

Worlebury Camp.

About two o'clock the company, including several ladies, started—some by break and some on foot—to Worlebury Camp. Arriving on that part of the hill, by Penwartha, just above Dunmarklyn, on the South-road, they were met by

Mr. C. W. DYMOND, who acted as guide. He first pointed out in that immediate locality an escarpment of the rock at the back of one of the ditches of the camp. The ditch, although filled up, is to a great extent traceable, and the escarpment, which is supposed to have been either for the purpose of a path or a foundation, was noticeable for some yards. Near this, and slightly eastward, Mr. Dymond halted the party at one of what he said had been designated by Mr. Atkins "slingers' platforms," but to which he could attach no name. This was the most perfect one existing out of perhaps two hundred that had been constructed. It consisted of a triangular patch of small stones, sunk two or three inches into the soil. Most of the patches, he added, had been destroyed in the gardens below.

Farther eastward an entrance was made by a path within the walls of the encampment, the first object of interest being a pit, some two or three feet deep, and measuring eighteen feet by fourteen. Portions of the side of this pit were of rock, and portions were built; it being explained that the masonry here was of a character quite different from the rest of the masonry of the camp, the stones being better selected and better laid. Some suggested that this pit might have been a

storage for water. In close proximity was a triangular rock-pit, about 6 ft. 6 in. in depth, the sides being of solid rock. In it were found a skeleton, a quantity of charred wheat, and some wattling. Mr. Dymond then drew attention to the most distinct remaining specimen of stone rectangular "appendages" to the inside of the camp wall, and which had been called platforms. Of these he said there were some four or five on that side of the camp. They were about forty feet long, and oblong in shape, and from their situation are probably the foundations of guardrooms or something of that sort. The visitors then made for the west end of the camp overlooking the pier, which is now to be reached by the well known flight of wooden steps. Here the party came to a standstill at the head of the way down to a spring that used to provide water for the camp, but which has been destroyed by a landslip. Proceeding along the cliffs, eastward, the question was asked whether the camp wall was continued on that side, and the answer given that it was not, as that end of the camp was sufficiently fortified by the cliffs themselves. A little to the east of the path down to the spring a remarkable natural opening in the cliffs was pointed out, and the suggestion offered that a small number could have defended it.

Farther on, a pit was pointed out, with a subterranean passage through the cliffs, which some thirty years ago was passable, but had since become filled with *débris*. Leaving the cliffs, and plunging into the thick wood, a line of seven pits was pointed out, and also the most interesting pit in the encampment. First, for its structure, as it was like a pit within a pit; the upper one being about six feet in diameter, the bottom one, about half the diameter of the first, being lined with stones, like a well, and about two feet deep. At the bottom was bare rock, as would be noticeable in all the pits if they were cleared. Secondly, that in this small, lower part of the pit, three skeletons were found crowded, one being that of a gigantic man, nearly seven feet high, whose skull

had been cloven. Some eighteen skeletons altogether have been found in the encampment, all males, half of them bearing evident traces of wounds. The bodies had been covered with loose stones, and the most likely idea is that they were killed at the time of the siege and sack of the camp, and thrown into the pits out of the way. It was the opinion that the various pits, from quantities of charred corn and wood found in most of them, were used as storages, and that a hut existed over each of them. When clearing these pits, under a thin superficial cap of earth, loose stones lay for a depth of several feet; then the skeletons, if any; then black earth, with fragments of wood; then, a layer of broken stones; and lastly, the rock-bottom, on which charred corn was frequently found. From viewing a triple group of small pits, way was made to the principal gateway of the camp, in an inlet on the southern side, it being explained that the large heap of stones, the ruins of a portion of the wall, had been deliberately thrown into the gap to fill it up. A small pit, not a yard square, was afterwards inspected, which, it was said, successfully combated the idea that the pits were in themselves dwelling places. The ruins of the inner and outer eastern walls of the camp were then climbed; on the former the wall facings were distinctly traceable. Further eastward of these, several outer ditches were passed, with the remark that this being the most accessible portion of the camp it was therefore the most strongly fortified.

The party then proceeded by a pathway to the road at the Kewstoke gate, by the pier, where carriages awaited to convey them to the Albert Museum, in which several objects of interest in connection with the camp are deposited. On arriving at the "Royal," some who were acquainted with the Museum, accepted an invitation of Colonel ABBOTT, of Southside, to see his collection of flint weapons and implements. These were beautifully arranged, Colonel Abbott kindly describing each in turn. The visitors were amply rewarded.

Dinner was served at the Masonic Hall, Lord Carlingford presiding.

Evening Meeting.

The Evening Meeting, at the Assembly Rooms, was well attended. The PRESIDENT announced several new Members, expressing his pleasure that Weston-super-Mare was evincing so much interest in the Society.

Dolbury Camp.

Mr. DYMOND said he had been asked to give a *vivâ voce* description of Dolbury—an interesting Camp, which he was told they were not likely to visit on this occasion. Dolbury Camp is oblong in plan, and about twenty-two acres in area. On three sides it is shut in by two banks of earth and stone, each with a ditch, now partially choked with *débris*. On the south, owing to the abruptness of the hill-side, there is only one slight unintrenched bank. The inner and higher bank was faced outside, for a portion of its height, with a stone retaining-wall, many pieces of which still remain. The work is very similar to that at Worlebury; but in the latter case the substance of the rampart was of stone only, and the walls were built in several stages; whereas, at Dolbury, he believed there had never been more than one wall-face. The camp had two entrances—one at the west end, to which access was obtained by an ancient chariot-way, which might be seen climbing the hill from the bottom of the pass; the other near the north-east corner. An existing south-east entrance is of doubtful antiquity. The ruins on the crest of the inclosure are those of a warrener's house. At Dolbury there are no pits, as at Worlebury, but there are several long, low mounds, each surrounded by a shallow ditch. It had been stated, as though a fact, that British chieftains were buried there, but no one had taken the trouble to verify the conjecture by actual examination of the mounds. On the top of one of these mounds is a cruciform arrangement of very small banks of

stones, now grass-grown. Several others are distributed around the edges of the inclosure. They had been mistaken for military works, and supposed to have been intended for sentry stations, or to prevent a rush; but in reality they were seats for vermin traps—one being actually in place when he last visited the camp.

Mr. C. J. SIMMONS said he had known Dolbury Camp for fully sixty years, and with regard to the cruciform stone banks alluded to by Mr. Dymond, he knew, as a fact, that they were the work of the grandfather of the present warrener, and he could remember the camp when nothing of the kind was there. His earliest recollection of the scarp running down towards Rowberrow was that a ramp on it was pointed out to him as having been used for the purpose of supplying the camp with water—an abundant supply of which could be obtained from the Rowberrow side. Prior to the making of the new road, over Dolbury was the shorter way by two miles to the villages on the north side of Rowberrow and Shipham, and was freely used by persons walking to those places. The bridle-path through the camp, from the east to the west side, and away to Charterhouse, has likewise disappeared. Some slight earthworks on the eastern side of the camp had not been noticed in the remarks of the last speaker, but he (Mr. Simmons) was not positive that the same were not thrown up for purposes unconnected with the original encampment.

Prebendary SCARTH said the slight earth-works alluded to corresponded with the cattle inclosures on Worlebury, and were evidently places into which cattle could be driven in case of necessity. He added, in reply to a question, that Saxon coins had been found within the inclosure at Dolbury, and within such inclosure is also a small earth-work, which gave evidence that the camp within had been occupied by smaller bodies of a more early date than the Romans or Saxons.

The PRESIDENT, in alluding to the mounds which had

proved to be nothing more than vermin traps, remarked it was the duty of such a Society as theirs to expose sham antiquities, as well as to clear up facts connected with real ones.

The Roman Villa at Wemberham.

Prebendary Scarth then read a paper on "the Roman Villa recently discovered at Wemberham," situate about a mile-and-a-half from Yatton. Printed in Part II.

Colonel PINNEY said he had always been told that water once covered the whole of the district about and nearly up to the high ground at Glastonbury. He should like to ask when the embankment of the river Brue was supposed to have been begun. He, for one, fancied it was a work much more modern than Roman. No doubt the Romans did carry out considerable embankments, and he could have wished they had continued such work to Weston-super-Mare, and then that town would have a more beautiful sea than at present.

Mr. DYMOND said no doubt many embankments were constructed by the Romans, whilst others were improved by them, but he thought data would show that many on this coast are pre-Roman. Alluding to the Glastonbury district, he asked how could peat have formed there unless the tide had been excluded, so as to allow of its formation? He thought they were too apt to do an injustice to the abilities of our ancestors, who were a fine race of men, and quite as capable as the Romans of doing work like that alluded to.

Mr. E. E. BAKER said he had had the pleasure of meeting that eminent authority, Mr. Roach Smith, who said, in explanation as to why the Romans built such a villa as that at Wemberham, in a marshy country, near a river, that in all probability they had a station there, for the purpose of collecting tribute from the natives, and built these villas and out-buildings in which to store corn and metal. And what more convenient site could have been selected for the shipment of such tribute than the estuary of the river Yeo. This theory,

to his mind, gave a direct reason why this villa had been built in a place so wild.

Rev. COWDEN COLE (Upton) said England had been held by the Romans for the benefit of the natives. The large number of coins found showed the large trade carried on in this country, and he thought such coins may have been hidden by the Romans themselves for safety, because their hold of the country was uncertain. The whole evidence of the Roman occupation shows a continual state of insurrection.

Mr. SMYTH-PIGOTT said, in the early part of 1884 he spent the days of two months in excavating the villa at Wemberham, but there is one extraordinary problem which has not yet been solved. There are two walls, of three feet in thickness, running from the villa under the bank of the Yeo, which do not appear in the river itself. The full extent and purpose of such walls remain to be explained. With regard to the sarcophagus found in 1825, south of the villa, he should like to ask whether those who dwelt in such villas were usually buried so close to the residence they had occupied during life. Coins of the reign of the Edwards were found among the ruins of the villa—which indicated that researches had been made there at a much earlier period; and in other parts of the field a great deal of pottery and charcoal had been found. There could be little doubt that further excavations will reveal other objects of interest. He added that some two miles distant from the site of the villa, in the parish of Kingston Seymour, upwards of 800 coins were found in November, bearing date of the second and third centuries.

Bishop CLIFFORD did not think the neighbourhood of Glastonbury was drained until the time of James I. He thought the old road in that locality was not so much attributable to drainage as to the fact that in the meres or sea lakes there were natural ridges of rock, which at certain states of the tide were used by pedestrians for the purpose of passing from one point to another. With regard to the villa that had

been discovered in such a singular position, its size must not be exaggerated when they considered the requirements of a well-to-do farmer for his cattle and his servants. And, further, they must not lose sight of the fact that the villa is in close proximity to what was once a rich mining district, and in just such a place as a man who had made his fortune at the mines would choose for settling down. It is certain that whilst the Romans had to defend themselves from attacks from without, they had no internal ruptures to contend with, the whole of the Roman Empire, in itself, being peaceful. He could not approve of all they did, but it may be supposed their veterans in war were rewarded with land in the countries they took, and nothing was more natural than to find such relics of civilisation as had recently been discovered.

The PRESIDENT observed that the discovery of such a villa on the marshy banks of the Yeo was a curious fact, and one that carried the consolidation of the district, and its conversion into solid and inhabitable land to a much more early period than he had thought. With regard to the far more extensive marshes to which Colonel Pinney had alluded, he could not think it possible that the embankments in that case were of so early a date as those in the Yeo district, as, according to the traditions, Glastonbury was an island, and they knew, from the Saxon names of places, that the sea must have made its way for a considerable distance inland. He tendered the best thanks of the meeting to Prebendary Scarth for his valuable paper, which had given rise to a most interesting discussion concerning that wonderful people who conquered not us, but the island in which we live.

Bishop CLIFFORD said, between the time of the Roman departure and Saxon occupation nearly 200 years elapsed, so that the British were not so easily overcome as the Saxon records would have them to believe.

Prebendary SCARTH, in reply, said it had been a common custom to bury the dead in gardens, and a similar interment to

that at Wemberham had been found at Castle Combe. About two feet six inches was the average depth of burial, but he did not know of instances of sepulchral monuments. In reply to the question asked by Colonel Pinney, he did not think it followed that because the Romans did some embankments that they did the whole. It was impossible for them to have done all the work they must have deemed advisable. He was one who believed the Romans did more for this country than had ever been acknowledged. Their system of colonization, also, was very perfect, for whilst they brought Spaniards and Gauls to Britain, they took some of the British away to form other colonies, and therefore the Roman conquest was not an unmitigated evil.

Prebendary SCARTH, in reply to a question, said circular coins, which must have been in circulation some 300 years later than the date they bear, were often found on Mendip. Every Emperor on coming into power issued fresh coinage, and it would depend on the requirements of the country at the time as to the amount of coin brought here, not merely for the payment of troops, but for commercial speculations, besides which no doubt the Roman merchants who accompanied the army brought coin with them for the purposes of usury.

Bishop HOBHOUSE suggested that the people may have pierced the sea walls in times of attack, and hence a reclaimed district may have become re-flooded. The name of Pylle, whilst implying a landing place, was also applied to a mere rivulet, and the word was often found in districts where the sea could never have been.

Mr. SIMMONS instanced that in the Lympsham marsh there was paid what was called an admiral's rent, which he understood had been paid, in days gone by, in respect of lands recovered from the sea.

Professor EARLE, in reply to a question by the President, said the word "Pill," or "Pylle," was remarkable, and one on which it was difficult to base any argument. He had always

supposed "Pill" to be a British word, ordinarily identical with the English word "pool"—a stream running into salt water, but subject to flooding from the sea. With regard to the hiding of money, people in the early days had exactly the same desire as those of the present time, to lay by something for a rainy day. But in the remote ages people could not lay it all out at once or invest it to advantage, so there being no deposit notes in those days, they placed the same for safety in the earth. Or, the coins may have been so secreted by people who, with some of the present day, like to hoard up little treasures unknown to their neighbours, or even to the members of their own family. He added to these suggestions the fact that during the time of the Roman occupation sudden orders were often given to move from one place to another, and people not being able to carry their treasures with them, deposited the same in a well-marked place, hoping to return at some future day to recover it. It was wonderful the large number of coins that had been found so hoarded. One gentleman had recovered between 29,000 and 30,000, so that the find near Wemberham was as nothing. In the *Saxon Chronicle* there is a passage, where the departure of the legion from Britain is commemorated in the following words: "This year the Romans departed from Britain, and they buried their money hoards." This, then, showed that the people of that early date were as familiar as we are with the unearthing of hoards, and from that time to the present such unearthing has continued. These facts would enable them, to some extent, to measure the wealth of the Romans.

Somerset Epitaphs.

Dr. HARDMAN followed with a paper on "Somerset Epitaphs," which will be found printed in Part II.