

## Obituary.

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### THE LATE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

It is with the deepest regret that we have to record the death of the President of the Society, the late Duke of Buckingham and Chandos. Many of the members will remember the pleasant day spent at Stowe in the year 1884, when the Society was entertained by his Grace, and will recall with what kindness the members were welcomed, and were personally conducted by the President over one of the stateliest houses of which England can boast. Others, in the earlier days of the Society, will remember the occasion of his entertaining the members at Wotton. It is unnecessary in these pages to make any but a passing reference to the distinguished titles which descended to him. Besides his dukedom, he was Earl Temple of Stowe (1822), Earl Temple (1749), Viscount and Baron Cobham, Lord Kinloss (1601), in the peerage of Scotland, and Earl Nugent, in the peerage of Ireland. Nor need a particular account be given of his public career, which at the time of his death was so fully made known to the world. A few points, however, in the late President's life which will naturally interest the members of our Society may suitably be briefly noticed in these Records. It was in 1861 that he succeeded his father in the dukedom, when he relinquished his position as Chairman of the London and North Western Railway, which he had held since 1853, and in which he had displayed his capacities and high qualities as a man of business. From 1861 to 1875, as Lord-Lieutenant of the County, and with his other special qualifications, he gave assiduous attention to county affairs. In 1875 he left England as Governor of Madras, returning in 1880, during which period he energetically grappled with the great Indian

famine of 1876-7. On his return to England, his Grace again took up the thread of county business, and his conduct as Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, or when presiding at county meetings, will always be remembered as distinguished for the grasp of the subject before him, and for the outspoken expression of his honest convictions. In 1886 the Duke was chosen a fitting successor of Lord Redesdale as Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords. From his early days he had, as is well known, filled several offices in the State; it will, therefore, be readily understood that he had but little leisure for literary or scientific pursuits, for which, notwithstanding any disadvantage under which he may have laboured, he possessed particular aptitude. At a meeting of our Society, held in 1884, the Duke of Buckingham was requested to occupy the position of the President of the Society, in the room of Dr. Mackarness, Bishop of Oxford, who had relinquished the office in consequence of continued ill health, and he accepted the presidency. It was at the reception of the Society at Stowe, to which allusion has already been made, that the Duke read a paper on the History of the House and Parish of Stowe, and this paper, which was published in the seventh number of Vol. V. of *THE RECORDS*, disclosed to the members that he had by no means neglected the study of archæology. In it, the Survey of Domesday Book is the origin from which he commences his account of Stowe and the surrounding localities; it is interesting to see that in early life he must have been keenly appreciative of archæological discoveries, and that had opportunities been favourable, he would have distinguished himself as an antiquary. The account, in the same paper, of the Roman Villa at Foscott, tells us of a tessellated pavement found, which, though "lost by injudicious attempts at removal," was recorded in a drawing made by the Duke when a boy. The early history of his ancestral house and the neighbourhood was evidently familiar to him, as we find references to the traces of two ecclesiastical structures in the locality—of the priory of Luffield and Biddlesden Abbey. There are, too, in the description of the Church at Stowe evidences of the Duke's knowledge of the features of our ancient parish churches in pre-Reformational times. The

account of the opening of two barrows at Thornborough, and the probable connection of one with the burial of Togodumnus, killed in a battle recorded by Tacitus, show that no objects of interest had been forgotten. Mention should not be omitted, too, of the lucid explanation given in the same paper of the specimens in the interesting Museum at Stowe, containing amongst the objects the flint implements of remote times, and valuable relics brought back from India. It is well that the Society possesses this single paper, as it abundantly proves that not only from his prominent position, but also from his special acquirements, the Society was fortunate in having the Duke of Buckingham as its President.

The death of his Grace, on the 26th March last, was unexpected by many; taken away in the midst of an active life, devoted for the most part to the public service, his loss is greatly to be deplored. His remains were interred in Wotton Church, the burial place of the Grenvilles for many generations, and a very large number of mourners attended his funeral. Amongst the members of the Society who were present on the occasion to pay their last respect to his memory, were the Hon. T. F. Fremantle, one of the Vice-Presidents, and the Rev. R. H. Pigott and Mr. R. Gibbs, F.S.A., two of the Honorary Secretaries; but every member of the Society, whether present or absent at the sad scene at Wotton, will, the more he becomes acquainted with the thoroughness of the late Duke's character, and the devotion he displayed to his public duties, lament the loss of so able and distinguished a President.

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THE LATE REV. BRYANT BURGESS, M.A.

The Society has recently sustained serious losses in being deprived by their deaths in quick succession, first of its President, and then of Mr. Bryant Burgess, one of its most prominent members. Mr. Burgess was one of the founders of the Society, was for some years one of its Honorary Secretaries, and continued, from its commencement to the time of his death, to take an active interest

in its work. He was specially zealous in communicating any archæological discovery which came under his notice, and in this way set an excellent example to his fellow-members. He was a frequent as well as a valuable contributor to the pages of THE RECORDS. A paper from his pen appears in the first volume of this publication, on the "Ornithology of the County of Buckingham," in which he gives a detailed list of birds seen in this county. In the third volume he writes a description of a Roman Villa, discovered at Latimer. In this account details are given of the ground plan of the villa, with a list of the remains that were found among the *debris*. At the Society's Annual Meeting, in 1883, Mr. Burgess read an interesting paper in Bulstrode Park, on the ancient entrenchments within that domain, in which he quoted Sir Bernard Burke, in impressing on his hearers the remarkable characteristics of the spot, who says, "It was a park in the Saxon era, the same park now—ay, and one of the most beautiful in the kingdom." In the fifth volume of THE RECORDS Mr. Burgess gives an excellent account of the opening of the celebrated tumulus at Taplow, and of the discoveries then made. The relics from this important barrow, which he so well describes, are known to every archæologist who now visits the British Museum. It will be remembered that in the first part of the sixth volume of THE RECORDS, and which is yet incomplete, Mr. Burgess contributed an exhaustive paper on the history of Latimers or Latimer, where he had resided for thirty-nine years, and up to the time of his death, as the Rector. This paper displays much painstaking research, and will furnish an interesting chapter in the future history of the county. The illustrations which adorn the paper are by Mr. Burgess's hand, and remind one of his skill as a draughtsman. In turning over the pages of THE RECORDS, a large number of beautiful sketches will be found to have been contributed by him, distinguished by his mark, **BB**. Besides the evidences given of Mr. Burgess's great interest in the Society, every member in the habit of attending the Annual Meetings will recollect that he was very rarely absent from these gatherings, and that the charming manners and genial courtesy which distinguished him made his presence particularly congenial and welcome.

The slight sketch given of Mr. Burgess has been purposely confined to his work as an archæologist; it would be an omission, therefore, not to mention that he held the office of Rural Dean of Amersham, and that in that capacity he zealously and conscientiously discharged his duties in his careful inspection and reports of the parish churches within his deanery. It is well when the care of our parish churches and their preservation is in any way committed to men having the knowledge and antiquarian acquirements Mr. Burgess possessed.

Not only as an archæologist, but as an ornithologist and botanist, will Mr. Burgess be remembered. Perhaps some idea of his private character from one who intimately knew him from his childhood, and who was a mourner at his grave at Latimers, will most suitably conclude the brief notice given of Mr. Burgess's life. He says: "I thought, yesterday, as we laid his body to rest in one of the prettiest spots our island can show, how well he knew and loved the beauties amidst which he lived, and which now so fittingly surround his grave. His was not a mere sensuous enjoyment of nature's loveliness—the trees, the plants, the birds were all known to him—and by him, as botanist and ornithologist, the marvel of their natures, as well as their beauty, was intelligently appreciated and enjoyed. So there was satisfaction in laying even his body in such company; it seemed to have a peculiar right to rest there, and the thought came, also, that his pure spirit might visit this fair scene so long familiar to him."