Third Day's Proceedings.

In spite of heavy rain on Thursday morning, the members, numbering over one hundred and twenty, left Minehead at 9.30 a.m., for Cleeve Abbey, Dunster Castle, etc. The downfall of rain increased rather than diminished during the day, but it cleared up for a short time at Cleeve Abbey. The first halt was made at

Old Cleeve Church,

which was described by the Rector, the Rev. GILBERT WEIGALL. He said: That while to antiquaries the interest of the Parish Church was rather overshadowed by its more fascinating neighbour, the ruins of the Cistercian Abbey, he need scarcely remind them that its history was much older than that of the Abbey, for while the present Church in its main features was typical of the XV Century, it was, of course, only the last successor of others that had stood upon that spot. There was certainly a church there in 1198. It was at that time in the possession of William de Romara. He gave it to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who made it a prebend of his cathedral, and annexed it to the Benedictine monastery of Bec, who afterwards farmed it to the Abbot and Convent of Cleéve. There was no doubt that in the days of Earl Harold a Saxon or Roman church was there, but no trace of that or its immediate successor could be pointed out with any certainty. The old cross opposite the porch was, no doubt, a preaching station in old days, perhaps the first spot on which the Gospel was preached at Old Cleeve. It was thus described by Dr. Pooley in his "Old Crosses of Somerset":—"This fine old cross is situated east of the south porch, the calvary of which, consisting of three steps, is much dilapidated. The basement measures four feet on each face of the octagon, by six inches in height, and one foot wide. The

socket is massive and of the usual form, one foot three inches high, by three feet square at the base. A tapering octagonal shaft, nine feet three inches in height, by one foot four inches square at the foot, is fastened with lead into the mortise. It appears to be early XIV Century work." If any traces were to be sought for of the Church that was there in the XIV Century, they must be looked for on the south side. There were three large stones, very rudely carved, and bearing every appearance of exposure to the weather, used as gargoyles, which might possibly be relics of a much earlier church. That, however, was only conjecture, and to be taken for what it was worth. The mouldings of the southern entrance were earlier than the main body of the Church. The hollows and rounds threw beautiful shadows and were certainly not later than the XIV Century, or Decorated style of Gothic architecture. The floor of the porch was pitched with small pebbles obtained from the sea-shore, and they were well and closely laid. In the centre a heart was indicated in small stones of rough alabaster, while near the entrance was a diamond indicated in the same way, and in large sprawling characters just within the porch was the date 1614. An empty niche over the door no doubt once held the figure of St. Andrew. In the porch also might at present be seen the old Church chest, which had just been unearthed from beneath the tower floor. It was made of one single oak tree, the lid being merely a part of the same tree, and it was of great age and dated back to the XV Century, and possibly to a much earlier date. A hole in the lid showed that it was used at one time as a money-box for Peter's pence and other offerings. The bosses in the roof of the porch were also worthy of notice. Passing into the Church, they found themselves in the south aisle, the oldest part of the church. The roof was a lean-to one, and under the wall-plate was some fine carving, with a running ornament suggesting the conventional treatment of the foliage and fruit of the vine. At the eastern end of the

same aisle was a small chapel, and in the wall there were evident traces of a piscina behind the plaster. The roof was evidently a belfry, as the holes in the beams through which the bell ropes passed were still to be seen, and it was possible that that part was the original belfry and older than the tower. That theory would not demolish the one that it was there that the Sanctus bell was rung. The font was XV Century work, and was rather higher than fonts were generally made. It was octagonal in plan, the bowl borne aloft by eight angels bearing shields, and with their wings bent over as scrolls. The panelled stem on which it stood had plain shields in each alternate sinking, and there was an excellent font cover, of oak, ogee in outline, bearing tracery and carving, and being of the same date as the font itself. The original finial was missing, a moulded square, with circular termination, of Jacobean date, now doing duty for the long-lost part. Before passing into the nave, the old poor-box might be noticed. It bore the date 1634, and was one of the movable treasures of the Church. There was one like it in the church at Alton, in Hants, which church had also a belfry much in the same position as that in the south aisle at Old Cleeve. There was also another in Monksilver church. Within the nave itself, the first object that struck the eye was the tower arch, which was graceful and imposing. It was exceptionally high for its width, and a broad wave-mould ran round, springing from the floor and unbroken by any capital at the springing of the actual arch. The arcade dividing the south aisle from the nave had bays with four central flat arches of not particularly graceful lines, and was supported by clustered columns, the four exterior ones of which only had capitals. The roof of the nave was of the waggon-shape usual in that district, some of the ribs springing from angels bearing shields, the angels being placed at intervals in front of the carved and embattled wall-plate. The battlements had perished in almost every case, but were to be seen in their original state in two of the spaces. The

bosses at the intersection of the ribs and purloins in the roof were rather larger than the usual run of bosses. On the south side of the chancel arch was a hagioscope, or squint, which in the centre of its thick masonry, had a traceried head, which, he believed, was rather unusual, the lines of squints being, as a rule, exceptionally severe. Some of the tiles near the entrance were ancient—XIV or XV Century—with inlaid devices in a lighter coloured clay, and the design of the fish might be traced throughout. Similar tiles and of the same date were to be found in the Priory Church, Dunster. In the north wall of the nave was a recessed canopied tomb of ogee outline, and containing the effigy of a layman, with his feet resting on a cat, whose paw rested on a mouse or rat with a long tail. His dress was thus described by Mr. Bloxam, who gave the date as 1410—1440:—"He appears represented in the long gown with loose sleeves, from which the close-folding inner sleeves of the vest or close-fitting tunic appear. The broad belt which encircles the body, and the extremity of which hangs down in front, and the stiff neat collar mark the period. Suspended on the left side is the avelace, dagger, or knife. Such sculptured effigies of laymen of this date are very rare." As to who he could have been, the only key to his identity was the cat and mouse, but so far the key had not fitted any lock. The only family whose heraldic crest at all resembled it was that of the Earl of Portarlington, whose crest was a cat affrontée, bearing in its mouth a rat sable, but although the family belonged to the neighbouring county of Dorset, he (Mr. Weigall) had so far been unable to discover any link between them and Old Cleeve. The present seats of the Church were modern, having replaced the old box-pews, which in their turn replaced the oak seats of the XV Century. In this respect Old Cleeve was like Dunster, for, when that church was restored in 1875-6, several of the old XV Century bench-ends were discovered underneath the nave floor by Mr. Hems, but, with one single exception, they were utterly rotten and decay-

ed. The one in question was repaired and formed the motif for the new ones. So at Old Cleeve one square-headed bench-end, carved and traceried, had been found, and was framed up where the edges had decayed with sound old oak, and was now good for another five hundred years. It was on the front seat on the south side of the nave and faced the south aisle, that on the north end of the seat being copied from it. Quite a number of the seats in the aisle were made up of old oak, probably obtained from the original benches, and the material was certainly XV Century. The pulpit was modern, having been given by Captain Perceval, who rented Chapel Cleeve for fifteen years—1848-63. There must have been at one time a rood-screen. Indications of it might be seen in the flattened west side of the capital of the chancel arch, and there were apparent traces of the entrance to the rood-loft in the plaster that covered the corner of the chancel arch and the arcade. The wall had not been explored within living memory, and it could not therefore be said whether any trace of the old stairway remained. The screen itself had been destroyed, and no trace of it could be pointed out with certainty, but there was a tradition that the oak panelling at the east end of the chancel originally formed part of the rood-screen. He, however, was inclined to think that it was of later date, as the workmanship was much better than that of the old bench-end. The chancel was decorated in 1885, and at the same time the organ chamber and belfry were built by the late rector, the Rev. Preb. W. W. Herringham. The brass chandelier, which was a very fine specimen of the kind, bore the date, 1770, and the following inscription :—"The gift of John Palmer, of Hilperton, Wilts, whose wife is daughter of Francis Baker, of this parish." At one time it used to hang opposite the south entrance, and after undergoing many vicissitudes in the schoolroom at Washford was restored and placed in its present position in March, 1905. The door on the north side of the chancel was of comparatively recent date, having been made

in the place of the old priest's door, traces of which might still be seen outside the Church under the window, which was of much later date. The litany desk was new, and was given by Mr. and Mrs. Rodda, of Washford. The stained window in the west was placed there in memory of William Leonard Halliday, Emma Letitia, his wife, and their only daughter, aged two years, also Edward Vibart, Emily, his wife, and their four children, all of whom perished in the massacre of Cawnpore, in 1857. The east window was in memory of John Halliday and Edmund Trowbridge. The small window, by Kemp, in the south wall of the chancel was put in in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hole, and the other two, by Halliday, were put in quite recently, that on the east of the south aisle in memory of the late Mr. Halliday, of Chapel Cleeve, and that in the west by the late Lady Somers in memory of her father and grandfather, who were both vicars of Old Cleeve. Viewing the Church from the outside, attention should be drawn to the tower, with a belfry staircase on the north-west. It was a typical Somerset tower, and although it could not claim any exceptional or striking feature, it had a beauty of its own. There was no superfluity of ornamental detail upon the tower. Successive ages had toned down the old stone to a warm grey. A broad band of quatrefoils, in the midst of each of which was a plain shield, ran round the tower, just beneath the belfry, and another of similar conception, but rather richer in execution immediately over the western entrance. With those exceptions, plain masses were relied upon for effect, rather than much detail. There were fine quatrefoiled sound-holes in the belfry, the middle one on the south side having a curious little figure with uplifted arm, probably a freak of some playful mason. The western windows in the south aisle were each of three lights, containing tracery of somewhat unusual formation. Their lines suggested that their motif was taken from the singularly shaped arch leading to a chapel on the south side of Dunster Church, the line of tracery taking

much the same unusual bend inwards in its upper part. The same might be seen in Dovery Court, and was carefully described by Mr. Chadwyck-Healey yesterday. On the exterior of the north wall might be seen the remains of the so-called "devil's door," opposite the south door and in a line with the font. The tower contained a fine peal of six bells, five of which were hung in 1884, partly made of old bells melted down, with the addition of new material. The chalice had a lid bearing the date, 1573, which was used as a paten, and the silver dish was given to the Church by Helena Bickam, widow, in 1640. Concluding, he pointed out a curious contrivance formerly used for playing the organ when it was first placed in the Church, and not unlike the modern pianola, being placed upon the keys of the instrument, so that the organ might be played by anyone who could turn a handle.

Lieut.-Colonel BRAMBLE, who was asked to give his opinion on the tomb and effigy, said he had not had the opportunity of inspecting it carefully, but from what he had seen it seemed to be a specimen of the dress of a civilian of the XIV Century. As compared with effigies represented in armour, there were but few such specimens, because the number of those having such tombs who were entitled to wear armour were in excess of the ordinary civilians. It could not, however, be said to be rare, for he had seen 100 or more. The figure wore the flowing gown, and the pouch and short sword usual in those times, and it seemed to be in good preservation. The suggestion of cat and mouse might have to do with someone of an allusive name rather than to arms, and he knew of nobody in that locality who had such a design in their arms. The animal at the foot of an effigy did not necessarily imply that it had to do with their arms, for the lion was often placed at the feet of a man and the dog at the feet of a woman. He drew attention to the tracery of the east window being of rather unusual pattern for that part of England, as also to the fact that the columns of the arches were variations upon the usual Somerset

columns. Referring again to the effigy, he said that it differed in some details from the civilian dress of the XIV Century. He wore a long gown, buttoned all the way down, and if there had been a border it would, at first sight, have given the idea that the person was someone entitled to wear armour, but who had taken the vows, which was frequently done before death, and attached himself to one of the religious communities of the neighbourhood. In Shrewsbury Abbey similar specimens were to be seen. On examination it would be found that the figure was wearing not a gorget, but an ornamental chain round the neck, which, in all probability, was a chain of office worn by a civilian.

Some interesting fossils found in the blue lias rocks on the seashore were exhibited by Mr. T. C. Gooding, churchwarden. These included a fossil turtle, the snout of another animal, and a very beautiful impression of seaweed in rock.

The Abbey of Cleeve.

The weather was much too wet to permit of the party inspecting the exterior of Old Cleeve Church, and a move was made for Cleeve Abbey.

Lieut.-Colonel BRAMBLE, standing at the gate-house of the Abbey, said it formed a very important part of such a building. Here it was a combined gate-house and guest-house where anyone might obtain food and shelter. It was built by William Dovell, the last abbot. Over the entrance was the inscription:—"Porta patens esto, nulli claudaris honesto," a rather ambiguous inscription, for it depended upon where the comma was put whether the inscription showed the place to be open to all honest men, or to all except honest men. The gate-house originally contained two stories and had a guest-chamber and porter's lodge, but the upper floor had fallen away and the building was not in its original state. On the west front was Abbot Dovell's name and, above it, the crucifix with niches

on either side originally containing the figures of the Virgin Mary and St. John. The porter and some of the servants of the abbey would reside in the gate-house and the guests of the abbey.

Passing through the abbey grounds, and crossing the little stream between the gate-house and the principal buildings, the party entered the abbey, where, in the cloisters, sheltered from the falling rain, Colonel Bramble continued his interesting description of the various buildings. They were standing, he said, in the western alley of the cloisters of the Cistercian abbey of St. Mary at Cleeve. The Cistercian order of monks had special designs of their own for the arrangement of their abbeys, and, with trifling exceptions, they were exactly alike. Some slight differences there were, because some abbeys were larger than others, and they had to adapt themselves to size and circumstances. All churches of Cistercian abbeys were dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin, and therefore a Lady Chapel was never found in the church, because the whole of it was dedicated to Our Lady. With the Cistercians everything was plain and severe in style, and in the early abbeys no carving or other ornamentation was to be found. Most of the abbeys had the domestic buildings on the south or sunny side. It was so at Cleeve Abbey, but in other very well known abbeys, such as Tintern, the domestic buildings were on the north side, probably in that case for convenience in obtaining water. At Netley also they were on the north side, but at Beaulieu they were, as at Cleeve Abbey, on the south. The churches were very plain, and in the form of a cross having a nave, chancel, and transepts with eastern aisles, and one or two, and frequently three, chapels running out from the east wall of the transepts, and dedicated to particular saints. At Cleeve there were two chapels on each side. The chancels, as a rule, were structural buildings, and in this case, to make up sufficient length, the ritual choir ran down and occupied the crossing and one bay of the nave. They could trace the foundations of

the choir, showing how it went down into the nave. On the east side of the cloisters which was an older part, the south side being much later, there was a beautiful Early English dormitory, with lancet windows, where each monk had a cubicle to himself, in just the same way that, in the present day, was done in the lodging-houses of London, and it was notable how in buildings now-a-days people went back in their designs to old forms of providing for air and light. In introducing the cubicle principle in dormitories they were only going back to the XIII Century form. The ground-floor room next the church was the sacristy, opening from the church only, other rooms beneath the dormitory, including the vaulted chapter-house with its triple arch, and the monks' day-room, or calefactory—the room with a fire. The chapter-house projected beyond the line of building east and included the library, now nearly swept away, and above it the scriptorium, while next to the chapter-house they would see the day-stairs leading to the dormitory. There had been another stair leading from the dormitory to the south transept of the church, and the day-stairs were opened to allow the monks to get from the dormitory to the cloisters without passing through the church. The day-room or calefactory further on had been called by various names. In early times no fire was allowed in the dormitory or the refectory, but only in the fratry, which in this instance projected south beyond the building. The original arrangement of the south side was very different from what it now was. The XIII Century refectory ran north and south, instead of east and west. The present refectory was built not long before the dissolution. Colonel Bramble related how, a good many years back, Mr. Luttrell, the owner of the property, had the garden at the back of the present refectory dug over, and at a depth of two feet in the mould was found the tiled floor of the ancient refectory, but, exposed to the air as it had since been, it had suffered, and was now in a somewhat dilapidated state. On the occasion of its being discovered he (Colonel

Bramble) came there at the instance of the British Archæological Association, and worked hard for three days making drawings of every tile and a plan showing their exact position in the floor, so that a complete record should be preserved. On that occasion he found two distinct series of tiles, the earliest being eight inches square, bearing various designs, among them being the arms of Clare and of the King of Cornwall, and many benefactors of the abbey being represented there. The floor at the south end had evidently wanted repair from time to time, and for this purpose tiles had been removed from the north end, their places being filled with five-and-a-half inch tiling, with arms of later families, differing from those at the upper end, while, running up from the north door, he found a depression where the tiles had been crushed down and some of them showed considerable signs of burning. This he attributed to a brazier having stood near the centre of the room, and the depression had been caused by the constant dragging of heavy logs along the floor to the brazier. Round three sides of the floor there were no tiles, this being where the tables had stood. Later, he considered, when the abbey was richer and had more money to spend, anticipating that it might be taken from them at some time or other, the monks made extensive alterations, pulling down their old refectory and building a new one, which was the very fine XV Century refectory that was still to be seen. There would have been some buildings on that side before, and the segmental arch of the lavatory might still be seen, where the monks washed their hands before going into the refectory to meals.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER pointed out that parallel buildings to those of Cleeve Abbey were to be seen in the Abbey of Bindon, in Dorset, the Church and other buildings being in exactly the same position. When the Somersetshire Archæological Society visited Cleeve Abbey, seventeen years ago, it was suggested that the designs on the tiles had nothing to do with the benefactors of the Abbey, but that there was a tile

manufactory in the neighbourhood, from which were sent out stock patterns, but in the case of the Berkerolles family,[1] he found that these tiles did represent a benefactor of the Abbey.

The rain clearing up a little, the party were conducted round the Abbey buildings by Colonel BRAMBLE, who commented further on the principal features of interest. On the site of the Church he pointed out the outline of the structural choir, the position of the high altar and of the chantry chapels. He incidentally also mentioned that at Woolavington there had been a chantry served by three priests, two of whom were appointed by the Abbot of Cleeve, and Gilbert de Woolavington, he said, was buried at Cleeve Abbey. A slab with a plain shield marked a grave in the north transept, and there were two or three other interments, he believed, at about that point. A peculiar character of Cistercian architecture was that the nave was separated from the aisle by low screens. The Cistercians were an agricultural community, and in an abbey there were comparatively few monks, but an enormous number of lay brethren, who were termed "conversi or converts," which led some to think, erroneously, that they were converted to that particular religion. The term lay brethren was the more expressive one. They were workmen, distinct from the monks. It was very customary to see the terms, monks, priests, friars, and canons, as if there was no difference between them, and the monks were often spoken of as low down in order, but the monks were the "swells" of the time. They had good abbeys and lands; the people looked to them as their natural protectors against the Barons. Their position would be better understood when he mentioned that there were three personages who had the honour of being called "Sir"—Sir Monk, Sir Priest, and Sir Knight. The monks held much the same position in olden times as canons of cathedrals held up to the

1. See p. 5, pt. ii.

time of their emoluments being taken away. The reason why the aisles were cut off was because the Church had to accommodate all classes. The monks occupied the choir, the lay brethren the nave, and the people of the surrounding district and those in the guest-house were allowed to occupy the aisles of the Church.

At the chapter-house, Colonel BRAMBLE said the entrance was one of the prettiest bits of Early English architecture *in situ* that he knew of. It was extremely light and graceful, yet plain. One thing which emphasized what he had previously remarked about old ideas coming to the front again might be noticed in the shafts of the windows, where a thin cushion of lead was placed between the rough and the polished stone. If the builders of the Holborn Viaduct had known what the builders of that Abbey knew, their work would have better accommodated itself to the weight it had to bear, and there would have been no danger as there had been of its crushing in. He mentioned that one of those discs of lead was found some years ago in the Abbey, and because it had a cross stamped upon it, it was pronounced to be the lid of a holy canister of some kind, though, of course, the cross was only put upon it in order to make it hold the better in the position where it was placed. Passing into the monk's dormitory, Colonel Bramble called attention to the Early English windows, each of which formerly lighted the cell or cubicle which formed a monk's sleeping apartment. The roof was modern, and placed there to preserve the building. In the XV Century refectory, Colonel Bramble called attention to the elegant transoms of the windows, and pointed out other interesting features.

Time pressing, only a very brief inspection of the rest of the buildings could be made, the last place visited being the old refectory floor in the abbey garden. Parts of this were exposed by the caretaker (Mr. Clapp), and Colonel BRAMBLE pointed out tiles bearing the arms of different benefactors.

Luncheon at Washford.

VOTES OF THANKS.

The party then adjourned to the Railway Hotel, Washford, for lunch. At the conclusion of the meal, the Rev. E. H. BATES said that, as it was practically the last time they would be assembled together in one room, he would take that opportunity of proposing a vote of thanks to all who had helped to make their meetings a success; and, first of all, he would like to mention how much they owed to their President, Mr. Luttrell, of Dunster Castle, for the kindly aid he had rendered the Society, and they were gratified that he had been able to be with them the whole of the first day and part of the second, while he would join them again that afternoon, when he would welcome them to his stately home. He also wished specially to record their thanks to the local committee at Minehead. He had put them immediately after Mr. Luttrell, because he had still in mind—as all those who had the pleasure of attending must also have in mind—a vivid remembrance of that delightful conversazione which the committee arranged for them on the previous evening. The term conversazione would convey to him in future quite a different impression to what it had before, and he thought that he must really include in his thanks the actors who took part in that excellent entertainment. They had also to thank the owners of property and land and their representatives for so freely granting access to places that were not always open to the public, and he also thanked the clergy for opening their churches, which, in that district, were so well taken care of; while in some cases the clergy had helped them to understand the full meaning of the beautiful buildings, and in others they had been indebted to Prebendary Hancock and Mr. Chadwyck-Healey for explaining them. He also referred in grateful terms to Mr. T. Lovelace, the tenant of Bratton Court, who had so kindly allowed them to inspect the fine old place, within and without, and to Mr.

F. Bligh Bond, who came from Bristol, and helped them a great deal in unfolding the history and architectural features of the churches. He wished also to thank Colonel Bramble for his lucid remarks on Cleeve Abbey; and last, but not at all the least, he felt that their thanks were due to Mr. H. St. George Gray, the curator of the museum and their assistant secretary, for the splendid work he had accomplished for them. Like the saint after whom he was named, Mr. Gray had a most happy knack of driving the dragons out of their path and making the way easy for them.

The Rev. J. E. W. COLLINS, in seconding, endorsed all that the Rev. E. H. Bates had said, and observed that they had had exceedingly pleasant outings, visited buildings and churches of considerable architectural interest and gone through some of the most beautiful scenery that could be found in England.

Mr. J. E. W. WAKEFIELD, of Taunton, supported the resolution, and in referring to the excellent work accomplished by the Society, suggested that the names of the three honorary secretaries should be included in the vote of thanks.

The vote was carried with acclamation, and

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER, in acknowledging it, referred to the part the Rev. F. M. and Mrs. Etherington, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew, and the Rev. and Mrs. Martin Alford had taken in making the arrangements for the entertainment of the night before.

Mr. T. H. ANDREW acknowledged the compliment on behalf of the local committee, and thanked the Society for the cordial way in which they had appreciated the committee's efforts. He could safely say that at Minehead they had looked forward with the keenest anticipation to the Society's visit.

Lieut.-Col. BRAMBLE also acknowledged the vote. He compared the state of Cleeve Abbey when he first made acquaintance with it and its present well-cared-for condition.

He also gave some interesting reminiscences of his early archæological days, from the time when, at the age of eleven, he rubbed his first brass. He strongly advocated archæological study, and expressed his pleasure at seeing around him so many of the younger people taking an interest in it.

Withycombe Church.

Resuming the breaks, the party journeyed next to Withycombe, where the church was the object of interest.

Mr. F. Bligh Bond briefly summarised the architectural features of this Church. It was dedicated to St. Nicholas, and he believed it to be of very early foundation. The font was probably Norman. The south doorway was Early English, and had a very interesting stoup on its west side. The windows were of the Decorated period, and those in the chancel had the same character, but whether original or not he could not say, while there was also a good deal of Perpendicular work in the Church. The massive tower, which probably belonged to an earlier church, stood in a peculiar position against the south wall. There were two nameless tombs in the Church, which also possessed a very fine screen with a beautiful cornice, four deep, and having particularly delicate and graceful vine enrichment, while the panels of the lower part might be of the time of James I. The church register dated from 1669, and the chalice was of pre-Reformation times.

The Rev. E. H. Bates mentioned that Sir H. Maxwell Lyte had very much wanted the Society to inspect the Church and to note the two figures on the tombs, that, if possible, they might be able to say who they represented, the point he was specially interested in being the two pieces of stone carving at the head and foot of the effigy in the window-sill on the north side. There had been various conjectures about them, one being that they were for lamps, but he was inclined to

think they were not in their original position. The lady was represented in the effigy as having her chin tied up, a kind of head-dress that was in vogue for widows about the XIII Century. The other effigy, in the south wall of the Church, was of earlier date, and was that of a young man of probably about twenty-five, but it was difficult in the absence of armour to say what was its date. In the vestry was the brass of a lady who had three husbands. Her name was Joan Carne, and she lived at Sandhill, where her spirit was said to walk. He was sorry that he had not been able to make arrangements for the Society to visit Sandhill, which was a beautiful specimen of an Elizabethan manor house. The font was assigned by Pridham to the early part of the XII Century, say Henry I, but not later.

Colonel BRAMBLE said, with regard to the monument in the north wall, he had not yet closely inspected it, but he did not think it was the effigy of a nun, as had been suggested, for it was not likely that there would be the tomb of a nun in a church like this, and nuns did not often have monuments. It was simply the monument of a widow, who had in her hands a heart case, with the narrow end upwards. It very often happened that when a person died abroad he gave orders for his heart to be removed and buried in his church at home, and this seemed to be the case of a heart interment. The effigy on the south side was that of a male person, a layman, of from 1220 to 1250, and it was another case of heart interment. The dress was that of a civilian of early type with long hair curled outwards and sleeves of the "liripipe" form.

The two square carved blocks of stone, one at the head and the other at the foot of the effigy in the north window, were examined by the company, and many suggestions were made as to their probable use, but nothing was advanced with any degree of certainty. They do not belong to the tomb.

Dunster Church.

Dunster was the next place visited, the party being welcomed at the Church by the Rev. Preb. F. Hancock, F.S.A., whose love for the grand old structure had induced him to prepare a most interesting history of the church and priory.

Preb. HANCOCK said the first thing they would notice on approaching the Church was the picturesque old cottage at the entrance to the churchyard, which was apparently constructed in large measure of old ship timber, and it seemed to have been assigned, at the arbitration of which they would hear something presently, to the parish priest. There was, no doubt, a church in very early times at Dunster, though no definite proof could be adduced of it, but probably of a humble character not suited to Norman ideas, and it was recorded that William de Mohun, to whom the Conqueror allotted the Honour of Dunster, with the consent of his wife Adeliza (A.D. 1090-1100), conveyed the advowson of the Church of St. George, together with a large estate in tithes and land in the district, to the prior and monks of Bath to "build and raise it," which expression seemed to imply that an already existing church had been ruined or destroyed in the stormy times succeeding the Conquest. The new owners accepted the responsibilities their possessions entailed upon them, and a church after the customary Norman fashion was erected. When the late extensive and skilful restoration was carried out, principally through the munificence of the present Mr. Luttrell, a large portion of the Norman west wall was exposed to view and also the jambs of the Norman west door. These jambs appeared to have been much injured by fire, as if in some early émeute—perhaps when King Stephen lay about the Castle, endeavouring in vain to reduce it—the Church had been held by one side or the other, and an attempt was made by the besiegers to effect an entrance by fire. The Church at present consisted of six bays, seventy-eight feet nine inches by twenty-

seven feet; a south aisle, eighty-six feet by twelve feet; and a north aisle, fifty-two feet by ten feet. The north aisle was shorn of two bays owing to its abutting upon the conventual buildings. The propinquity of the priory accounted also for the long piece of windowless wall on the north side of the Church, for the monks would allow no windows to be inserted which would overlook their house, and the wall had to be kept blank. The two transepts, including the tower crossing, measured sixty-four feet six inches by eighteen feet ten inches, the crossing being twenty-eight feet square, and beyond was an eastern limb, which was composed of a presbytery fifty feet two inches by twenty-two feet four inches. On its north and south sides were aisles of two bays, the south aisle being thirty-three feet two inches by thirteen feet nine inches. There was no clerestory throughout the Church, but the interior effect was of very solemn and dignified character as viewed from the great west doorway. It would be observed that the pillars of the nave were unequally spaced relatively to their opposite fellows. The roofs were all waggon-roofs, except the one in the south aisle and the one over the crossing. They had been well preserved, and the carved bosses were of the customary character of the Perpendicular period. William Dunster, a former abbot of Cleeve, a foundation which owned before the Reformation considerable property in Dunster, appeared to have contributed considerably towards the erection of the north aisle, which aisle seemed to have been much altered, if not altogether rebuilt, after the year 1504, for they found that Thomas Upcott, of Dunster, a dealer in iron, and a man evidently of considerable means, who died in 1504, left "to the fabric of the said Dunster church, *i.e.*, to the new aisle there is to be made or repaired in the said church, in the north part, ten tons of iron coming in a ship of John Cokky's, if the parishioners of Dunster begin to repair the said aisle within three years." The south aisle was probably rebuilt or remodelled about the same time. From legacies left by wills to the

Church it was evident that much was being done to the Church at that period. The flat ceiling of the south aisle was curious. It evidently was not made for its present position, but for a wider building. It was curious to observe how the old builders used up all materials that came to hand. In the south walls were tiles, and many fragments of Norman and Early English window shafts, and set in the battlements was the tombstone of a prior, while in the north wall were many ashlared stones which probably came from the walls of the Norman building. One of the things they were most proud of in the Church was the beautiful rood-screen. It stood eleven feet high and had fourteen bays, and the canopy which supported the rood was of a very rich description. The Altar of the Cross in Dunster Church was mentioned in a will as early as the time of Edward II and in various later wills, and it no doubt stood in the customary position, viz., on the right-hand side of the chancel arch. The screen ran across the whole length of the nave, and its story was this: By the beginning of the XV Century the Benedictine Order, to which the priory of Dunster belonged, had become very unpopular in England, and constant disputes appeared to have taken place between the parishioners of Dunster and the prior and his monks. Sir Hugh Luttrell took up the matter on the part of his tenants, and three arbitrators were appointed, who met at St. Mary's Church, Glastonbury, in 1498, to consider and settle the differences which had arisen. Their award, as far as the Church was concerned, was that the chancel or presbytery should be handed over to the prior and monks to form a separate and distinct church for their private use, and that the high altar of the parishioners should be moved westward, to stand on or near the site then occupied by the altar of St. James, and there, just within the present altar rails, the high altar stood until the recent restoration. The award appeared to have given general satisfaction; but though a site was thus found for their high altar the parish priest and the laity of Dunster were left without a chancel, and

the patrons of the benefice, as the Benedictine Order had done in other places, decided to shut off a portion of the whole nave to form one. So the beautiful screen was erected across the nave, and the newel staircase to reach its loft was built. Passing through the screen, the present chancel of the parish church was entered, and, facing it were the piers which supported the original chancel arch of the Norman church, with their characteristic capitals. In the window in the north aisle were fragments of old stained glass, one of the panes having a representation of the scallop hat of St. James; therefore near that window, and probably where the present belfry staircase went up, was the altar of St. James, while on the other side, in its customary place, would have been the altar of the Holy Rood, of which the piscina still remained. A little to the west of and above the archway in the northern limb of the tower was to be seen the doorway which gave admittance to the screen of the Church before the building was divided. The screen stood between the western pillars of the tower, and was approached by a still existing staircase. When the presbytery was given over to the monks, that screen was moved back within the eastern arches, where it remained until the restoration, when it was removed to its present position between the south transept and the priory church. The tower was in the centre of the Church. By the middle of the XV Century it had apparently got into bad condition, or a desire had arisen for a tower of more stately proportions. Accordingly, money was got together for a new and more magnificent building. The builder was one John Marys, of Stogursey, the contract being signed on Michaelmas Day, 1443, and how conscientiously he performed his work the tower still bore witness. The tower rose three stages above the roof to a height of one hundred feet, and contained eight bells. The present transepts probably occupied the same positions as those of the Norman period. The curious character of the arch opening into the south aisle of the priory church was noticeable. It belonged

to the end of the Decorated period, but, later, being found too narrow for the processions which became frequent as the services of the church became more ceremonious and stately, it was widened by leaving the head of the arch *in situ* and setting back its jambs on two shouldered corbels. He went on to say that, as the high altar originally stood, they would expect to find altars to St. Mary and the Holy Trinity at the end of the choir aisles, and contemporary wills showed that such chapels did exist there in early times. He gave some account of the three chantries of Holy Trinity, St. John and St. Mary, and of legacies left to them, and proceeded to describe the presbytery or priory church. It formed the chancel of the original Norman church, but during the Early English period it appeared to have been entirely remodelled. To that period belonged the east window, the lancet windows on the south side, and the sedilia, as now restored from fragments that were found. During the Perpendicular period, the presbytery was again entirely remodelled, when a large window of that style of architecture was inserted in place of the triform lancet window in the east end, and more light being thus gained by it and the large windows in the new side aisles, the older lancet windows were built up. The altar of the priory church was an old stone one, and was found in the nave, where it had been used as a tombstone by the Poyntz family. On the left-hand side of the altar was the chapel of St. Laurence, now used as a priest's vestry. The XIII Century arched tomb beneath the doorway of the chapel he considered to be possibly the tomb of Sir John de Mohun the third, who, as a boy of nine years of age, succeeded to the Honour of Dunster in 1279, distinguished himself in the wars waged by Edward I in Flanders and Scotland; was one of the signatories to the famous document despatched by the Barons to Boniface III, declaring that the King should be independent of authority of the Pope; and was a great benefactor to the town, the church, and the priory. Many of the tiles in the chapel bore sacred symbols

or the arms of great families connected at that period with Somerset. The ancient stone altar of the chapel was found *in situ* and bore six instead of the ordinary five crosses. He (Preb. Hancock) pointed out and commented briefly on the many ancient and beautiful monuments of the Luttrell family, and referred especially to the effigy of a woman lying beneath a beautiful canopy of the Decorated period in the priory church. Tradition assigned it to the Everard family, but Sir H. Maxwell Lyte considered it to be one of the family of De Mohun, perhaps of Lady Avice or Hawis de Mohun, wife of Reginald de Mohun, Earl of Somerset, who died in 1257. The speaker said that early wills showed that a great number of lights, of which he gave a list, were kept burning in the Church; and in conclusion he drew attention to some fine memorial windows, and to three very ancient chests, one of which according to early custom had been hollowed out from the trunk of a huge oak.

The Rev. F. W. WEAVER remarked that the Rev. Mackenzie Walcott, in his book on Cleeve Abbey, mentioned a William Dunster as an abbot of Cleeve, and said that his name once appeared in the window over St. James' altar at Dunster. There was no documentary evidence that there was an abbot of that name, and he enquired whether the name was to be found among the fragments of stained glass in the window of the north aisle. He is probably identical with William Seylake, abbot of Cleeve in 1419.[1]

Preb. HANCOCK believed that "W. D." was there, with the abbot's crozier.

The Rev. E. H. BATES thanked Preb. Hancock for his description of the Church, and informed him that a formal vote of thanks to him had been passed at the luncheon for the valuable information he had given the Society in so able a manner.

1. See pt. ii, p. 39.

Dunster Castle.

On leaving the Church, the archæologists proceeded to Dunster Castle, the residence of the President, G. F. Luttrell, Esq., in whose family the Castle and its estates have been since the time when the reversion of the Honour of Dunster was purchased by Lady Elizabeth Luttrell of Lady Joan de Mohun in 1376. The party passed up the steep ascent that leads under the grand old XV Century gate-house and through the still older gateway, dating from the time of Henry III, up the steps to the west front of the Castle. Inside the Castle they were received and warmly welcomed by Mr. Luttrell, Mrs. Luttrell, and Miss Luttrell, and divided into smaller companies, they were conducted over the interior, Mr. Luttrell and Miss Luttrell personally conducting two of the parties, while Preb. Hancock took another. In this way the various apartments were traversed, the guides drawing attention to and explaining the many beautiful and curious treasures the Castle contains. In the study were displayed bones and horns of the deer, the ox, the bison, etc., found in the submarine forest on the sea-shore, also some fine specimens of hammer-heads and adzes of prehistoric age. Among the many features of interest inspected were the ancient kitchen fireplace, and the wrought iron-work, and beautifully carved wood-work preserved in the present billiard-room; the handsome paintings on leather representing scenes from the lives of Antony and Cleopatra; the armoury with a fine collection of ancient guns and other weapons, and cannon-balls found in the neighbourhood; the magnificent family paintings and other pictures, one of them entitled "The Device," recently restored and re-hung, attracting much critical attention; the grand staircase, with its elaborate and magnificent carving, representing the chase of the deer and fox; the beautiful ceiling of the dining-room, the work of Italian masters; the collection of historical deeds, arranged by William Prynne, when confined in the Castle during the Commonwealth,

prominent among which was to be seen the parchment slip recording the purchase of the Castle and estates by Lady Elizabeth Luttrell; and the bedroom used by Prince Charles, afterwards Charles II, with its secret recess for hiding purposes. All these and many others were enthusiastically inspected, and the company were then conducted to the large room in the gate-house, where tea was provided, to which the party were entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Luttrell.