

The Excursion.

Bristol Cathedral

was then visited, over which the company were conducted by Mr. E. A. FREEMAN.

Mr. FREEMAN first pointed out the main features of the church from the site of the cloister. He called attention to the fact that it was not originally an episcopal church, nor the church of a monastery of the first rank. It therefore could not enter into any fair comparison with our great cathedral and abbey churches. Moreover it was only a fragment of the original building, the nave having been destroyed ; still there was quite enough to show the complete arrangements of a monastic church, as distinguished from those secular churches like Hereford and Wells. The monastery was originally founded by Robert Fitzharding, in the twelfth century. No part of his work was now visible in the church ; but the chapter-house of his time, or a little later, was one of the best specimens surviving of a Norman chapter-house. It was easy to trace the original height of the nave and transepts, which were on quite a small scale, much lower than the present building. There had evidently been a design entertained in the fourteenth century of re-building the nave, and the fragments showed that it had been actually begun. However, that nave seemed never to have been finished, and the Norman nave had certainly vanished. Mr. Freeman went inside and pointed out the internal peculiarities of the building. Except the Early English chapel at the north side, the choir, choir-aisles, and Lady chapel, formed a perfect work of the fourteenth century, in a style which marked a stage in the developement of the local forms of architecture, as a con-

siderable approach had been made both in the mouldings of the piers, and in the tracery of the windows, to the local Perpendicular of Somersetshire. The main peculiarity of the building was to be found in the choir, aisles, and Lady chapel, being all of one uniform height ; the elevation consisting merely of piers and arches without any triforium or clerestory. In the original arrangement, the high altar was advanced several bays from the east end ; its position being well marked by the difference in the roof between the choir and the Lady chapel to the east of it. The choir and presbytery occupied the space from this point westward, to the eastern arch of the lantern. The destruction of the nave caused everything to be thrust eastward. The Lady chapel was taken into the choir, and the high altar placed under the east window. The western part of the choir was taken to form, with the crossing, a new nave, and the new choir was fenced off by a screen, which bore the initials of Henry the Eighth, and Edward, Prince of Wales. At the same time, as the church was now raised to cathedral rank, a bishop's throne was introduced, somewhat perhaps, like a four-post bed, but which after three hundred years, had got to look fairly venerable. All this, he was sorry to say, was now gone ; the screen had vanished, the throne had vanished also ; it had given way to a much meaner one, and all the properties of choral arrangement had been broken down by setting up another throne opposite, rather finer than the bishop's, for the Dean ! Mr. Freeman strongly condemned the whole of the existing arrangements, which would only be brought out into a stronger light by the expected re-building of the nave.

The Rev. CANON NORRIS, gave some interesting particulars in reference to the building. Referring to the Austin Canons who formerly occupied it, he mentioned in-

identally an investigation which was made about 400 years ago by the then Bishop of Worcester, into their conduct. It was reported to the bishop that they kept their hunters and hounds, and he sent down some one to inquire into the matter. The doors of that part of the building in which the animals were kept were all made fast, and the messenger returned and reported that he could see nothing of the kind. The suspicions of the bishop, however, were not removed, and he determined to investigate the matter for himself. Keeping his determination in secret, he put on his scarlet coat—if huntsmen did wear scarlet in those days—and joined in the hunt. Subsequently he assembled the canons and challenged them with the fact, and on their denying it, he pointed out to one, saying, "I saw you go over such-and-such a fence," to another, "You came to grief in that ditch." The canons were thus caught, and there was a document in existence in which they made a promise to keep no more hunters or hounds. With regard to the nave, he rejoiced to say that at the next meeting of the Society it would be rising from the sod, and that, thanks to the noble spirit of the citizens of Bristol, the disgrace which had attached to them for three centuries was about to be wiped out. He gave some extremely interesting evidence, including that of William of Worcester, in 1488, to show that a nave was in existence at that time, and then gave some particulars of the steps which had been taken to secure its re-building.

A brief visit was paid to the Mayor's Chapel, and from thence the company proceeded to

St. Mary Redcliff Church,

where Mr. FREEMAN directed attention to the artistic character of the structure, observing that it stood alone amongst English parish churches in that it was vaulted

throughout. The Perpendicular principle was carried out to its fullest development in Redcliff, though there was a great deal of the earlier style apparent. The vault of the church did not altogether please him, and in fact it was done at a rather unlucky time, when a good form of vaulting had gone out of fashion, and another good form was struggling into existence. The simple form of vaulting was gone out, and the fan tracery, as seen to perfection in King's College, had not then come in, and it seemed at Redcliff as if they were feeling after it, but had not got it. Mr. Freeman noticed the great height of the clerestory, that, he said, was similar to that at Sherborne, Bath, and Christ Church, Hampshire. Still, however, the style was essentially the Somersetshire one, and it seemed to be the natural modification of the Somersetshire parish church, when carried out on the scale of a minster with vaulting. The speaker congratulated the people of St. Mary Redcliff on their speedily getting rid of the monstrous organ case at the west end, when they would be able to see the full proportions of the nave and a west window. He hoped that they would also have a good reredos; he meant a high one, as in some places the people had the reredos low, under the notion of seeing into the Lady chapel. He might, however, say that this chapel was not meant to be looked into from the main body of the church.

The Rev. H. G. RANDALL, Vicar of St. Mary Redcliff, said that Mr. Godwin, their architect, was unavoidably absent at Manchester that day, or he would have attended the meeting. With regard to the reredos, he was glad to hear what Mr. Freeman had said, as they intended to have a high one, although their object was not entirely to exclude the Lady chapel, but to show that there was something there. The organ screen at the west end would shortly be removed.

The party adjourned to luncheon at Colston's-rooms, near the church, by invitation of the vicar.

The Evening Meeting.

An Evening Meeting was held at the Fine Arts Academy.

The Rev. Prebendary Scarth read the following by Mr. E. W. GODWIN, F.S.A., in the unavoidable absence of that gentleman, on the

Foundation of S. Mary and S. Mark, now the Mayor's Chapel, Bristol.

Sir Maurice de Gaunt, (ob. 1230) his brother Henry de Gaunt, (ob. 1268) and his nephew Robert de Gourney, (ob. 1269) have each had the honour imputed to them of founding this House. Tanner is in favour of the first, and says, "He seems to have made it subject to the Canons of S. Augustine." After his death Robert de Gourney made it a distinct House. In deeds dated 1259, 1278, 1316, Robert de Gourney is considered the original founder.

The foundation charter of Sir Maurice de Gaunt shows his object to have been solely the relief of twenty-seven poor people, and makes mention of one chaplain. His nephew's charter confirms the former grant, and provides three chaplains, and the relief of one hundred poor daily. Leland says that S. Mark's was, as he remembered, "cawillyd the Gauntes, otherwyse, Ben Horumes." Leland in his Itinerary says also, that "one Henrie Gaunte erected a College of Pristes with a Master, on the Green of S. Augustine Hospitales in ruin."

The Bishop of Worcester's ordinance 1259, called it an "Hospital," but says nothing of any poor or infirm inmates,

although the chaplains, clerks, and lay friars, are repeatedly mentioned. At the bishop's visitation, 1278, he discovered that for four years the alms of the poor had been "damnably omitted," and at the second visitation, six years later, the same complaint is urged.

In the inquisition taken 31 Henry VIII, the resignation is described as having been made by deed, "bearing date under the convent seal of the same late monastery." We see therefore that the charitable notion of old De Gaunt was so enlarged by his nephew De Gourney, between 1230 and 1267, as to lose all its original character, and became as much a Religious House as any Priory in Bristol. In 1278 we find that the amalgamation of the conventual with the eleemosynary institution had failed, and the conventual got the upper hand, and the Bishop of Worcester condemns the perversion and misuse in 1284. In 1314 the brethren of S. Mark's made grievous complaints of poverty; and by letters patent of Edward II, the Bishop of Bath granted them the church of Stockland, and on a repetition of this complaint in 1326, he granted them the church of Overstowey.

The Priory was situated at the north-east side of College Green, and seems to have extended as far back as the Carmelites. Frog Lane bounded it on one side, and on the west ran the waters of the Frome. Orchard Street and Culver Street, occupy a portion of its site. "Culver" takes its name from *columbarium*, or Pigeon House, and the orchard or garden is mentioned by William of Wyrcester, but his notice of the House is singularly laconic, pp. 188, 247.

The chapel of the Gaunts is the only portion left of the old foundation, and a fragment of the winged lion of S. Mark (?) built into a house wall.

The original ground plan of the chapel was Transeptal without aisles, to which was afterwards added a Decorated aisle, westward. A late Perpendicular chapel being an extension eastward of the Decorated aisle, and eastward still a tower of the same late style, and in the place of the earlier transept further east another Perpendicular chapel opened from the tower. This chapel is one of the most important architectural works in Bristol, great part of it ranking in purity of style with the north chapel of the cathedral, but now sadly obscured by erections within for corporation purposes.

Mr. E. GREEN next read a paper, compiled from letters and scarce documents, on the Somersetshire Rebellion, which is published in Part II.

Votes of thanks having been passed, the meeting separated.
