
Excursion : Thursday.

The Society met at St. Cuthbert's Church. Mr. Freeman described the architecture of the building, and Mr. Serel gave some notices illustrative of its history. A full description of the architecture by Mr. B. Ferrey will be found in Vol. II, and by Mr. Freeman in Vol. XII

of the Society's Proceedings. A few years ago a reredos was set up in the church by the Freemasons of the county. In reference to this Mr. Freeman said that the sculpture might be pretty, but that the architectural details were simply of no style at all.

From the church the company went to Bishop Bubwith's almshouse, which was described by Mr. Parker. A notice of this building may be found in Mr. Parker's paper on the Ecclesiastical Buildings of Wells, with some illustrative notes by Mr. Serel, published in Vol. XII of the Proceedings. Mr. Parker again took occasion to mourn over the way in which this building had been injured in the present generation by changes inside, through which it had lost nearly all its original character.

Part of the company then visited the house in the Vicars' Close which has been restored by its present owner, Mr. Parker, the rest went to

The Canons' Barn.

MR. IRVINE first called attention to this building, but, by some mistake, he unfortunately was not present when the Society visited it.

It was stated that Bishop Joscelyn in his charter notices the Barn not as a gift of his own, but as already part of the possessions of the church. In a charter by Bishop Roger, the Barn is again noticed in a long schedule of the possessions of the Wells Chapter. The charter states that the Barn was given Bishop Reginald Fitz Joscelyn (1174-1191) for commons, and that it was to be held free from all rents and services. This Barn has for centuries been held of the Chapter by the lessees of the great tithes of the parish of St. Cuthbert's, as their Tithe Barn. A great part of the building is of comparatively

modern date : the old part is within and cannot be seen from the outside.

Some doubt was raised as to whether the old part should not be considered Norman work, but, after a most careful examination, Mr. Irvine is of opinion that it is an exceeding early example of Early English. The Barn adjoins the road called the North Liberty.

As a good part of the morning had by this time passed, and there seemed no chance of the same party being able to visit both Wookey Hole and Wookey Church, the Rev. W. Hunt begged the members to make their choice between the two, but to be sure to meet together at the Palace Gate at 2 p.m., in obedience to the kind invitation of the President. By far the larger number chose the excursion to Wookey Hole, but the attractions of the various and unique groups of ecclesiastical buildings, which cluster round the Cathedral, were so strong, that it was some time before the stragglers could be gathered together and induced to set off.

Wookey Hole

was thrown open to the Society by the kindness of Mr. Hodgkinson. Mr. Sanford guided the party, and explained the formation of the cavern. He also described the animal remains, and the traces of human occupation, which he and Mr. W. Boyd Dawkins had found in a cave, called the Hyæna Den, when they first explored the Hole together. Mr. Sanford considered that this cavern, in common with all the caverns and fissures in the limestone, was caused by the action of water. The carbonic acid contained in the rain water, which falls upon the limestone rocks, dissolving the carbonate of lime contained in them. A most interesting account of the formation of caves and

“combes” in the limestone may be found in Vol. XII of the Proceedings, pp. 53 and 161, written by Mr. W. Boyd Dawkins, F.R.S., of the Owens College, who was, at the time he read those papers, a fellow worker with Mr. Sanford. A small number visited

Wookey Church,

which had lately been well restored.

Mr. SEREL called attention to an altar tomb of Thomas Clarke, Esq., and Anthony his wife, who, he said, were people of some repute in their time. Thomas Clarke was chosen one of the members of the city in 1547, and held his seat for six years. A large monument to one of the members of the same family used to stand on the north side of the chancel of St. Cuthbert's Church. This monument was taken away some few years ago, but can still be seen carelessly thrown aside. The armorial bearings on this monument are almost identical with those on that in Wells.

Mr. Freeman hospitably entertained those who were present at a collation, which had been prepared in expectation of a much larger number of guests.

The company, in number about 170, assembled soon after two o'clock at the Gatehouse of the

Bishop's Palace.

The PRESIDENT and Mr. PARKER acted as guides to the party.

The PRESIDENT showed that the portcullis and draw-bridge were not made to work, and said that it would cost quite £300 to make them a reality.

The Rev. Preb. SCARTH said that the only place where the machinery was in working order was the north gate of the Palace at York.

A very full account of the Palace, by Mr. Parker, with beautiful illustrations, may be found in Vol. XI of the Society's Proceedings. The wider portion of the substructure of the present Palace, or undercroft, which was built by Bishop Joscelyn, and which, probably, was used either for stores or as a servants' hall, has been carefully treated by the present Bishop, and has been turned into a dining hall. The north end of Bishop Joscelyn's Hall, with its remarkable window of two lights, trefoil-headed, with a quartrefoil over the heads, which was formerly used as a dining-room, is now a bed-room. The party were taken, not only through the ruins of the old palace, but also over all the especially interesting parts of the present dwelling, and every part was fully explained by their guides; but, as no change has been made in the building, or in its internal arrangements, save the two already-mentioned, since Mr. Parker's paper was written, it does not seem necessary again to record his explanation. When the building had been thoroughly seen, the Right Reverend President and Lady Arthur Hervey entertained their numerous guests at luncheon, which was laid in the old undercroft. After luncheon a few toasts were proposed.

The health of the President was proposed by Sir WILLIAM MEDLYCOTT, who spoke of the kind and able manner in which he had performed the duties of his office, and had cheerfully given up so much of his valuable time to promote the interests of the Society. Sir William Medlycott also begged to express the thanks of all present to Lady Arthur Hervey for the kind and liberal reception which they had met with that day.

The PRESIDENT, in reply, assured his guests that it gave pleasure to him and to Lady Arthur to see them. He expressed a hope that the Society might again, at some

future day, meet at Wells, and spoke of the many objects of interest which yet remained to be seen in the city and the neighbourhood.

The BISHOP then proposed the health of Mr. Sanford, his immediate predecessor in office, and informed the Society that Mr. Sanford had purchased a valuable saurian, which he found was for sale at a house on the route of the day before, and had presented it to the Society.

In returning thanks for the executive officers, the Rev. WILLIAM HUNT explained that his colleague, Mr. O. Malet, was obliged to be absent to recruit his health; he spoke of Mr. Malet's kind assistance, and the great energy with which he applied himself to forward the cause of the Society in all ways, and especially in the matter of the purchase of Taunton Castle. He also wished to bear testimony to the valuable and intelligent services of Mr. Bidgood, the curator and assistant secretary of the Society. He begged to assure the Society that he had not lost sight of a scheme, which had been proposed to him some time ago, of illustrating the History of the County, by a series of papers, by different hands; and, that if Mr. Sanford and others, present and absent, would join in doing their parts, he would do all in his power to carry the matter through. He thanked Mr. Freeman, Mr. Sanford, Mr. Dickinson, and others, for the kind way in which they had spoken of his efforts, and the help they had given him in arranging the present meeting. He had originally agreed to act as secretary, in conjunction with Mr. Malet, only for a short time, until some one could be found to fill the vacancy made by the unexpected death of Mr. Jones, and he did not know how long other engagements would allow him to continue in office, but, as long as he remained secretary, he hoped that the members of the Society would extend

him the same indulgence which he at present received from them, and he could assure them that he would do his best for them.

After a few other toasts, the company separated at five o'clock, the President bidding them a cordial farewell. This ended the meeting of 1873, which was pronounced to be the most successful one which the Society had had, at least since the last Wells meeting of 1863.
