

S E C O N D D A Y .

Excursion.

On Tuesday morning a party of ladies and gentlemen started on an excursion to several places in the neighbourhood. The weather was exceedingly unfavourable, showers being frequent and severe, and the unpropitiousness of the elements prevented many, no doubt, from joining. The more eager archæologists, however, were not to be detained

by any such impediment. They were evidently disposed, under any circumstances, not to let the day pass without seeing some of the objects of interest in the neighbourhood; and accordingly started, at about eleven o'clock in covered conveyances. The result amply repaid them, and in the course of the afternoon the weather assumed a more propitious aspect, although the day terminated as it had commenced—in rain. The party was joined on its progress by a number of archæologists who had accepted the hospitality of F. H. Dickinson, Esq., and R. Neville Grenville, Esq., on the previous evening, and by several of the gentry of the neighbourhood through which it passed.

The first place visited after leaving Glastonbury was STREET; and here several magnificent fossils were shown by Mr. James Clark, taken from the quarries at that place. There were two ichthyosauri, from seven to eight feet in length, in a highly perfect state. The eye of one was remarked to have been exceedingly well preserved; and Mr. Clark pointed out that it was so formed as to be capable of extending its vision, similar to the eyes of birds of prey. These two beautiful specimens belonged to a quarryman named Seymour. There was also an ichthyosaurus in Mr. Clark's own collection, which was found at Ashcott, and a smaller one from the Street quarries. The party was kindly escorted by the Messrs. Clark over their large manufactory of ladies' shoes, mats, &c., and marked the various operations with much interest. The sewing machines, which performed their task with surprising rapidity and neatness, drew particular attention. The mats, which were manufactured from the skins of various animals, from the lion and tiger to the Angola goat and the sheep, were deservedly admired. About 150 persons are engaged in this manufactory, and nearly 1000 are em-

ployed, more or less, by its liberal and spirited proprietors. Proceeding through the village, the quarry was visited, from which several of the saurians in the British Museum, as well as others, have been taken. Mr. Clark mentioned that Dr. Wright, of Cheltenham, found in the quarry, a few days ago, a coral—the *Isastrea Murchisonæ*—and it was remarkable that he had observed the same sort of coral in the Island of Skye, and in Gloucestershire, proving that there was originally a bed of it running through the kingdom. A part of a plesiosaurus and other fossils were shown in a shed belonging to the quarryman.

The excursionists proceeded—through a country highly beautiful from its undulating features of hill and vale, and equally interesting from its geological characteristics, the hills exhibiting in their upper part the white lias formation, with red marl beneath—to COMPTON DUNDON. Here the ruins of a manor-house of the fourteenth century were examined, and the church was visited. Mr. Freeman explained the features of the sacred edifice, characterising it as a very good little typical church, having nothing in it *very* extraordinary, but still a few features that were worthy of note. It seemed to be pretty much of the same date, though there had been a few alterations in the detail of the building. One or two ritual matters were worth noticing. There was a stone screen that was evidently coeval with the chancel arch. It was not at all common to see a stone screen in a parish church; he only knew two or three instances, and he did not remember one of such amazing thickness as the present. Mr. Freeman then proceeded to draw attention to what he conceived to be the curious preparations in connection with the rood-loft, which appeared to have been reached in an extraordinary way. His idea on this matter will best be explained by stating

that the pulpit is inserted in the wall of the church, and approached through an aperture in the wall, leading to the back part of it. This aperture, Mr. Freeman appeared to think, originally communicated with the rood-loft. Mr. Dickinson, however, pointed out that there were indications of an opening having existed near the chancel-arch, which had probably answered this purpose. A small window in the eastern part of the nave on the south side, Mr. Freeman said, corresponded with those that were usually found lighting the rood-loft, where the church had no clerestory. The roof of the church was of a description very common in this part of England, and also in South-Wales—the coved. It was a kind of roof that all modern architects and restorers abominated ; and, if the church should be restored, no doubt something brought down from the north would be substituted for it. He had had the satisfaction of preserving roofs of that kind in one or two instances ; and thought it to be one of the best descriptions, although, where it was ceiled over, as had been the common practice with old fashioned churchwardens, and where there were not projecting ribs, it did not, of course, look well.

The cavalcade next halted at SOMERTON. The road afforded very beautiful and extensive views, reaching to Ham-hill, and the Wellington Monument. It passes by Compton beacon, on the summit of which a Roman encampment was pointed out. The church at Somerton was inspected, and elicited general admiration. The magnificent carved oak roof was spoken of in the highest terms. Mr. Freeman explained the characteristics of the sacred building. Here, he said, was a church of another Somersetshire type, and with a much larger and more complicated ground-plan than that last visited. It was a quasi-

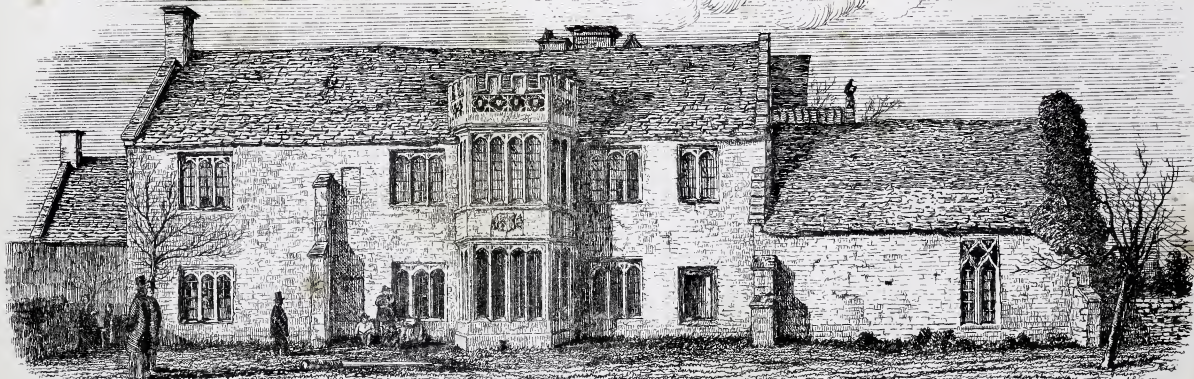
cruciform church. It had not four arches and a central tower, like those of a fully developed cruciform shape, and yet the transepts were very fine, and really superior to some that were of a more fully developed character. One of the transepts went into the tower, and only one. At Exeter Cathedral, and at Ottery St. Mary Church, and a few other large buildings, there were two side towers; but here, and in one or two other Somerset churches, such as that of Stoke-sub-Hamdon, there was only a tower over one transept. The tower was well worth noticing, from being a Somersetshire octagon. The octagon was a very common form in Somerset, and also in Northamptonshire; but the towers of this character were of two kinds; in Northampton the octagon was a mere top to the square part; in Somerset the square part was merely a base for the octagon, which, therefore, gave a character to the whole structure. He only knew of one or two instances where the tower was octagonal from the base. The tower appeared to have received an addition subsequent to its first erection. The same thing was very conspicuous at Stoke St. Gregory. There a much larger nave was built, which quite out-topped the old tower, which was therefore raised. The addition was not so apparent in the present instance; but still it was quite palpable. The church was in the Decorated style of the fourteenth century, with Perpendicular alterations. One of these consisted in the addition of the tower which he had just spoken of; and another was the very fine carved oak roof. This was a kind of roof often found in Somersetshire churches where there was a clerestory; and where there was no clerestory the coved roof was generally found. It was a roof of which he was exceedingly fond, especially when it was so magnificent as in the present instance. There was also a

very splendid example of it at Martock. The most curious alteration made in Perpendicular times was found in the chancel, which was rebuilt, and, for some cause or other, made much narrower than the old chancel. This was shewn by the width of the chancel-arch, a part of which could be seen outside. It was, however, a very nice chancel, and the east window was a good specimen of the local Perpendicular. The appearance of it was spoiled by the blue glass placed around the mullions and tracery ; but if the eyes were fixed upon the tracery, it would be seen that it was a beautiful example of the Perpendicular period, and also had a form that was not often met with except in Somerset, where there was one complete pattern, filled in with another pattern. The roof of the chancel seemed to be a plaster imitation of the wooden roof of the nave. There appeared to have been also a great deal done in the seventeenth century, including the very fine pulpit. There was, he understood, a new west window—what kind of one there formerly was he could not say. Mr. Pinney remarked that the window was very bad before. Mr. Parker then called attention to the tie-beams, which formed a highly ornamental portion of the roof. These beams were now, as much as possible, done away with, because the builders did not know how to make them ornamental ; but in this case they had succeeded in making them a highly attractive feature of the church. Mr. Pinney said there was a tradition that the roof was brought from Muchelney Abbey. Mr. Freeman said there were traditions of the same kind in many places, and there was not much reliance to be placed on them. Mr. Parker pointed out that the carved oak did not form the actual roof, but was an ornamental ceiling. The notion that it was necessary to shew the inside of the slate or tile was altogether modern ; and

it was formerly a very frequent course to have a plain outer roof to support the actual covering, and an ornamental wooden ceiling within.

In the course of examining the church a conversation originated on the subject of subterranean passages, and Mr. Parker said it might be useful to mention that what were called subterranean passages were generally, in point of fact, *drains*. There was often a passage leading from a castle for a short distance to a postern gate, but anything like one of a mile in length was unknown in the middle ages. The drains were very perfectly constructed. Mr. Jones reminded the members of the subterranean passage which was said to exist at Stogursey, connecting the castle with the church, and which, at the last annual meeting, was found to be a well-constructed drain, through which a considerable stream of water was flowing at the time. Mr. Dickinson remarked that probably they were made in imitation of the large drains of Italy.

The next place visited was LYTE'S CARY, where a beautiful piece of ancient domestic architecture, formerly occupied as a mansion by the Lyte family, but now the property of F. H. Dickinson, Esq., engaged attention. Mr. Parker said it was one of the best and most perfect buildings of the period remaining. The house was rebuilt in the time of Henry VIII., but the chapel was of the period of Edward III., and must have originally communicated internally with the mansion. He drew attention to the finials of the gables, bearing crests of the Lyte family, and to a very beautiful oriel window. The domestic architecture of the time, he said, did not differ very materially from that of an earlier date; but, as the habits of the people changed, and the hall became less used for general purposes than before, the private rooms became of



Engraved by T. G. Crump from a Photograph by A. Gunn. Esq. Feb. 4. 1850.

LYTES CARY MANOR HOUSE - SOUTH FRONT.

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more importance, and dining and drawing-rooms were introduced, so that the family could retire, when they wished to do so, to their private apartments. The chapel, which is a beautiful example of architecture, was examined with evident interest, and the company also went through the hall (now used as a cider cellar), in which an original fireplace of the time of Henry VIII. was observed. The drawing and dining-rooms were equally, or perhaps more carefully noticed, Mr. Parker pointing out the chief peculiarities. The ceiling of the latter is in a highly perfect state, and of a remarkably fine description. The letters J. E. and L. H., appearing on one of the fronts, were shewn by the arms to be the initials of the Christian and surnames respectively of John Lyte and Elizabeth Horsey. A portion of the house is now occupied as a farm-house by Mr. Withy. Two plates of this interesting Manor House are given in the present volume, presented by F. H. Dickinson, Esq., from whom the Secretaries have also received the following notice of the place and the family of Lyte:—

“8, Upper Harley Street, March 24, 1860.

“My dear Mr. Jones,

“I am sorry I can give but an imperfect account of Lyte's Cary. The title deeds—almost the only means of information I have, besides the county histories—are at the Bankers, and I do not like to trouble my trustees just now by asking for them. They do not, so far as I remember, disclose much, merely the gradual squeezing out of the Lyte family by successive mortgages in the middle of the last century, when it is my impression that the property passed to the Lockyers, who were the patrons of the borough of Ilchester, and from them to my father or grandfather, about the beginning of this century.

“I find, however, in a recital of a deed concerning Tuck’s Cary, which I conceive to be what is marked in the Ordnance Map as Cook’s Cary, that it is stated to have been the inheritance of Henry Lyte, Esq., of Lyte’s Cary, afterwards of Thomas Lyte, gentleman, and of Thomas Cooke, Esq., of the same place, and from them it passed to Thomas Freke and John Freke Willes, soon after whose death, in 1799, this part of the property was bought by my grandfather. Upon it, skirting the river Cary, which gave its name to the Manor, is a long trench, which I conceive to be the remains of fish ponds. The dam for supplying these ponds with water may have been at the bridge where the road crosses to Kingsdon.

“There is said to have been a botanic garden at Lyte’s Cary in Elizabeth’s time, but I have not been able to make out from my tenant whether any peculiar plants remain so as to guess the site.

“I give here the title of a work on botany, published by one of the family :—

“‘A niewe Herball or historie of plantes wherein is contayned the whole discourse and perfect description of all sorts of Herbs and Plantes, their divers and sundry Kindes; their strange Figures, Fashions, and Shapes; their Names, Natures, Operations, and Vertues; and that not onely of those whiche are here growing in this our Countrie of Englande, but of all others also of forayne Realmes, commonly used in Physicke. First set forth in the Doutche or Almaigne tongue, by that learned D. Rembert Dodoens, Physition to the Emperour; and nowe first translated out of French into English by Henry Lyte Esquyer. At London by me Gerard Dewes, dwelling in Paules Churchyarde, at the sign of the Swanne. 1578.’

“There are other editions of 1586, 1595, and 1619. I do



Engraved by J. H. Granger, from a Photograph by C. L. Wainwright.

LYLES CARY MANOR HOUSE — EAST FRONT.

Ford, Printer, Taunton.

not find in the dedications and verses, Latin and English, in praise of the author, anything which shows him to have had any botanical garden of his own.

“I have seen in the Bishop's Register at Wells, an institution to a chapelry at Lyte's Cary, but whether this refers to the chapel attached to the house or to the north transept of the parish church I do not know. That transept belonged to Lyte's Cary, but so far as my memory serves, was reserved when the property was sold. It became the property of Mr. Shute, the south transept having been also his and mine jointly.

“The Lyte family have certainly been seated at Lyte's Cary from very early times. I have seen the name repeatedly in early deeds concerning an almshouse at Ilchester. The tradition in the neighbourhood is that they came in with William the Conqueror, and that the name is indicative of their being blacksmiths; certainly if this had been exactly true, their name would have been French, not English.

“There is a little book in the British Museum ‘Of Decimal Arithmetic by Henry Lyte, gentleman, 1619,’ and a reprint of ‘The light of Britayne, 1588.’ It is a quaint book, in which every English place is made out to be named after something of classical celebrity, and he by no means forgets his own home: ‘The famous ryver of Mœander is in Caria. This Mœander ryver had golden sands and singing swannes that sometime served Venus, queene of Phrygia and Caria, wherefore the swannes of Caria, and signettes of Troy in Britayne, must alwaies singe of Troy and the Troyans.’ And again: ‘Brute of Albania, the founder of Britayne, who brought in Carius a noble Prince of Lydia and Caria, with the people of Carie, and swans of Carie, into Britayne. By the oracles aforesaid the swans of Carie

in Britayne are now stirred up to maintain the veritie of the British historie.'

"The author seems to have spelt his name indifferently—Lyte and Lite; but the place always Lytes-carie.

"The swans of course are in allusion to the family arms, which remain on the house, and are given on a large wood cut to back the title page of the first edition of his work on botany. A chevron between three swans,* with a swan for a crest standing on a trumpet. 'Lætitia et spe immortalitalis' is written below, which may probably be the motto. Above is written, in allusion to the arms:—

Tortilis hic lituus niveusque olor arguit in te
Leite animum niveum pictus † et intrepidum,

and below:

Like as the swanne doth chaunt his tunes in signe of
ioyfull mynde,

So Lyte by learning shewes him selfe to Prince and
countrie kinde.

"There are lots of other conceits in Latin and English on a name so provocative of puns. I am sorry to have to add, for the honour of English printing, that this handsome book, which is full of curious woodcuts of plants, was printed at Antwerp.

"I am sorry I cannot give you any better account of Lyte's Cary to accompany the south and south-east views of the house which will appear in our journal, which may serve at least to remind some of the members of the society of the pleasant day we spent there last year.

"Believe me, yours very truly,

"F. H. DICKINSON."

* Edmondson gives—gules, a chevron between 3 swans argent. Crest, a demi swan argent, with wings expanded gules, against a plume of 3 feathers, the middle one of the first, the other two of the second.

† What does this mean?

Leaving this interesting spot, the next place marked down on the programme was CHARLTON MACKRELL; but as the hour was getting late, the party did not alight. In passing by, the grounds of Courthay were pointed out, for some time the residence of General Whitelock.

The excursionists next reached KINGWESTON, where, although there was not much of an archæological character awaiting their inspection, the very beautiful grounds and handsome mansion of F. H. Dickinson, Esq., and the elegant church which has been erected through the munificence of that gentleman, drew forth a warmth of commendation which shewed that, although archæologists are chiefly distinguished by their admiration of the antique, they are not insensible to beauty wherever it is found. Added to the attractions of the spot, a magnificent repast was provided by the worthy proprietor, to which the company were invited. The kindness of Mr. Dickinson and his lady was fully appreciated. While at Kingweston, Mr. Mayhew exhibited a series of elaborate plans and drawings, by Mr. Gilbert Scott, architect, representing Glastonbury Abbey Church as it originally stood.

The next place visited was BUTLEIGH, where the church, which has recently undergone restoration, and is now being enlarged, was examined, under the direction of the vicar, the Rev. F. Neville. The edifice was stated by Mr. Parker to have been originally a long and narrow church, with a tower in the centre, of the fourteenth century, (temp. Edward III.) A chapel was added by the late Lord Glastonbury, and subsequently the church was enlarged by the addition of transepts, in exact imitation of the old style. The west window was of the time of Henry VII. The chancel was restored by the late Dean of Windsor in a most tasteful and admirable manner. The

expense of the transepts was borne by the family. The company were invited to go through the noble mansion of R. Neville Grenville, Esq., and readily availed themselves of the opportunity, the esteemed proprietor most kindly exhibiting the many objects of interest and value in the library and among the miniatures and paintings, &c., with which the mansion is adorned.

The programme included also visits to Baltonsborough, West Pennard, and Ponter's Ball, and several of the gentlemen present were anxious to see the earthworks at the latter spot, but it was found to be impracticable. These works, in common with all the others of importance in the county, have been carefully examined by the Rev. F. Warre, who gave an interesting account of the works at Ponter's Ball, and round Glastonbury Tor, and elsewhere, which is printed in Part II.