Excursion: Thursday.

The Society met at the Digby Hotel at 10.30 a.m., and thence set out on the second day's Excursion. The first place visited was

Poyntington.

The place of gathering was the churchyard of the little parish church. When the party was seated on the grass

(1). Printed in Part II. (2). Printed in Part II.

Mr. O. W. MALET read a short memoir of "Sir Thomas Malet,"[3] one of his own ancestors, who resided in the village, and whose second son was there slain in a skirmish with the Parliamentary forces.

The Rector, the Rev. J. HEALE, next read a paper[4] on one of the old parish books which he had lately discovered.

The Rev. W. BARNES thought that the name of the village might be derived from some possible Peofa, whose descendants would bear the patronymic Peofingas. Their place of settlement would be called Peofington, and hence would come Poyntington. This derivation was however held to be somewhat groundless.

The thanks of the Society were voted to Mr. Malet and to the Rev. J. Heale for their papers. Some amusement was caused by the serious rebuke which the Rector administered to the Secretary in charge of the excursion, for spelling the name of the village with an *i* and not a *y*.

The party then went into the church, an interesting little building of several dates of architecture.

Mr. J. H. PARKER said that he made no doubt but that there was once a small Norman church there to which large additions had been made. The old cradle roof was very fine, and he hoped that it would be preserved, though it did cut off the tower arch in rather an awkward way. In his opinion the tower arch and window were of the time of Edward III, though he believed that many people gave them an earlier date: the plain chamfered arch was not uncommon then. There had been a chantry under the rood-loft, and a fourteenth century window had been curiously altered, and cut about, and filled in to fit the loft. The north wall of the church was no doubt Norman, and

(3). Printed in Part II.

(4). Printed in Part II.

a decorated window had been let into it. The square headed windows were peculiar, but he saw no reason to doubt their being of the time of Edward III. The south porch was Norman. He could not protest too strongly against the grotesque caricature of a foreign gothic apse which had lately been put on to an old English parish church, and he feared that the nave would soon be destroyed under the pretence of what is called "restoration."

Mr. E. A. FREEMAN said that the carved capitals of the old doorway afforded a very good lesson of the way in which the earliest form of Norman capital grew into the latest. He said that he had heard words from the Rector which filled him with alarm; he had heard of a new north wall and a new porch. He supposed that it was intended that the whole place should be destroyed; so it was a great gain that they had an opportunity of seeing it now. What the original chancel was he did not know, but, when he saw the present one, he said at first that it was an apse which had swum over across the sea. On looking again, he saw that that could not be, for such windows never came from Germany, Italy, or France: yet they were not English. From the Peofa of Mr. Barnes on to the Ruskin of to-day, there was never an Englishman who could have made such a building as this apse. He begged them to keep up the memorials of the history of the church.

The Rev. J. HEALE said that he supposed that, neither Mr. Freeman or Mr. Parker would keep the window under the loft as it was.

Mr. FREEMAN said that he certainly would keep it, as he did not think that prettiness was every thing. He begged that the old porch might not be destroyed; it had stood 700 years; and even if they meant to put it up again just as it was, still he feared that when it was once down it

would never rise again quite the same. They should also, by all means, keep the north wall.

Rev. J. HEALE said that the wall was out of the perpendicular.

Mr. J. H. PARKER explained how the wall might be made perfectly safe and strong by "underpinning," and begged that it might be left alone.

The party next visited the old Manor house, where they were hospitably received by the occupier, Mr. Game.

Mr. J. H. PARKER said that the house was of the late Tudor period, with a gate-house forming an entrance to a quadrangular court. On the opposite side of the court are remains of the hall, and near the lower end of it was the kitchen—a detached building at the right hand corner of the court. The kitchen was once connected with the hall by a wooden passage which has been destroyed. The upper end of the hall, at the angle of the court, is connected with the cellar, and the solar over it, by a staircase in the corner. The cellar and the solar form another side of the court, and connect the hall with the gate-house. The fourth side was formed either by a boundary wall only, or perhaps by stables.

As to the pretty parsonage house adjoining the church, Mr. Parker said that he need only remark on the fine front, with four hall windows of the time of Henry IV. One window, in a gable, now blocked up, may be earlier. This window and the cellar under it he considered to be the oldest part of the house.

Sandford Orcas Church and Manor House

were next visited. Orcas is a corruption of Orescuiltz or Orskoys, a family who possessed the manor. The Church of St. Nicholas has a decorated chancel and an Early

English font, but its other parts are in the Perpendicular style. The south or manor aisle has a richly-carved roof, and contains the monument of William Knowle, 1607, whose family had possessions in this parish, temp. Ed. III. A Knoyle was sheriff of Dorset and Somerset, 1492. His family built the Manor House adjacent, temp. Hen. VIII, or early in the reign of Elizabeth. The gate-house[5] has a chimney with Ionic volutes, and the chimney of the parlour has a bold cabling on its cap. On the porch is a lozenge containing arms—Knoyle, *gules* on a bend, *argent*, 3 escallops *sable*, impaling (?) 3 horses courant. The same arms are painted on the east wall of the manor aisle. The hall has a good oak screen and large bay windows. Arms in glass:—1, Knoyle; 2, Knoyle impaling Martin of Athelhampton; 3, Knoyle impaling Payne. The drawing-room is over the hall, and the solar over the cellar. The inner porch has a good Perpendicular doorway. The manor and advowson passed by purchase in 1735 to John Hutchings, and the Manor House has been restored by his descendant, the present possessor.[6]

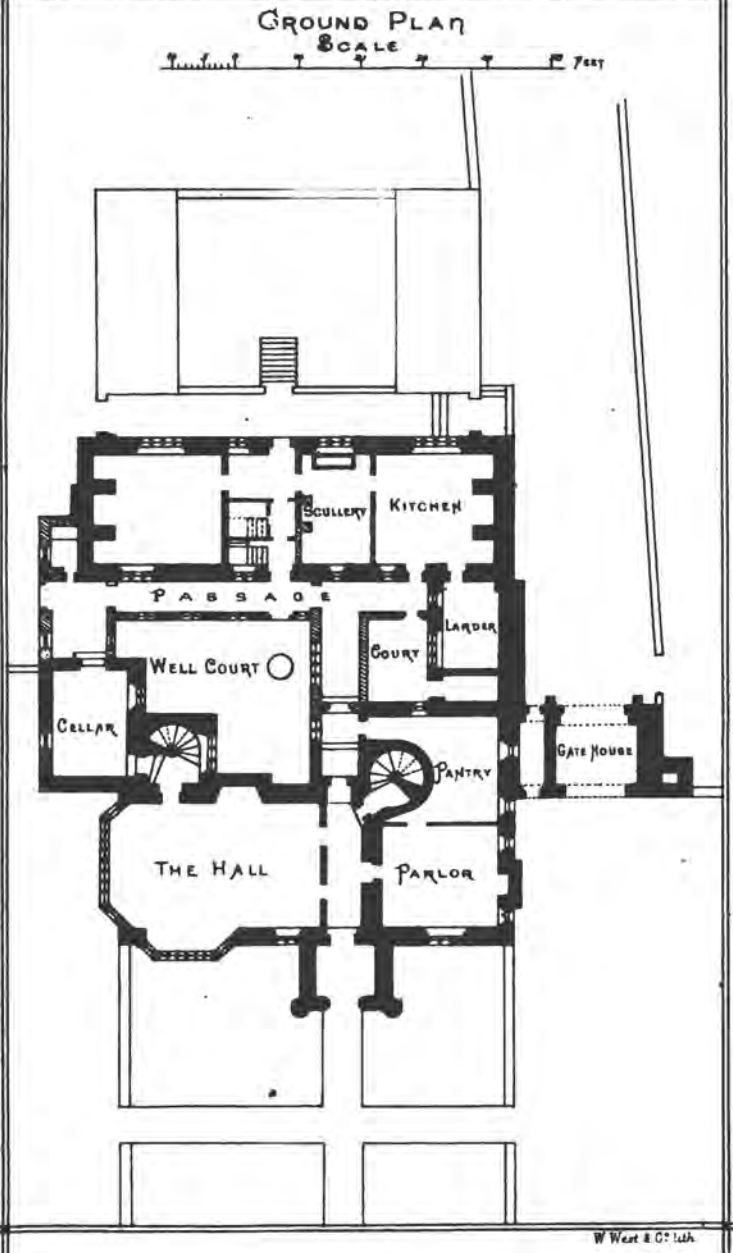
Mr. Hutchings conducted the party all over the Manor House, and gave a clear and interesting explanation of the buildings; he then kindly entertained his visitors.

Mr. J. H. PARKER observed that the house was of the same character throughout, and that it had been restored in a most scrupulous manner. He considered that the church had also been treated in a conscientious way, and that it was a real restoration.

(5). See ground plan.

(6). These remarks and the plan of Manor House have been kindly furnished by Mr. Hutchings, the Lord of the Manor, and the restorer of the church and house.

: The Manor House Sandford Orcas :



Chilton Cantelo

was next visited, and the Rector, the Rev. C. Goodford, the Provost of Eton, deputed Mr. J. H. Parker to speak on the work which he had carried out on the church.

Mr. J. H. PARKER said that the church had been admirably restored under Dr. Goodford. It was in such a bad state that it was absolutely necessary to rebuild it, but in the rebuilding every fragment of the old church, which could be preserved, had been conscientiously replaced in its old position: and the effect was so good that it was hard to believe how very much had been done in the last few years. It is, he said, an admirable instance of what real restoration is, and contrasts most favourably with what is commonly but falsely so called. Archæologists have gradually learned to hate the name of restoration, which is too often synonymous with the demolition of every old feature, and the substitution for them of some modern fancy. Dr. Goodford has shown what honest restoration really is; unfortunately such examples are very rare.

The Rev. PROVOST then spoke of the way in which different parts of the building had been treated, and also explained some curious mural paintings which he had found in the church, which illustrated the beautiful legend of the Assumption of the Virgin. He said the mural paintings in this church were discovered in the following way:—It was determined in 1864 to restore the church; it was found on examination that restoration must (with the exception of the tower) be rebuilding. The tower being of a much later date than the rest of the church was sound and solid, and could safely be let alone.

One main object kept in view was to retain all that was possible of the old features in the old places; in this view

I hope we may have been considered to have succeeded. The old Norman font, the piscina, the hagioscope, the simple old sedilia, the two windows in the north transept are stone for stone the original construction, carefully replaced in the exact spots from which they were temporarily removed. The screen required some repairs and a deal of scraping. The places of some stones, which project from the wall in the chancel and south transept, are to an inch what they were before, but I have never yet been able to obtain any explanation of their position and use, and I shall be greatly obliged to any one who will take the trouble to visit the church and give me instructions on this point. I have conjectured that they were brackets for images, but they are not all equally suitable for this purpose. I said just now the tower was let alone; this is not strictly true, we did not indeed restore it, but completed it, which the original architect never did. Out of the eight finials which now rise on the buttresses at the four corners of the tower one only had ever been put on; of the smaller ones at the top of the tower, none, though the shafts on which they were to stand were in all cases ready to receive them. The one which had been put up was fortunately a sufficient guide to us in making the rest; the original design was completed, and we venture to think that no one who knew the tower before, and has seen it since, can doubt the improvement.

Before the walls of the church were pulled down they were carefully scraped from white-wash, and it was in doing this in the north transept that the paintings, of which we have now to speak, were brought to light.

Under several coats of white-wash we came upon a smooth glazed surface, ornamented (wherever the subjects here exhibited did not interfere with it) with a diaper

pattern, consisting of quadrangular compartments, imitating masonry jointing, with a cinquefoil ornament in each; the quadrangular compartments measuring 10 x 6 ins. The same pattern is found on the south side of the choir of the well-known Church of St. Cross near Winchester, the lines there measuring 8½ x 6 ins. They are described, and a drawing of them given, in the *British Archæological Association Journal*, vi. p. 79—442; the ornament there being sometimes cinquefoil, sometimes quartrefoil. The same is found in Soberton Church in Hampshire, described in page 442 of the same volume. In the *Sussex Archæological Collection*, v. p. 213, this pattern is said to belong to the 11th century, which seems somewhat too old for the church at Chilton; the colour is in each case the same, a dark brown, as shewn in the fac-simile exhibited here.

Of the subject of the drawings now exhibited, there can, I think, be no doubt; they clearly represent the Death, Burial, Assumption, and Coronation of the Virgin Mary.

The whole of the history is of course legendary, and the legend runs as follows:—It relates that the Virgin Mary lived after the ascension of our Lord in the house of the Apostle St. John, on Mount Sion; that she reached the age, according to one account of sixty, according to another of seventy-two years; that as years advanced she was more and more filled with a longing to be with her glorified Son. While filled with these thoughts she was visited by the Angel Gabriel, who announced to her that she should pass through death to Paradise. St. John was brought by a whirlwind from Ephesus, where he was preaching, to the house in which the Virgin was, and some similar miraculous agency brought the other Apostles to the

same spot. While they were all assembled, expecting and lamenting her death, St. Peter at the head and St. John at the foot of the bed, our Lord appeared, and gave the Apostles directions to bear her body on a bier to the Valley of Jehosaphat, and to watch by it three days, when He promised to return; addressing our Lord, the Virgin said, "To Thee do I commend my spirit." Our Lord then took the soul, and bore it to Heaven; the Apostles placed the body on a bier, and were carrying it to burial, when the high priest and some other unbelieving Jews attempted to stop them. The high priest, who had laid his hands on the bier, was unable to remove them; some of his companions were struck helpless to the ground. At the end of the three days our Lord returned, according to his promise, restored the soul to the body, which he revived, the Virgin was borne by angels to Heaven, where our Lord received her, and placed a crown of gold upon her head.

This legend appears to be carefully followed in the paintings. The west wall of the chapel (for such I assume it to have been), on which the subject was continued from south to north, contained the figures as far as the two first that we come to bearing the poles; on the north wall, at right angles to this, were the two other bearers; then, on the western splay of the north window, were the recumbent figure, the two figures at the head and the five at the side; then came the north window, and the splay on the eastern side of it contained the figure with the hands uplifted, the two figures looking down upon it, and supporting it with drapery; then followed on the north wall the same figure, supported in the same way, with a third figure looking down from above, and extending its hand towards the supported figure. Then, on the east wall, the

two remaining figures; the rest of the wall to the angle was filled with the diaper pattern before described.

What I have said will, I hope, have made the arrangement of the figures on the wall plain to my hearers; the paintings ranged with the level of the bottom of the north window.

For explanation, we must, of course, refer to the legend as stated above; and in support of what may be said on this head, I would refer to Mrs. Jameson's *Legends of the Madonna*; to a paper in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxxviii. page 434; and to the 53rd vol. of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, page 547. The first-named work treats the subject with reference to art generally, the two latter have special reference to mural paintings in Chalgrove Church, Oxfordshire, on the same subject with those here; these it may be interesting to compare as we go on.

I would first remark that the figure of the Virgin, as repeatedly represented here, does not give the idea of the age which the legend states she had reached at the time of her death; but the artist no doubt followed the rule laid down by "Pictor Christianus Eruditus," he says that it is a great mistake to represent her as though her death were the result of age or sickness, she simply "amore languit," and should be represented with her eyes fixed on Heaven, her arms either extended towards it, or folded upon her breast, and she "pretiosis exornata vestibus, valde decora atque pulchra."

The first picture represents the visit of the Angel Gabriel, when the Virgin is usually represented in a sitting posture. In Chalgrove Church she is represented as standing, and the figure of the angel presenting to the Virgin a palm branch is in good preservation; here but slight traces of the angel remain. I should say that in

Chalgrove Church the subject runs from right to left, and forms two series, one above the other; not, as here, one continuous line. The next two figures I take to be those of the Virgin and of St. John, to whom she is announcing her coming death; it is possible that this part of the subject is omitted, and that these two figures belong to the death scene which follows, but I incline to the former idea from a comparison with the Chalgrove paintings, where there are two persons only at the bed. The other six in this picture are undoubtedly Apostles. The figure of our Lord taking the soul of the Virgin in the form of an infant is very distinct; a similar representation is found at Stagham Church in Sussex, where angels are conveying a soul to Heaven. (See *Sussex Archæological Collection*, xiii. p. 238.) Then follows the funeral procession, the bier borne by the Apostles—the two falling figures are clearly those of unbelieving Jews; the same number is represented in Chalgrove Church, where the high priest is fixed to the bier, as he possibly may have been here, though the figure is now lost. The next group contains the restoration of the Virgin to life, according to our Lord's promise; the tomb, you will observe, is arcaded below, as it is at Chalgrove, where the same peculiarity is to be observed of the tomb from which our Lord arises in a representation of the resurrection. The next two compartments represent the Virgin borne to Heaven by angels, and in the second received by our Lord. The whole concludes with her coronation by Him; the features of the two last figures are remarkably like those representing the same subject at Chalgrove, probably both were done at the same period, and the figures drawn from some common type.

While on the subject of the church, and of this chapel

in particular, I can hardly pass over what I spoke of in a letter to our Secretary as my single local curiosity—a skull which cannot be buried; the tradition is mentioned in Collinson, and still survives here. There is no doubt that a headless skeleton lies beneath the tomb stone of which Collinson speaks. This was ascertained at the time of the necessary demolition of the church. The conjecture is probable, from the date at which Mr. Brome was buried, that he took this precaution lest his head, like that of many others after the restoration, might be severed from his body and exposed to insult. I know of no instance of a similar kind, though I have endeavoured through *Notes and Queries* to obtain one. The founder of the chapel, I conceive, lies in a stone coffin which is below that of Mr. Brome. The arch over the tomb is thus mentioned in Symonds' *Diary*, printed for the Camden Society, 1859. "Saturday 20 July 1644 his Majestie marched from thence (*i.e.* from Bruton). The rendezvous was on the hill, Queen Camel being on the left, thence to Ivilchester that night, where his Majestie lay; the troop was quartered at Chilton two miles off. Chilton Church hath no armes in it; a flat coffin monument, playne, lyes within an arch under the north wall of the north chapel." The arch remains as Mr. Symonds saw it, the plain monument is covered by that of Theophilus Brome, the inscription and arms on which may be seen in Collinson's *History*.

The thanks of the Society were given to the Rev. Provost for his kind reception.

The Society paid the last visit of the meeting to

Trent,

and gathered in the beautiful little church.

Mr. J. H. Parker said a few words inside the church. He called attention to the magnificent rood loft, left in its original state. The roof was not quite what he could wish; and, indeed, the interior throughout, though handsome, was not quite an example of restoration. The tower and spire were far more worth looking at than any thing inside the building.

Mr. J. Batten pointed out different coats of arms in illustration of his paper on Trent, which he read the evening before, and especially the curious genealogical trees on the soffit of the arch, dividing the north chapel from the nave.

The party was then bidden to lunch, and was entertained by the President with lavish hospitality in a great tent on the lawn of the old Manor House.

After luncheon several toasts were drunk. Among them was the health of the President, which was proposed by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, who thanked him in the name of the Society for the able way in which he had fulfilled the duties of his office on that occasion, and for the magnificent manner with which he had entertained the Society.

After lunch another visit was paid to the church, and Mr. Freeman spoke of the tower and spire with great admiration. The old manor house, which contains the hiding place of Charles II, was also visited; and the other manor house, which formerly belonged to the Young family. A picturesque chantry-house adjoins the churchyard; and another chantry priest's house stands a little further from the church. Both these are of the Tudor period. The little village is full of natural and architectural beauty. It is to be regretted that the necessity of meeting trains, &c., cut short the visit of the Society. Much remains to

be seen, and perhaps another and less hurried visit may at a future day be paid to this most interesting spot.

Here the Society ended its twenty-sixth annual meeting, which was one of the pleasantest and most largely attended which had ever been held.