

The Third Day.

A very large number of Members started from the Town Hall for Dunster, Cleeve Abbey, and Blue Anchor.

The first halt was made at

Lower Marsh, Dunster.

This is one of the old manor houses alluded to by Mr. Luttrell in his address before the Society. The party, on assembling in front of the house, were addressed by

Mr. BUCKLE, who said that he knew nothing of its history, but his impression was that this house belonged to the Stewkleys in the 16th century, and passed to the Luttrells by the

marriage of George Luttrell to Miss Stewkley. It was a mediæval house, and the porch was in a very good state of preservation. There were two buttresses below, and immediately over the porch was a little chapel. There could be no doubt that it was a chapel, because there remained the piscina, and on either side of the east window there were two corbels, one above the other, which were clearly intended to carry images.

A brief inspection of this interesting place was made. It is now in the occupation of Mr. Maynard, formerly gamekeeper to H.R.H. Prince Albert. From here a move was made to

Dunster.

The fine old oak room of the Luttrell Arms Hotel, with its richly-timbered roof, was the first place inspected. There is in the hotel one of the plaster mantel-pieces for which West Somerset is peculiar. It has a bas-relief representing, it was suggested the story of Actæon, but this does not seem to suit the representation. There were also theories that it might be the story of Lazarus being licked by dogs, or one of Boccaccio's stories of a woman torn to pieces by dogs for unchastity.

In the north wing of the hotel there remains a fine specimen of 15th century timber building. The rooms on the first floor of this wing were originally approached from an external gallery, precisely as in the case of the old coaching inns, which are now so fast disappearing. Perhaps the previous existence of this gallery may be regarded as some slight evidence that the house was already an inn in the 15th century.

The Yarn Market.

On leaving the hotel, a brief glance was given at the octagonal building erected by George Luttrell, about the year 1600, as a yarn market. On the vane are cut the initials G.L. and the date 1647; but George Luttrell died in 1629. Per-

haps Francis Luttrell replaced the vane at the date mentioned, and ordered his grandfather's initials to be cut upon it, as they may have been upon the original vane.

The Church.

A short walk brought the party to the Vicarage grounds, from the lawn of which there is a very comprehensive view of the Church.

Mr. BUCKLE said, standing where they were, they were looking upon the farm yard of the Priory. Beyond that were the domestic buildings of the Priory, with what corresponded to a cloister in a real Abbey. So far as he knew, there were never more than a few monks in this Priory, and it was really more in the nature of a farm house than a complete Abbey. So far as he could see, there was no indication that there had ever been a cloister, although there did appear to have been a cloister court. The buildings in which the monks dwelt were those with the tiled roof a little west. The farm yard lay immediately below them. There was a barn, and immediately adjoining was a rough gateway. That barn was not the tithe barn. The large barn they passed on the way from the station was supposed to have been the tithe barn, and the one just below them was the farmer's; the monks themselves being the farmers.

In the garden of the Vicarage was an ancient pigeon-house, with stone nests fixed all round the walls; and there was a ladder in the centre which moved round on a pivot, and enabled the keeper to go the round of the nests. It was very seldom that these ladders were found *in situ*.

Going into the Church, Mr. Buckle addressed the Society on the history of the building. The oldest parts, as far as he knew, were of the time of William de Mohun, who came over with the Conqueror and was given the manor of Dunster as a reward for his services. He granted the Church of Dunster to the Abbey of Bath, in order that the Church might be built

and raised, "*ut ecclesiam edificent et exalcent.*" This showed that there was an old Saxon parish Church before the Normans came there, and before the monks had anything to do with it. Immediately afterwards the Bath Abbey established a cell at Dunster; a very small one, having not more than three or six monks, but they seemed to have done their duty to the Church. There was evidence that the Norman monks rebuilt the whole of the Church. The walls of the early Church must have been very considerably loftier than the walls of the present Church, but finishing with a flat ceiling, the actual height of the Church might not be higher than the ridge of the present roof. There were considerable alterations made in the Church by Reginald de Mohun, who did a great deal in Church building, and was the benefactor of Cleve and Bruton Pories. There was a long Early English chancel beyond the tower, and indications of Early English work elsewhere. There was an arch in the southern transept that seemed to show that the Early English Church was cruciform. Bit by bit the Church was taken down, and practically it was entirely rebuilt. Almost all that was west of the tower was of the fifteenth century, and the tower itself was of the date 1443.¹ A copy of the original contract for the building of the tower was in the possession of Mr. Luttrell. Before the monks came there, there must have been a parish priest; and after the monks were established, there was a secular vicar of the parish, and the vicar and his parishioners seemed not to have hit it off very well with the monks. In 1499, these disputes reached such a pitch that an appeal was made to the Bishop, who appointed three arbitrators, one of whom was Abbot Richard of Glastonbury; another, Thomas Tremayle, a Judge; and the third, Thomas Gilbert, Doctor of Canon Law. The arbitrators decided that for the future the Church should be divided into two structures; the monks to have the part east of the tower, and the parishioners that west of the tower.

¹ Printed in *Dunster and its Lords*, p. 134.

The immediate effect of that was that the rood screen was required in its present position, and the handsome screen they saw before them was the result. It was very valuable historically, because they were able to fix the date of it at about 1499. The carpenter who made that screen seemed to have been in great repute in that neighbourhood, because the one at Minehead was almost identical, and there were others in the neighbourhood apparently by the same hand at Timberscombe, and Carhampton. At the time of the dissolution of the chantries, there were described as being in the parish Church of Dunster two chantries—one dedicated to St. Lawrence and the other to St. George or the Trinity. It had been supposed that the chapel of St. Lawrence was situate to the north of the high altar; but if this had been the case the chantry would have been swept away at the dissolution of the Priory. It must have occupied some position on the west of the tower.

On going into the eastern part of the Church, Mr. Buckle said that part represented the old monks' choir. The screen at the west end stood where was formerly the western screen of the monks' choir. The arch over the aisle on the south side was of a most remarkable shape. In the 15th century, for some reason or other, they wanted to widen the opening, and did not want to spend any more money than they could help. They propped up the arch while they rebuilt the jambs below, and put two great corbels in to support the arch; and every part of it except the corbels and bases was 13th century work. In that part of the Church there was a most interesting collection of monuments relating to the Luttrell family, including one which resembled very closely the one in Porlock Church. At the dissolution of the monasteries, the Priory property—at any rate in the immediate neighbourhood—was granted to Sir Hugh Luttrell for a term of years, with remainder to Humphrey Colles; but Sir Hugh Luttrell bought out the remainder man and obtained the whole of the property of the monks of Dunster, and that carried with it property in that

half of the Church in which they were standing. He thought there could be no question at all that it was absolutely Mr. Luttrell's property, and he had the right to do anything he pleased in it. There was a similar case at Arundel, where the Duke of Norfolk, having obtained the eastern part of the Church, had built a wall separating it from the west, and he held Roman Catholic services in it.¹

After making some observations on the monuments, the party proceeded to

Dunster Castle,

over which they were shown by its owner, the PRESIDENT. From the windows and terraces magnificent views were obtained of the grand landscape around, and the Channel, with the Steep and Fat Holmes in the distance. The dining-room, with its superb ceiling (1581) and chaste white marble chimney-piece; the oak panellings of the rooms; the staircases, with remarkable carvings out of single immense boards of elm; old paintings and rare engravings; portraits by Thornhill and Opie; leather hangings, like tapestry, and other contents of the Castle were admired by a very numerous party, who then sat down in the large room over the gateway to luncheon, for which the thanks of the Society were tendered by Sir EDWARD ELTON.

The next place to be visited, according to the programme, was Carhampton Church; but time had passed too quickly, and it was necessary to pass it by, and hurry on to

Cleve Abbey.

Here Mr. BUCKLE again took charge of the very large party, and taking up his position, first at the gateway, then in the chapel, the cloister, the dormitory, and the refectory, pointed

¹ The contract for the building of the tower, the award of the arbitrators, and further particulars about most of the points mentioned above, are to be found in Mr. Maxwell Lyte's book on *Dunster and its Lords*.

out the leading features of interest. His remarks and observations will be found in Part II.

Time, however, again ran short, and Mr. Buckle was left speaking to a large company, while a considerable number who were interested in geology hurried off for the purpose of hearing a description, *in situ*, by Mr. Ussher, of

The Geological Formation at Blue Anchor.

In the vicinity of the Blue Anchor cliffs, time forbidding a closer inspection,

Mr. USSHER gave a brief geological exposition of the phenomena. He asked them to excuse introductory remarks, for which there was no time available. The cliffs before them were entirely composed of secondary rocks, and illustrated three successive stages in the earlier deposition of that great period, viz., the Triassic, the Rhætic, and the Lower Lias. Of these, the Triassic was the oldest; it was represented in the cliff by its newest member, the Red Marls of the Keuper. These Marls were thought to have originated from sedimentary deposition in salt lakes or inland seas, which were doubtless not far from the coasts of the period, as the beds pass upwards into the Rhætic series, a marine formation, forming a passage into the overlying Shales, Clays, and Limestones of the Lower Lias.

The Keuper Marls contain Rock Salt beds in Cheshire. In the south-western counties, although no Rock Salt occurs in them, its former presence is here and there attested by the occurrence of pseudomorphs or crystalline shapes, from which the Chloride of Sodium has been dissolved away by degrees, and its place has been taken by the Marl.

Owing to subsequent chemical changes, it is not always possible to arrive at any conclusions from the minerals found in rocks as to the conditions attending their deposition. But in this respect the Triassic Marls are favoured. Here at Blue Anchor, as in many other places, they contain deposits of

Gypsum, which tend to throw some light on the conditions under which they were deposited. Gypsum or hydrated Sulphate of Calcium ($\text{Ca SO}_4 + 2 \text{H}_2\text{O}$) occurs in rocks of many different geological ages, being found in the Salt range in India in pre-Silurian rocks. It assumes three forms, viz., the compact, granular or finely crystalline, as Alabaster; the fibrous, as Satin Spar; the visibly crystalline, as Selenite; it can, as a rule, be scratched by the finger nail. Alabaster frequently occurs in the Triassic Marls in impersistent beds, in a manner which plainly betokens contemporaneous deposition with the environing sediment; but the irregularity of these beds or masses, and the signs of disturbance in the enclosing sediments which are frequently interlaced and mingled with the Gypsum, point to the lodgment of further accumulations of the material dissolved by percolating water, and carried downwards from the overlying beds. Satin Spar is found in veins and cracks, into which it has been carried by percolating waters from a disseminated state in the strata drained by them. Selenite often occurs in isolated crystals in the black Shales of the Rhætic beds, and is found in dark Clays of a much more recent geological age. Mr. J. G. Goodchild recently furnished a valuable paper on Gypsum, to which I am indebted for most of my information on the subject.

The evaporation of sea water has been found to give the following results:—First a weak precipitate of Carbonate of Lime, with a trace of Strontium, hydrated Sesquioxide of Iron, with a trace of Manganese; then, during the evaporation of eighty per cent. of its original volume no precipitate takes place. It then leaves an abundant precipitate of Gypsum, identical in character with that of the Alabaster beds; this continues during the evaporation of eight per cent. of the water; after which, during the evaporation of two per cent., there is no precipitate. Then a precipitate of Chloride of Sodium or Sea Salt takes place, “continuing until the volume of water has been reduced by one half, when a precipitation

of Sulphate of Magnesia begins to take place." We thus arrive at the consecutive deposition of four distinct deposits by the evaporation of sea water. Mr. Goodchild considers "that the Gypsum deposits in the Triassic Marls seem to represent numerous episodes of higher salinity in the history of the old inland lakes. The normal periods, or those of lower salinity, being represented by the ordinary form of sediment."

Mr. Ussher considered this explanation as very probable, as from proximity to the sea, or insulation from it by temporary and shifting barriers, incursions of sea water might take place from time to time in the lagoons. Whatever might have been the nature of the basin in which the Triassic Marls were deposited, their present extension proves that the Quantocks formed an island during their deposition, and also during the formation of the subsequent Penarth or Rhætic beds and the Lower Lias. The Mendips, on the other hand, though forming a barrier of land during the Triassic period, were almost submerged during the deposition of the Lias. Between the Quantocks and the Brendons, the Stogumber and Crocombe valley was excavated in the earlier stages of the Triassic epoch, and formed a strait between the Watchet, Williton, and Minehead waters on the north, and those which covered Taunton vale, and far to the southward, during the Triassic, Rhætic, and Liassic periods, long before the Greensands of the Blackdown Hills were formed.

All sedimentary strata were derived from pre-existing rocks, and this fact would be readily appreciated by those who studied the composition of the coarser Triassic rocks south of Williton, which are largely composed of Devonian fragments of the same character as the rocks of the high lands on either side of the valley.

Attention was then called to the persistence of specific forms of Ammonites on horizons in the Lias.

Finally, Mr. Ussher pointed out that the shifting of the sands by gales on the coasts at Blue Anchor, Stolford, and

many other places on the coasts of Devon and Cornwall, disclosed traces of peat, and trunks and stools of trees, with which no remains of extinct mammals were found; proving that at no very remote period in pre-historic times, the land had risen high enough to allow of the growth of a belt of forest land all round our coasts; the elevation probably producing a land connection with the Continent, and converting the Bristol Channel into a broad forest tract; but since that, a subsidence enabled the sea to re-conquer its old domain, in which it has mercifully spared us some relics of the reign of King Log.

Again this meeting was cut short by the approach of the last train out from Minehead, and a remnant only were able to accept the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. HALLIDAY, of Chapel Cleve, to tea.
