

Thursday.

On Thursday morning the second excursion was commenced by a visit to

Longleat.

Here the Marquis of Bath received the visitors, and personally conducted them over the mansion, pointing out and explaining the many objects of interest, such as the numerous and valuable pictures, tapestry, old armour, etc. The portions of the house visited included the great hall, the little dining-room, the lower dining-room, and the upper dining-room, the drawing-room, the saloon, corridors, grand staircase, etc. A large number of the party went on to the roof, whence is obtained the best view of the magnificent gardens and the noble park.

The DEAN of WELLS expressed in fitting terms the company's thanks to his lordship.

Witham Friary Church.

A pleasant drive took the society to Witham Friary. Previous to entering the church, the Rev. J. T. WESTROPP (Vicar) gave some interesting details concerning the fishponds which belonged to the Carthusian monastery formerly existing in the parish, the church, and the manor of Witham. He

pointed out that the stream which supplied water to the ponds was the river Frome, and rose in that parish. In speaking of the manor of Witham, Mr. Westropp said he was told that about 1820, when the place belonged to Alderman Beckford, the park was enclosed with palisading, and a man who stole one of the palisades was tried, and sentenced to be whipped from one end of the parish to the other, at a cart's tail; he was informed of this by an eye witness. The land of Witham was worthless at the time of the foundation; and not one of the religious orders then established in the country would accept it. It was then offered to the Carthusians, one of the most austere orders, who, up to that time, had no settlement in England. Hugh, the prior, built or completed the building of the church. The structure was in the Norman style, and the splay of the windows was peculiar: inside the splay was two feet ten inches wide, whilst outside it was one foot eight inches, instead of about five or six inches as in ordinary architecture. It was found that the walls were not strong enough* to support the stone roof, and an outer skin was run up, making the walls about twenty inches thicker than they would otherwise have been. When the church was restored in 1876, the architect went to Lincoln Chapter-house to see the buttresses erected there by St. Hugh, and made the buttresses around Witham church exact copies of them. Mr. Westropp observed that it was unusual to see two fonts in a small church like that of Witham. He said that from 1174 (the probable date of the erection of the building) to 1458 there was no font in the church. In the early part of the present century the font had disappeared, and the church did not possess one till 1843, when a Mr. Jonathan Hooper Masters wished to be baptized. He presented a font, and it remained in use till the church was restored in 1876, when the original Norman† font

* See Note (31) post, Part II., p. 17.—[ED] See Illustration.

† This cannot have been a Norman Font, unless an old one were brought to Witham, and there erected; for this particular font was not in existence at Witham till 1459. See post, Part II., p. 13.—[ED.]

was discovered to have been used as a building stone in the tower that was erected in the year 1832. Mr. Burney, who was vicar of the parish in 1876, had the old font taken out, and restored to its former place, the font given by Mr. Masters being removed to a niche in one of the side walls of the building. Mr. Westropp said a beautiful old rood screen formerly existed in the church, taken down in 1832 during the restoration carried out by the Rev. C. G. R. Festing. Mr. Westropp asked the meaning of a double piscina; there was one in Witham Church, as well as in other Somerset churches. When the exterior of the church was reached, Mr. Westropp showed that three of the existing bays belonged to the original structure, whilst the one nearest the entrance was added during the last restoration; this latter was constructed on the same general principles as the older portion, but was of a somewhat different pattern, so that it might not be a sham antique. He also said there was formerly a leper hospital at Maiden Bradley, and he pointed out the small window through which the lepers received the Holy Communion. The old guest house of the monastery was stated to be a building which had been converted into two cottages. Mr. Westropp said the community of monks residing at Witham never numbered more than twelve; in 1178, there were only eight monks.



LEPERS' WINDOW.

Mr. BUCKLE then gave an account of the architectural history of the building, following the papers by the Rev. W. Hunt and Mr. W. White in Vol. xxiv. of these *Proceedings*.

Mr. ELWORTHY said he disagreed with Mr. Buckle regarding his statement that the building in which they were, was a parish church previous to the establishment of the charter-house. It was never a parish church till two hundred or two hundred-and-fifty years after Hugh's time. (*See paper in Part II.*)

Luncheon was served at the *Seymour's Arms Inn*, after which

Holtwell Quarry

was visited, and was described by Professor ALLEN.

Munney Church.

When this church was reached, some explanatory remarks were made by Mr. BUCKLE, who said that the church and the neighbouring castle formed the subjects of a long and interesting article by Mr. Green, published in their *Proceedings* shortly after their last visit to Frome. (Vol. xxii, 1877.) The greater part of the church was in the Early English style, including the chancel, both aisles, and the north transept arch; the windows under the gables of the two transepts were Early Decorated with reticulated tracery; Perpendicular work remained in the tower, the south porch, the screen and squints, and the east windows of the transepts. The westward extension of the aisles was modern; and so were many of the windows, but they seemed to be reproductions of the old ones. The date of the arcade was difficult to decide. The oak Rood screen had a special interest to the members of the society; for at their last visit to the church this screen was missing, though it was stated to be still in existence in Frome. In consequence of what was said upon that occasion the screen was brought back and replaced in its original position. It

was satisfactory to find that the visit of the society had thus brought a practical benefit to the church. On the west face of the tower there was a remarkable panel representing *a key and a knotted cord*, probably a Delamare badge, as it occurred also (in a slightly different form) on the cornice of one of the monuments.* These monuments were the most interesting features of the church, but they had been so thoroughly described by Mr. Green that there was no need now to dwell on them at length; though his identification of the figures needed revision. The oldest monument represented a knight of the camail period, and was described by Symonds with sufficient accuracy as being "In the form of the Black Prince." Symonds further stated that this was the tomb "of Delamare who temp. Edward II built the church and castle," putting by a clerical error Edward II for Edward III, and alluding apparently to Sir John Delamare, who obtained license to crenellate in 1373. It was difficult to see what part of the church could have been built by Sir John, but it ought to be recollected that Symonds (in a matter of that kind) was only able to preserve the traditions of a period which was three centuries removed from the time of which he wrote. Probably this monument represented Sir John Delamare, though it might possibly have been intended for his father or for his son Philip.

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The other Delamare tomb was surrounded with heraldic shields, and supported two recumbent figures, those of a man in a tabard and a collar of SS, and a lady with a long flowing veil over her head. Among the coats of arms was one of *Poulet and Delamare quarterly*, showing that it must have been erected after the marriage of the heiress, Constantia, to John Poulet, which took place about the year 1427, and presumably commemorated her father and mother, the last generation of the name of Delamare. Mr. Green considered her father to

* The Rev. E. Peacock believes that this stone is one of the panels of the tomb, and was let into the tower at the time when the tombs were shifted.

have been Philip, the founder of the chantry, and that he died about 1395, a date which fitted badly with Constantia's age, and with the style of the tomb. But the evidences for this part of the pedigree were very scanty, and they would apparently be better satisfied by the assumption that Constantia was the daughter of John, and granddaughter of Philip. If this were the true state of the case the tomb might naturally be assigned to this John and his wife.

As regards the Prater monument, Mr. Buckle had nothing to add to Mr. Green's description.

Dunney Castle

was also visited.

Mr. ELWORTHY said that the building they were now in had been fully described by Mr. Green in the article before alluded to by Mr. Buckle. Properly speaking, it did not fall under the technical designation of a castle. It was in fact, a fortified dwelling house or manse, and was so called in the original document of 1373, by which Edward III licensed Sir John Delamare to fortify and to "kernellate" his house.

Whilst the party were inside the castle, the DEAN OF WELLS proposed, in eloquent terms, a warm vote of thanks to Col. Bramble, who had acted as director of the excursions, and who, by the admirable manner in which he had done so, had contributed greatly to the pleasure, comfort and instruction of them all. The Dean spoke of the debt which the society owed to him for the excellence of his arrangements, and for the firm, yet courteous way in which Col. Bramble carried them out.

In responding, Col. BRAMBLE said he was pleased his efforts had met with their approbation; he added that they were very much indebted to the local committee, with Mr. George Daniel as secretary, who had not spared time or trouble in helping them, and rendering their visit to that district an enjoyable one.

Mr. HUDD said they also owed thanks for the hospitality shown in connection with the conversazione the previous evening.

Whatley Church

was next visited.

The Rev. W. E. WHITAKER (Rector) received the party, and gave a brief account of the church, which is dedicated to St. George. It was stated to be of Early English, or possibly, Norman date, and was restored in 1870. It is a rather small structure, having chancel, nave and chapels, with a tower and spire at the west end. The font is Early English, much restored; and in the church is a fine effigy of a recumbent cross-legged knight.

The grave of the late Dean Church, of St. Paul's Cathedral, formerly Rector of the parish, situated outside the south wall of the chancel, was an object of much interest, and indeed seemed to be the greatest attraction to the whole party.

The remains of the Roman Villa existing on Mr. J. H. Shore's estate were next visited. The pavements of what was formerly the *triclinium* or dining room, and of another apartment, with the curious patterns in the mosaic walls, were examined, and also the ruined walls of the Roman baths belonging to it.

On returning to Frome, the members dispersed, and thus closed the very pleasant meeting of 1893.