

Excursion: Wednesday.

A large party left Taunton in the morning on an excursion, the first place visited being a

Quarry in the grounds at Glastonbury.

Mr. W. A. JONES pointed out the junction of the Syenite with the Devonian rock.

Mr. W. BOYD DAWKINS, F.R.S., mounted an eminence and explained the composition of the great mass of igneous rocks on which he stood. It belonged to the crystalline division—the order of rocks poured out through active volcanoes. It was not of considerable extent, and occupied a space between the Devonian stratified rocks of the country. The Devonian rocks were very much twisted and crumpled about, and that could only have been induced by enormous exertion from below. First of all, during the time these Devonian rocks were crumpled and twisted and contorted, there were certain fissures made in them, and subsequently the molten matter from below was forced upwards through the broken fissures to occupy the cool space. It had been baked, and looked as if it had been put into a smelter's oven. It was usual to call it Syenite, but he was not altogether satisfied that it was Syenite. It seemed rather to be allied to the class of volcanic rocks to which basalt belonged, and which were found largely in the Mendip Hills.

Mr. W. A. JONES said that the rock first became known in 1814. The Secretary of the Geological Society found accidentally at Cheddon a rock which led him to make the enquiry. They had evidence of the quarry having been opened and worked extensively, for in taking down the old towers of St. Mary's and St. James' at Taunton great masses of the rock were found built into them. Ten years ago he heard a story from a labourer there to the effect that his master (Mr. Warre) had gone to a barber's shop in London, and noticed the barber with considerable delight sharpening his razor on a hone, which he was told upon enquiry came from a place called Hestercombe down in the country. He understood that it was frequently used as a hone-stone. In reply to the President, as to whether he found the rock radiating from any central mass, or any linear expansion, he replied that no other junction had been found. Some of the same character of rock was, he believed, found near Wrington, and the Malvern Hills were igneous rocks, of very much the same character. On behalf of the Committee he acknowledged the courtesy of Mr. Knollys and Mr. Parsons, the agents of Lord Ashburton and Lord Portman, for the facilities they had given for the examination of the rocks and the inspection of the grounds.

Mr. R. K. M. KING read the following extracts relating to this rock from Corner's Geological Survey :—

The rocks of this district differ in mineralogical character, but the different varieties graduate so insensibly into each other, that they may be considered as one common formation. A large portion have the structure of sandstones, the component parts varying in size from that of mustard seed to such a degree of fineness that the particles can with difficulty be discerned.

Quartz and clay are the essential component parts of all the varieties, but in different proportions. The quartz, in some instances, prevails, to the entire exclusion of any other ingredient forming a granular quartz rock. The coarse varieties have abundance of quartz, but clay is the principal ingredient of the slaty kinds. They have all an internal stratified structure, which is less apparent in those of a coarse grain, but becomes more distinct as the texture becomes finer, and at last the rock graduates into a fine grained slate, divisible into laminæ as thin as paper, and having the smooth silky feel and shining surface of the clay slate of a primary country. Alternation of the fine-grained slaty varieties with those of the coarsest structure in many successive strata, and without any regularity of position, are of constant occurrence, and frequently without any gradation of one structure into another. In some instances portions of slate are contained in the coarse-grained varieties. Scales of mica are frequent, and they all contain oxide of iron, and to the different states of this oxide their various colours are, no doubt, to be ascribed. The prevailing colours are reddish brown, and greenish grey, and there are many intermediate shades and mixtures of these colours. Some of the slaty varieties are of a purplish hue, occasionally spotted with green. I did not discover a trace of any organic body in either variety, but in many places great beds of limestone, full of madrepores, are contained in the slate, the limestone and slate towards the external part of the beds being inter-stratified. Veins of quartz, which are often of great magnitude, are of constant occurrence, being sometimes accompanied by calcareous spar and ferriferous carbonate of lime. Veins of sulphate of barytes are not uncommon. The layers composed of quartz, chlorite, and ferriferous carbonate of lime are often interposed between the strata of slate, and pyrites is sometimes disseminated through the mass of the rock. Copper in the state of sulphurate and malachite and veins of hematite are frequently found, and

nests of copper ore of considerable magnitude have been found in the subordinate beds of limestone.

I shall call this series of rocks a *Grauwacke Formation*.

As the ends of the inclined slaty strata rise to the surface they become either vertical or are very much twisted, with a succession of sharp angular bendings and a fracture at every angle. The most remarkable instances of these contortions are to be seen in the lanes between Enmore and West Monkton, and in the other roads which cross the south-eastern ridges of the Quantock Hills, and at Adsborough and the lane leading to Tarr, near Kingston, where they are covered by horizontal beds of red argillaceous sandstone and conglomerate.

Near Ely Green, in the side of the combe called Dibbles and in the neighbourhood of Cheddon Fitzpaine, I observed a variety of slate, differing considerably in appearance from any I met with in the district. It is of a blueish green colour, apparently derived from chlorite, with purplish stains, and including small spherical masses of a white earthy texture, which give to the mass an amygdaloid structure. It may be considered as a variety of argillaceous slate, and as it occurs in strata conformable with the usual varieties of the grauwacke formation, it belongs, I have no doubt, to the same class. It is found very useful as a fire stone.

In passing through Cheddon Fitzpaine I found granite, called by the country people, "Pottle stone," in situ, and whetstone. The last was a greenish compact stone, very like some iron stones. The granite is small grained, and consists of dull, flesh-coloured feldspar, with green mica and a small quantity of quartz.

Within a few yards of the granite the inclination of the strata is about 35 degrees, but as it approaches nearer to it the angle increases to 63 degrees.

The granite as it approaches the slate is much finer grained, and at the contact there is an indistinct blending of the two, and there is an appearance of fragments of slate united by a granitic cement.

The Rev. H. H. WINWOOD said the question had been asked whether the Quantocks were old red sandstone or Devonian. The latter were divided into lower, middle, and upper, and at the base of all was a coarse sandstone. The Quantocks represented the middle Devonian division, consisting of red sandstone and slate. It remained for an energetic scientific man like the President to bore through the red sandstone, and find what was below—perhaps the black mineral, which was now so valuable.

The PRESIDENT said that in the neighbourhood of Burlescombe and Holcombe Rogus there were some very thin carboniferous bits, and it was not at all impossible that still further south, working-beds might be found; but it was not a favourable symptom that the marine equivalents of the carboniferous formation were very well known, and showed no indications of workable coal. It was very possible that at a time long before the upheaving of the Mendips they might have been covered with coal, and that it might have been extended into the Bridgwater level and some distance west. The chance of finding coal was remote, and pregnant with a great deal of cost; and looking at the uncarboniferous state of Devonshire it would be very doubtful whether it would be found in a workable state. So, until more was known about it, landowners would not sink a great deal of money in boring, when they could spend it in improving their estates.

Mr. W. BOYD DAWKINS said the first thing to be taken into consideration was the cost of boring for coal. As one of the originators of the borings in Sussex he said that the cost was about £1 a foot. It was a well-ascertained fact that the coal measures on the Mendips, which were enormously valuable, were cut off by that range of hills, and appeared to die away as they approached the hills, because

the sea had washed the edges of the coal away. There was no geological doubt, however, that the coal-field actually extended to the south of the Mendips.

After this digression on coal, the party descended to the main quarry, where the stone was found to be of a much more decided granite character.

The PRESIDENT said it frequently occurred that there was an appearance of stratification which was deceptive, and there was an example of it here. The lines abutted very sharply, but the joints were not carried through. The explanation of this was found in the paper which had been read by Mr. King.

Gestercombe House.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said the only fragments of the old building visible were the buttresses of the hall, of the time of Henry VII.

The PRESIDENT said there was another buttress on the other side of the house, and there were also one or two Elizabethan windows. He produced a double-handed sword, which is said to have been taken from King John of France, at the battle of Poitiers, by John la Warre. That a sword was so taken was undoubted, and this one had been in the possession of the family for a great number of years, and always bore its present history.

Mr. F. H. DICKINSON thought that the inscription must be contemporaneous with the making of the weapon. The characters were Roman.

Mr. JOHN BATTEN said it was perfectly clear that John, King of France, surrendered after much contention to John la Warre and Sir John Pelham. He could have been no direct ancestor of the Warres, however, or the peerage would have descended to the family.

The sword has inscribed on one side a cross, with the monogram I.H.S., and on the other

EN GLADIUM JOHANNIS GALLIÆ R.

The Rev. T. HUGO, M.A., here read a paper on "Hestercombe," which is printed in Part II., page 136.

Mr. BATTEN exhibited an old deed relating to Hestercombe, of the date of Edward III.

Kingston Church*

was the next resort, and here the vicar (Rev. I. S. Gale) met the visitors, who were further welcomed by merry peals from the bells. The churchyard contains a grand old yew of great dimensions.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said that this church differed from most others in the neighbourhood. A considerable portion remained of the Early English style of the beginning of the 13th century. The chancel had been almost entirely rebuilt. There was no mark of any chancel arch, but it was impossible to say what the original termination was; it was exceedingly probable that there was an apse at the end. The columns indicated that there was no chancel arch at that point. The present ceiling also belonged to a late period. The tower was one of the finest of Somersetshire towers of the time of Henry VII., and the fan tracery vault at the porch was a remarkable feature. The greater part had been carefully restored, and great credit was due for the faithful manner in which this had been done. There was a fine tomb in the Decorated style, of the date of Richard II., and supposed to contain the remains of one of the Warre family. The painted glass

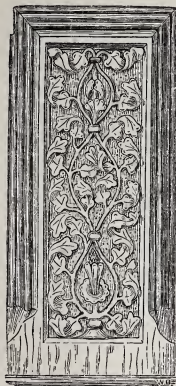
* An account of this Church, by the late Rev. Eccles J. Carter, together with engravings of the tower and tomb of the Warre family, will be found in the volume of the Society's Proceedings for 1853, p. 33.

in the window came from the chapel at Hestercombe, but was not ancient.* The pewing was quite unique. Somersetshire benches he considered the best church furniture to be seen anywhere in the world. All over the Continent they had the greatish rubbish of chairs piled up in the churches, and anything like these benches was seldom seen except in the east and west of England. Those in this church were every one different and beautifully carved. One was dated 1522, and they were in the fashion of the period of the beginning of the 16th century. The pew system began in Scotland, and spread through the centre of England into France. That fashion prevailed for two or three centuries, and destroyed these beautiful benches which all antiquarians agreed were the finest church furniture. Passing into the churchyard Mr. Parker called attention to the fine outline of the tower, which was a very rich example in decoration altogether, little pinnacles attaching to the buttresses all the way up. The parapet was open, and the windows of the tower pierced to keep out the birds—a feature of a peculiarly Somersetshire character. Notice having been drawn to the rough-casting, he said that the carrying out of the work in that manner had no doubt an economical solution. The niches, instead of standing upon corbels, rested upon little shafts; the images were gone; and the feature was an unusual one.

The following extracts from Heale's excellent work on the "History of Church Seats or Pews" will show that Somerset was famous for its bench-ends :—

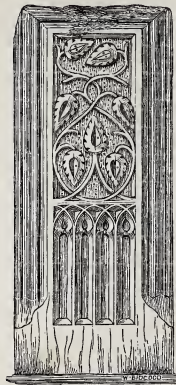
The early pews were, beyond all question, simply a row of benches with backs, and those which are now commonly termed "open seats" are examples of early pews, or copies or

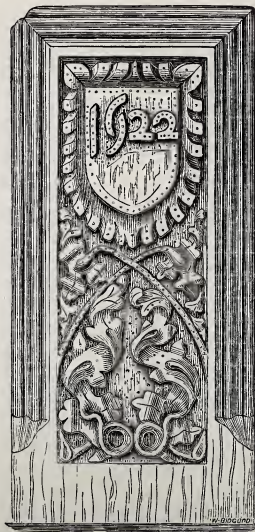
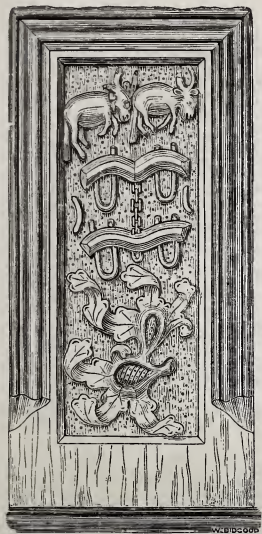
* The armorial bearings shown are those of families connected with the Warres.



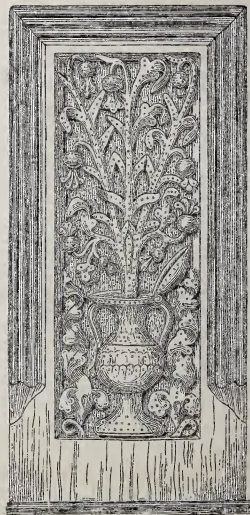
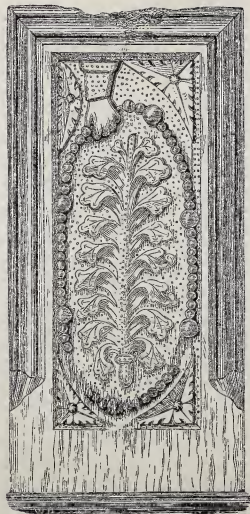
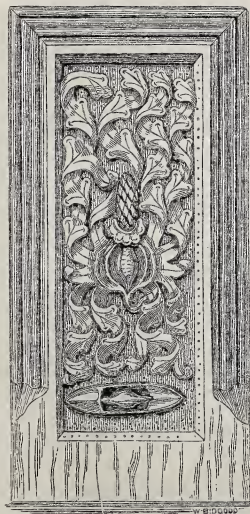
THE accompanying pages contain Engravings of a selection from the Ancient Bench-ends of the Church of KINGSTON ST. MARY, in the county of Somerset. They were promised as a donation for the County Archæological Society to WILLIAM ARTHUR JONES, Esq., M.A., in the Excursion which he organized, and are now inscribed to his honoured memory by one of his sorrowing friends,

W. E. S.





BENCH-ENDS. KINGSTON ST. MARY, SOMERSET.



BENCH-ENDS. KINGSTON ST. MARY, SOMERSET.

imitations of them. . . . They were always substantial and of good durable material, such as oak or beech, and capitally joined and fitted. . . . Perhaps the earliest existing pew is at St. John's Church, Winchester: the date may safely be fixed as late Decorated work. . . . The most beautiful early pews are to be found in Norfolk, with adjoining parts of Lincolnshire and Suffolk, and in Somerset and Devon. . . . Magnificent specimens exist at Cheddar, Somerset. . . . Beautiful bench-ends, decorated with geometric traceried panelling, occur at Crowcombe. . . . Such panelling, combined with rich carving, is seen at Trull, and carving alone at Milverton. . . . At Clapton the bench-ends, though perfectly devoid of all other ornament, have their elbows both curled in a very unusual manner.* . . . At Nettlecombe are beautiful specimens of an early period. . . . At Broomfield we find the sacred monogram within a carved bordure of vine with grapes.† . . . A very singular carved bench-end occurs at Spaxton, representing a fuller at work, with shears, a comb, and other implements, in the vacancies of the panel.‡ . . . At Milverton we have the royal arms, probably of Henry VIII, and in the same church are fine specimens carved with medallions, excellent likenesses of Queen Mary kneeling, and also portraits of Cardinal Pole and Bishop Gardiner. . . . It is only at a rather late period that we meet with any date upon the pews. The earliest appears to be one at Bishops Hull, where some good seats bear the date 1530; one at Crowcombe bears the date MCCCCXXXIII. Some very poor specimens at Milverton are dated 1540. . . . At what time doors were added we are unable to discover; some benches at Bishops Hull have a bar across by way of door.

By the invitation of Mr. W. E. Surtees, the Society were entertained in the adjoining school-room at an

* Engraving in Vol. X. of the Society's Proceedings.

† " Vol. V. " "

‡ " Vol. VIII. " "

excellent luncheon. A hearty vote of thanks was subsequently passed to Mr. Surtees on the motion of the President, and the excursionists proceeded to

Norton Fitzwarren Church.

The Rev. T. HUGO pointed out the screen, which he said was as fine a one as would be found anywhere. It contained a carved representation of two dragons and a plough in the centre. According to the legend the dragon who lived on the hill seemed to have infested the fields where the ploughmen were, and here he was in pursuit of the men. The plough was of a mediæval character. One circumstance might lead to the discovery of the date of its construction—the name of the churchwarden for the time being was carved upon it. Its age was not very far before the year 1500. It ought to be coloured, as was no doubt the intention of the builder.

Mr. JONES and Mr. PARKER thought the representation was merely as usual allegorical of the results of sloth and industry, or virtue and vice.

The PRESIDENT pointed out that the upper line of foliage appeared to be of a different character from the rest, and asked whether it was likely to be of the same date.

Mr. HUGO thought it was so.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said the church was of an early character, probably late in the 14th century, and had been restored carefully and well. The date was very likely Richard II, and the windows were the same. There was no staircase to the rood loft, but he was informed that when the wall was rebuilt it was not considered necessary to rebuild the staircase from the outer wall. It was a rood loft, and not merely a rood screen. In the chancel there were remains of an earlier church of the 13th cen-

tury. The tower belonged to a later period, but Richard II would do well for it. He thought the greater part of the church was built in the latter part of the 14th century.

The Rev. J. P. HEWETT (rector) mentioned that in the year 1825 the screen, which until then had been in its original state, was covered with a coat of oak paint over the colouring.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., describing the tower from the exterior, said it was remarkable, the treble set of gargoyles being very unusual. The two lower ones could only have been meant for ornaments. It was certainly earlier than the general character of Somersetshire towers.

The PRESIDENT pointed out in the south-west corner of the churchyard a spot which was used as a great burying-place for gipsies, who were brought from all parts of the country to be buried there.

Ascending a hill in the rear of the church the party found themselves in

Norton Camp.*

The Rev. Prebendary SCARTH, before entering the camp or city, pointed out the line of fortification from east to west, and the area on the top where the city stood, together with the circuit of the entrenchment. It was an entrenchment, he said, which had not been understood in former times. It had fallen to him to take them over three or four earthworks in succession—first the noble one at Cadbury, near Wincanton, one of the finest in England, and last year at Hambdon, with its undoubted Roman entrenchment following the course of the hill, amphitheatre, and curious stones. The circuit of the latter camp was

* A paper on this camp, by the late Rev. F. Warre, will be found in the first volume of the Society's Proceedings.

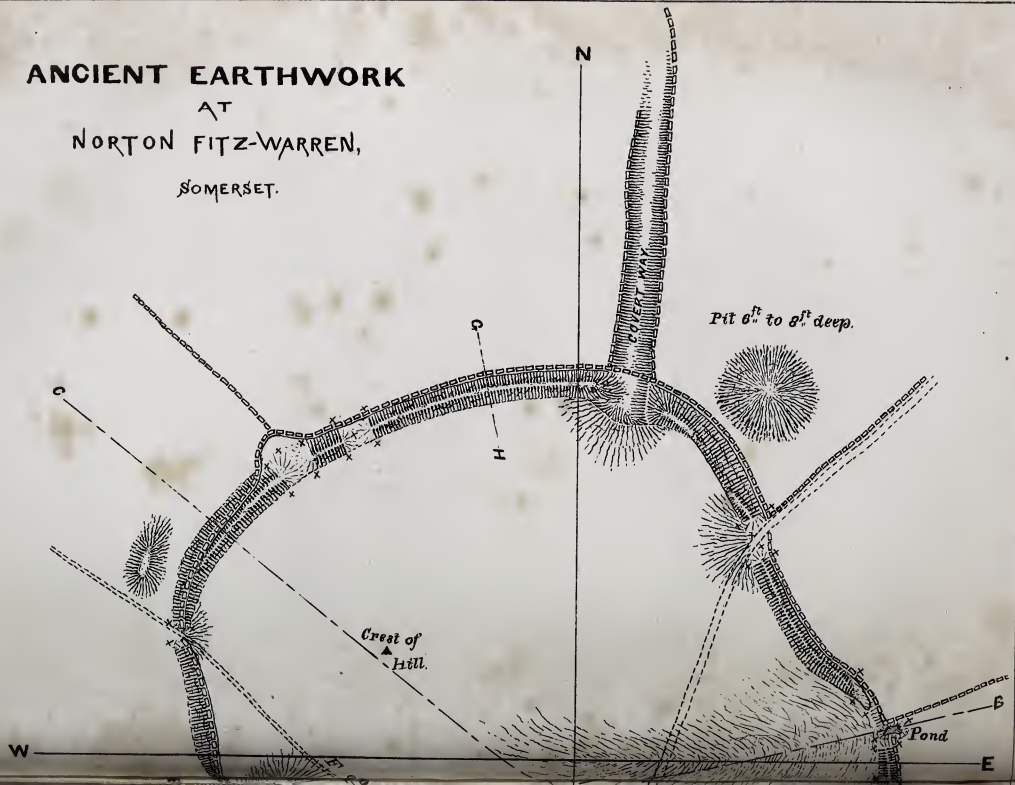
three miles, but a great portion of it had been destroyed by quarrying. There were also the camps of Clifton Down, which he had the opportunity of explaining some time ago.* At Norton the entrenchments seem to have been of a different kind, and simple earthworks, resembling those at Kenchester. The form of the city they were about to enter strongly reminded him of Kenchester, the Roman Magna, and also, in some degree, of Silchester. It had very much the appearance of an ancient Roman city, and stood at the intersection of two ancient Roman roads, which had not been quite made out. He looked upon it as the origin of the town of Taunton, and it was occupied, probably, in times prior to the Romans. It did not convey the idea of a British stronghold, although it might have been an inferior one. Having made part of the circuit of the field crowning the hill, he pointed out places where natural depressions and spurs had been improved by the holders of the camp, and also sections of the rampart and covered road.

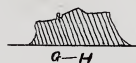
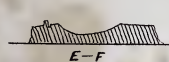
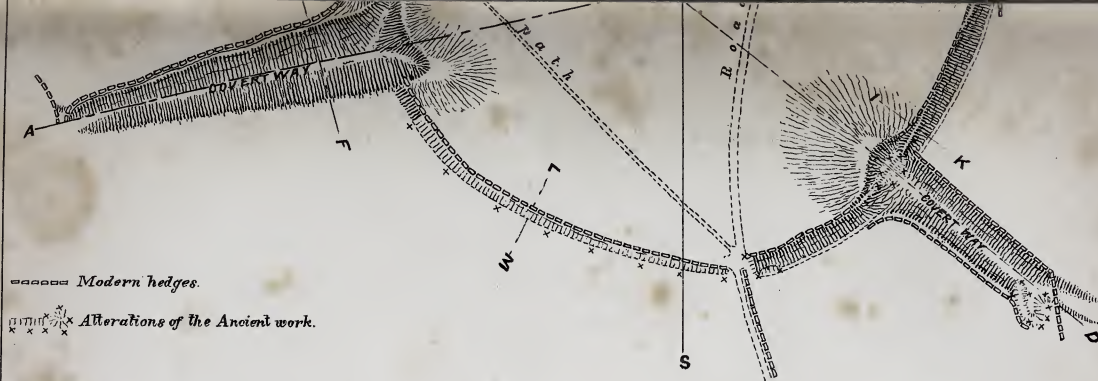
Mr. W. A. JONES stated that in digging for the railway, in the valley below the hill, a large collection of Roman pottery was found. It was now in the Museum, and he recommended its inspection.

Prebendary SCARTH, in a field sloping to the west, pointed out what he believed to have been the amphitheatre. It was, he said, four years ago since the Society went to Charter House and Mendip, and saw one of the camp amphitheatres, not very far distant from the camp itself. Last year they saw one within the enclosure on Ham Hill. Directly he came here and looked at the regular form of this depression, he had very little doubt

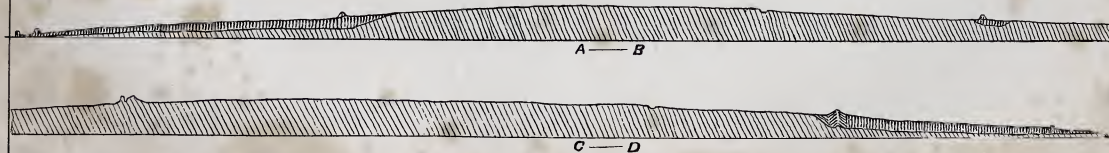
* Proceedings of the Society, Vol. XV., p. 30.

ANCIENT EARTHWORK
AT
NORTON FITZ-WARREN,
SOMERSET.





SECTIONS.



Surveyed and drawn by C.W.Dymond, C.E. Sept^r 1872.

Scale 1 inch = 200 feet.

W^m Bidgood, lith.

that it was the amphitheatre of the camp. He had examined those at Silchester, Cirencester, and Dorchester, the latter remains being perhaps the most perfect of any. The amphitheatre was generally situated outside the gates of the camp, and not far from it, and was constructed for the purpose of exercises and exhibitions of various kinds. Legions often had their private gladiators for the sake of their own amusement. This, then, was one of the proofs that the place had been under Roman occupation, but he could not say that it was made exclusively by the Romans. People might say it was a pond, but in that case they would not find it so regular after the lapse of so many years under the plough. The seats had naturally been effaced. The irregularity of the rampart was no proof that it was not Roman, because when the Romans took possession of a hill they adapted the fortification to its form. No inscriptions are recorded to have been found there, and no altars, which generally enabled persons to fix the date, but these were often wantonly destroyed or neglected, and lost. It was a melancholy thing that the inscriptions, altars, mile-stones, and other remains of Roman times had been so frequently destroyed. Only, perhaps, one or two Roman mile-stones had been found in this part of the country.

Mr. W. A. JONES, speaking of the Roman occupation, said that within two miles as the crow flies of the Cothelstone tower, there were still remains of a Roman camp such as Mr. Clark described on Tuesday.

Mr. G. T. CLARK said that when any earthwork was observed to be rectangular in its outline, the presumption was that it was Roman ; but if traces of Roman occupation were found around, the presumption was turned into a certainty. The entrances to this camp appeared to be of

the usual form of British entrances, and he thought that the spot was occupied, not by a disciplined body of men, but by a tribe, though the Romans might have modified it. As to the depression in question, he must confess that he had doubts as to it having been an amphitheatre.

The remaining portions of the camp having been investigated, an onward move was made to

Bishops Cull Church.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said there was very little to say about the edifice. There were just the remains of an old chancel, and the most curious thing in the church was the bench-end representing the Resurrection. A most peculiar feature was the octagonal tower.

Mr. W. A. JONES explained the history of the shields in the chancel window, and remarked that here was the tomb-stone of Dr. Crotch.

The Manor House,

formerly the residence of the Farewells, with its rich stone porch and armorial bearings, carved in stone, having been inspected by the courtesy of Mr. Johnson, the excursionists returned to Taunton; many, however, paid a visit to Trull Church.

Evening Meeting.

There was a Meeting in the Great Hall of the Castle in the evening. The President occupied the chair, and called upon

Mr. W. A. JONES, M.A., who read a paper "On the Customs of the Manor of Taunton Deane," which is printed in Part II. page 77.

At the conclusion of the reading,

Mr. F. H. DICKINSON remarked that they were again in the place where the Society was formed, and nothing could be more appropriate than that they should have such an account of the customs connected with the place as Mr. Jones had given them. The enquiry into the boundaries of our ancient parishes, hundreds, and counties, was attended with a great deal of difficulty ; but there were materials scattered throughout their borders from which information might be obtained. There was no reason to suppose that the local laws, of which Mr. Jones had spoken, differed from the rest of the kingdom of Wessex. They owed Mr. Jones great thanks for arranging everything connected with his subject so clearly and admirably. Mr. Jones was a person to whom the Society was more indebted now than to any other person, since they had lost their dear friend Mr. Warre, who was one of the founders of the Society. He therefore moved that the thanks of the meeting be given to Mr. Jones.

Mr. J. BATTEN, in seconding the proposition, observed that there was nothing peculiar in the customs except in the minor details.

The PRESIDENT, in putting the motion to the meeting, expressed his hearty thanks to Mr. Jones for the extremely valuable paper he had given.

The vote was carried by acclamation.

The Rev. W. TUCKWELL, M.A., read a paper "On the Flora of the Quantocks," which will be found in Part II., page 177.

The PRESIDENT spoke eulogistically of the manner of treatment adopted, and called for a vote of thanks, which was readily given.

The Rev. H. H. WINWOOD said the flora of the

Quantocks might have been worked out, but the geology of the range was not, and there was a great deal to be done there now.

The PRESIDENT strongly recommended botanists to study the soil and subsoil upon which the plants grew. This was of the greatest possible importance, and by such means two or three sciences could be joined together ; the enjoyment would be enhanced, and many secrets of nature laid bare.

The Rev. J. COLEMAN then read the following

*Extracts from the Parish Register of Stoke St.
Gregory.*

I am about to occupy your time for ten minutes with some extracts from the old register-books of the parish of Stoke St. Gregory. Most of them, I venture to think, have some interest of a local character.

The first page of the oldest register of the parish of Stoke St. Gregory is occupied with this preface—

“ A register of weddings, christnings, and burialls within the parish of Gregoristoke from the yere of our Lord 1561, till this present year 1600, diligentlie pūsed and faithfully copied out of the old booke (according to the order in that be halfe provided) by mee, Thomas Cutler, curate of the said parish.

“ Now, whereas by the said order it was appointed that this book should be copied out from the first yere of the raigne of our soueraigne lady Queen Elizabeth, sithens which yere the book was by theiues amongst other things stollen out of the church, and therefore wanteth four yeres : and then ab anno domini, 1561, till the yere 1573, so indiscreetly handled that when the book was shewed before the Queene’s visitours, the parishioners, as I have herd by credible report, were grievously amerced.

“ Therefore I hope euery indifferent man will charitably

judge of my dealing in copying out of this book, for I haue doon it as I could, and not as I would, yet somewhat better than I found it. I present it to your vewe. Yours in the Lord, Thomas Cutler."

The same religious regard for the parish register which is shown in "Master Thomas Cutler, minister of this parish of Gregoristoke," by this first extract, appears also in the next page. It is an apology for his change from the old style to the new—"and all done (he adds) in the English tung for euery man to reade, being desirous rather to benefit other then at the handes of the unlearned to hunt for cōmendacion of learning, being altogether unworthy thereof.—Yours, Thomas Cutler." πάντοτε δόξα Θεῷ

A series of historical events is noted as follows :—

1. Queen of Scots beheaded, February 8, ano domini 1586. The sumer next following was whete at 7s. 6d. ye bushell.

2. A great earthquake in most parts of England, Apr. 6, 1580.

3. England invaded by Spaniards, July 21, 1580.

4. Whete sold for 17s. a bushel in ano dom. 1597.

5. Earle of Essex beheaded, Feb. 25, ano dom. 1601.

6. Queen Elizabeth departed this life, March 24, 1602:

7. King James was proclaymed King of England eodem die.

8. An horrible treason by gunpowder disclosed Novemb. 5, 1605.

Battle of Sedgemoor, July 6, 1685, between 1 and 2.30 a.m. Monday morning.

After this follows an entry made in the year 1719 :—

"The scription in a window of our Parish Church of Gregory stoke is this,—

"Will^s Conqueror, occiso Haraldo, Regno potitus, istam ecclesiam in suis possessionibus."

E. Pierce, Vicar 1719.

This was the Rev. Ezra Pierce, who was vicar of North

Curry, and planted the trees in the churchyard of that parish.

Next occurs this entry :—

“Memorandum, that Richard Maiente, of the city of Exeter, supposed to be a Papist, read the oath of supremacy in the Chancell of Gregorie Stoke, on Sunday the 22nd of August anno dmi. 1624, and then and there did receive the Communion at the hands of mee Tristram Lawrence, then minister of the Parish of Gregory Stoke aforesayd.”

Another entry is this :—

Gregory Stoke Procession for viewing the bounds of the parish was May 28th and 29th 1717. By common guess 22 miles round.

Ezra Pierce, Vicar.

Thomas Gander

Thomas Hemborough

} Churchwardens.

In A.D. 1712 the parish is for the first time called Stoke St. Gregory, the name of its patron saint having always before this preceded, *e.g.*, Gregory-Stoke.

Were I addressing an audience composed of my former parishioners, their old parish registers would supply me with many a topic both of interest and amusement to them, but the members of this Association could justly charge me with wearying them out if I favoured them with purely local matters, connecting the past with the present. But there are yet one or two matters, common alike to this and other parishes, suggested by a search into the registers of Stoke St. Gregory.

As late as 1798 there was a Quakers' Meeting House standing in the parish, all traces of which are gone ; and there was ground which is named “The Quakers' Burying Platt,” where at least twelve bodies are recorded to have been interred between A.D. 1689 and A.D. 1692.

In the hamlet of Stathe, some two miles from the parish

church, there is a field called Chapplehay. On this site there was an ancient chapel standing, and bodies were there interred. All traces of the use to which this ground has, in days gone by, been put is now effaced. Such instances of fields now given over to the plough or the dairy, but once set apart as God's acre, and still having buried there stones of the sanctuary, are by no means uncommon in the county ; and it seems to me a work worthy of this Society, and one which would meet with sympathy from those most immediately interested in the lands, if an effort were made to erect upon these sites some slight memorial of their having once been devoted to the worship and service of Almighty God.

I have here some original presentments made by the churchwardens of Stoke St. Gregory and North Curry, in the years 1664, 1673, 1680, and 1698, the first of which is curious :—

Gregory Stoke—The presentment of the churchwardens and sideman of Gregory Stoke, made at the visitacōn of the Wor^{ll} William Peirs, Doctor of Divinity, officiall to the Right Wor^{ll} the Deane and Chapter of the Cathedrale Church in Wells, the fourteenth day of October, 1664.

Imp^{ris} wee p'sent ye Church Leads to be in some defect and out of reparacōn.

Item wee p'sent wee have no white linnen cloth for ye Comunion Table.

Item that wee have no booke of homilies.

Item that wee have no Surplice.

Item that wee have no booke to write the names and licences of strange preachers.

Item that wee have no Herse cloth for ye buriall of ye dead.

Item wee p'sent that ye Minister hath not yet p'formed his office in Cathechising the children because he hath two cures to serve.

Item wee p'sent Thomas Leaky and Emme his wife for incontineney before marriage, and ther of there hath been and is a cōmon fame in this the s^d P^{sh}

Item wee p'sent Marvell Jent the wife of Christopher Jent for causing of strife between her neighbours and for that she is a raylor.

Item wee p'sent Joseph Hancock for not paying his rates to the Church being four behind. William Sain for the like being 2s. 2d. behind. William Pocock for the like being 6 behind. Thomas Coombe, senr., for the like being 4d. behind. Elizabeth Ley, widdow, for the like being 8d. behind. Jane Powell, widdow, for the like being 01s. 04d. behind. Thomas Godwin for the like being 01s. 02d. behind. Gregory Powell, the elder, for the like being 01s. 06d. behind. Thomas Coombe, jun., for the like being 4d. behind.

Item wee p'sent the old Churchwardens for not giving up of their last Accompts, but they p'mise that it shall be speedily done.

John Willicomb	}	Churchwardens.
Wm. Clements		
		Gilburd Bray, Sideman.

The following is a presentment from the Churchwardens of North Curry in the year 1680 :—

Somsett	{	The P'esentment of the Churchwardens of the Parish Church of North Cory duely elected for the year 1680.
North Cory		
Peculiar		

Wee p'sent Herny Ffoster, William Brownsford Churchwardens for the last yeare, and William Verrier and Edward Derham als. Ffarmer, Churchwardens for the yeare before, for that they with the Confedracy of John Ffox, John Sanddy, Thomas Owen, and Robert Hill, jr. did take downe a bell out of the Tower of the parysh church of North Cory aforesd, and the same bell did carey away and refuse to bring it againe to the damage of the p'shionrs of the sayd parish fforty pounds.

Robert Handall
Hennery Nurton.

The PRESIDENT observed that Mr. Coleman had opened an important mine of information, which revealed traits of character and local feeling, and enabled historians in future days to draw pictures which they would not otherwise be able to present.

Mr. W. E. SURTEES mentioned that a distinguished antiquarian of former days published a book of the interesting and curious extracts from the parish registers of the county of Durham. If Mr. Coleman or any other gentleman would follow that example in the interests of Somersetshire, he would confer upon the county a very great service.

Mr. E. A. FREEMAN, D.C.L., remarked that of the 16th century they had in Mr. Coleman's paper exactly such a collection of local annals as they might have had 700 or 800 years ago. These notices were the same sort of things which they found in the shorter and more meagre annals out of which our history was made. The main events of Elizabeth's reign were put down without note or comment, and, supposing that the larger histories were to vanish, they would be in much the same position in years to come, with regard to Elizabeth's history, as they were of early matters. It struck him how the old names were changing; this was plain from the records of Stoke St. Gregory. So also at the present time continual alterations were being made in the names of the colleges of Cambridge and streets all over the country, something grander than the original titles being sought. Every lane must now be turned into a "street," and thus some little bit of history was wiped out.

Mr. G. T. CLARK said there were not many parish registers which contained annals, but there was one valuable bit of information which could be derived from them—

the classification of the names. There was no body of men more active than rural clergymen, but there were times in the winter when they could find an opportunity to take up the registers and make a classification of the names, and draw certain conclusions as to the length of time names remained in the parish. They would thus derive a vast amount of information as to the transitional state of the rural population.

The PRESIDENT said that although names might not remain many years in a certain parish, they remained an enormous time in one neighbourhood.

Mr. F. H. DICKINSON suspected it would be found that our names were curiously local.

Mr. E. CHISHOLM-BATTEN thought that names were very permanent in this neighbourhood. He had been told that the descendants of the people who took the body of William Rufus into Winchester were still in the same position of life, and bearing the same name.

Mr. M. J. C. BUCKLEY said that the common names of many of our English flowers had been changed after 1530. In many of the present names of plants we retained part of the original name and cut off the rest. It would be a very interesting and useful thing to rescue those names from the neglect into which they had fallen.

The Rev. THOS. HUGO, M.A., then read a paper "On the Hospital of St. Margaret, Taunton," which is given in Part II., page 100.

At the conclusion of the reading, a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Hugo, on the motion of the President.

Mr. JOHN BATTEN proposed that the Annual Meeting for 1873 should be held at Sherborne.

Mr. JONES stated reasons why it should be held at Wells, but promised the attention of the Council to the subject.