

S. Albans Architectural and Archæological Society.
BALANCE SHEET FOR 1885

Receipts.		:0:	Payments.	
	£ s. d.			£ s. d.
Balance from last year	32 10 1		Minute book and case for excursions	10 6
Life Subscription	5 5 0		Photo-lithograph of Anstey Church for	
Ordinary Subscriptions	11 11 0		Transactions	1 5 0
			Bills for Printing	5 16 6
			New book case and repairs	9 13 6
			Meeting	17 0
			Excursion	5 0
			Postage and parcels	15 10½
			Custodian of Library	1 0 0
				£ 20 3 4½
			Balance	29 2 8½
				£ 49 6 1
Total	£ 49 6 1			

Examined and found correct,
G. N. MARTEN, AUDITOR.
The Bank, St. Albans,
2nd March, 1886.

Obituary Notice.

PROFESSOR T. L. DONALDSON, PHIL. DOC.

The Committee record with sincere regret the loss they have sustained by the death (in August, 1885) of Professor Thomas L. Donaldson, one of their most distinguished vice-presidents, and an energetic supporter of the Society during the first twenty years of its existence. The record of his eminent professional career belongs to the literature of Architecture, and may be read in the excellent biographical* memorials printed in the Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects; but a brief outline taken from this source may claim a place here in grateful acknowledgment of valuable services.

Mr. Donaldson, who died at the advanced age of ninety, was about eighty years ago a pupil in the S. Albans Grammar School (then held in the Lady Chapel), where, in a five years' course under Dr. W. Mogg Bowen, was laid the foundation for his subsequent literary acquirements. A few years after leaving the school, having chosen his father's profession, he became a student in "the Antique School" of the Royal Academy, and in 1817 gained there a silver medal. At the age of twenty-two he commenced a five years' course of professional study abroad, in a series of tours embracing the most famous sites of ancient edifices, in Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, and Sicily. Among his fellow students were Huyot, Dedreux, Charles Tyrell, and Turner, afterwards the famous painter. Two years of this course he spent in Rome, sketching and making measured drawings of the great monuments of antiquity, and studying the best modern examples of Italian architecture. Here he received, from the celebrated Canova, a diploma of membership of the Academy of S. Luke, a distinction which he valued very highly. Some of the results of his investigations and study were embodied in a folio work on Pompeii, which he completed and edited for Mr. W. B. Cooke, in 1827, soon after he had entered upon professional life in London. About the same time he contributed the description to a work entitled, "Selection of ornamental sculptures from the museum of the Louvre." In 1833 he produced in 4to "Collection of

* See Memoir of the late Professor Donaldson by Edward A. Gruning and Wyatt Papworth. Transactions of R. Institute of B. Architects, vol. II. 1886.

the most approved examples of Doorways from ancient and modern buildings in Greece and Italy." This was reproduced in France, in 1837, when he became a corresponding member of the "Institut de France." Three years before this he had entered on the important work of his life in connexion with the Royal Institute of British Architects, of which, it is stated, "he may practically be considered the founder, and of which he was eventually the only surviving original member." The Institute was inaugurated* (*"usui civium, decori urbium,"*) June 15, 1835, under the presidency of Lord de Grey, the address on the occasion being drawn up by Mr. Donaldson, who was the first Hon. Secretary. With his labours were associated those of his brother, Hon. Solicitor to the Institute, to whose skill the framing of the Charter, granted in 1837, was due. Mr. William L. Donaldson, who died in 1862, was also a member of our Archæological Society.

Among the earlier contributions of Mr. T. L. Donaldson, at the sessional meetings, the following papers may be noted as indicating the wide range of his researches:

"Particulars relating to the MSS. of Vitruvius."

"History of the construction of the Peristyles of the Basilica at Vicenza, by Palladio."

"Italian Towers."

"Observations on Pelasgic or Cyclopien constructions existing in Greece."

"The life of Apollodorus, the architect."

"The History of Architecture from the building of the Pyramids to the revival of Italian Architecture in the XVIth century."

"Architectural and Iconographical application of the Cross during the Middle Ages."

"The Ancient Sculptured Marbles from Halicarnassus."

The formation of the Institute having greatly promoted communication with kindred societies on the continent, the pamphlet entitled "Questions on various subjects connected with Architecture," compiled for the Council by Mr. Donaldson, was translated into German and Italian, and disseminated abroad with fruitful results, and in 1839 the talented compiler became Hon. Secretary for Foreign Correspondence, an office rendered congenial to him by his familiarity with foreign

* The motto of the Institute selected by Mr. Donaldson.

Architectural literature and his great acquaintance with continental academies. This post he continued to fill with extraordinary energy and most beneficial results, for twenty years. The reputation he had acquired as a writer on Architectural science obtained for him in 1842 the Chair of Architecture at University College, London. His professional labours extended over twenty-three years; and the estimate of their high value was marked, on his retirement, by the presentation to him of a gold medal engraved with his portrait, also by the establishment of an annual prize, consisting of a silver copy of the medal, given by the Institute of B.A.

The Professor's connection with our Society commenced in 1845, the year of its formation; Archdeacon Burney being the president, Dr. Nicholson (brother-in-law to the Professor) vice-president, and the Rev. C. Boutell and Mr. G. W. Lydekker, the Hon. Secretaries.

Amongst the Hon. Members elected on the same occasion were—Mr. W. Basil Jones (the present Bishop of S. David's), Mr. E. A. Freeman (the historian of the Norman Conquest), Mr. M. H. Bloxam (author of "Ecclesiastical Gothic Architecture"), Mr. Orlando Jewitt (the late eminent Architectural engraver), and Mr. John H. Parker (the late distinguished antiquary). In the early days of the Society Mr. Donaldson frequently visited S. Albans, taking part in the investigations of the Abbey antiquities carried on by Dr. Nicholson, who secured his professional services for directing the repairs to the fabric of the church undertaken before 1856. The Professor's papers, however, dealt, for the most part, with antiquities other than local, in fields of research most familiar to him. In 1846, at a meeting presided over by Archdeacon Grant, he exhibited a large collection of Architectural drawings: and in the following year he delivered a lecture on the "Basilicas of Ancient Christian churches," illustrated by diagrams and sketches. In 1848 he read a paper on the "Subterranean Structures of Egypt." It may here be noted that Mr. Donaldson subsequently travelled to Egypt; and, on his return, was the first to explain to the Institute of B.A. the discoveries then recently made by Mariette Bay, comprising the Serapeion of Memphis and the Tomb near the great Sphinx. In 1853, being then a vice-president of our Society, he contributed a paper on "The Royal Tombs

in Westminster Abbey, around the shrine of Edward the Confessor." On this interesting subject he had the previous year delivered a carefully studied paper at the Institute. The enthusiasm it excited resulted in a petition to the Queen for a Royal Commission in reference to measures for the preservation of these important national monuments; and subsequently in a grant from the Treasury, to be applied to this object under the professional advice of Sir Gilbert Scott.

In 1855 he delivered a lecture at S. Albans on "The Palaces of the Louvre and Tuilleries," illustrating the subject by numerous drawings.

A year or two later, the decayed condition of the Ancient Clock-tower at S. Albans having engaged considerable attention, the Professor, in co-operation with the Archæological Society, took up the subject with his characteristic energy, and at a meeting held June 17, 1859, under the presidency of the Earl of Verulam, "he gave a description of the present state, and proposed restoration of the clock tower, illustrated by plans and drawings." It appears from old documents in possession of the Corporation of S. Albans, that this interesting structure was erected, as a * "Clok-hows," between 1403 and 1412. In 1427 the ownership was vested in a body of Feoffees, from whom, in course of time, it passed to the Mayor and Corporation. The leases granted to the mediæval tenants of "le Clokke-house," required them to regulate the clock, ring the "Angelus" bell morning and evening, and toll the same in any casualty of fire or fray; but did not bind them to repair the fabric. On the removal (in 1856) of the house, which had abutted, probably since Elizabethan times, on the south side of the tower, the dilapidation became the more apparent. The disfigurement of the roof and parapet by the obsolete telegraph apparatus, and an ugly chimney, will be remembered. The investigations of Mr. Donaldson had also revealed the serious insecurity of the "Gabriel" bell, disintegration of the flint work of the walls, and failure in the foundations. As no Fabric Fund existed, the restoration was promoted by public subscription, after a meeting convened by the † Mayor,

* Corporation documents, dated 13th Henry IV., 5th Henry VI: and 1st Henry VII.

† Mr. Thomas W. Kent.

early in 1865: and by the liberal co-operation of leading residents in the county, the work was undertaken the same year, and completed in the next, the Tower recovering its structural soundness and Architectural embellishment under the skilful treatment of Sir Gilbert Scott.

The Society, whose vice-president had rendered excellent service in the cause, expressed its interest in the work by a contribution of thirty guineas from its funds.

Although Mr. Donaldson was all his life an enthusiastic worker in the cause of Architecture, it did not fall to his lot to erect very many prominent public buildings. His strength lay in the classical styles. At the competition for the Royal Exchange in 1840, his design was selected as the first in merit, but the work fell to Sir William Tite. In 1851 he was associated with Sir Charles Barry as architect to the Building committee of the great "Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations." Subsequently he was chosen, with others, to compete for the "National Memorial to the Prince Consort." The versatility of his powers as a practical architect is attested by various public edifices, erected from his designs in London and elsewhere: his last work, the Hall of the Scottish Corporation, was executed when he was 85 years old. A large portion of his time was devoted to promoting objects of public utility in connection with important commissions on which he acted. In everything he undertook he worked with unceasing energy, exemplifying the high standard of professional duty, which he upheld in his writings. Amongst his valued literary labours were comprised "Architectural Maxims" (published in 1847), his fine work on Architectural medals, entitled *"Architectura Numismatica," and his last production, "Specifications." He contributed largely to the "Dictionary of Architecture" from his own stores of original sketches. He was also the compiler of a large number of valuable Biographical Memorials of architects and artists.

Of the Institute, which was the arena in which he displayed his brilliant powers in the service of architecture, he became President in 1863. In 1851 he had

* A copy of this work is in the Society's Library. It is to be regretted that none of the Professor's papers have been printed in the Transactions of our Society

received the *Royal Gold Medal* of the R.I.B.A., the *Blue Ribbon* of the profession. In 1879 he presented to that Society a gold badge and chain of office, he enriched its library with many valuable books and drawings. For nearly 40 years he was looked up to as the eloquent instructor and gifted leader of the brotherhood assembled in its hall. He is described by an *old member of the Institute as "a most indefatigable writer and speaker, to whose entranced intelligence the study of Architecture was a worship. Of Professor Donaldson" (he continues) "I need only say that so far as a high-minded and fearless maintenance of the lofty character of our splendid art and its literature, and of the honourable historical position of our artists, antiquarians, and critics, could defend us from assault, whether vulgar or refined, he never for an instant swerved from his duty as leader of the guild." H. F.

*Professor Kerr.