

Evening Meeting.

The usual assembly was held in the Town Hall, which was quite full.

The PRESIDENT, on taking the chair, called on the Rev.

H. C. Ruddock to read a paper, written by Mr. Clement Waldron, who was unable to attend, on the

Town and Parish of Wiveliscombe.

As Mr. Waldron had already printed his paper, copies being in the room for distribution, it is only necessary here to give an epitome of it.

Of the very early history of Wiveliscombe there is little or no record. A celt of unusual size, found at Whitefield, and now preserved in the Museum at Taunton; some fragments of cinerary urns and various barrows in the neighbourhood, constitute the oldest traces of primeval man.

The outline of a small square camp appears in some fields called "Dry Aubreys," to the south of Castle and the railway; and not far from this spot, a barrow of large size (which does not appear to have been recently opened) stands close to the railway at Croford, about a mile from the town, at a place called Coxborough.

Near Croford, also, may be traced a deep Roman road, which led to the camp at Castle.

All these places deserve careful examination, as well as a fissure in the Castle Rock above Croford, which has all the characteristics of a bone cavern. There is a tradition that some of the adherents of Monmouth were concealed in this cave after the fatal battle of Sedgmoor, during the "reign of terror," when Judge Jefferys held his bloody assize at Taunton.

Of the Bishop's Palace, some fast crumbling walls now alone remain. Situate in a finely wooded and fertile country, it stood formerly a stately edifice, fronting the south, with a large park before it extending down into the valley to the east. The main entrance was probably through the archway now standing, and the gardens and old buildings between the north wall and the road or street, formerly called "The Palace Green," was then a large curtilage in the rear. Fifty years ago the kitchen was in existence, and the north wall, now

fast falling into ruins, stood at three times its present height, with Gothic windows at intervals through its whole length. At that period the Palace Green was open to the public as a place of recreation, and among other fine trees standing there, was a plane tree of remarkable size. Here bull and badger baiting, cock fighting, wrestling matches, cudgel playing, and many quaint games, now obsolete, and perhaps happily forgotten, took place. At Whitsuntide, a great town festival was held there, and a gathering of the inhabitants to hold what was called a "revel."

At the east end of the Green stood the tithe barn, forming at one period a portion of the Palace. In later times, when tithes in kind were no longer gathered, it was used by strolling players and conjurers, and when the old church was pulled down, divine service was celebrated there.

The fields now called the "High Parks" formed a portion of the demesne, and the present names of the fields and places in the neighbourhood attest the purposes to which they were once appropriated, viz., Pond Close, formerly the usual Carp Stew, Court Gardens, Ashpierres, and Carters Close, or Carterers Close; few will recognize in the humble dwellings of Rotten Row the Routine Row, along which religious processions passed. The Palace was supplied with water from a remarkable spring of great purity, which wells out, "*splendior vitro*," from the foot of Bend-knee Hill, at Hartswell. This was really "Arch Well," for it had a culvert over it, and the water was conveyed in leaden pipes to the Palace. The water from this and another spring was collected and used to keep the town mill going,—a source of considerable profit in those days to the lord of the manor.

The Manors of Wiveliscombe and Fitzhead consisted of about 200 tenements, besides a large extent of common land on Maundown and elsewhere, and a farm called Wiveliscombe Farm, held in demesne. It was for many years leased by the Bishops of Bath and Wells for three lives. The Bishop's

lessee, or Lord Farmer, as he was called, held Manor Courts and made grants for lives, which, according to the custom of the Manor, were binding on the Bishops. The first Bishop's lease of which there is any record bears date the 4th Nov., 1585, by it the Manor was granted to the Crown, pursuant to an exception expressly made in the disabling Statute of 1st Elizabeth, c. 19, for a term of 99 years, to purchase peace and quiet for poor Bishop Godwin, who had offended the Queen. This term was assigned to one Bond, and in process of time it devolved on John Coventry, the second son of Thomas Coventry, created Lord Keeper in the first year of the reign of Charles I. After John Coventry's death, the Manor descended to his son, Sir John Coventry, who within one year of the expiration of his term surrendered it, and took a lease from the Bishop, conformably with the Statute of Elizabeth before-mentioned. This Sir John Coventry was Member of Parliament in the reign of Charles II, and in his person originated the famous "Cutting and Maiming Act."

The Coventry family continued to be the lessees of the Manor until the year 1813, when John Coventry sold his interest—dependent on the life of His Majesty King George III—to the Earl of Clarendon for £10,000, and shortly afterwards the Earl of Clarendon surrendered the Manor to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who for the sum of £36,529 conveyed it to his son, Richard Beadon, Esq. In course of time the holders of leases were enabled to enfranchise, and the remains of the ancient Manor passed into the hands of Lord Ashburton.

There were two other Manors within the parish, viz., the Prebendal Manor, belonging to the Prebend or Canon of Wiveliscombe in Wells Cathedral, and the Manor of Oakhampton, or Ockington, held under the Dean and Chapter of Wells.

The Prebendal Manor was long held by the Lords Stawel, until it fell into the hands of Dr. King, afterwards Bishop of

Rochester and editor of the *Life and Writings of Edmund Burke*. Dr. King sold part of this Manor for the redemption of the land-tax, consisting of the western portion of the town, including Ware, Sharphouse, the greater part of West Street, the Bell Inn, Gullet, Lambrook, Rotten-row, and some portions of Church Street.

The Manor of Oakhampton was held for a long time by the elder branches of the Yea family as lessees from the Dean and Chapter of Wells. The tenant of Oakhampton Farm was compelled by the custom of the Manor to attend annually at the Court Leet with a horn slung across his shoulder, and holding a hound in a leash, in token of his service and that he was ready to assist in the hunting excursions of his chief lord.

Both Wiveliscombe and the neighbouring town of Milverton were borough towns, and sent Representatives to Parliament.

The Borough Inn and Burgesses Close, at the bottom of Golden Hill, are remnants of the old town, and some customs are still observed, or were within a recent period, which relate back to the same thing, such as the Borough dinner and Borough court, where a Bailiff and Portreeve were annually elected, with ale tasters, swineherds, and scavengers ; but these officials have now given place to a Board of Health and the Police.

The parish church was built at an unfortunate period, before the work of restoration was understood. The old church stood nearly on the same site. The screen was a very handsome one, elaborately carved in oak with various and quaint devices, which had been painted and gilded. The principal figures were Moses and Aaron. The pulpit and ends of the seats, the ceiling, and other portions of wood work, were also handsomely carved. There was a rood-loft, which was used as a gallery. The tower was cracked from the top to the bottom, and oscillated when the bells were rung.

Many of the monuments in the old church were removed

to the present building, where they may be recognised by their dates. There was a large vault belonging to the Wyndham family in the south-eastern corner of the church; when opened it was found to contain nothing but earth and stones. It was said that the Wyndhams were buried in stone coffins, and that former churchwardens had removed them and used them on their farms as drinking troughs for cattle.

Eliza Coles, "the sole daughter faire and heire indeed" of Humphrey Wyndham, and widow of John Coles, Esq., erected an almshouse "for the settlement of eight poor aged people, and did also order the charity of 1s. 6d. a week to be for ever paid unto each of the said poor people; which money was, by a decree made in the High Court of Chancery, charged on the Manor of Wiveliscombe."

This decree was obtained in 1687, and the sum of £31 4s. was annually paid, until the death of His Majesty King George III, in 1820, when the Coventry family ceased to have any further interest in the matter.

In the reign of Charles II, Sir John Coventry, who was then lessee of the Manor, gave the tolls of the market to the use of the poor of the parish. In course of time, these monies having accumulated, David Yea and eleven other trustees for the same, purchased with them, of Francis Hawley and Judith his wife, the poor lands at Maundown. Francis Hawley, who had been one of Cromwell's Generals, lived at "Jews." The purchase was made in February, 1686, the year after the battle of Sedgemoor and the miserable defeat there of the Duke of Monmouth, Sir John's old enemy, who had assisted at the slitting of his nose.

The chief industry of the town to the commencement of this century, was the manufacture of woollen goods, consisting of blanketings, knap coatings, kerseys, shrouds, ermine, baize, and peniston. The ancestors of the North, Featherstone, and Chorley families, old families of Wiveliscombe, were wealthy and thriving clothiers. A large portion of the cloth manu-

factured was sent to the colonies for the use of the slave population. The Act of Emancipation destroyed this trade; the cloth was considered a badge of slavery, and the emancipated negro refused to wear it.

The "peniston" had a bad character. It was stretched on the rack beyond fair limits, and was liable to contract when wetted: a coat made of it, if exposed to a shower of rain, would at once put the wearer in a strait waistcoat. Fifty years ago, the sound of the shuttle and the rattle of the loom might be heard in nearly every street, and the pasture fields contained lines of oaken racks, on which blanketings and other woollen goods were stretched: but the trade melted away before the power-loom and steam and the more advanced enterprise of greater manufacturing centres.

The large brewery belonging to Mr. Hancock now represents the chief trade. The upper waters of the Tone, fed by many pure springs in the parish of Wiveliscombe, are here converted into that sound and excellent ale, which flows in a perennial stream to so many distant towns.

Mr. GREEN, on account of the late hour, epitomised the following notes, remarking that he feared the idea that Wiveliscombe ever returned Member or Members to Parliament must be given up. We had now an official, printed account of all such returns, and Wiveliscombe was not found in the list. The supposed allusions to a borough would refer to the Lord's Court. As to the derivation of the name, he thought it must still be considered an open question. Walter de Hemingford (p. 399) must answer perhaps for some of the suggestions, as in recording a visit of the archbishop in 1331, he calls it Wenelliscombe—Wembliscumbe—Wynescombe—and as a last guess, in a note at foot it is written Wivescombe. *Domesday Book* had been mentioned, but there was now available another and rather earlier document, destined to be used piecemeal, as *Domesday* had been.

In the *Gheld Inquest of Somerset*, taken in 1084, it is re-

corded that in Wiveliscoma there was one mill, and rent amounting to fifty pence; there were also six goats; the value of the Manor was £10, the acreage, excluding Fitzhead, was 4,634. There were thirty-six plough lands, working 4,320 acres; with meadow and other lands, marking rather less than noted in *Domesday* taken two years later. Within this there were rated twelve hides; of these the bishop had three in hand, and three knights held the other nine. Two of the three knights appear to have been named Theodoric and Egbert, their other name varying perhaps, until destined to take *atte* or *de la* for a prefix. Wiveliscombe almost gave the name to the Hundred. Of the scattered episcopal manors, says Mr. Eyton, Wyvelescombe "is found in one of the old indexes as a sometime independent Hundred or Liberty; but it was never actually so recognized."

In 1256 (41 Hen. III), 28th May, the bishop got a charter of free-warren in his lordships of Wynelescombe and Liddeyard, the grant being witnessed, with others, by Philip Basset, and Reginald Wolerand. By charter also, in 1284 (13 Ed. I), he received a grant of the right to hold a market weekly for one day, on Tuesday; and a fair every year, for three days, viz., the vigil, the day and the morrow of the Trinity. These grants were made rather as a source of revenue to the lord, but probably at the same time they were no small convenience to the people.

The condition of the people, and their position towards their lord in early times, is one of great interest, and the more so, as documents relating to the subject are but rarely found. The general story is known, and may be told again, but documentary evidence should be carefully sought, and produced, for special cases. There were once serfs or slaves in England—men and women bought and sold; and then a little above them were the villeins or townsmen—who being born within the manor, belonged to it and could not leave it without consent, which meant a fine; who cultivated small holdings or were cottars, in both

cases paying their rent by personal services. An example of the former condition seems to be met with at Beckington, where, in or about the year 1260, Ysolda de Erlegh made a grant of half a virgate of land, held by Hamo de la Rigge (Ridge), "together with the said Hamo and all his chattels." Hamo had nothing, not even himself, to call his own. (*Dodsworth Charters*, Bodleian).

For Wiveliscombe there happens to be extant (*Bodleian Charters*, No. 15), a Court Roll of the manor, being the account from Michaelmas, 30 Hen. VI, to Michaelmas, 31 Hen. VI, which would be for the year ending Michaelmas, 1452.

The rents of assize, *i.e.*, from regular tenants paying chiefly

in money, were	...	...	£ 21	4	10½
Other rents	...	...	9	1	8
Works—ploughing, etc.	...	...	1	0	9
Three mills and a fulling mill	...	...	5	12	0
From Fitzhead	...	...	9	6	7
„ the Dovecot	...	...	0	1	8
„ fruit from the garden...	...	...	0	0	2
Trinity Fair at Wilscumbe, and St. James's at Fitzhead	...	...	2	0	0
Cocks and hens sold	...	...	0	16	8½
Two young cocks, sold to Roger Bocher	...	...	0	0	8
One ditto	...	...	0	0	4
Two cart loads of hay	...	...	0	0	4

Then there is the account of the wool.

One todd, 10 lbs., fracte	...	...	0	3	2
Sixteen pounds lambs' wool	...	...	0	2	0
Fifty-eight lamb skins	...	...	0	5	4
Woods	...	...	0	16	8
Bark	...	...	0	2	0

There were also rents from small tenements, and from the farm and three fulling mills; from land in Fitzhyde and Penfield, and Nodebreche; and a garden in Langrygge. Pasture was sold in High Park, and in Awbrey and the Conynger;

and in Est Park and Molwelmede and Bury; also an acre called Weleacre and Floremede; and a parcel called Duckemore. Among those named as holding arable land is John Yaa.

Among the stock—cows and sheep—sold, two cows and one calf brought 18s. 6d. There was one ox sold which had been taken as a heriot. One hundred and forty-five *multones*, 135 ewes, 145 hoggets, and 118 lambs; and 7 todts 16 lbs. of wool were sold. Twenty-five *multones*, called Rebbers, brought 9d. each; and twenty-eight others 8d. each. There is also entered 1 todd of wool, arising from the goods and chattels of Robt. Pawley. Pawley seems to have come entirely to grief. An ox, a cow, a calf from the herd of calves, and three young oxen are entered as seized by the bailiff, the goods of Robt. Pawley.

In the expenditure appears a charge for stone for the gate and manor house; for the new mill; for the windmill; for repairs to the mill at Croford, and to another at Cottecombe. There is also a charge towards the stipend of the vicar—per ann., 20d., for a “toga.” The expenses of the seneschall for holding his court, were for the year, “as appears by three bills sealed,” 49s. 2½d.

Turning now to this court (the Court Baron or Manor Court), and the perquisites and dues belonging to it, the relation of the people to their lord will be more clear. The fees received from the Halmote at Michaelmas amounted to 2s. 3d., and John Beram was fined 40d. At Candlemas (February) the perquisites amounted to 4s. 11d.; but Thomas Janys had a bad time, being fined £10. At the Hock-day Court (the second Tuesday after Easter) the fees were 2s. 4d., and at St. John Baptist, 3s. But the most remarkable fees were three charges for permitting marriage. In these three courts, Juliana, relict of John Wyche, paid £10 for a license; whilst Marion, relict of John Robyns, paid but £5 6s. 8d.; and Joan, relict of John Bradeford, paid only £4. These were, as will be seen, very uneven sums, fixed by

caprice, and very heavy. The money would represent perhaps five and twenty times those sums now : that is, £10 then would be equal to £200 or £250 now. There is no entry of any other marriage, so that what the custom of the manor may have been cannot be stated.

Next must be noted the services due, and how they were paid.

There is but one entry of a tenant above the condition of a villein, in the person of Henry Bowryng, who, entered as *nativi domini*, had got so far towards freedom that his personal labour was commuted to a payment, called capitage, of 12d. The surplus labour of the others—that not actually wanted by the lord—would appear to have been sold ; that is, the labour was performed to order, and a money payment received for it from the employer. This clearly marks the step by which all could avoid service, as it would be equally advantageous to take money from the villein as from the employer. Possibly this was done. Four days' ploughing and labour were sold at 6d. ; and 8s. 7d. were received for 206 harrowings, at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each ; and 53 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for 1,272 manual labours, at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Thirty-two days' work at stacking where charged at 1d. ; 8s. 8d. were received for "messone" (harvest work), on twenty-six acres, at 4d. ; and 4s. 1d. for forty-nine bederypps or reapings, at 1d. Then there were six days' labour from two burgages, of which each burgage gave three half-days at hoeing.

There were 420 days due from lands, at Michaelmas and Midsummer ; the same service from 204 half-virgates of land, and 20 ferdell, and 10 and 5 acres ; and 888 labours from 7 half-virgates, 20 ferdell, and 10 and 5 acres. There were also 104 works due from fifty customary tenants, or copyholders.

These entries are of interest, as showing the many small holdings, enabling us to see how the land was brought into cultivation through such allotments, the return being so much labour to the lord. From such holdings, first by service, then as customary or copyhold, afterwards as freehold, came the class known as yeomen, of whom there were so many in Somerset

before this century. They have disappeared before the more expensive habits of life and the great accumulating commercial wealth of the last fifty years, the impossibility of getting more than a bare existence, and the fact that the owner could better employ the money value as tenant of a larger acreage.

There were also 210 "aruro" or days' ploughing, for seed corn and oats, each ploughing valued at $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.; 210 harrowings, each of three half-days, valued at $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and 60 harrowings, from 60 customary tenants, at which each harrowed for one day: other labour, called Redebeoggyn, was valued each at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. There was labour also at stacking and carrying hay; and 21 works from 21 cottars for one day, each valued at 1d. Various harvest works are noted, and bederypps (reapings), every one doing one day; and 21 bederypps were due from 21 cottars, at which each worked for half a day.

In the receipts there is an entry of four quarters of white wheat, received at the Feast of St. Martin; a very small supply to us, but wheat at this date was but little cultivated, and only used by the very wealthy. The toll at the mill was three quarters and two bushels of barley and sixteen quarters five bushels one peck of oats. The general food at this time was oatmeal, eaten with salt. The bread was of rye, when not made with mixed corn—oats, barley, and rye—called meslin. The final entry records a payment "*liberatis denariorum*" to the receptor of the lord, for "four tables"—presumably the household charges—£40.

This document, here rather hurriedly examined, has in itself a sufficient text for a good paper, and would, if space permitted, well bear being printed *in extenso*.

Wiveliscombe jogged on in this way until the great time of the dissolution; and then, as the manor remained episcopal, there is not much to record. One Lawrence Hyde managed to buy of the church lands, a close called Waterlete, and a close called Longland, worth 6s. 8d. per annum: for these, at 22 years' purchase, he paid £7 6s. 8d.

In the County Records at Taunton, of the year 1620, there is a document somewhat rare, although there is one other such in Somerset, whereby, in consideration of the payment of £5, and a yearly rent of 10s., a license was granted to William Bennett of Wiveliscombe, clothier ; Robert Bennett, his son, and Mary and Joan, his daughters, in survivorship, to the longest liver of them, to keep an inn at the house of the said Bennett, having for the sign the King's Arms. He was bound to keep the assize of bread, beer, and ale, and all measures ; and to observe and keep the prices of horse-meat, as by the Justices of Assize set down.

At this time a quart of the best cost a penny ; and two quarts of the smallest cost the same price. The price and the quality were fixed by the Justices, and any deviation was marked by a fine.

During the Civil War, Wiveliscombe being in no line of march, nothing occurred to record. After the troubles were over, however, there was the usual little account to be settled ; the properties of the losers were seized, or fines imposed before they were freed.

Robt. Camon held some leaseholds in Wiveliscombe and Fitzhead, worth, he declared, under two hundred pounds per annum. The value being small, he was pardoned.

Wm. Chilcott had a small holding, which was sold to Robt. Colby of London.

William Coleford was charged with being a commissary in a regiment of foot against the Parliament. In defence, he stated that he was a servant to John Coventry, Esq., a colonel of foot ; that he served as a commissary for a fortnight, and then deserted and returned to his habitation, 24th June, 1645, and surrendered himself. His property was a mill and a piece of ground, value £12 ; certain other lands, worth £7 ; and after his father's death certain houses, worth £16. The out-goings were, to the king, £1 4s. ; to Mr. Coventry, for the mill, 12s.

As a set-off he was indebted on a mortgage to John Baker, of Ilton, £100; to Richard Chilcott, on a bond, £20; to James Prowse, of Wellington, Esq., £27; to Edward Benett, Wiveliscombe, £5; to Richard Venn, £5; to Thomas Goddard, £6. For these deductions he prayed an allowance. He was fined one-tenth, which came to £38 8s.

John Coventry, of Barton, being in arms for the King, surrendered at Exeter, and so, according to the articles there agreed upon, his composition would not exceed two years' value of his estate. He was found possessed of the remainder of a term for "thirty-eight years yet to come," of and in the manor of Wiveliscombe, at £80 per annum. Sixteen of these years were in his own right, and the remaining twenty-two were in right of his wife. The whole was worth, before the troubles, over and above the rent reserved, £270. His fine on his whole property would have been £10,000, but now, under the Exeter agreement, he was fined £4,000; and the paper bears the record "paid."

John Bourne, Esq., of Gothelney, held a house and two acres of land; but in his schedule, as a means of getting a reduction in his fine, he sets out that, as his estate lay between Taunton and Bridgwater, he had lost all the profits for two years; that he had lost his principal mansion house in Taunton,—pulled down for the better defence of the town,—and his orchards all felled; that he had 180 dragoons quartered on him for three weeks during the "league" of Bridgwater; that he lost ten horses; that twelve loads of hay had been taken from him, and twelve great ash trees to make pikes. He put his losses at £800 to £1,000 about Taunton, and two or three hundred more in other places. The real estate, nett, was declared at £541 6s. 7½d., the fine, £500; and £200 more for his personal estate; making up £700 in all.

There seems to have been a considerable struggle over the rectory, causing no little confusion. It was even charged that it was "sett unto the use of a Cavalier." In 1649 the Trustees

for forfeited estates claimed it as part of the property of the "late Hierarchy;" and no counter claim being made, no lease being produced to them, according to the Act for the sale of such lands, the glebe, apportioned at £193 5s. 7d. per ann., was sold "in possession" to Nicholas Bond, Esq. Afterwards an attempt was made to oust Mr. Bond, by a claim that the rectory was held by lease for three lives surviving. Against this he petitioned, 21st Nov., 1651, and an order was made that "no lease or pretended claim" should be allowed. This order was obeyed, and he retained his hold. Some strong influence, however, was brought to bear, so that on the 20th April, 1652, Mr. Bond was obliged to petition again, stating that he had purchased the glebe, and that Sir John Stowell, "it was pretended," had a lease for three lives, but no such lease had been produced, therefore the Commissioners had sold to him with possession, and the Committee in the county had ordered delivery. He had thereupon paid his purchase-money and received his conveyance; but, coming to receive his half-year's rents, the tenants refused to pay, because, as they alleged, the Committee had confirmed a lease for six years, made by themselves; if this lease were allowed, it would be a loss of £500 to the State, and as much to him, as purchaser. As the result it was ordered again, that his purchase should be confirmed. Bond then seems to have taken possession, ousting the then tenant, Wm. Hill, who in turn petitioned, stating that he held the rectory improper at a yearly rent of £261, with fire boote, gate boote, and all necessities for reparations; but the glebe being taken from him he had nothing left but the tithes of corn, and corn being very cheap, he had suffered much, especially as "he was obliged to pay the whole rent, to his utter undoing." This is endorsed "To be considered," but the subject no more appears.

In the list of his property, made out by Sir John Stowell, there appears the rectory of Wiveliscombe, set down as let, with the glebe, to Richard Bovett, of Taunton, for six years, from 25th March, 1651, at £261. This would be the "pre-

tended" lease before mentioned, but one not likely to be noticed, as Sir John's estate had long before been forfeited.

Whilst the glebe passed to Bond, the tithes, valued at £270 per ann., were left to the disposal of the Commissioners, or Trustees, for the maintenance of ministers. From them, on 21st April, 1654, John Wood, minister of Wiveliscombe, being approved as qualified to preach the Gospel, was declared fit to receive such augmentation as should be settled on him. The amount is not named. Fifty pounds a year were ordered to be paid to John Hill, minister of Elworthy, his then maintenance being but £50 a year; and Henry Nicholl, minister of Brompton, was also augmented £50 a year from the same source,—his maintenance before not exceeding that amount.

Sir John Stowell, in the schedule of his property, states that the rectory was worth £460; of this, the tithes were worth £270. The whole was in arrear for "seven years at least," and he prayed that an equivalent deduction should be made in his fine. He also craved that an annuity of £100 per ann., from this rectorial income, allowed by him to his mother, might be continued, and her arrears paid up. The Lady Griffin, in her turn, then petitioned that she had from 1632, in consideration of the sum of £800 paid down, received from Sir John this annuity, and had so received it, with some interruptions, until payment was refused in 1650. The petition was referred for consideration, and finally granted on the 21st Feb., 1651. But as to the arrears, the order made looks like a joke. Sir John had set out that he had leased the rectory to Lieut.-Col. Bovett, and that the colonel was in arrear £107. As from this lease Bovett could have neither received nor paid anything, he must have been surprised to find it ordered "that Lieut.-Col. Bovett do pay the Lady Griffin all arrears;" a good mode of settling his account with Sir John.

The plague, as it was called, was very severe in the county, and it is recorded in the *Sessions Rolls*, that at Wiveliscombe the "poor infected people doe break abroad and committ many

outrages and cast infected things into men's windowes, to the great danger of spreading abroad the infection; 440 poore infected people want relieffe,—£20 rate a week too little." These "poor people" were isolated for the general safety, and perhaps left much more to chance and to their own society than they cared to endure. In 1649, coming from Cornwall and Devon, Dr. Worthington, a prominent divine, whose *Diary* has been printed by the Chetham Society, notes that he "Passed over Exmoor, a *terra incognita inhabitabilis*. At Exford we passed a moor where there were no horses, nor any track, and we were almost carried to the North Sea." The doctor was evidently out of his reckoning, but, "at last meeting with one, we were directed to Wiveliscombe, a little market town;" where no doubt he found a safe and comfortable anchorage.

Mr. W. FEATHERSTONE kindly handed in some notes, but, as with other papers, from want of time they could not be read; a selection from them is here made, to prevent repetition.

The staple trade of the town fifty-five years since was the manufacture, by about forty makers, of blankets and collar cloth, and a very coarse cloth called penny stone. After the material was woven, it was taken on horses and donkeys to the fulling mills on the Tone, and there cleansed; then taken back and dyed blue with indigo, and washed, racked, and stretched. Next it was taken to the nibbing mill, where (the machinery being driven by horse-power) it was napped and finished. It was now called penny stone, and had a good appearance to the eye, but was not valuable. When the manufacture ceased, this alone caused a diminution in the wages paid, of from four to five hundred pounds a week. As indicating the quantity manufactured, the then wagon proprietors, Whitmarsh and Brice, of Taunton, received £6,000 per annum for carriage of this one article from Taunton to London. The blanket and collar cloth making was continued for a time, but eventually succumbed to the competition from

other quarters. The water supply is obtained from springs rising on a farm called Withycombe, distant about half a mile, and until lately, was brought by an open course to the top of West Street, where there was a small reservoir, known as the water-house. On this little stream small water-wheels were erected, called indigo-mills—for grinding that dye. From the water-house pipes conveyed the water to three taps or conduits; one in West Street, one at the corner of the White Hart in North Street, and a third at the top of High Street and Golden Hill. As this stream came along the side of a hill, and not by its natural course—which would be in the valley leading to the Town Mills—it must have been artificial, and made for the benefit of the town; but there is no record either by whom or when this was done. The present owner of the farm can only claim supply for drinking purposes. As from time to time the pipes from the water-house were tapped to accommodate private houses, the supply at the conduits was found insufficient,—an inconvenience which continued until about fifteen years ago, when, on the formation of a Local Board of Health, the matter was taken in hand. Besides a supply to the rated houses, there are now twenty public taps.

Twenty-five years ago last January, when gas was introduced, Wiveliscombe was considered the smallest town in England where it was used.

Mr. C. I. ELTON then read a paper on a Roman House at Whitestaunton, which will be found printed in Part II.

The PRESIDENT said he was sure all would join in thanking Mr. Elton for his paper. With him at work at home, they would learn something of the life of the Romans, and possibly be saved a journey to Herculaneum or Pompeii.

Mr. GREEN, in some remarks referring to the Roman bath lately uncovered at Bath, thought the question of a “discovery,” so loudly claimed, had been too hastily assumed, as the existence of the bath had already been noted.

Some conversation, embodying a general denial, ensued, one

assertion being that Mr. Green was ignorant of the subject, and that the earlier allusions were to another bath.

MR. GREEN did not reply, in part as no remark made called for it, and also because of the late hour. A few facts may now be added. In 1756, Dr. Lucas, of Bath, published a book on the *Bath Waters*, and therein he gave an account of what he saw in 1755, when the Abbey House was pulled down in that year. The Abbey House, known also as the Royal lodgings, adjoined the west end of the abbey church, and made "near a right angle to it;" the western side stood square with the west end of the church, and extended southward. In an excellent little book on the *Historic Houses of Bath*, by R. E. Peach, just published, it is mentioned that Dr. Peirce, who lived in the house, had as a convenience a gallery and a door on the western side, leading to the King's bath; and on the other side a private door into the church. On clearing out the foundations to the depth of ten or twelve feet, a system of Roman baths, with other remains, was found. Dr. Lucas has left an account and a plan of what he saw, and there are several drawings in the British Museum. The ground was then built on, and so this bath, which measured 42 ft. 6 in. \times 34 ft., disappeared, and now lies buried beneath the Kingston Buildings, to be again some day uncovered; but not, it is to be hoped, again "discovered." In 1763, Dr. Sutherland, another writer on the *Bath Waters*, repeats Dr. Lucas's account, adding to it some experiences of his own, and giving also a plan with fuller discoveries.

Before the Abbey House was destroyed no roadway appears here, but one of the improvements of the time was a "causeway," the present Abbey Street, leading from the Abbey to the Abbey Green. A glance at a map of the city of this date, and at Sutherland's plan, will show these points clearly.

Dr. Sutherland, in giving his account, says: From "each corner" of the "western" side of Lucas's bath there issues a wall of "stone and mortar." These walls he had "traced six

or eight feet westward under the causeway which leads from the Abbey to the Abbey Green." Any one standing now on this "causeway," and looking down westward into the present clearing, must see exactly their position. Dr. Sutherland continues:—From this western side a subterranean passage had been traced for twenty-four feet—that is, twenty-four feet of the present "discovery,"—and at the end of the passage was found a "leaden cistern," raised about three feet from the ground, continually overflowing with hot water. From this a channel was visible, conveying the water eastward to Lucas's bath. The plan given marks this passage, the channel, the cistern, and the steps, now again visible, of this end of the bath. The entire length could not be measured, but, judging by what he thought a "length proportionable" to the actual visible base of 68 feet, by "estimation," he gives the measurement of this "great bath," as he calls it, as 96 ft. \times 68 ft. He records that between "the wall" and the bath the "corridor" was paved with stone; just as at present seen.

This is the bath now disentombed. It is on the same spot, with the same base of 68 ft. Any difference in this estimated and the announced length may arise from the use of a different starting place; such as from either the inside or outside of "the wall;" or by including some extreme points. The measurement now given, assumed here to have been actually made, is 111 ft. \times 68 ft.

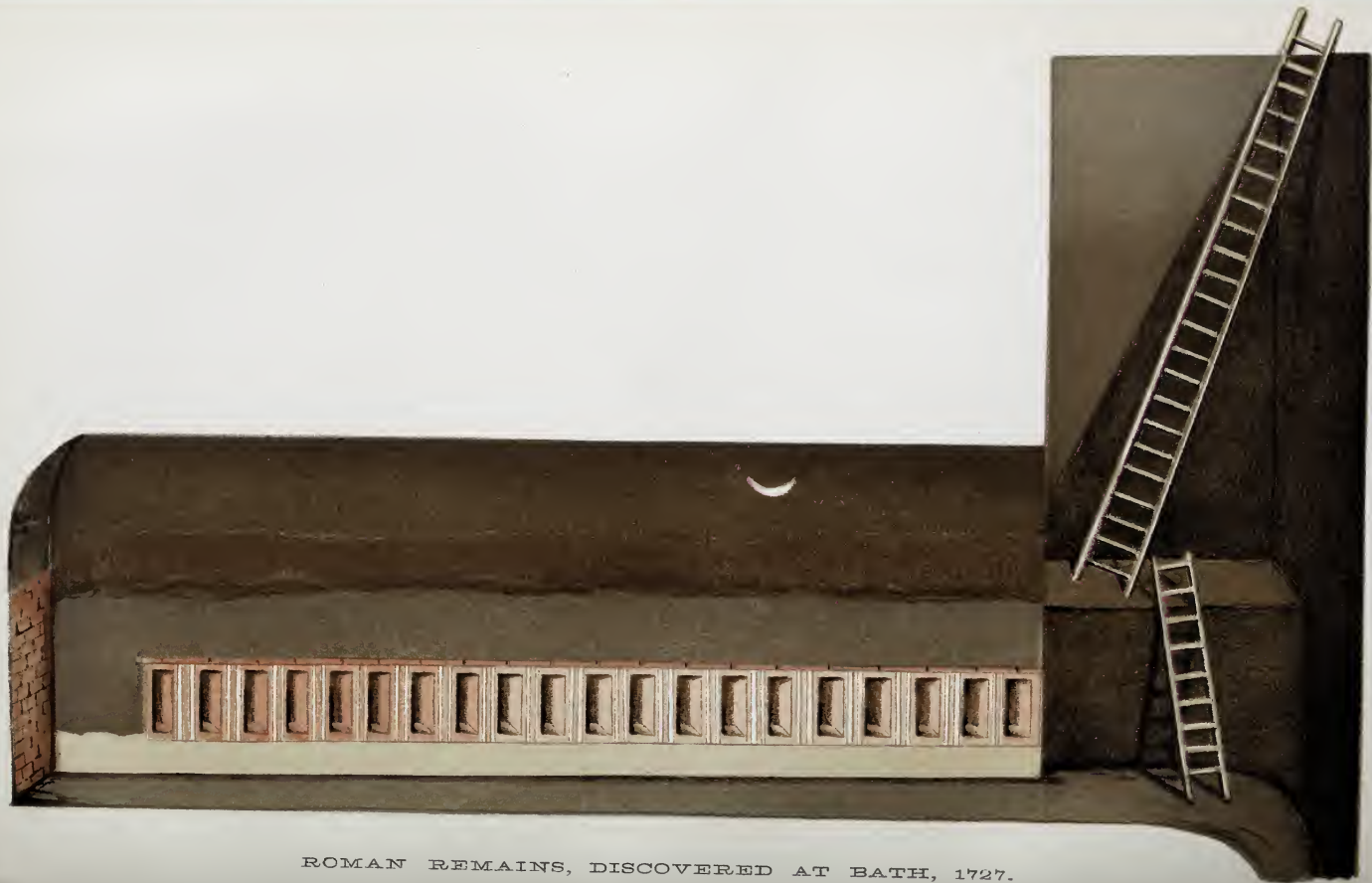
In a recent account of this present clearing, it is stated that it originated from some sewer repairs being supposed necessary hereabouts, and during the investigation below, a "long drain, high enough for passage, was followed," until presently there was found "a Roman tank, lined with lead, in which the water bubbled up at many points." This is just what Sutherland records; so exactly that the wording seems a repetition. Dr. Spry, another writer on the *Waters*, 1822, also gives a plan of these baths, with an account of some further discoveries, adjoining on the west, as made in 1799 and 1803.

It was concluded that another bath was here, to balance or correspond in plan with Lucas's bath on the east. Dr. Spry names these three baths,—the eastern, the great, and the western. This discovery will no doubt now soon be again "discovered."

All accounts agree that no damage was done when these remains were exposed, but that "with a Vandalism wholly unaccountable," they were again "buried amidst a chaos of filth, to form the foundations of beggarly houses." Their re-exposure would be as profitable as it would be highly creditable to the authorities concerned, but this should not be done in a dilatory manner, making it a nuisance, and producing, perhaps, an action for damages, as just tried in Bristol during this summer in connexion with the present work at a cost to the Corporation of £250. When 'tis done, 'twere well 'twere done quickly.

There is a plan in the British Museum, "drawn and measured upon the place by Bernard Lins," entitled, a "representation of the subterranean ancient stoves, as discovered in 1727," sixteen feet below the surface, and near "where the brass head was found," over against Alderman Ford's house, in Stall Street. The occasion was the making of a sewer in the middle of the street, to convey the drains from the houses "into the ancient sewer, which emptied in the river about ten yards westward of the bridge." The drawing shows "the east side of the cave or vault, as it runs up the street," which was underpinned with wood, in order to lay the sewer. At the bottom is shown a row of hollow bricks; through these a stick was thrust three or four feet "towards the east, going to the King's bath." This find does not appear to be noted anywhere, or by Mr. Scarth, in his book published in 1864. Such notices simply mean, what is already well known, that this part of the city is entirely covered with these buried remains.

It must be hoped that when these baths are cleared, there may be seen around them modern "scholæ," "cabones that lett smoks to them that want them." Perhaps, too, some may like



ROMAN REMAINS, DISCOVERED AT BATH, 1727.

Castle Rock Quarry.

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to use the steps as “quisheons of stone, wch in ye water seams very cosy to sitt upon.”

It was after eleven o'clock when the meeting broke up.