

## Excursion: Thursday.

The members left Taunton in the morning on a second Excursion. After a brief halt to inspect the remains of ST. MARGARET'S HOSPITAL, on the outskirts of the town, the party proceeded to walk through the

### Old Road to Bathpool.

At a point where the pitched causeway rises high above the road, a stoppage was made, and

The Rev. Prebendary SCARTH said his knowledge of Roman roads only extended to this country, many of which were in deep hollows like this, but whether formed so, or worked by the lapse of ages, no one could say. They had the advantage of Mr. Parker's company, however. He knew the ancient roads in Italy, and might be able to say something to determine what were original Roman roads in this country. There were certain places where the roads were worn into deep hollows as this was, but they could be traced best over hard hills where the plough had not been. In many places these roads were 16 feet wide, had a trench on each side in order to carry off the water, were formed of the materials of the country, and were perfectly hard. Then, chiefly in descending hills, they were found worn into deep hollows like this, but which unfortunately had been in the progress of improvement very much filled in. In the neighbourhood of Bath some of them had been completely filled in. He hoped, however, that this one would be preserved intact, for it was well worthy of preservation. Happily where he was at present residing he had a portion of glebe containing an old road very similar to this, on the road from Bridgwater

to Bristol. He prized it far more than the other portions of the land, and would take care that it should never be filled up while he could help it. These roads were among the most curious remains in England, and he had long wished for a perfect map of the Roman roads in Britain. One was a far too cautious map, and only represented those roads which every one knew. They had no doubt about the great military roads, but as there are certain turnpike and bye-roads used now, so there were in the times of the Romans. He had often pressed it at their meetings that there should be a good map made of Roman Britain. Each county society might take up the matter, but no single man could attempt to do justice to it. Two or three men in each county might undertake the task.

The Rev. T. HUGO said he had always thought that this road was constructed anterior to Roman times, by the original inhabitants of the country. There could be very little doubt at all events that it was used by the Romans. A road from this, running through Holloway, went not far from Castle Neroche; another diverging to the west carried them by Galmington and Wellington into Devonshire. By-and-bye they would get to a still more interesting point of the road. Here of course it was quite clear that the lapse of ages had resulted in the very worn and hollow way, but he was sure that for many years all the traffic of the west between Taunton, London, and Bristol came along this road. The pitched causeway was evidently intended for the use of foot passengers, and he should like to know the date of it.

Mr. R. K. M. KING pointed out one great peculiarity in regard to the pitched way. The Society, in walking through, would observe what had been noticed by the inhabitants for a great length of time—that whoever con-

structed the pitching, whether Romans or people anterior to them, very great pains indeed were taken to construct a permanent way. It was true that much of it was formed from the material of the parish, the hardest of the sandstone, but a large quantity of flint was also introduced, evidently from the Blackdown Hills, the very place from which they still obtained flint for their roads.

Mr. F. H. DICKINSON agreed that they ought to have some account taken of the old roads. Hollow roads occurred in all parts in the oolitic strata, because they would naturally sink.

Mr. W. A. JONES mentioned that they had a map in the Museum on which they had marked in blue what they considered to be the British roads and camps, and the Roman in red.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said no doubt these hollow ways were used by the Romans, but existed before their time. All over Gaul they were found very similar. They were in the fashion of the world 1,000 years before the Christian era, and remained in vogue to the first century. One of the discoveries which he had made in Rome was, that the roads were made in the hollows, and about the second century they began to raise the roads. Thus the Arch of Augustus had been filled up to the shoulders, while some of the arches stood at full height. The pitching of this road was mediæval entirely. Hollow ways were convenient, because every soldier carried a light shield upon his arm, and the wind made it very troublesome.

Advancing to a lower part of the road,

The Rev. THOS. HUGO said that at various times encroachments had been made. The old road had been much altered since he was there last. The bridge on which they were standing was now not above half its

former width, and the last time he saw it the abutments were visible. The trees, too, which are now in the field were then in a line of hedge alongside of the road.

The walk was then resumed until the old road disappears at Bathpool Mill, near the bridge, where the carriages were waiting, and the party proceeded to

### West Monkton Church.\*

The stocks and whipping-post remain in the churchyard in a good state of preservation.

Mr. E. A. FREEMAN, D.C.L., said the church was to some extent a carrying out on a very much smaller and plainer scale of the type seen at Taunton, Bruton, and Martock—the clerestory with a large window. They also found, what was not very often discovered, the clerestory and the compass-roof together. It would be very much improved by the simple process of making a string-course between the arcade and the clerestory. There were earlier bits preserved, but the general history was a common one. The tower had been added to an earlier building; then afterwards the nave was rebuilt, between the new tower and the old chancel.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., thought it pretty clear that the church was earlier than the generality of Somersetshire churches. The tower was of the date of Richard II, and the nave was later. The chancel arch, as very often happened, was one of the earliest parts of the church, and supported the roof on both sides. The probability was that it was Early English, of the same date as a window at the west end—about 1240 or 1250. The nave, probably, was built in the middle of the 15th century. Whether

\* An engraving of the tower is given in the volume of the Society's Proceedings for 1852.

the east window was genuine was doubtful; if it was, it was clearly one of Edward III's time; but it looked suspiciously modern. The tower was a good one of its kind, and not so elaborate as usual. The west door was particularly good, of the Early Perpendicular style.

### Creech St. Michael Church

was next visited. In a niche over the porch is a mutilated representation of the Trinity, and a handsomely-carved reading-desk bears the date 1634.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., looked upon it as a very puzzling church to make out at a few minutes' notice. There was a great deal of the Early English, and much of the Perpendicular character, which might almost be called Transitional. Early English arches remained under the tower. The Perpendicular arch was an insertion, and the chancel arch had also been introduced. It was pretty clear that the greater part of the old walls remained, notwithstanding that the character had been changed. There was a very beautiful waggon-roof, with a remarkably rich cornice. It was one of the richest things he had seen for a long time. The roof of the chancel was pointed, that would indicate an earlier period. There were very curious arrangements in the little chapel, where the passage leading to the rood-loft had evidently been carried along the wall. There was also a corbel, as if there had been a wooden gallery. The rood-loft often was an extensive fabric in these buildings, and it might have been carried over the Early English arch. The tower was remarkably good Early English transitional work, and there was an additional story of the 15th century added.

Mr. R. K. M. KING drew attention to two or three points, with regard to family history in the parish. They

could see a very fine monument of one of the oldest families in the county. The name was Robert Cuffe, and he had reason to believe that the only living descendant of the family held land at the present time with Colonel Pinney. The date of the burial was 1597. Mr. Cuffe left two daughters, and at the time of his death he was owner of this large and rich parish, constituting the Manor of Creech. One of the daughters and co-heiresses, named Ann, married Sir Francis Warre, alluded to in Mr. Hugo's paper, and Sir Francis thus became entitled to one moiety of the manor. Thomas Warre had previously added to the domain of Hestercombe the adjoining Manor of West Monkton. The other daughter married a person of the name of Keyt. Attention having been called to some very perfect arms in the north chapel, they were pronounced by Mr. King to be those of a very ancient family named Ceeley, now extinct.

Mr. BATTEN said there had been alterations and improvements in the decorations made from time to time with no sparing hand, and these could hardly be accounted for otherwise than upon the hypothesis that the church was one of the earliest possessions of the Abbey of Montacute.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., standing in the churchyard, called attention to the remarkable tower. Many, he said, would call it Norman because of the flat buttresses, but he should not go so far back. Very likely the work was Early English. It was possible that the windows might have been altered, but there was no evidence of this. The upper belfry story was evidently an addition of the 15th century. The staircase seemed to have been so arranged as to afford access to the tower and the rood-loft. The west front was good Perpendicular, and there was a

very rich Decorated cross over the chancel. The outer arch of the porch might be Norman, but the interior was Early English.

After a long drive the excursionists arrived at North Curry, and proceeded first to Moredon, the residence of Major Barrett. Here the Society, by previous invitation, were entertained most hospitably in a marquee erected on the lawn. The President and Mr. Jones tendered the thanks of the Society for the reception accorded them, and Major Barrett, in response, declared that it had given him very great pleasure to receive them, and though it was the first visit he hoped it would not be the last, for he should be happy at any time to welcome the Society. A walk across the valley led to the church on the opposite eminence.

### North Curry Church.

Mr. E. A. FREEMAN, D.C.L., remarked that it was more than 20 years since he was at the place, and he was glad to have before him to refresh his memory an exceedingly accurate ground plan and minute account of the building, provided by Mr. Foster, a native of the place. The church was one of the earlier types of the county, very much altered, but less so than many. That cruciform shape was very common in Somersetshire in earlier, but rare in later times. The central towers had been frequently pulled down and erected at the west end, but so great a change had not taken place in this church. There seemed to have been a much earlier church here, of which a small fragment was still left. In the north aisle there was a good Norman doorway, with a segmental arch, and the President had shown very plainly that it was as it had been from the beginning. Setting aside that small remain, the church was a building of the middle of the 14th cen-

tury, largely recast in the 15th, but not so much so as to alter the original character, because they had left the central tower. As it stood in the 14th century it was a cross church, with very low walls and very high roof, keeping somewhat more of the character of an earlier time than was usual in the middle of the 14th century. They could trace pretty well the height of the walls by the low buttresses. He liked the north transept front exceedingly. The change which had been made in the north transept was the lowering of the roof, which must have been of an enormously high pitch, with very low walls. The east end of the choir was stuccoed, so that they could not trace the gables. The east window and side windows of the tower were, probably, of the 15th century. The tower remained untouched, and was the original octagonal tower of the 14th century. These towers were rather a feature in Somersetshire, although few, while in other counties they might never see one. They met with it again in Northamptonshire, but with this difference—the Somersetshire octagon was one with a square base. They could see that at Bishops Hull, Somerton, Puddymore, and Barton St. David's; while in Northamptonshire the octagon was set upon a square tower. There was another octagon at "Gregory Stoke," but that was more slender than this. The bold porch formed a feature of the church. The original roofs seemed to have been all of one level, but when the 15th century people touched the choir in the transept they raised the walls somewhat. There was no need, however, to have brought in any clerestory windows. There was a little window at the east belonging to the earlier church, showing the height. The porch was altogether an addition, and the west front had been recast in the Perpendicular. It very often happened in

the cruciform parish churches that the west end had nothing of an artistic design, but here it had still a certain degree of design about it which was pleasing and satisfactory. The parapet was pierced throughout, except in the transept. The church was under the care of his friend Sir George Gilbert Scott, and he was very glad to see that he did not mean to do any mischief. He had looked at the designs throughout, and did not see that anything would be destroyed, but the only doubt in his mind was whether it was quite wise to place a low spire on the tower. There was something to be said on both sides, but now that the high roofs were gone he doubted whether it was wise to put on the tower a feature which belonged to a past state of things into which the builders of the 15th century brought it. Still, he wished that other churches were likely to suffer as little harm as North Curry.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., thought that an octagonal wooden spire would be an immense improvement.

The PRESIDENT remarked that they had here a very large chancel, with a central tower. In the great number of instances a large chancel was connected with some religious house, and he should like to know whether it was so or not in this case. Such was the case at Dunster and many other places.

Mr. FREEMAN said that it belonged formerly to the church of Wells.

The VICAR (Rev. F. Harrison) said there were at one time four chapels belonging to the parish, and in a farmhouse the other day a roof was discovered which evidently belonged to one of those chapels. He said in reply to Mr. Freeman's enquiries about King John's connection with the parish, that the only fact known was the confirmation

by King John of the gift by Richard I of the manor and domain to the church of Wells.

Mr. E. A. FREEMAN, D.C.L. (the party having entered the church) observed that the changes which had gone on could be seen there, but not so plainly as outside. It was plain that inside as well as outside the ground plan had been untouched. In the great central lantern they found the four arches of the earlier building, and it had been intended to fill in with stone. That was one of the commonest things to find a vault which was begun and never finished. The reason was this : it was much better to let the wall stay a bit before putting in the stone vault, and it frequently happened that this was never done, but that a wooden vault had been put on as here. If there was any reason why the walls would not bear a vault of stone, he did not see why they should not have one of wood, supposing that it did not pretend to be anything else. The builders seemed to have been satisfied with putting in a row of clerestory windows without adapting them in any way. The lack which they saw at West Monkton was visible again here. Evidently there was a great want of a string-course between the arcade and the clerestory, and the want was felt more here than at West Monkton.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., called attention to the corbels of the roof in the transept, which seemed to indicate that there had been a different roof there. In the arcade the continuous imposts, without moulding, were very common on the Continent, but very rare in England. There was a tradition that the tombs in the chancel came from Athelney.

In the vestry is a marble tablet, with a long inscription, relating to certain privileges and grotesque revelries, known as North Curry feast.

The VICAR, in reply to Canon Meade, said he was happy to state that these proceedings were not kept up now, but ceased about seven years ago. The feast was attended with a good deal of excess, and those interested in the "charities" were induced to give up their rights to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He pointed out the uncommon perfection of the registers.

The Rev. Prebendary SCARTH made a few remarks concerning the proposed transfer of parish registers from the custody of the clergy to a central department at London.

Mr. JONES asked whether the entries were transcripts from an old register.

The VICAR thought they must be, the caligraphy was so uniform.

The PRESIDENT asked whether any explanation could be given of the item £2 12s. "for four hospitals," and what institutions of such a nature were likely to have had any claim upon that parish for a periodical and uniform payment. It was a large sum to be given out of the parish funds, and not out of the offertory.

The VICAR exhibited an old staff which belonged to the borough of Newport, in the parish of North Curry.

The Rev. T. HUGO pointed out an entry in the register, stating that two persons about to be married gave an indemnity that they would not be chargeable to the parish, but would return in case of necessity to their own parish. Such indemnities, he said, were not unusually given years ago by strangers entering London.

### Thorn Falcon Church

was visited on the return journey, and the curious ancient pewter Communion Service was examined.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., fixed the date of the church

at the 15th century. The tower was in a very genuine unaltered state ; there was an old waggon-roof, and the clerestory had two windows in it. The rood-loft was all on the western side of the chancel arch, and the rood-loft staircase was outside. In connection with the bench-ends, which were very good, he said he knew a clergyman in the neighbourhood of Oxford who had amused himself by carving the bench-ends of his church with his own hands. A great many of these were evidently carved by the clergy themselves, if not by the monks.

Mr. E. CHISHOLM-BATTEN showed that the date 1542 was on one, and stated that the parish was once called Thorn Fagan.

### Ruishton Church

was the last place visited on the excursion, the church of Hatch Beauchamp having been passed over for want of time.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., said that at first sight it looked like most other Somersetshire churches, but there were considerable remains of two periods. There were remains of the Norman 12th century church. There was a fine Norman doorway, and the windows belonged to the date of the 13th century, the east window being of the end of the same century. A very curious feature was the hagioscope or "squint." The example was almost unique, and another remarkable feature was the window and the doorway left in the staircase leading to the rood-loft. The reredos had been made out of the rood-screen. The glass in the chancel window was uncommonly good—a fine imitation of the genuine English glass of the 15th century. The peculiarity of the deflection of two feet in the church he believed found an explanation in the fact that our forefathers were very careless in laying out their ground plans; else it might be that the nave was of one period, and the

chancel of another. There was a very lofty tower arch, and the font was a very remarkable one. In the churchyard was the base of a cross, sculptured with the four Evangelists.

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## A Conversazione

was held in the evening in the Museum of the Society. Numerous articles of antiquarian interest were sent for exhibition.

Mr. J. H. PARKER, C.B., exhibited a complete set of photographs of his recent researches in Rome, and gave a brief sketch of the excavations which had been made, partly under his own direction and partly under Government. These researches had, he said, thrown an entirely new light on the ancient history of the city, and brought them back to the Rome of their boyhood. The remains had been preserved for centuries in a remarkable manner, having been used as foundations for other buildings. The wall which he called the wall of Romulus, the founder of the city, was of earlier construction than any other in Rome, and agreed with the description of it given by Dionysius; and the remains of the capitolium, the public treasury, record office, and the senate house, also tallied with the materials to be gathered from classical literature. The city was evidently built upon ancient earthworks. There were remains of fortifications everywhere, and they could only have been made by the employment of the whole of the population upon them, which naturally caused the revolt recorded by historians.

Mr. E. B. TYLOR, LL.D., F.R.S., delivered an address on the growth of civilisation, illustrated by various weapons in the Museum. In the course of his remarks he said that

some of the customs of modern times, which we could not now understand the meaning of, were to be looked upon as "survivals" from a state of savagery, and concluded by urging greater attention to ethnology.

Votes of thanks were passed to Mr. Parker and Mr. Tylor, on the motion of the President, who, together with Mr. G. T. Clark and Mr. Freeman, took part in the proceedings.

Mr. JONES drew attention to a series of plans of ancient earthworks by Mr. C. W. Dymond, C.E., which he said were most valuable contributions to the history of pre-historic times. He also announced that Mr. Dymond had liberally offered that any of the plans relating to Somersetshire were at the service of the Society for publication in their Proceedings.

After thanks had been passed to Mr. Dymond,

The PRESIDENT congratulated the Society upon having had a most successful gathering, and cordial thanks having been voted to him on the motion of Mr. W. E. Surtees, the Annual Meeting for 1872 closed.

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Bronze torque and celts found in the neighbourhood, by Mr. W. A. SANFORD.

Remains found on the site of a Roman villa at Stan-  
chester, Curry Rivel, comprising coins, pottery, glass,  
bronze ornaments, charred wood, &c., by Mr. W. W.  
MUNCKTON.

Specimens of White's Thrush, *Turdus varius*, killed at  
Hestercombe; Black Redstart, *Ruticilla Tithys*, Wood  
Sandpiper, *Totanus glareola*, and Baillon's Crake, *Crex*  
*Bailloni*, killed near Taunton; Iceland Gull, *Larus leu-*  
*copterus*, and Glaucous Gull, *Larus glaucus*, killed at  
Weston-super-Mare, by Mr. CECIL SMITH.

Specimens of the Crane, *Grus cinerea*, killed at Stol-  
ford; Pied Flycatcher, *Muscicapa atricapilla*, Little Bittern,  
*Botaurus minutus*, and Little Auk, *Mergulus melanoleucos*,  
killed near Taunton, by Mr. C. HADDON.

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