A move was then made for a tour of inspection of some of the objects of antiquarian and historical interest in the town.

The Castle*

was first inspected under the guidance of Mr. G. T. CLARK. On emerging from the hall the company found themselves in the inner court of the Castle facing the gateway. Mr. Clark remarked that the inner front of

* A paper on the Castle, by the late Rev. F. Warre, together with a plan and some engravings, will be found in Vol. IV. of the Society's Proceedings.

the gateway seemed to be later than the front towards the road, the latter being in the Early Decorated style. The party having been met and welcomed to the interior of the Castle by Mr. Gillett, the present occupant, the base of the Norman keep was first entered. Mr. Clark said it was very unusual to have the basement of a Norman keep arched, as that was; and there were signs of artificial work about it. Norman keeps were generally floored with timber, and where they were vaulted this had been put in at a later period. The tidy walls, however, were fatal to any examination. There was an old staircase which, unfortunately, had been turned into a wine cellar. The arch had been found to be three feet thick and the wall 14 feet thick, which was thicker than usual, but it was to be explained by the fact that thick walls were generally built when the foundation was not very good. Having led the party through to the lawn on the west, he told them they were standing where the old ditch was; it had been filled in by Sir Benjamin Hammet—a great benefactor of this town, but who, unfortunately, played havoc with its archæological remains. The round tower looked modern, but the Norman buttresses were old. The centre pilaster strip was lower than the window. Most likely the entrance to the keep was on the other side, and was sure to have been on the first floor, for the keeps seldom had a subterranean chamber. The specimens of the Norman pilaster were about as good as he ever saw. Leading on to the north, he said they were then on the other face of the keep, with the river Tone, from which the town derives its name, behind them. On the first story to the right he pointed out a deep narrow opening, which he confessed he could not explain. Probably, he said, it was Early English work, but it was too high for a

door, and did not look altogether like a window. The pattern of the staircase no doubt was Norman, but it looked as if it had been rebuilt in later times. No doubt there were windows all along between the buttresses.

Mr. W. A. JONES asked whether there was likely to have been a wall between the hall and the river.

Mr. CLARK replied in the negative—only a breastwork. He pointed out a postern, with a segmental arch, which, he said, might be of any date. Passing to the east, into the space now used as a playground for a school, he said they were then in what was in some respects decidedly the most interesting part of the Castle—an artificial earthwork raised many feet above the ground around, and, no doubt, composed of the earth thrown out of the ditch. Here, he took it, the Saxon King had his citadel, which was very probably constructed of timber, because heavy masonry could not be put upon newly-made ground. It could be seen from the cut of it that it was artificial, and there was room for a very considerable house. When the Norman came he, according to their usual way, built his wall against the mound, and used the mound as a terrace from which to attack the people outside. That gave a great military advantage, which the Normans knew so well how to employ. The space was now rectangular, but probably it had been trimmed; and there were enough remains to make it exceedingly probable that that was the real citadel of the Castle, and upon which, in the 8th century, the Saxon King put his residence. Therefore it would be the oldest inhabited part of the town, which the people ought to value, because they had in it the earliest evidence of military work, and should point it out as the most extraordinary and interesting part in the history of the town. The mill, he observed, had been so trans-

mogrified that they could see very little of the original work. There was a curious ancient arch between the citadel-ground and the mill, which was probably an ancient sewer.

Mr. CLARK, making for Castle Green, halted in front of the gateway, and said that they were then standing on the site of the ancient drawbridge and looking on the outer face of the gate of the inner ward. He drew attention to the insertion of the carved stone armorial bearings of Bishop Langton just above the archway, and the arms of Henry VII. higher up. On both sides there was a patch of stone, which he believed were the holes through which the chains of the drawbridge passed.

Mr. W. A. JONES mentioned that when the Castle was sold by the late Lord of the Manor, he was not able to sell the room over the archway. This belonged to the tenants of the Manor of Taunton Deane, and not to the owner of the Castle, and it was now under the charge of the Deputy Steward, the records of the Manor being preserved in it.

The remains of the Eastern Gate of the Castle were also inspected, and the Members then proceeded to the

Church of St. Mary Magdalene.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., drew attention to the only two pieces of sculpture which remain of the old tower. These are the two spandrils at the entrance, and are original work, of the time of Henry VII., representing the Day of Judgment and Doom.* There were also, he pointed out, stoups for holy water on each side of the door. The tower was one of the richest and finest ex-

* Engravings of these Spandrils will be found in the first volume of the Society's Proceedings, p. 89.

amples of the old Somersetshire towers. It had been carefully restored in a manner with which they could not find fault. Upon entering the sacred edifice the visitors were accompanied by the vicar (Rev. Prebendary Clark), and the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells was also present. Mr. Parker said he was sorry that he had been called upon to speak in the church, because it had been restored so thoroughly that it ceased to be archæological, and became a 19th century object; and it was not his business to criticise modern restoration. There were, however, remains of the old work. The roof preserved its original character, and respecting the decorations they were matters of taste which it was of no use to discuss. The character of the capitals was essentially Somersetshire. The general style was rich Perpendicular English. There was a peculiarity in the capital of the chancel arch, which he believed belonged to an earlier period than the rest. To his mind the figures in the niches were too large; and with regard to the painting, unless there was good evidence of what it had been, he would not altogether commend it. He was happy to say that the decoration of churches was being very commonly restored all over the country, for he did not approve of leaving walls untidy, merely because they were ancient. There was not the slightest doubt that the old churches were intended to be coloured. In this intance the patterns of the painting were not the usual patterns of the period, and he doubted whether they were genuine. Mr. Street, one of our first architects, and a friend of his own, was the designer of the reredos, and it was not for him to find fault with it; but Mr. Street was too fond of making much of his altar screen. This was very handsome in its way, no doubt; but the fault was that it did not stand

clear of the window, but was carried a little too high. The carving was beautifully done. There could not be a more thoroughly English style than that church. The Perpendicular English was altogether peculiar to this country. These fine open-timbered roofs, which were the glory of the land, were as much to be admired as the vaulted French roofs. The latter were so common in France, because in very early days the French hit upon a very cheap mode of vaulting, which would not cost half the money of vaulting an English church. There was no doubt a great advantage in vaulted roofs, as had been recently proved in the fire at Canterbury Cathedral; but for ornament our roofs were much preferable. Mr. Freeman knew so much more about the local peculiarities of churches that he would much rather he had spoken than himself. The double aisle of the church was a peculiarity, and probably arose from the increasing wealth of the place and the requirement for a number of chantry chapels.

Mr. E. A. Freeman, D.C.L., added a few words of comparison of St. Mary's with other specimens of ecclesiastical architecture in the country. He expressed a hope that St. James' tower would grow up by the side of this, and said that though St. Mary's was the highest and most striking tower, it did not rank so high as a work of art as its neighbours, St. James' and Bishop's Lydeard.

St. James' Church

was the next subject of inspection.

Mr. J. H. Parker, C.B., said it was an original Somerset Perpendicular Henry VII. church. The font was a beautiful piece of sculpture of its kind. The chancel window was a modern one of painted glass. It was good of its kind, but modern painted glass would never compare with the

old. It was one of the things in which we are behindhand. The arch next to the pulpit had been made of two. He hoped that now the tower was being re-built the time was not very far distant when the galleries would disappear, as they had in other places; for with the adoption of open seats instead of doors there would be plenty of room. The pulpit was nothing very particular, but a handsome one of its kind. The tower was a very fine one, and was to be restored exactly as before. He was told that the very unusual circular window over the entrance door was modern.

The Rev. T. HUGO, in reply to a question, said this was never the conventual church of Taunton Priory.

The VICAR (Rev. W. T. Redfern) mentioned that in the old parish registers (which were openly exhibited) there were entries of persons buried who had been executed for treason, and of marriages in the time of the Commonwealth, which appeared to have been performed by a justice of the peace.

At the Canon Street corner of St. James' Street attention was paid to some old almshouses, whose date was generally supposed to be that of Henry VII., but by some much earlier.

Taunton Priory.*

The Rev. T. HUGO led to the site of the ancient Priory, and showed the only remains of it in the dilapidated structure, now apparently used as a barn. Since the Dissolution, three centuries ago, the ground had been opened over and over again for the purpose of getting stone. In several of the houses in Canon Street, close

* A paper on the Priory, by the Rev. T. Hugo, with some engravings, will be found in Vol. IX. of the Society's Proceedings.

by, there were pieces of stone, doubtless coming from the ancient Priory. He believed that every bit of stonework in the "chapel," as it was called, was an insertion, with the exception of the doorway. The windows on the east side were modern. He had been told that in the last century, at the time of the French wars, the building was appropriated to the use of some French people here for religious worship, and had therefore been called "the chapel."

The next centre of attraction was

The Grammar School.

These fine old premises, now used no longer for their original purpose, are occupied by the Middle Schools.

Mr. W. A. JONES stated that the school was built by Bishop Fox, as the Lord of the Manor, in the early part of the reign of Henry VIII., and endowed by William Walbee, whose will was proved in the reign of Queen Mary. At one time the roof of the school-room was open, but is now plastered in. The dormitories are now adapted as a chapel for the school services.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said the school was a good example of its time, and was in a very genuine state. The old roof remained perfect, and there were very few such. It was the simple Late Perpendicular style.

The *Annual Dinner* took place at the London Hotel. The president gave one toast, "The Queen," remarking that it was their privilege to be subjects of a lineal descendant of Ingild, the brother of the founder of this town.

An Evening Meeting

was held in the Castle Hall.

Ancient Geography of the West of England.

Mr. W. Boyd Dawkins, F.R.S., delivered an able address on this subject, of which the following is an abstract.

The submarine forest exposed between the tide-marks on the coast of West Somerset has long been known. That portion of it visible at Porlock was described in 1839 by Sir Henry de la Beche, and more recently by Mr. Godwin-Austen in an essay read before the Geological Society in 1865. It was shown by the latter to be rooted on "an angular detritus," and to be overlaid by the following deposits :—

1. A blue freshwater-mud deposit, resulting, probably, from the depression of the land.
2. A surface of plant-growth *(Iris)*.
3. A marine silt with *Scrobicularia piperata*.
4. Shingle that forms a ridge which is at the present time encroaching on the level water-meadows behind.

The physical changes manifested by the section he interprets thus :—The accumulation of angular detritus, in which the trees are rooted, belongs to subaërial conditions, which were in operation while the boulder-clay of the centre and north of Britain was falling from the melting icebergs. This was followed by the epoch of the growth of the forest and of the accumulation of vegetable matter. The overlying blue clay marks the time during which the trees were killed ; the surface of marsh-growth covered with *Iris*, marks the epoch when the trees fell ; the *Scrobicularia*-clay indicates a depression below the sea-

level; and, lastly, the clay was elevated and the shingle thrown up on the surface to form the barrier at high-water mark.

Mr. Godwin-Austen's valuable essay recalled to mind a worked flint that I had found in the angular detritus in 1861. On its re-examination I found that it had been chipped by the hand of man. In the autumn of 1869, the Rev. H. H. Winwood and myself resolved to verify the discovery by a thorough examination of the forest-bed. On digging through the layer of undisturbed vegetable matter, we met with ample traces of man's handiwork in flint and chert chippings, and in one very well-formed flake which, apparently, had never been used. They were embedded in the upper ferruginous portion of the angular detritus, and evidently had been dropped upon the surface-soil of the period, and not transported by water. On searching the shingle we found only one water-worn flint-pebble, which, possibly, may have been washed out of the angular detritus; it is therefore probable that the presence of flint and chert in that neighbourhood is owing to their transport by man.

Encouraged by these results, we resolved to explore the submarine forest in the nearest bay to the east close to Minehead. It there consists of oak, ash, alder, and hazel, which grew on a blue clay, full of rootlets, that thickens considerably seawards. The blue clay in its lower part is full of angular fragments of Devonian rocks, which, as at Porlock, constitute a landwash, and not a shingle. At the point between tides, where the angular fragments began to appear, the flint chippings were found. The exact spot where we dug was to the east of the little stream that enters the sea between Minehead and Warren farm, and close to a large stump that is generally exposed at one-

third tides, about 200 yards from the shore and 50 from a line of posts for nets. The splinters, which, as at Porlock, clearly had been struck off by the hand of man in the manufacture of some tool, consisted of flint and chert, the latter of which was derived from the greensand of Blackdown, on the borders of Devonshire. They were embedded in a ferruginous band as at Porlock, and occurred as deep as one foot from the surface of the bed. We dug in several other spots without finding any other traces of man's presence.

In both these localities it is clear that man had been living on the old land-surface, and that the remains of his handiwork had been dropped in the angular detritus which Mr. Godwin-Austen believes to be subaërial and glacial.

These fragments of submerged forest are mere scraps, spared by the waves, of an ancient growth of oak, ash, and yew, that is found everywhere underneath the peat or alluvium in the Somersetshire levels. At Porlock Quay, on the west, it dips under the fresh water and marine strata that have been described, at high-water mark, and is stripped of its supra-jacent deposits from the line of half-tide down to low water. Opposite the precipitous headland of North Hill it has not yet been found. At Minehead it reappears under the same conditions as at Porlock, and thence it is represented in an easterly direction by several patches, visible at extreme low water as far as Stolford, where the angular detritus rest on the Liassic reefs. Then it passes under the alluvium of Stert Point, at the mouth of the river Parret, to join the large forest that lies buried in the basins of the Axe, the Tone, the Parret, and the Yeo. At Weston-super-Mare it can be seen under the alluvium. Throughout this wide area the trees have been utterly destroyed by the growth of

peat, or by the deposits of the floods, except at a few isolated spots, which stand at a higher level than usual, in the great flats extending between the Polden Hills and the Quantocks. One of these oases, a little distance to the west of Middlezoy, is termed the Oaks, because those trees form a marked contrast to the prevailing elms and willows of the district. In the neighbouring ditches that gradually cut into the peat and then into silt, prostrate oak trees are very abundant. As we approach the river Parret the silt gradually increases in thickness, until, at Borough Bridge, the forest is struck at a depth of 18 feet below the present surface, or about the same distance below the line of high-water mark in the river.

The destruction of the forest seems to have been brought about by the stagnation of water consequent on the deposit of silt in the rivers, by which their beds were raised until the surrounding district became flooded ; then the peat grew and gradually changed the surface into a spongy morass, in which the trees died, and, as the latter decayed, they were blown down, the lines of their trunks pointing away from the prevalent winds. But while this was going on, the rivers were depositing silt in quantities greatest at the line where their currents impinged on the slack water, and gradually reaching a minimum in passing away from their courses ; and in this way the fertile alluvium of the vales of Taunton, Bridgwater, Highbridge, and Weston-super-Mare was deposited, while around Shapwick the peat comes up to the surface, and attains a depth of at least 16 feet.

The conditions, therefore, under which the forest at Porlock Quay and Minehead was destroyed are not merely confined to those isolated spots, but are constant over the whole of the Somerset levels. If, then, we can approxi-

mately fix the date of the destruction of the forest, we have a clue to the antiquity of the traces of man found in the land-surface underneath. And this we are able to do by the discoveries, made by the late Mr. Stradling at the bottom of the peat, in the great marsh that extends from Highbridge to Glastonbury. From time to time, between the years 1830 and 1851, he obtained sundry flints, celts, and spear-heads of the neolithic type, a bronze celt, and three paddles from the top of the sub-turbary marl. A large canoe also, formed out of an immense oak, and known as "Squire Phippen's big ship," made its appearance in dry seasons, and eventually was broken up for firewood by the cottagers. It is clear, therefore, that at least as early as the neolithic age the forest beneath the turbary has been destroyed, and its area occupied by a stagnant morass. The latest date, therefore, which we can assign to the traces of man in the submerged land-surface at Porlock and Minehead is an early stage in the neolithic period. The discovery of *Bos longifrons*, or small domestic ox, in the same forest-surface near Barnstaple, fixes the date as not older than the neolithic age, because that animal was unknown in Europe before.

So far as I know, no cases are on record of the occurrence of traces of man underneath any other submarine forest on the shores of Britain. They do not add to our knowledge of primeval man, or extend his range further than we already know into the past; they merely prove that he dwelt in the district probably before and possibly during the growth of the forest, and before those physical changes began to be felt by which its destruction and submergence were brought about—changes of great magnitude and probably of long duration.

In closing, Mr. Dawkins asked why some one among

them did not take the trouble to examine the evidence relative to "the levels" of the county, to the enclosure of these great flat stretches of morass and alluvium? Why should we be ignorant of the history of the making of the dykes, and of the relation which the ancient forest of Somersetshire bore to the cultivated lands in the periods embraced by history? In answer to a gentleman, he said he did not think that the remains found in the caves in this neighbourhood and in the gravels all round the coast were of the same age as this forest-surface, but that they belonged to the age of extinct mammalia, or the pleistocene, of which the characteristic woolly rhinoceros had been discovered in digging the foundations of Taunton Gaol, and the mammoth by Sir A. A. Hood, at St. Audries.

General MUNBEE thought that the subject was one of the very greatest possible importance to this county, and to science in general. It represented the subsidence of our land, and also the existence of submerged forest all round England. Their thanks were very greatly due to the gentleman who had been good enough to bring forward the notice, and it would be exceedingly advisable that this very interesting subject should be followed out more intimately. The whole of the immediate alluvial districts were in a great measure below the level of high-water mark, at all events. He suggested that a committee be formed to pursue investigations such as had been indicated, and take levels in such directions as they might choose, and by the next year record what they had been able to do.

Mr. CHARLES MOORE said there was one point upon which he was a little sceptical, although he perfectly agreed with Mr. Dawkins in the whole of his interesting address; it was Mr. Dawkins' correlation of the turbaries

inland with the forest-beds which surround the coast. It seemed to him that Mr. Dawkins depended very much upon the work which Mr. Stradling did in former times. They all knew Mr. Stradling in the early days of the Association, and the earnestness with which he worked; but in his day the points connected with the introduction of man upon the earth had not sprung up, and he did not think that the observations of Mr. Stradling were sufficiently devoted to those points for him to be a great authority in connection with this matter. It was true Mr. Stradling examined very carefully the work done at the turbaries, but none of the finished implements found in them had ever been found in connection with a forest-bed.

Some further remarks were made by the Rev. Thos. Hugo, Mr. E. B. Tylor, and the President, when

Mr. E. A. Freeman, D.C.L., read a paper on "King Ine," which is given in Part II., p. 1.

The President remarked that when they got so much light upon the life of a person who lived in such remote times when there were so few contemporary records, it showed what could be done in that way. On the very borders of Somersetshire and Devonshire, at a place where there was no natural boundary to the county, there was a rampart stretching for some distance across the hill, where there could be no cause for it. That, very likely, might be some record of the inroad of the Saxons.

Mr. Buckley remarked that there was one place where the memory of Ine was still retained, and his name was mentioned every day. In the monastery at Rome, which sheltered St. Augustine before he came on his mission to Britain, there was still a tablet recording that in that monastery was a hospital which had been founded for English pilgrims, first by the liberality of Ine, and secondly

by the munificence of an English merchant. His name was mentioned there every day in the Mass.

Cordial votes of thanks having been passed to Mr. Dawkins and Mr. Freeman, the evening's proceedings were concluded.
