

## Excursion : Thursday.

The number of visitors was so largely and unexpectedly increased that considerable difficulty was experienced in providing enough carriages, and in getting the party off.

For the future all those who wish to make use of the carriages, provided by the Secretary in charge of the Excursion, should purchase their tickets before 6 p.m. on the day before, so that he may know how many will want seats. Those who kindly comply with this request will be held to have a prior claim, and although the Secretary will try to accommodate all who may want seats, yet he will not be responsible for the accommodation of those who have not given this notice of their intention.

The route lay through Blatchbridge and Woodlands to

### Longleat House,

which was reached after a most lovely drive through the Park. The Marquis of Bath received the party with a kind welcome, and himself led the visitors through the corridors and lower library. The party then assembled in the hall, and Canon JACKSON read a valuable paper on

### The Literary Treasures of Longleat,

of which the following is the substance :—

He said that some time ago he had been invited by the Society's Secretary to contribute something for the Frome

meeting, and that a text was given him on which to write. That text was a perplexing one, for it was "The Literary Treasures of Longleat." How could he treat it without either wearying the audience, or unduly compressing matter which ought to fill at least a volume. Those treasures are, he said, of two kinds, printed books and manuscripts. The printed treasures of Longleat fill two very large rooms : that which is called the lower or modern library on the ground floor ; and the upper or old library at the top of the house. The lower library contains a very fine collection of books, all arranged and catalogued, formed chiefly by the grandfather of the present owner of the house. There are Greek and Latin classical authors of superb editions ; also many of our rarest county histories, the four first folios of Shakespeare, and a great number of those little thin 4to. volumes much sought after by book-lovers of all species. For there are many species of book-lovers : some like books for the old title pages, some for the black letter, some for the illustrations, some for the bindings, and now and then a few for the contents. For every one of these book-lovers there is abundance of interesting matter in the lower library—Caxton's "Wynkyn de Worde" Chaucer, as edited by William Thynne, and so forth. After mentioning some other rare books the learned Canon said that he would pass to the old library, which, among many books of modern date placed there for convenience, also contained a vast collection which belonged to the library in the time of the first Lord Weymouth, and which were chiefly collected by him. They were on different subjects, but especially on the controversial divinity of the latter part of the seventeenth century. The first Lord Weymouth was the friend and protector of Bishop Ken, and they seem to have entered together into those religious questions which agitated the country, and to have gathered together all the publications which related to them. It is, the Canon said, not an uncommon notion among the public that all the books in the old library were Bishop Ken's ; and the room is often enquired for as "Bishop Ken's

Library." This is not so. The room itself, without any manner of doubt, belonged to Lord Weymouth, and so did the books. But the Bishop by his will bequeathed to Lord Weymouth, out of his own collection, such works as his lordship might not have already, and such others as he might choose. The room was no doubt very much the daily living place of the good Bishop; but neither room nor library was his own, further than in the way I have mentioned. There is also a large collection of Civil War tracts, and a great number of old geographical works of voyages and travels descriptive of the world as then known. Also many valuable works on antiquities, coins, and the like, such as are now seldom met with in private houses; fine and costly volumes, the like of which indeed are seldom printed in our days. I must not omit to mention that the room I am speaking of, the old library upstairs, is indebted for its contents not only to Lord Weymouth and Bishop Ken. At the further end of it, occupying the entire wall, is a very wonderful collection of publications, all upon one single subject, but that a subject of never-censing interest—the great French Revolution of 1792. The collection embraces, I believe, almost everything that was published in France during that terrible period of the history of France; and it includes all books, pamphlets, and narratives published not only in Paris itself, but in all the provincial cities and towns; describing all the horrors that took place over the whole country. Whether quite unique or not I cannot say, but this collection is certainly a very remarkable and valuable one, and was added to the literary treasures of the house by the present owner. Taking this old library of Longleat altogether, it is, both from its mere construction as well as its interesting contents, one of the most curious rooms to be seen in any house in England. The reader then passed to the manuscript treasures and remarked upon the special charm which attached to a treasure of this kind in comparison with the value of printed books. Of the collection of MSS. in the old library it was impossible to give anything but a mere outline. Amongst

them were named "The Bible" in English after the translation usually ascribed to Wicliff, a large folio, 398 pp., pure vellum, beautifully written and adorned with illuminated initial letters, containing the Old and New Testaments complete, and the prefatory epistle of S. Jerome. Another noble volume comprized the works of Zacharias Chrysopalos, of the twelfth century. Next is a "*Liber Pontificalis*" of 13th century, containing the forms of certain services used in consecrations of churches and cemeteries, in the office of matrimony, benediction of rings, appointment of abbesses, and the like. "*The Life of Christ*," by Bonaventure, Bishop of Albania and Cardinal, translated into English by John Morton; 15th century. "*A Sermon that S. Austín made on Christmas Day*." This is a very curious old document, in the quaintest English possible, and intended as the preface says, "for folk of simple understanding: children that haven nede to be fedde with mylke of light doctrine, and not with sad meat of great clergy and high contemplacion." The spelling of the words are very curious. The teaching of S. John, it says, was given as "treacle" against the venom of dyverse heretykes; and instead of being called the Redeemer our Lord is spoken of as the "Buyer-again." There is also a volume of old English religious poems of the 15th century, some of which are very simple and touching, and, so far as I know, have never been printed. There should also be mentioned Lydgate's "*Life of the Virgin Mary*," a MS. of the 15th century, afterwards printed by Caxton. Amongst a different class of subjects, relating to monastic establishments, may be named "*Privileges of the Sanctuary of S. Peter of Westminster*," an interesting MS. volume of the 15th century. Prefixed to it is a charter of King Edgar, by which he ordains that the Church of S. Peter at Westminster shall become a sanctuary for fugitives of every degree; and other charters of Edward the Confessor and William I confirming the privileges. There are many registers of various abbeys, and amongst them one of Glastonbury, of the 14th

century, a fine folio of 440 pages in vellum. Prefixed to it is a Bull of Pope John XXI, addressed to Adam, Abbot of the monastery, according permission for his confessor to forgive the sins of the said Abbot when in *articulo mortis*, like as the Roman pontiffs were accustomed to do. This is dated at Avignon. Then follow the prefatory matters appointed by Edward I to be prefixed to all monastic chartularies, having relation to his right to a feudal superiority over Scotland. There are six in number :—1. The Genealogy of the Kings of England, beginning with Adam down to Edward III. 2. Concerning the origin of Giants in the Island of Albion. 3. Of the length and breadth of England. 4. A citatory letter of Pope Boniface for the Kingdom of Scotland. 5. A Declaration of the King of England about the affairs of Scotland. 6. A letter of the barons to Pope Boniface on behalf of the rights of the Kingdom of Scotland. The date of the last charter registered appears to be about 1361. At page 427 is a brief register of the muniments at Wells. Next comes a very curious old book, commonly called "*Liber Ruber Bathoniæ*," or "*The Red Book of Bath*." Why it is called a red book is not very intelligible, because it is bound in white pigskin on thick wood, with brass bosses upon the sides. Inside of the upper cover is a square hole or socket let into the wood and nearly the size of the cover itself, secured with a door of thin iron plate covered with leather and studded with brass nails. In this were formerly kept the balances for weighing gold, as appears by the first entry in the catalogue of contents. It once belonged to the monastery at Bath, and came into the hands of Dr. Thomas Guidot, who, dying in 1703, bequeathed it to the first Lord Weymouth. I had always expected to find in this old MS. a good deal about the history of Bath and its Abbey. But it is quite a different thing. It is a collection of most miscellaneous articles, about thirty in number. Its date is 1428. There are short treatises about weights and measures, the Gospels, calendars in rime, an essay on phlebotomy, the ringing (or rather beating) of bells

—“*pulsatio campanorum*”—showing how far that enlivening recreation is founded upon ecclesiastical law, and how far upon custom. Then come treatises on the office of coroner, a charter of the forest, the names of those who came over with William I, an assize of bread and beer, measurement of land with the acre-staff, and “The Gestes of King Arthur” in rime. This is a poem of 642 lines, and is so curious that it was printed as the first issue of the publications of the Early English Text Society. At intervals of 50 or 60 verses the reader is desired by the quaint old poet to pause and say a Paternoster and Ave. At the end of the volume, in more modern writing, is an account of the placing of a pillory in the city of Bath, with a drawing of that instrument of publicity, dated 1412. There is an old rental of the bishopric of Hereford, and a book of expenses of Shaftesbury Abbey (24 Hen. VIII), of which Sir W. Uvedale, Kt., was Seneschal. In the class of historical works, the finest MS. is one of Josephus’ “Wars and Antiquities of the Jews.” This is a large and noble volume of the 15th century, in a clear hand in pure vellum. Another MS. is a curious volume (30 Hen. VIII) being a list of all the English residents in the town of Calais at that time, when it belonged to England; the names of the men, women, and children, strangers and inhabitants, scattered through the twelve wards of His Majesty’s town; with devices for its fortification, victualling, wages of workmen, &c. Then is a MS. copy of a very celebrated book called “Leicester’s Commonwealth,” being a virulent attack by Parsons the Jesuit (or some one else so called), upon the character and life of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. This was secretly circulated, but only in manuscript, for many years, as Queen Elizabeth and the Privy Council had published a protest against it as a slanderous story. A greater pack of lies against a very eminent man was never whipped up together, and unluckily Scott’s novel of Kenilworth, being built upon it, is not only full of the grossest historical errors, but has stamped Dudley’s name with a most unjust stigma, which perhaps may never be

effaced. There are also some volumes of very valuable original letters, which came from Sheffield Castle when it was dismantled. They are addressed to the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury, to whom the Castle belonged, and are written by the great statesmen and others of Queen Elizabeth's time, including several from Her Majesty herself to the Earl. One begins "My dear old man." In one of these volumes are several letters from the unfortunate Lady Arabella Stuart, the first cousin of King James I. There is also in four large folio volumes a complete history of the Talbot family (Earls of Shrewsbury), compiled entirely out of the records at Sheffield Castle, the greater part of which are now deposited in the Herald's College, London. There are volumes of State Papers, ambassadors' correspondence, and the like. A great number also of curious treatises on alchymy, medicine, most curious receipts and antidotes, astronomical tables, leech-craft, and astrology; treatises on the philosopher's stone—the secret of secrets—coinage; and of ancient law treatises a very large collection, very difficult to read and still more difficult to understand; also many records of Star Chamber proceedings, which are scarce and valuable. There are several volumes of very old English and French poetry in manuscript. A treatise on chivalry, called "*Le Livre des Faiz d'Armes*," by Christine of Pisa, an Italian lady of the 15th century; and another by the same authoress, called "*Hector and Othea*," translated into English by Stephen Scrope, of Castle Combe, in Wiltshire, son-in-law of Sir John Falstaff (not the fat knight of Shakespeare). "*The Temple of Glasse*," a poem commonly said to have been written by Chaucer, and included in his works. But it was not by him. It is now called "*The Isle of Ladies*." The Longleat copy is the only MS. of it known. Also several other MSS. of the poems of Chaucer and Lydgate. In one called "*Ipomedon*," by Lydgate, there is the written autograph (of great rarity) of Richard III when Duke of Gloucester, with a motto "*Tant le désirée*." I may just mention as a sample of the value of MSS., especially



when, as in this case, they happen to contain any rare autograph, that only a few weeks ago at an auction in London a little MS., which happened to have this very autograph signature in it, was sold for the marvellous sum of £331. Besides all the books and MSS. to which I have only very slightly referred there is a vast quantity of original documents at Longleat, which have been all arranged. They consist of what we may call personal documents and topographical documents. The personal documents relate to families, and include a great deal that refers to many of the historical houses of the country. I only name, very cursorily, a few: the Staffords Dukes of Buckingham, the Veres, the Seymours Dukes of Somerset: and of course a great deal that relates to the oldest and successive owners of Longleat. Also a simply enormous quantity of original correspondence of celebrated characters. The topographical department is very large and curious, containing documents relating to ancient estates in a great many counties in England and Wales, especially, of course, Somerset and Wilts. There are several original deeds, and quantities of court rolls and the like, relating to Glastonbury Abbey. The whole of these documents have been put in order, and a summary of them printed in the Reports of the Historical Commissioners. As those Reports present 48 folio pages of double column in small type under the heads of the Marquis of Bath's papers, I need not say that it is out of the question to attempt going into particular details. I will simply say that next to the collection of Hatfield papers belonging to the Marquis of Salisbury it is one of the most important private collections to be met with. It is thus described in the words of the Commissioners:—"The collection of the Marquis of Bath is a wonderfully complete and vivid illustration of our civil, military, naval, and ecclesiastical history, and from the earliest times." Canon Jackson then showed a curious and valuable MS. which he had lately discovered amongst some papers of a different nature belonging to the Marquis. It was a Register of the holdings of the tenants of Glastonbury in the time of



Abbot Henry de Soliaco, about 1189. This MS. is a perfect mine of knowledge, for it contains not only interesting topographical and archæological particulars, but also much which is of the highest degree important to the historian in the names of the tenants, and the position held by those who were called by them.

Sir W. MEDLYCOTT expressed the thanks of the Society to the Marquis of Bath for his kindness, and to Canon Jackson for the exceedingly interesting information which he had given to them.

Mr. PARKER made a few remarks on the architecture of Longleat House, describing it as perhaps the finest Elizabethan house in the kingdom, and almost entirely unaltered. He pointed out the difference between an Elizabethan and what he might call a mediæval house; and described the arrangements of the dining hall. It was not possible to fix the exact date of this house for it was twenty years in building.

The party then drove to

### *Holwell Quarries*

where Mr. MOORE expounded the geological lessons to be learned there. At the first quarry he remarked that, when the British Association came there, he asked a question as to what geological section he was then standing on. A gentleman who had just prepared a geological map at once replied that he must be standing on Carboniferous Limestone. Well, that was a natural supposition, Carboniferous Limestone being incident to the district; but he (Mr. Moore) rather surprised them by pointing out within a few square yards Inferior Oolite, Lias, Carboniferous Limestone, and Rhætic beds containing teeth and other remains. He himself was standing on a mineral vein filled up with crystallised carbonate of lime. So that there were several distinct geological formations in that little patch of ground. Close by was a cavern which might contain remains of elephants, hippopotami, rhinoceri, and all the beasts of the glacial period.

In the Inferior Oolite were all the shells of that period ; in the Liassic Conglomerate were all the various shells of the liassic period, and the Carboniferous Limestone had all the usual fossils.

At another quarry Mr. MOORE pointed out that there were as many as thirteen veins of younger age going down from the top to the base of the older Carboniferous Limestone rock. Here could be seen traces of iron ore, lead and calamine in the veins, and amongst the fossils had been found *microlestes*, teeth of *sargodon* and *lepidotus*, scales of *gyrolepis*, &c. *Acrodus* was also very abundant. A third quarry was also visited where the *microlestes* was found.

Rev. H. H. WINWOOD would not discuss Mr. Moore's facts which rested on too firm a basis, but would venture to differ from some of his theories. One of these theories was regarding the upheaval of the Mendips, which as they had heard yesterday, Mr. Moore considered the effect of an upthrust from below. Now if such had been the case surely the fissures, instead of widening as they descended—a fact which Mr. Moore had stated was their special peculiarity—would have lessened and become narrower below, and would have been wider above. But if they took the contrary theory, that those disturbances were caused by shrinkage of the crust of the earth and consequent subsidence, the wedge-shaped masses would descend in such a way as to narrow the fissures at the top and widen them at the bottom.

Mr. MOORE said his impression was that the Mendips had been carried bodily forward at their fullest elevation for a considerable distance to the north, that consequently there had been a tendency of the great mass of limestones to return again to their original position, and accordingly they gave way in various parts and became cracked and fissured—not all at the same time but at different geological periods. If this was the case it would be natural to expect that the fissures would widen at the bottom. In remarking that the veins widened as they

passed downwards, he only intended to apply the observation to the 40 or 50 feet seen in the face of the limestone quarries : there could be no doubt but that, like most fissures and veins found in the older rocks, they widened out in pockets, and then contracted so as occasionally to be almost lost ; this might be repeated again and again as they passed downwards in a formation of such thickness as the Carboniferous Limestone.

### *Nunney Castle*

was next visited, and occupied the attention of the party for a considerable time.

Mr. PARKER described the ruin as the remains of a strongly fortified manor house of the fourteenth century, about the time of Edward II. The corbels running round the top of the tower once upheld wooden galleries from which stones could be hurled upon invaders. It was a small building for an Edwardian Castle, but full of interest. It was once divided into four storeys. The two lower storeys contained the kitchen, the servants' rooms and domestic offices and the dining hall ; the two upper were devoted to the family and state apartments. At one end of the building in one of the towers could be traced a sacrarium and a little oratory. It was probable that when necessary the room adjoining was used as a chapel, and that the sacrarium was at other times curtained off. Several windows and one of the fireplaces were of the time of Henry VII. It had a moat all round it, and Mr. Parker pointed out the holes through which the chains of the drawbridge probably once passed on the basement floor on the side facing the village.

Mr. DAVIS said that these holes did not seem to him to be at all like those which would have made for such a purpose. He did not believe the drawbridge was on that side of the building.

Mr. TALBOT upheld the view taken by Mr. Parker ; and Mr. Sanford and others also agreed in thinking it most probable that the holes were used for working the drawbridge.

### **Nunney Church**

most probably partakes of the same history as the Castle. It was no doubt built by the Delameres, and was extensively altered in the reign of Henry VII.

Mr. PARKER said that it had been suggested to him that the denudation of the neighbourhood, about which they had heard so much, had affected Nunney Church. There had evidently been a considerable denudation, which he thought must have been caused by glacial action, for he never saw a church with a more icy look about it. The chief features were the ancient squints, the piscina, the font, and the tombs of the Delameres. He could not avoid referring to the fine rood screen which at that moment was standing in the temporary museum at Frome, and which had been taken from its place in that church. He was told that one of the Churchwardens had presumed to sell this beautiful part of the church fittings to some person in the neighbourhood. He did not know if the Churchwarden who had done this thing was then present, but he begged to tell him that he had done an illegal act, and the sooner he took steps to undo the mischief, the better for himself and for all parties. The screen was a peculiarly good one, it fitted, and there was no reason to believe but that it had been made for the church. The sale of it for a mere trifle by those who should have been its most jealous guardians was a disgrace to the parish, and indeed to the county. The roof of the nave was in a wretched state. He could not approve of the attempts at restoration which had been made in the interior.

The hall of an old manor house near the church, now used as a lumber store, still preserves a fine roof, music gallery, and screen. It is called the Nunnery, but of course never had anything to do with Nuns : it is a purely secular building.

A pleasant drive through Ridgway brought the party to

### **Marston House,**

the seat of the Earl of Cork and Orrery, the President of the

Society, who gave his numerous visitors a hearty welcome. Some time was spent in admiring the choice pictures which adorn the suite of rooms and the corridor on the ground floor. The party then gathered in the billiard room where several curious and interesting objects had been laid out.

The PRESIDENT pointed out a *fac-simile* of the original orrery, now at Cambridge. This instrument was invented by George Graham about 1700, and was presented to John, Earl of Orrery, after whom it was named at the suggestion of Steele. His Lordship also called attention to a number of original letters by distinguished men, including Pope, Swift, Dr. King, the Duke of Marlborough, with a vast amount of bad spelling, and Lord Bolingbroke; to the Prayer Book which was the constant companion of Charles I, and which contained some notes in the King's handwriting; to the original air pump of Robert Boyle, the philosopher, and to different other curiosities, among which should be mentioned a fine and most rare edition of Cæsar, with the famous illustration of the black bull. Lord Cork stated that a church formerly stood on the lawn immediately in front of the house, and a framed notice which hung in the room gave the following account of one of the many unknown or forgotten sufferers in the cause of Church and King, who was formerly connected with the little building.

*Upon the ruin of the Royal Family and the death of the King, Lord Broghil, Earl of Orrery, retired to Marston House, situate in England, which his father, Richard, Earl of Cork, had bought of Sir John Hipposley, and was formerly part of Edmund, Earl of Cornwallis's estate.*

*Lord Broghil used to repeat a singular incident. The parish church of Marston is very near to the Mansion house. Lord Orrery never failed to go thither on a Sunday, but one Sunday having sat there some time, and being disappointed of the then qualified minister, his lordship was preparing to return home when his steward told him a person in the church offered to preach. His lordship, though he looked upon the proposal only as a piece of enthusiasm, gave permission, and was never more surprised or delighted than with the sermon, which was filled with learning, sense, and piety. His lordship would not suffer the preacher to escape unknown, but invited him to dinner, and inquiring of him his name, life, and fortune, received this answer: "My Lord, my name is Ashbery; I am a clergyman of the Church of England, and a loyal subject of the King. I have lived three years in a cottage under your warren wall, within a*

*few paces of your lordship's house; my son lives with me, and we dig and read by turns. I have a little money and some few books, and I submit cheerfully to the will of Providence."* This worthy and learned man, for such Lord Orrery always called him, died at Marston some years after, but not until his lordship had obtained an allowance of £30 per annum for him without any obligation of taking the covenant.

Luncheon was then announced and a large party enjoyed the hospitality of the noble President. The rest of the afternoon was spent in strolling on the terrace in front of the house which commands a splendid view.

Mr. H. DANBY SEYMOUR expressed the thanks of the Society to Lord Cork for the kind and able way in which he discharged the office of President.

The thanks of the Society are also due to Mr. E. H. Dickinson, the Chairman of the Local Committee, and to the other gentlemen who served upon it, and above all to Mr. George Walters, the Local Secretary, who gave much valuable advice and assistance in the preparations which had to be made for the Meeting. The Frome Literary and Scientific Institution kindly placed their building at the disposal of the Society during its visit, and the Local Museum was held there.

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