

The Rev. W. ARTHUR JONES, one of the Secretaries, read the following Notice of Remains of Ancient British Hut-circles on Croydon Hill :—

“I beg to call the attention of the Society to the remains of an ancient British village which I think I have discovered in this neighbourhood. I was led to examine this district from seeing, in Savage’s *Carhampton* that on the Croydon Hills there were two Druidic circles. When I came to the spot indicated I could find no trace whatever of the tall upright stones invariably marking the site of sacred enclosures; nor could I learn from any of the oldest inhabitants that stones of that description ever existed there. I had almost given up the search—concluding that the Druidic circle, if it ever existed, was now utterly destroyed—when I came upon the remains (almost entirely covered with the fern brake) which had given rise to the representations of Savage. But, instead of being a Druidic circle, it proved, considering the circumstances, a remarkably well-defined collection of hut circles.

“This ancient British settlement (as I take it) lies on the south-western declivity of the hill above Withycombe, under the eminence called the Fire-beacon, and close to the cottage known as Higher Dumbledeer. The outline of several of the cabin-circles is perfect; that of others is more or less obliterated; and I ascertained from some of the inhabitants that a great quantity of the stones had been used to drain the adjoining fields. The aspect and position of this village corresponds most fully with those in which the ancient British villages are found on the Dartmoor. It stands on a gentle slope, looking towards the south-west, and sheltered by the hill behind from the cold winds of the north and north-east. Close by there is a spring of running water at Higher Dumbledeer; and a little lower,

in a deep ravine, flows the crystal stream which works the mills at Withycombe. While the spot selected was retired, yet the inhabitants enjoyed a fine open prospect over the rich plains which separate the Brendon from the Quantock Hills.

“Although many hut-circles were made exclusively of earth, yet it is found that *stone* was used in their construction wherever it was abundant. This was the case here. But while the lower part of the cabins was built of stone, the upper parts were constructed of more perishable materials—of wood, or wattling, covered with turf or thatch. Judging from the allusions to British huts in Diodorus Siculus, and likewise from the illustrations of them given on the Antonine Column, the circular forms which now alone remain would seem to have been the base or foundations of dwellings of the description already referred to, with tapering roofs, and a hole at top for the escape of smoke. In accordance with the plan on which these settlements appear to have been constructed, the huts in this case were built side by side, in the circumference of a large circle. From the measurements I was able to take of the more perfect, the huts themselves would seem to have been about 21ft. in diameter, and the large circle, including the whole settlement, about 160ft., which would give a circumference of about 480ft.

“I hope that during this meeting the spot to which I refer may be visited by the Society, in order to determine whether these circles are what they appear to be. It is not prudent to delay the investigation, for agricultural improvement is rapidly spreading; enclosures are climbing up the valleys and along the slopes of the hills—so that before many years these remains of our Celtic ancestors will exist only in the records of antiquarian societies.”

The Rev. THOMAS HUGO, On the Charters and other Archives of Cleeve Abbey, given in Part II.

At the close of Mr. Hugo's paper, much valuable information relating to Cleeve Abbey, was elicited by a conversation in which Mr. WARDEN and other gentlemen took part.

The meeting was then adjourned, and the company visited the Church and the Castle, under the able guidance of the Secretary, the Rev. F. Warre. Afterwards a large party explored the fine encampments in the Park.

At five o'clock there was an ORDINARY at the Luttrell Arms Hotel, which was numerously attended.

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## The Evening Meeting.

Soon after seven o'clock the meeting was resumed.

The PRESIDENT opened the proceedings by reading several interesting family letters, written during the time of the Commonwealth, and a curious passport to enable Mrs. Luttrell to cross over from Watchet into Wales. These form part of a series shortly to be published, from the treasures of Nettlecombe Court, and, consequently, do not appear in our Proceedings.

The Rev. WM. ARTHUR JONES then read a paper On the Geological Formations in the neighbourhood of Dunster, given in Part II.

Mr. C. MOORE, F.G.S., gave an interesting account of some further discoveries made by him in the Oolite in the neighbourhood of Dundry and Bath.

This was followed by a paper by Miss ISABELLA GIFFORD, On the rare and most remarkable Plants in the

neighbourhoods of Dunster, Blue Anchor, Minehead, &c., given in Part II.

The announcement of the discovery of *Asplenium Septentrionale* in Somersetshire, gave rise to an animated discussion, in which the Rev. THOMAS HUGO, Dr. WOODFORDE, and others, took part.

The following papers were presented, but not read, owing to the absence of the writers, and are given in Part II. :—

On the traces of Camps and Ancient Earth-works still existing around Bath, by the Rev. H. M. SCARTH.

On the Painted Glass in Wells Cathedral, by Mr. GREVILLE J. CHESTER.

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