington, Tompson, and Sturston. Before, there were two vicars. These places were all now united into one benefice. There were three churches, three Sunday schools, three everything; and therefore the unfortunate Rector, out of a total income of £450, had to find a curate, keep up a rectory with a vicarage for the curate, and finance every parish organisation, for there was no one else to do it. He did not know what was going to happen in future. As would be seen, the Church needed great repair. He could not find the money, and the people in the neighbourhood were all poor.

In concluding his paper at Tottington, the Rev. EDWARD FITZGERALD. Charles Kent appended some interesting remarks on the associations of Edward Fitzgerald with Merton Rectory. He said: Fitzgerald, the translator of "Omar Khayyam," the associate of Carlyle, Thackeray, and Tennyson, was a great friend of the Crabbe family. The son, the poet George Crabbe, was the Vicar of Bredfield, where Fitzgerald lived. Fitzgerald and the vicar became great friends, both being eccentric. In Crabbe's cobbler's shop, where the vicar patched his sermons, not his boots, Fitzgerald spent many happy hours. When the vicar died the poet continued his friendship with his son—known as George the Third, Rector of Merton. He loved to come here and talk over old Bredfield days, and compose in this secluded dell. It was here he commenced the translation of "Omar Khayyam," and left behind his Persian dictionary, which he asked the rector to forward on. Miss Crabbe became his confidante, and he published nothing without her approval. On his last visit to Merton, Fitzgerald stayed at Bury to revisit the scene of his old schooldays, as if he had some premonition of coming death. Coming on here the same evening he retired early,

wearied out with the journey. When he was called in the morning he made no response, and the rector shortly afterwards entered his room to find he had passed away. With regard to his religious views, no one had a greater reverence for holy things and revealed religion than he. The greater part of his life he was an orthodox Churchman of a very strict type, as many letters show. He was an accomplished organist, playing the services in his parish church. But in his latter years the effect of his temperament was such that he was unable to accept the orthodox faith on trust, yet numbering among his dearest friends those who, differently constituted to himself, were able to live "by faith." The epitaph on his tomb suggested by Crabbe, and which Cowell had taught him to love, is very apt, and explains his trust and confidence in the Supreme Being: "It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves."

At the Church of Tompson the President read
 TOMPSON a paper. The screen, he said, dated, without
 CHURCH. doubt, from the early 14th century. He narrated
 the course of events which had saved the Church
 from total dilapidation after it had been practically unused for
 a long time.

At Breccles Hall, Mr. Detmar Blow, who had
 BRECCLES come for the purpose specially from London,
 HALL. read a paper dealing with the architectural work
 which had been done to the structure, and the
 President made a brief summary of its very remote history. It
 was undoubtedly Mr. Charles Hanbury who had saved the place
 from destruction.
