

*Second Annual Meeting held at Wells, September 17th, 1850.*

*The Hon. and Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of the  
Diocese, Vice President, in the Chair.*

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## Morning Meeting.

The Very Rev. the DEAN and other Dignitaries of the Cathedral were present, besides a large attendance of the gentry of the county.

The Right Rev. Chairman opened the meeting with the following address :—

“I have much pleasure in acceding to the request made me to take the chair at this meeting, but I felt that I should better render what little assistance I am able to give to this society, by putting my observations upon paper than by trusting myself to speak off-hand upon subjects in which I indeed feel an interest, but with which I must profess myself, at the outset, to be most inadequately acquainted. My knowledge of those studies which it is the object of this society to promote, is, I must repeat, most slender and imperfect. Still it does not appear to me necessary to have a full knowledge of a pursuit in order to assign it its proper value in the wide *curriculum* of human learning. *That* must, indeed, be a narrow mind, that can see no excellence beyond its own sphere, no object worthy of acquirement beyond what it has itself been able to master. Least of all, is it characteristic of the christian spirit to despise everything we cannot understand, or to value the attainments of others, *lower* than our own. *Damnānt quod non intelligunt*, the principle so properly denounced at your first meeting, by one whose absence, and the cause of whose absence we must all so

deeply regret to day—the Dean of Westminster—that principle is as little applicable to the christian as to the philosopher. It is therefore more for the purpose of expressing the interest I feel in the objects of your society, than from a hope or intention of adding anything to your information, that I venture to make any remarks at all before you to day—but dead, indeed, should I be to all that is wonderful in nature, or beautiful in art, if I could dwell amid the caves of the Mendip, and the ruins of Glastonbury, and the still-perfect glories of my own cathedral, and I may add, the beautiful remains of human skill and architectural proportion within the walls of my own palace, without feeling that the archaeology of nature and of art had claims, if not upon my studies, at least on my interests and affections. Still, I feel sure that there is no one here who would wish me to view these subjects otherwise than as subsidiary to that greatest of all wisdom to which my spiritual office mainly directs me; and I would wish you, in like manner, to remember all along, (what indeed the character of my observations will of itself remind you of,) that it is *not a professor* or a *savant*, but *your Bishop* who speaks to you. The time, I trust, is come, when it is as unnecessary to defend the pursuit of Natural History from the imputation of irreligion, as the study of antiquity from a tendency to trifling and superstition. Still, there may even now be evils, into which a too exclusive devotion to either study may lead its votaries, and which it may not be out of place for one in my position to recall for your warning. Yet one chief excellence in both pursuits, I would first most gladly dwell on, which indeed may be overlooked by beginners and by those who have only a little learning, but which, I am convinced, is the great lesson to be learnt, (and which *will* be learnt,) by all who

enter deeply and with a right spirit—a pearl missed by those who dive shallowly, but treasured as of greatest price by all who have most profoundly fathomed the depths of learning. And that lesson is the lesson of humility. Whether we view the workings of the Almighty's hand in the minutest of the creeping things under our feet, in the lowest hyssop on the wall, in the cedar forests, or in the mountains on which they grow, in the stupendous ruins of early creations now passed away, or whether we view the handicraft of *man*, in the massive columns, the lofty arches, the delicate tracery, the skilful groining, the exquisite sculpture, (of all of which this city and neighbourhood furnish such rich examples,) there is but one and the same lesson of humility to be learnt. Not that we are for a moment to compare the *degree* of humiliation which we must feel in one case and in the other ; but, still, as the contemplation of the one must make us feel how little we are in the sight of God, so must the other make us confess how little we are in comparison with our forefathers. Here then, at the outset, is an advantage to be gained from the right pursuit of these studies—higher than the highest result of their own subject matter—higher than the most glorious achievements of human science and art. Yet it may be feared that these studies have not always thus brought into the obedience of Christ the thoughts and affections of all those who have devoted themselves to their pursuit. In natural science this appears to me greatly to have resulted from the narrow and confined view which naturalists have themselves taken. It is true that such pursuits are no longer carried on in a spirit, nor are they considered in their results antagonistic to christianity ; but are they not too often conceived as something altogether separate?—made a thing apart? Is not the naturalist too apt to frame to himself a religion of

his own out of purely natural elements, and then to look upon the Christian faith as something merely supplemental, which may be combined with it, or not? Is he not apt to look upon the natural objects around him and draw from them the evidences of the goodness and power of God, and *stop there*. And yet can he *honestly there stop*? Proof, undoubtedly, he will find on every side, of God's abundant mercy. He will find the strata of the earth, and all the productions that grow thereon, so disposed as to be most convenient for the use of man,—he will find marks of design and providence in the meanest creature that moves upon its surface, power in the floods and in the lightning, glory in the sun and in the stars—goodness in everything! Even the very lilies of the field, blooming beside his path and home, seem placed there but to gladden man's eyes and heart. But is this *all* that he will see there? Will he not also find traces of ruin and of wrath? Will not the same rocks that furnish him with materials for his house and his hearth shew him also marks of destruction and of death? Does not the same electric burst that purifies the atmosphere, bring destruction often upon the lowly cottage and the innocent cattle? Do not those birds, those beasts, those fishes, from which the naturalist draws so many proofs of the Almighty's providence and mercy, prey upon one another, inflicting a cruel and premature death?—do not the floods *overwhelm*? and does not the sun scorch? Do not flowers fade?—do not some poison? Can we understand the stars? Are there then not signs of mystery, of sin, of sorrow, of pain, of death, in the natural world? and can the philosopher blink and overlook these things? And yet how are they to be reconciled with an all-merciful Creator, except it be the God of Revelation, the God of the Bible—that Almighty Creator, who, manifesting him-

self to us as our "*Redeemer*," tells of *wrath cancelled*—as our "*Judge*," of *sin condemned*? It is well, I think, to dwell on this consideration, (so often overlooked by the mere naturalist,) that no honest research will leave him in a clear and consistent scheme of natural religion, apart from the faith of the gospel. He will indeed be left in yet greater difficulties, and perplexities, and mysteries, than when he began—difficulties and perplexities which can alone be cleared up, mysteries which can alone be, not solved, but accepted, by a belief in the revealed word of God. In archaeological pursuits, which claim probably the interest of the greater number of the members of this society, whatever danger there may be, is supposed to be rather in the opposite direction. The objection to archaeology as a trifling and useless study being now abandoned, the graver charge of its reviving abandoned superstitions, and creating a hankering after things condemned and forbidden, has been brought against it. And certainly that temper of moderation and forbearance,—that discriminating liberty of choice in choosing the good and refusing the evil, which under her motherly care and direction, our church has always allowed her faithful children—is nowhere more required than in the study of the arts and usages of past ages. For if in archaeology—(and I speak here with particular reference to what in this country must be the chief era—the *middle ages*, and that province which necessarily presents itself most conspicuously—its architectural objects, and those especially of the church), if, I say, in archaeological researches in this quarter, the subject is entered into in the mere dry letter of antiquarianism; if churches are to be examined in no other spirit than that in which we might contemplate some ancient barn or some heathen temple; if the motives of the

founders, the uses to which different parts were designed, the symbolism of their form and ornament are to be ignored and despised—then, it appears to me, the labours of its students will result in little more than the unrelieved tediousness of a museum catalogue. But if, on the other hand, we enter on the study with a blind admiration of every object and usage that presents itself; if everything is to be deemed beautiful and perfect merely because it is *old*; if we will not admit that the ancient architects ever committed a fault in construction or proportion; if we make no allowance for lapse of time, for changes in ritual and ceremony, for the new acquirements and habits of society—then, with equal folly and more danger, we are turning our light into darkness, and laying a snare for our judgment—it *may* be for our *faith*. But there *is* a spirit, at once reverential and enlightened, with which these subjects can best be entered into, and which, indeed, appears to me most remarkably to have characterized its most successful students. If we pursue the study of church architecture, for instance, in the same spirit with which Mr. Bloxham and Mr. Markland (and I the more gladly mention these names as being those of *laymen*, and the latter as one which has, in this diocese and on the church at large, the greatest claim to have good witness borne it); if, I say, we follow in the track and in the spirit which those two faithful sons of the church have pointed out to us—then we can hardly fail to have our hearts warmed, as our minds are strengthened; we shall be led not only to admire, but to emulate the works of by-gone days—to discriminate the pious motive from the superstitious use—the beautiful from the monstrous—the living from the dead—that which is temporary and conventional from that which is unchangeable and eternal. I feel I have



detained you too long, and I feel how imperfectly I have developed the ideas which the meeting of this society has suggested to me. I trust, however, that I have said enough to prevent them being *misunderstood*. To have fully explained them would have been to have occupied more time than the whole which can be devoted to papers and remarks far more valuable than my own. I will conclude, merely with wishing prosperity to this society, and expressing the pleasure it has given me that it has honoured this city with its meeting ; and I would only now impress upon its members, especially its younger ones, to remember how much of the success of their pursuits in either branch of nature or of art—(and indeed the principle will apply *to far higher interests than these*) depends *upon the careful and faithful attention to small things* and on *combining an appreciation of the present with a reverence for the past*. Thus followed out in a spirit of *thankful humility*, these pursuits may tend as much to the *glory of God* as to the *good of man*.

The Rev. T. F. DYMOCK then read the Report of the Committee for the year, as follows :—

“ In pursuance of their design, of accumulating facts and inviting correspondence with persons in all parts of the county, your Committee have issued series of questions on Archaeology, Ecclesiastical Architecture, and Botany. These last have drawn forth but few replies, but in the two first subjects they have received returns from twenty parishes some of which furnish very complete information, and others which are very defective may not be without use as serving to indicate in what cases it is worth while to make further enquiries.

“ Three quarterly meetings have been held—in January April and July—at the towns of Taunton, Bridgwater, and Frome, at which papers have been read, and oral commu-

nications made, on both the subjects which the society takes in hand. It is proposed, with the permission of the contributors, to select from these such portions as may seem suitable for publication, and may be sufficient to form an 8vo. volume ; and it is intended to illustrate this publication with engravings on copper or wood of the following objects ;—Nunney Castle ; Lullington Church ; the old Market Cross and Bridge at Bridgwater, both now removed ; remains of ancient sculpture, from St. Cuthbert's Church, Wells, and from Wellington Church ; Saxon and early English coins struck in the county.\* Papers of a general nature, not relating to this county more than any other, though at the time of reading they afforded so much gratification and instruction to the auditors, they have no intention of committing to the press.

“The original rules of the society provided for one anniversary and three other general meetings, to take place quarterly, with the understanding that these last should be held at the head quarters of the society, and that the anniversary meeting alone should be migratory. It was, however, subsequently resolved to make all the meetings migratory, and to this resolution the committee have adhered. But their experience of the past year having shewn them that one meeting in each quarter is likely to prove too great a tax upon the time of those who carry on the business of the society, as well as of those who contribute to its amusement, they now recommend that meetings shall be held only twice in the year—the anniversary meeting at the usual time, and another in the summer quarter, when the length of the days and the weather are favourable for an excursion.

\* The Papers on Lullington Church and the Sculptures from St. Cuthbert's Church, Wells, with the illustrations, are deferred, and other subjects take their place.



“The committee have made an arrangement with the Taunton Literary Institution, by which they obtain the use of their large room, the loan of their museum and a portion of their library, upon payment of half their annual rent. They have also united with them in securing the services of a curator upon similar terms. These arrangements cost the society £50 a year.

“They have received many gifts and deposits of books, fossils, coins, and other objects of antiquity and natural history, which, together with the collection of the Taunton Literary Institution, form the nucleus of a museum in that town. Members have been invited to make deposits on loan, that in case this society should not continue to flourish as we have every reason to expect it will, they may have the power of withdrawing them, and placing them where they are more likely to be of use. A list of all gifts and deposits will be added to the projected publication.

“The committee have not thought themselves justified in laying out much money in the purchase of objects for the museum or library. They have, however, procured a few books and a collection of sulphur casts from ancient seals. They have given a subscription in aid of the researches of the British Natural History Society ; in return for which they have received a collection of fossils from the tertiary beds of the Hampshire coast, and are to receive others from the mountain limestone of the North of England and Ireland, and they have also made a grant of £5 to aid in uncovering some remains of a Roman villa in the parish of East Coker. In conclusion, the committee venture to congratulate the members on the establishment and fair prospects of this society. It has been in existence only 18 months, and consists of more than 300 members. It has been favorably received at three of the principal towns of the county. They believe that a spirit of enquiry has

been excited and will spread, and hope that if your society attain to nothing higher, it will prove a useful hand-maid to some of our great British societies which have similar objects in view, gathering up for their use, out of our portion of the kingdom, such fragments of information as they, in their wider researches, may be constrained to overlook, and making our small contribution to that mass of facts which forms the sure ground on which is based all real advance in literature and science."

Mr. BADCOCK, the treasurer, presented his report, an abstract of which is subjoined, viz. :—

**The Treasurer in account with Somerset Archaeological and Natural  
Dr, History Society, Cr,**

1850.	£	s.	d.	1850.	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions to 31st Decem- ber, 1849 - - -	112	10	0	Disbursements connected with organization of Society, &c.	70	16	8
Donations to ditto - -	18	10	0	Printing and Stationery -	60	15	9
Entrance fees to ditto -	112	10	0	Books, Maps, Casts, &c. -	15	15	10
Subscriptions for current year	57	10	0	Cases, Furniture, &c, for Museum - - -	30	7	2
Donations for ditto - -	21	0	0	Rent, &c. to Midsummer last	43	9	0
O. Lasbury - - -	0	6	3	Contribution towards alter- ations in Museum Room	20	0	0
				Curator, Quarter's Salary -	6	5	0
					£347	9	5
				Balance - - - -	74	16	10
					£322	6	3

R. G. BADCOCK, Treasurer.

On the motion of Mr. DICKINSON, seconded by the Ven. Archdeacon BRYMER, the reports were adopted.

Mr. BAKER then read a paper *on the Marl Pits* of Somersetshire, which had been entrusted to him by the Rev. Mr. Poole, of Enmore, who would have been present had not the infirmities of age prevented him. The paper referred principally to the pits on the eastern slopes of the

Quantocks, where they are so numerous that within less than a mile from Mr. Poole's residence, there are more than forty ; coloured drawings of some of which were exhibited. They vary in diameter from thirty to sixty feet, and differ very much in depth. More than fifty years ago, during a very dry summer, he had one of them emptied. The water was got out easily, the deposit with more difficulty, and at last he had the pleasure of standing on the bottom. Many opinions had been formed respecting the object of these excavations. He thought the most probable was, that the pits were dug, many ages since, to obtain clay to alloy the rich vegetable surface soil, when the ground was first cultivated after the clearing of the primeval forests.

Mr. MARKLAND then addressed the meeting on the sculpture of the west end of Wells Cathedral, and read some communications which he had received from C. R. Cockerell, Esq. R.A. He (Mr. Markland) deeply regretted the absence of that gentleman from the present meeting, a feeling in which all present would participate, especially when they heard that it was caused by severe indisposition. Knowing the great attention which Mr. Cockerell had paid to these remains of ancient art, and having had the benefit of hearing, last year, at the meeting of the Archaeological Institute, at Salisbury, a very able paper on the sculpture of that Cathedral from the pen of Mr. Cockerell, he (Mr. Markland) had felt anxious that the members of the Somersetshire Archaeological Society should have been similarly benefitted by listening to remarks from Mr. Cockerell's own lips, on the present subject.

Mr. Cockerell, in his first letter, dated, "Bank of England, 4th September," says, "I am much honoured and gratified by your note and proposition of yesterday, regarding our beloved Wells, which, without any extreme or enthusi-

astic view, I must ever consider as the most interesting historical monument of the middle ages in Europe. It would give me sincere pleasure to wait on the Somerset Archaeological Society, at Wells, on the 17th, if my health would permit; at all events, I shall hope to offer you some notes on the subject, which will suffice to present the chief fruits of my delightful studies on that precious monument. I shall be very curious to know which of those ascertained personages has recently fallen from his niche, as I hear through the papers." [This was the statue of Edward the Elder, a very fine one. Fortunately, Mr. Cockerell has preserved a drawing of it.] "Professional and peremptory engagements have indeed sadly deferred my proposed publication—the forum and the muses are ever adverse in their occupations. Meanwhile, the contemplation of these noble illustrations of our ancestors enhances greatly their merit and informs the artist's eye; here indeed, as at Lincoln, sculpture assumes a grace at once poetical in conception and in execution,—approaching the fairest times of Greece in idea—and far and deeply exceeding them in affecting Christian interest; and of course in national feeling." In a subsequent letter, dated 13th September, Mr. Cockerell wrote, "I am not sure whether I mentioned in my letter, that I have been for some months an invalid. Your agreeable letter, and the hope of visiting my beloved Wells, in such learned company, probably dismissed my griefs for the moment; but a relapse since then, and the strenuous advice of my medical advisers, forbid the great enjoyment which I had promised myself in explaining my view of the admirable works of Bishop Trotman; and I must limit my services to the transmission of the pictures of the west and east and north fronts; and their catalogues; and some of the statues as ensamples of the whole; eleven sheets in all;

which I will direct to you at Longleat this day, with the request that you will kindly submit them to the consideration of the meeting, and trusting that they will oblige me with any observations or criticisms which may occur to them. The letter-press already printed is too confused to trouble you with. The catalogue of the statues, and the recognition of the grand scheme, must suffice; comprehending, as it does, the great doctrines of the faith, according to the Hymn of St. Ambrose, the *Te Deum*,—a religious homily in stone—and at the same time, an exhibition to the unlearned, of those spiritual and temporal Princes, who during 500 years had protected and advanced the faith, and the interests of Holy Church. This is the interesting point for the contemplation of all observers, and the chief contribution I have to offer; and I cannot doubt that all who accept it will then agree that no monument in Europe, ancient or modern, has ever embodied so magnificent and glorious a scheme. In the nine tiers of sculpture we have, first, nearest the ground, the foundation of all, the Prophets and Apostles. “The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee.” In the second, the Angels in Praise—“To Thee all Angels cry aloud.” In the third, the history of the Creation, to the Patriarchs, and the New Testament—“the Holy Church, throughout all the world, doth acknowledge Thee.” In the fourth and fifth, the historical tiers (so deeply interesting), may be included in this “Holy Church,” and this may be deemed the continuation of the WORD, from Moses to Augustine, and thence to the time of Bishop Trotman. The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth, illustrate our belief, “That Thou shalt come to be our Judge,” in the presence of the Apostles, the nine Angels, and the Resurrection—subjects full of pathos and expression. Over the door, we are reminded—“When Thou tookest upon

Thee to deliver man, Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb." See also, in the soffete of the arch, the Ten Commandments. The historical tiers (a surprising series) will be found of the deepest interest, and the learned will not fail to recognize, for example, on the spiritual side, Ina, the first Founder ; Edward the Elder ; the five Archbishops, translated before 1200, from Wells ; Brithelmus, especially, *holding his Pallium*, and yielding it to king Edgar ; the Bishops of Sherborne and of Wells. While on the temporal side,—Edgar without his crown ; Athelstan ; Alfred in the centre, the sun of this galaxy ; Ethelfleda, withdrawing the nuptial ring from her finger, &c., &c. In the north, Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror, and Robert Courthose, *lifting up his cloak to shew you his short legs*, and others. All these, as proofs of identity, together with the regular succession which the catalogue exhibits, and the many other evidences the observer cannot fail to acknowledge, will, I think, satisfy every reasonable person of the correctness of my interpretations, the subject of so many long and delightful visits and contemplations at Wells. It is deplorable injustice to offer you such a hasty description, written in my office to catch occasion, on so noble and glorious a work, involving the most interesting of all subjects, and, to a Saxon Englishman, of all histories ; but to the learned and ingenious *verbum sat* ; and I am sure you will on reflection do as much, perhaps more justice to this extraordinary work than I could myself.\* Mr. Parker is my publisher, and any subscriber may obtain from him the copies which I hope

\* This compliment is entirely disclaimed. Having access to the drawings only two days before the meeting, and being then absent from home and my own books, I could not prepare any observations on this interesting subject in any way worthy the attention of the society.



shortly to issue. I grieve to hear of the fate of Edward the Elder, which is indeed ominous, as the founder of the Episcopal Church of Wells,\* and I earnestly hope the fragments are preserved and have not suffered much. It would be scandalous to leave it unrestored.† Pray offer my respects to your meeting, and my excuses for so jejune a description of the pride of Somersetshire.”

In a later communication Mr. Cockerell said, “For those who observe the court calendar, Wells offers a very curious Pecrage. Beside Henry II, in the north front, is Alicia, his

\* “Plegmundus tandem Cantuariensis cum anno 905, septem simul ordinaret Episcopos quorum tres in sedibus novis tunc erectis per Edwardum seniores Regem sunt collocati ; Adelmus Abbas Glastoniensis in Episcopatum Wellensem consecratus est. Adelmus igitur Episcoporum Wellensium primus fuit, qui cum annos sedisset decem, ad Archipraesulatum Cantuariensem hinc translatus est.”—Godwin by Richardson, p. 364.

“We have the number of seven bishops consecrated together by Plegmund ; and as for the time, we must take Radulphus de Diceto’s account, who fixes it to the year 909. The names of the consecrated prelates were, Fridstan, Bishop of Winchester, Werestun of Shereburn, Kenulph of Dorchester, Beomock of Selsea, Athelm of Wells, Eadulph of Crediton, or Kirtan in Devonshire, and Athelstan of St. Petrox, or Padstow, in Cornwall. These three sees last mentioned were newly erected.” Collier’s Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 404.

Thus we see that, in the 10th century, a larger number of Episcopal Sees existed in the South Western parts of England than are to be found in the 19th. The episcopal See of Dorchester was in Oxfordshire, not the capital of the County of Dorset.

† This statue was, I am told, literally dashed to pieces, and it is much to be feared, that if due care be not speedily taken, several other statues will be sacrificed. It is earnestly hoped that the dean and chapter and the gentlemen of the county will come forward, and that a *special subscription* will be entered into for their preservation. The slender shafts, formerly existing at the angles of the two centre buttresses, should be replaced, not only in order that the buttresses themselves may harmonize with the rest of the building, but that the statues in those particular spots may be the better guarded.

second queen, the mother, *fons et origo*, of ‘*all the Howards*.’ Robert, the old Duke of Normandy, and Fulke, Earl of Anjou, are above, in the same front. Genealogies were dear to Trotman and his coadjutors, as they are to us now, so long as the stem and branches bear worthy fruits.”

Mr. Cockerell’s conception of, and his explanation, in the foregoing letters, of this noble specimen of ancient art—so grand in its design and so beautiful in its execution—will lead us hereafter to regard this cathedral with heightened feelings both of reverence and admiration.

Bishop Trotman, the Prelate to whom we owe this great work, is better known by his more dignified and euphonical name of Joceline of Wells. He was consecrated Bishop of Wells 1206, and having filled the see more than thirty-seven years, died in 1244. He may be regarded as the Wykeham of the diocese over which he presided.

“*Ecclesiam ipsam Wellensem jamjam collapsuram egregie refecit ac restituit, vel potius novam condidit. Nam partem multo maximam, quicquid nimirum presbyterio est ab occidente, demolitus est, ut cum ampliorem tum pulchriorem redderet, structura excitata ex polito lapide affabre insculpto, augustissima et spectatu dignissima.*”\*

Henry III, the monarch in whose reign Bishop Joceline flourished, is said to have been the first English king who displayed in a remarkable degree a taste for architecture, sculpture, and painting. To the rebuilding and restoring of the royal residences, and to the decoration of them we are told that he paid minute attention.† As he doubtless fostered similar tastes in some of his subjects, Joceline

\* Godwin de Præsulibus Angliæ, by Richardson, p. 371.

† Mr. Botfield’s “*Manners and Household Expenses of England in the 13th and 15th Centuries.*” Introduction p. lxxiv.

may have partaken of the royal influence. Flaxman notices especially the zeal and success with which sculpture was practised at this period. Amongst the works best known is the chapel of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, a building of singular beauty. In that chapel is placed Henry's own tomb, with those of his eldest son Edward I, and of Queen Eleanor, the first wife of the latter. The tombs of Henry and Eleanor have been frequently the subject of praise for their exquisite beauty, and, to use Flaxman's words, well deserve our respect and attention. The marble work of Queen Eleanor's tomb is said to have been executed by Richard de Crundale. The statue, which is of metal, originally richly coated with gold, was the work of Master William Torell, who doubtless executed the adjoining tomb of Henry III.\*

We gather from the above and other sources of information, regarding the memorials of conjugal love, which Edward I. raised in honour of his beloved queen, that at this period England possessed native artists competent to execute the finest works, and that a resort to the continent for a supply of such persons was therefore needless.† The fact is here mentioned, as we shall doubtless regard the sculpture at Wells, and on our other cathedrals with additional interest, if satisfied that it is the work of English artists.

To return to the sculpture at Wells, we find that Flaxman, equally with Mr. Cockerell, appreciated these works of art, and the criticism of that distinguished sculptor well deserves our attention. Referring to the west front, he speaks of it

\* Mr. Hunter's valuable paper on the death of Queen Eleanor, *Archæologia*, vol. xxix., 190. Stothard's *Monumental Effigies*, p. 32.

† "Manners and Household Expenses, &c.," ut supra, lxxviii.

as evincing both “ the piety and comprehension of Bishop Joceline’s mind; the sculpture presenting the noblest, most useful and interesting subjects possible to be chosen.” Flaxman admits however that “ the work is ill drawn and deficient in principle, and that much of the sculpture is rude and severe : yet, that in parts there is a beautiful simplicity, an irresistible sentiment, and sometimes a grace, excelling more modern productions.”\*

After enumerating several of the subjects,† he continues, “ Wells was finished 46 years before the cathedral of Amiens, and 36 years before the cathedral of Orvieto was begun ; and it seems to be the first specimen that is to be found in Western Europe of such magnificent and varied sculpture, united in a series of sacred history. It is therefore probable that the general idea of the work might be brought from the east by some of the crusaders.”‡ This appears a natural conclusion. The return of the crusaders “ brought a taste for Grecian art, which was then visible wherever they had marched. The church waxed strong, rich, ambitious, and desirous of splendour. Magnificent abbeys were built, and the whole skill and genius of the land were employed in embellishing them with traditions of the saints, and legends of the church. In the days of the third Henry, the desire to excel seemed universal, and many works of true genius adorned our cathedrals. The creation, the deluge, the nativity, the crucifixion, and the resurrection were designed with a feeling at once scriptural and imaginative. Over the works of those days were scattered much good sense, right feeling and simple grace, which redeemed the imperfect workmanship.”||

\* Flaxman’s Lectures on Sculpture, p. 39.

† Of three of these he has given engravings,—1st the creation of Eve ; 2nd the death of Isaac ; and 3rd what is called an angel, but which is doubtless the figure of St. John the Evangelist.

‡ Lectures ut supra, p. 40. || Quarterly Review, vol. xxxiv. p. 121.

Amongst other disadvantages under which this work was produced, Flaxman observes, "there were neither prints, nor printed books to assist the artist; the sculptor could not be instructed in anatomy, for there were no anatomists."\* This must be received with some qualification, for though in the middle ages the knowledge of the human frame was probably very limited, yet our sculptors, many of whom may have travelled, must, as men of observation, have availed themselves of every opportunity of gaining knowledge, and was it possible for them to have acquired the grace observable in many of these groups and single figures, especially in the female form, without some anatomical knowledge of the human frame? Early medical writings, though not generally accessible, may have become familiar, from their contents being quoted, and they may have given hints both as to proportions and outline. In Mr. Winston's able work on a sister art, are some valuable remarks which closely apply to the present subject.

"Notwithstanding their rudeness, and defective drawing, the early English figures in general possess great merit—simple and unaffected, they are often grandly conceived, though they may be imperfectly executed through the artist's want of technical skill. A deep and lively feeling often pervades the entire figure; and its countenance, though frequently distorted and exaggerated, is apt to exhibit both expression and character, in a far more striking degree than is usually the case with later works. The early English artists were particularly happy in their representations of deified and sainted personages; the peculiarity of the style, as shown in the formality and severity of the countenances, and the stiff and unnatural character of the draperies, contributing to produce a solemn effect well suited to the subject."†

\* Lectures ut supra, p. 39. † Winston on ancient glass painting, p. 48.

With very limited opportunities of forming a judgment on continental buildings, Mr. Markland remarked that the only cathedral which had occurred to him, bearing any resemblance in design to the façade of Wells, is a portion of the cathedral of Burgos, which, vast and magnificent as it is, combines the greatest irregularities, with the greatest beauties. On "the portal of the Apostles" may be observed in the lowest tier, the twelve Apostles. In three upper windows nine figures form the lower part of the mullions, somewhat after the fashion of Caryatides. This portal is said to belong to the second epoch of the gothic style, viz., the thirteenth century, the period under our consideration.\*

Mr. Markland could not but congratulate the Society on the auspices under which they met that day, graced as the meeting was by the presence of his lordship in the chair, and by the highest civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the city and its cathedral. If asked whether associations of this kind were calculated to be beneficial, we need not speak theoretically, but may refer to facts. To take one instance : the last report of the Yorkshire Architectural Society stated, that "the good which has been already effected by that Society and the *kindred Institutions* is already apparent on all hands. It would be impossible even for a casual observer to traverse the county without being sensible of increasing attention being bestowed on its ancient architectural remains, and of the improved aspect and ecclesiastical character of the newly built churches."

Had these Societies existed earlier, how many precious relics might have been preserved—how much mischief in

\* I am indebted to George Vivian, Esq., of Claverton, for the opportunity of consulting a magnificent, and in *this country*, a *very* rare work, entitled "*Espana artistica y monumental, par Don Gerano Pirez de Villa-amil, et Don Patricio Escosura.*" 3 vols. folio, Paris, 1842.



the miscalled work of restoration might have been avoided—and how much money, expended solely in doing mischief, might have been judiciously applied. Regrets are now vain and useless, but the recollection of these sad proceedings should stimulate us to more strenuous efforts in preserving in their integrity, as far as it is practicable, those beautiful specimens of ancient art which we still possess. He would refer to a very interesting antiquarian work, just published by Mr. C. Roach Smith, and beautifully illustrated by Mr. Fairholt, entitled “the antiquities of Richborough, Reculver, and Lyme in Kent.” Speaking of the church lately standing at Reculver, the author observes, “this church possessed especial claims for preservation. It stood as a monument of the downfall of paganism and the triumph of christianity. Upwards of a thousand years our forefathers had preserved, endowed, and repaired it, and generation after generation had called it theirs, and within its walls had ratified the obligations of social life; they had died and were buried about it. Tradition hallowed it as the burial place of Ethelbert, who received and protected Augustine; monuments of the ancestors of rich and influential families, whose near relatives also lay there interred, stood within and around its walls. The church at the commencement of the present century, though it had been neglected and was dilapidated, might have been easily repaired; *but the gentry and clergy abandoned it to jobbers and speculators, who seized upon the venerable pile, tore it to pieces and divided the spoil.* The old people, who remember the circumstances, tell, how the bells fell to the share of one, the lead to another, recount the prices at which the materials were sold, and relate how, ere long, the curse of heaven fell on all the destroyers of the church, that nothing prospered with them, and that at last they and their families came to misery and ruin.”\* So

\* Page 200.

disgraceful an occurrence (Mr. Markland remarked) would not be permitted to take place, nay, would not be *thought* of, in 1850.

Seventy years ago, Dr. Johnson lamented, and with too great reason, that our cathedrals “were mouldering by unregarded dilapidation.” Could he now walk into the beautiful pile, adjoining that hall, what a favorable change would he witness in marking the zeal, skill, and reverential feelings evinced in the restoration of that exquisite building.

So far from any due appreciation of our finer Ecclesiastical Buildings it seemed to have been an object, with some writers, during a long succession of years to disparage them. Even so gifted a man as Evelyn is found amongst the number. He admits that in the pointed style “there is something of solid and oddly artificial too, after a sort,” but, he adds, “the bundles of staves, and other incongruous props to support pondrous arched roofs, trite and busy carvings, clumsy buttresses, towers, sharp-pointed arches, turrets and pinnacles, breaking the angles of sight, and so confounding it, that one cannot consider it with any steadiness, where to begin or end”; all these, he concludes, are “the offspring of a night of ignorance and superstition.”\*

No change in public taste occurred during the next half century. Seed, in a sermon delivered before the University of Oxford, in 1741, speaks of “old gothic buildings as an irregular encumbered magnificence, showing a stiff awkward state, and an ostentatious pride.”†

Collinson, the historian of this county, possessed little of taste or feeling, but still we might have expected from a clergyman and an antiquary something more decorous than the following description of this exquisite sculpture—“one

\* Account of Architects and Architecture, Miscell. Works, p. 366.

† Discourses, 1757, vol. i., p. 143.

whole line of the breadth of the portal of Wells is occupied by a *grotesque representation* of the resurrection in small figures, wherein are expressed all the various attitudes of the resuscitated bodies emerging from their earthly mansions.”\*

Gilpin who, half a century ago, was regarded as an oracle in matters of taste, displays great ignorance, as well as a want of due appreciation of the sublime and beautiful, when speaking of our cathedral. He tells us that “the cathedral of Wells is a beautiful pile *notwithstanding* it is of *Saxon* architecture”! he speaks also of “the *Saxon* heaviness which prevails still more in the inside”! not one word of praise is passed on the sculpture.

In such days can we be surprised that deeds were committed which may almost vie with the sacrilegious acts of Dowsing and his iconoclastic brethren. The adjoining church of St. Cuthbert affords pregnant instances of this fact.

Mr. Markland knew that the members of these Societies were still the subject of unfriendly comment, but he could answer for his brother members of this Society, as for himself, that *one* feeling actuated them in their labours. So far as regarded the building and restoration of churches, it was their hope and endeavour to render them less unworthy of the Great Being to whom they were dedicated, and to promote those feelings of reverence which had too long slumbered. He would say to those, who had doubted as to the propriety and usefulness of their proceedings, let them look to men like George Herbert, who could find sermons in stones, and who, it had been well observed, saw a purpose and learned a lesson, even in the minutest portion

\* History of Somersetshire, vol. iii. p. 398.

of God's House.\* All might conduce to holy thoughts and devout aspirations. The cleansing the building, to purity of life—the strength of the walls, to firmness of purpose and constancy in action. The christian knows well that the kingdom of God does not consist in structures of wood and stone, nor in the ceremonies performed within them, but he is also convinced devotion and praise may unquestionably be aided and heightened by the beauty of the sanctuary—"the pealing anthem and the pausing choir." Let it not then be unjustly said that we attach undue importance to these aids. In taking his leave of opponents, or lukewarm friends, he would say, in the words of a brother antiquary, on a like occasion,† "Give us but a fair trial. We desire to proceed with judgment and caution as well as vigour," and to adopt those things only which the church sanctions and approves. "When you find us devoted to frivolous and superstitious notions, deaf to the voice of reason and friendly counsel, and to the injunctions of lawful authority, then leave us and oppose us, but, remember, that the most prudent way is to join us, and direct our course."

The Rev. D. M. CLERK, after thanking the Dean and Chapter for the use of the *Liber Albus* and *Liber Ruber*, commenced reading a paper on *Wells Cathedral*, which is given in the second part.

The next paper was on *Roman Occupation*, by the Rev. W. PHELPS, the historian of Somersetshire, but the allotted time having expired, it was not presented to the meeting.

A paper on the cathedral, by Mr. BRITTON, and another by the Rev. F. GRAY, on Pilton Church, were withheld for the same reason.

\* Transactions of the Exeter Arch. Society, vol. iii. part 3, p. 201 ;  
a work which cannot be too highly commended.

† Inaugural Address, by Rev. W. L. Nichols, M.A.—Exeter Transactions, vol. iii., part 2, page 21.

On the motion of Mr. NEVILLE, seconded by the MAYOR of WELLS, a vote of thanks to the Bishop was carried by acclamation, and the morning meeting closed.

The Dean and Chapter having ordered that the cathedral should be thrown open to the members of the society, a large number proceeded thither and inspected the venerable structure and the works of restoration now proceeding.

Dinner had been provided at the Judges' Chambers for a hundred and twenty, but a much larger number applied for admission, and about fifty or sixty found no room. The very Rev. the Dean (Dr. Jenkyns) presided. Many ladies graced the table with their presence.

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## Evening Meeting.

*The Very Rev. the Dean of Wells in the Chair.*

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After an appropriate address from the chair,

Mr. BAKER, after adverting to his paper read at the second quarterly meeting, on the *geology* of the county, proceeded to speak of the *fauna*. It was his wish to point out the connexion between the geology and the animals of the district, and he hoped to do so on a future occasion. He then gave a rapid sketch of the various classes from the *mammalia* downwards, interspersed with interesting anecdotes. His list of the fauna is given the second part.

Mr. W. STRADLING exhibited several curious articles of interest to the antiquary.

Archdeacon BRYMER said, within the last half-hour he had received some notes from Mr. Ferrey, on the magnificent parish church of St. Cuthbert's, in that city, and which was well worthy to be the daughter of the splendid cathedral. The notes were accompanied by two elaborate drawings of the very interesting discoveries made in St. Cuthbert's in 1848, consisting of an ancient fresco, and two altar-pieces of peculiar beauty. He then proceeded to read the notes, which gave a detailed description of the church, and were of great interest. He said, in conclusion, it was to him a subject of great satisfaction and gratitude that the Almighty had put it into the hearts of the worthy vicar and parishioners of St. Cuthbert's to attempt the restoration of their beautiful church. He sincerely trusted that they would be able fully to accomplish that good work, and that under God's blessing they would make that edifice one of the most beautiful and perfect specimens of Gothic architecture that exist throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Mr. C. E. GILES said he had that morning examined the sculptures in St. Cuthbert's church, and he felt that the same hands which executed them, produced also the beautiful specimens of the same kind which had been recently discovered in the church at Wellington. The latter were well worthy of being illustrated; and the committee proposed to give some drawings of them in their forthcoming volume.\* He then stated that he had met with, a few days ago, in the church at Netherbury, Dorset, a remarkable series of figures in fresco. They seemed to be of the reign of Henry IV, and represented the various vices and virtues. Over several illustrations of charity were written the words,

\* The Committee hope to enrich a future vol. with illustrations of the sculpture in St. Cuthbert's.



“For Jesu’s sake.” Unfortunately, they could not be preserved, and within a fortnight would probably be destroyed; but he had made tracings of them, which were then in the room, and he would endeavour to make a detailed communication respecting them at a future time.

The Rev. T. F. DYMOCK spoke on the subject of inscriptions found upon church bells. He read several, some of them very quaint and amusing.

At the suggestion of Mr. DICKINSON,

Mr. STRADLING then gave a description of the Peat Moor at Mere; after which

The Rev. F. B. PORTMAN proposed, and Mr. DICKINSON seconded, a vote of thanks to the Very Rev. Chairman for his kindness in taking the chair, and the ability and urbanity with which he had presided.

The motion having been carried by acclamation, the Dean briefly returned thanks, and the meeting closed.

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## Second Day.

The Bishop’s palace and gardens having been courteously thrown open to the society, a numerous party availed themselves of the opportunity of inspecting the many objects of interest to the archaeologist and naturalist there congregated. They next proceeded to Glastonbury, where they were favored with most propitious weather for surveying the glorious ruins of the abbey, since become the property of Mr. Seymour, a member of the society.

The Rev. F. WARRE then read his paper on the abbey, which will be found in the second part.

After visiting the old barn, and ascending the Torr Hill, the geological structure of which formed the subject of a

short lecture, on the spot, by Mr. Moore, of Ilminster, the day was too far advanced for a visit to the Turf Moor, and the company broke up and proceeded to their respective homes, after two days of much gratification and enjoyment.

Many objects of interest were exhibited the first day, the principal of which are given in the subjoined list.

*By the Society.*—Brasses of Redcliff Church; ditto, Trumington; two views of Nunney Castle; four of old Bridgewater; two of Lullington Church. Case of Peat. Hippopotamus Skin.

*By Rev. E. C. K. Bearcroft.*—Five Rubbings of Brasses.

*By Dr. Markland.*—Rubbings of Monumental Brasses executed by Messrs. John Hardman, and Co. 166, Great Charles-street, Birmingham, to the memory of—1. Rev. Walter Fletcher, Chancellor of the Diocese, in Carlisle Cathedral. 2. John B. Seymour, student of Balliol College, in the chapel. 3. Rev. Dr. Riddell, in the Roman Catholic Chapel, Newcastle on Tyne. 4. Rev. W. Richmond, in the Roman Catholic Chapel, Breewood. 5. W. Adair, Esq. of Heatherton Park, near Taunton. 6. Edward Parker, Esq. in Kensal Green Cemetery, London. 7. George Case, Esq. Prescott, Lancashire. 8. The Ven. Archdeacon Wrangham, in Chester Cathedral. 9. Joseph Leigh, Esq. Belmont, Cheshire. 10. John Ryland, Esq. Old Edgbaston Church, near Birmingham. 11. Mrs. Wrangham, wife of Mr. Serjeant Wrangham, Chester Cathedral. 12. Mrs. Clarke, Northfield Church, near Birmingham. 13. Henry Dawson, Esq. Lanside Abbey in Leicestershire.—Specimens of carving in wood, chiefly ornamental mouldings, by Giles Vinell, of Doulting.

*By Mr. C. E. Giles.*—Tracings of Frescoes from Netherbury Church; Drawings and Sketchings of Wellington Reredos. Curious plans of Ecclesiastical Buildings at Wells, by Carter, lent by Mr. Britton.

*By Mr. Sheppard.*—Manuscript Customs of the Manor of Wells. Mining Laws of Mendip, and Proclamation made by Lord Chief Justice Chock, on a stone at Priddy, called the Forge, in the reign of Edward IV. Ancient account of events in Wells, Copies of its Charters, &c. Ancient Iron Chest. Cases of Birds of Paradise, Golden Pheasants, &c. Fac-simile of the Warrant for beheading Charles I, 1648. Sword from King's Sedgmoor. Specimen of the Saw Fish. Skull of Porpoise.

*By the Vicars Choral of Wells.*—Two Ancient Manuscript Books.

*By the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells.*—Two cases of Stuffed Birds.

*By Mr. T. Serel.*—Copy Glaston Abbey Seal, articles found in Glaston Abbey, old map of Westbury Park Manor. Collinson's History of Somerset. Many old manuscript documents relating to the local history of Somerset.

*By Mr. W. Baker, Bridgwater.*—A case containing Eight species of British Bats. A case of Trachiaë, Heads, Breast Bones, &c. of Birds. Five cases of Skeletons of Bats, Shrews, Reptiles, &c. Cases of Mustelae and Hoopoe.

*By Mr. W. Tucker of Cannington.*—A case containing Stoats, in winter and common dress, Vares, &c.

*By Mr. Stradling of Chilton-super-Polden.*—Antique Ornament for Priest's Robe. Ancient Extreme Unction Box. Dog's Collar of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Case of British and Roman Antiques, principally from the Turbaries of Chilton-super-Polden and Edington. Ancient English Cross Bow and Jack. Finely diapered Battle Axe, found in a Rhine near Sedgmoor, date 1625.

*By Mr. Paget.*—MSS.—Pontificale Eccles. Ling., folio, 1397; Heare's Ref. 1470, quarto; Biblia Sacra, p. 1080, quarto; Biblia Sacra, A.D. 1300; Regulæ Ordinis, Benedic.

1593. Books—Caxton, Mirror of World, 1481; Wynkyn de Worde, Golden Legend, 1512; Biblia Sacra, 1476; Nov. Test. 1552; Byddel, Prymer, 1535; Barclay's Ship of Fools, 1570. Four Roman Dice. Engraving of Roman Sword. Unknown Implement. Coat of Chain Armour.

*By Mr. Somerville.*—Fruit, Tebilde and Dhoura Palm, N. Africa. Fossil Shells, from mountains above Thela in Egypt.

*By Rev. D. M. Clerk.*—Persepolitan Gems. Abbot Whiting's Toasting Fork and Flesh Hook. Broadsword and Belt found at Pilton. Thirty Brasses (various dates). Himalaya Pheasant.

*By Rev. R. J. Meade.*—Printed Sketch of Wellow Pavement, five pieces. Dendritic Schist. Papenheim. Florence Marble and Landscape Stone from Castleham; Bending Marble. Chinese Seal. Silicious Madrepore.

*By the Lay Vicars.*—MSS. Two Books, Charter of Elizabeth. Ancient Silver Drinking cups. Tankard, Saltcellars, Seal, Spoons.

*By Mr. W. Tyndale.*—Bit and Spur from Algiers. Fragment of Temple of Ephesus.

*By Mr. Foster.*—Dress of N. American Indian. Cromwell Bit.

*By Dr. Boyd.*—Porphyry. Verd Antique, Tessellated Pavement and Marble, from Carthage.

*By Rev. A. B. Russell, Wells.*—Indian Serpents, two vols. specimens of Indian Coins, Daggers, &c. Thirteen Engravings upon Copper.

*By Rev. F. Warre.*—Wooden Cup.

*By Rev. H. Wickham.*—Pedigree of Jones of Langford Court, date 1645.

*By Mr. H. Powell, Wells.*—Sixty Roman and English Coins. Fossils. Plesiosaurus, &c. Two Crucifixes,

(one dug up in Wells and the other in Wales.) One ancient Spur. Dagger dug up at Sedgmoor. Roman Pavement and Pottery. Specimen of Copper Ore. Jerusalem Thorn. Egyptian Isis. Specimen of Egyptian Cloth. Specimen of Cloth from Sandwich Isles. Alpine Flower found at the summit of the Alps. African Bird Killer. Old Sword.

*By Mr. J. Walker, Jun., Axbridge.*—Seventy-two Roman Coins found near Charterhouse, Mendip.

*By Mr. H. P. Plowman, Wells.*—Two cases, Casts of Seals.

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