

THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society,

Held at Weston-super-Mare, September, 16th, 1851.

THOMAS TUTTON KNYFTON, ESQ. HIGH SHERIFF OF
THE COUNTY, IN THE CHAIR.

THE business commenced on Tuesday morning at eleven o'clock, when the members assembled in the large and commodious National School Room, which had been kindly placed at the service of the Society by the Ven. Archdeacon Law, rector of the parish.

The Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, general Secretaries, and the district or local Secretaries, were severally re-appointed. The following gentlemen were also elected as Vice-Presidents:—The Rev. J. T. Law, T. T. Knyfton, Esq. Lord Talbot de Malahide, W. H. P. Gore Langton, Esq. M.P. J. H. Smyth Pigott, Esq. and F. H. Synge, Esq. The following gentlemen were balloted for, and elected as honorary and corresponding members:—The Rev. T. F. Dymock, E. A. Freeman, Esq. the Rev. Joseph Hunter, the Rev. Richard Warner, W. Yarrell, Esq. Charles Empson, Esq. and W. Tyson, Esq. The gentle-

men appointed as local Secretaries were J. H. Pring, Esq. M.D. and the Rev. C. P. Parish. H. C. Trenchard, Esq. and the Rev. H. Parr, were elected new members of the Committee. The names of sixty-four new members were also added to the roll of the Society.

After the conclusion of the formal business, the meeting was adjourned till one o'clock, when the chairman opened the proceedings in a brief and appropriate address. He directed the attention of such as wished to visit some of the objects of archæological interest in the vicinity, to a few within reach. The first place he would mention was Churchill, about ten miles distant, where, on a bold ridge of the Mendip Hills, was to be seen a remarkably fine Roman encampment. Many were aware that at Cheddar there was a fine stream of water, which gushed from the base of the cliffs. At some few miles from the spot, amongst the Mendips, was what was termed a "swallet hole," into which flowed a stream of similar volume, and it had been surmised that this stream was the one which found its vent at Cheddar. That supposition was now confirmed. A mining company had recently been established on the hills, whose refuse materials sometimes discoloured the water of the engulfed stream, and the same water now found its way, in its discoloured state, to the stream at Cheddar. At Wrington was still standing the house in which John Locke was born, though it derived its interest solely from this circumstance, and was little worth looking at as a building; near it however was the very fine old parish church, which was well worthy of a visit. Adjoining to Wrington, was the fine old church of Yatton; and there was also a church of much interest at Christon, a very small structure, and supposed to be one of the oldest in Somerset. On the part of the inhabitants of this neigh-

bourhood he begged to thank the Society for having chosen this place for holding their present anniversary meeting.

The Rev. F. WARRE, one of the honorary secretaries, announced that a letter had been received by Dr. Pring, the local honorary secretary, from the Duke of Northumberland, expressing his grace's regret at being unable to attend the meeting of the Society.

Mr. C. E. GILES then read the following report ;—

“Your Committee, in presenting their Annual Report, would beg to inform you that their principal undertaking during the past year, has been the arrangement and publication of the first volume of the Society's Proceedings. As this volume comprises a period of nearly two years, it is of an unusually large size, and has been a work of some considerable labor ; involving, moreover, a large outlay of your funds. But your Committee believe that this outlay has been fully justified, as well by the new and interesting matter which the volume contains, as by the prospective advantage to the Society in the increase of its members, through making its operations more generally known. For any errors or imperfections in the details of this work, your Committee would hope that a kind allowance may be made ; as the task of editorship, and the difficulties attending publication, require an amount of experience, to which the members of your Committee have hitherto been able to lay no claim. The volume (as you are aware,) has been presented GRATIS to all who were members of the Society at the time of its publication ; the remaining copies have been purchased by the publisher, of whom they may be had at 6s. 6d. each. Your Committee venture to hope that the future state of your

funds will admit of the publication of a similar volume from time to time, of good type and character, but of smaller dimensions, and at a more moderate cost."

"A serious loss to the Society's funds, as well as much inconvenience to persons wishing to become members, has accrued from Rule IX, restricting their election to *General Meetings*; and your Committee have, in consequence, proposed to amend the said rule, so as to secure to candidates the earliest possible admission."

"Agreeably with an alteration made in Rule IV, at our last Anniversary Meeting, arrangements were made for holding a General Meeting in the Spring and the Autumn of the present year; but your Committee having learnt that very many influential members would be absent from the county during the Spring, found it necessary to limit the business of that meeting to the election of members, and to the transaction of other matters of routine."

"In compliance with the request of many persons resident in and around Taunton, a series of monthly evening *Conversazioni*, confined to the subjects embraced by the Society, was held in the Museum during the last winter. But it is our duty to state that no portion of the funds of the Society was appropriated towards the expenses of these meetings; a small entrance fee being found more than sufficient to cover all the necessary outlay. These meetings appeared to awaken an interest in the Society's proceedings; and under these circumstances, the Committee propose to commence a second series in the course of next month, of which due notice will be given to each member."

"The Museum has received donations and deposits of several objects of interest during the year; among which should be mentioned the following:—A valuable specimen of Tessellated Pavement found at East Coker, presented by

C. J. Helyar, Esq. A very fine collection of Rubbings from Brasses, deposited by the Rev. H. Alford, of Wymeswold. Several very fine Rubbings, by the Rev. E. C. K. Bearcroft. Several interesting Implements found in the shafts of mines worked by the Romans, below Quantock, by the Rev. F. Warre."

"As the Society is unable, at present, to devote any considerable sums to the purchase of specimens, your Committee would respectfully invite collectors to render their assistance; and beg to call attention to Rule XIX, regulating loans."

"Your Committee has entered into correspondence with the Architectural Society of Northamptonshire, and the Archaeological Society of Sussex, upon the invitation of those bodies."

"The assembling of the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, at Bristol in July, cannot have failed to excite a general interest in our pursuits. Many of our members attended its sectional meetings, and some were able to assist them with communications of interest. Your Committee deem it due to the able officers of that most important body, to acknowledge their readiness at all times to co-operate with our Society, and to aid us in our local efforts, from the stores of information at their command. Your Committee would call especial attention to the able lectures on Wells Cathedral, delivered by Professors Willis and Cockerell, and to a valuable recent publication by the latter gentleman, illustrating the sculptures of the West front of that venerable pile."

"The number of members on the Society's books for the present year amounts to 339, and your Committee in concluding this brief report, has the pleasing task of congratulating the Society, as well on its generally flourishing

of other nations were very generally studied in England, and the traveller came home with a growing admiration of the monuments of Rome. In the design of the Bath Abbey, it was evident that the architect was alive to the follies of the day, and endeavoured to avoid them. His aim was to avoid the perpendicular lines and the angles then so much praised ; and the appearance of poverty in the building was the result, not of that design, but of the smallness of his funds. The arches of the nave and choir were elegant, without extreme lightness ; and beauty, not monotony, was the result. The roof appeared to derive support from invisible means, and was a model of grace, elegance, and lightness. The merit of the design of the church could not be doubted ; the cleverness of its construction had always been allowed ; and he was at a loss to see why rudeness of workmanship had been imputed to it. It was the commencement of a new style, and having the building before them, all united in praising its general effect.

A paper was then read by Mr. FREEMAN on the Perpendicular Churches of Somerset, which is given in full in Part II.

MR. DICKINSON, in moving a vote of thanks to Mr. Freeman and Mr. Davis, thought it necessary to state that there were some points in Mr. Freeman's paper, as his preference for the Perpendicular style, with which he did not himself agree ; as to his remarks on Mr. Ruskin, he thought it should be distinctly understood that Mr. Freeman's observations only expressed his individual opinions, and in no wise compromised the society as a body.

The Rev. MALCOLM CLERK took the opportunity of referring to some remarks made by Professor Willis in his lecture on Wells Cathedral, at the recent meeting of the Archaeological Institute. Mr. Willis had said,

that the west front could not have been built by Joceline Trotman. The reverend gentleman proceeded at some length to point out the grounds on which he came to an opposite conclusion.

1st. That he had not seen any *consecration deed* of the Bishop's, and did not know where such was to be found, but that the Liber Albus No. 2, favored as he supposed, his theory ; the date of the consecration of the church is there stated to be October 23, 1239 ; and if the church was not finished at the time of its consecration, there is no reason to suppose that the Bishop left off building as soon as it was consecrated.

2nd. A document in the Liber Albus No. 2, (and also in Wilkins,) which bore date the year of Joceline's death, (he believed A.D. 1342,) two years and half or more after the consecration, the purport of which is to assign revenues to the ministering priests, to his mind clearly spoke of this assignment of revenue as his last necessary act, in regard to his cathedral, *after having completed all else that was required for the due celebration of divine worship, &c.* which would hardly have been said, if he had left the west front a large blank, only protected from the air by some temporary construction.

3rd. The Canon of Wells, and also Godwin, both favoured his idea (in passages which he gave) that the west front, or rather all west of the choir, was *the* particular portion which bishop Trotman cared to build.

4th. The style of the architecture, by Mr. Willis's own confession, gave no token of late construction.

5th. If Bishop Joceline did not build the west front, the only person who could have built it, must have been one of the Buttons, as an inscription thereon (of which he presented a rubbing,) seemed to indicate.

The next paper was then read by the Rev. W. PHELPS, the well known Author of the History of Somerset, on West Britain previous to the Roman occupation.

The morning sitting was followed by the ORDINARY.

The Evening Meeting

Commenced at seven o'clock, when a large company assembled, the High Sheriff again presiding.

A paper was read by Mr .A. CROSSE, on Holwell Cavern, which is given in full in Part II.

The communication by Mr. Crosse was followed by a paper by the REV. W. CROTCH, on the Recent Plants and Shells of the Weston District.

The next communication was a paper by Mr. C. MOORE, on the "Aptychus," which is given in Part II.

Mr. DICKINSON moved a vote of thanks to the gentlemen who had favoured the meeting with their communications.

On the motion of the Rev. PREBENDARY CHILCOTT, the thanks of the meeting were voted by acclamation to the President, for his able conduct in the chair.

Mr. KNYFTON, having acknowledged the compliment in suitable terms, the meeting adjourned at eight o'clock.