

Evening Meeting.

The chair was taken punctually at the time appointed. There was a large attendance, the room being quite full. The PRESIDENT first read a letter from Mr. F. H. Dickinson, expressing regret at not being able to attend. Mr. Dickinson having recently visited Witham Friary, wished to draw attention to the fishponds there, as he thought they should be surveyed. The water supplying them seemed to have been diverted from the stream and carried along the edge of the hill on the south-east side of the valley; this valley being divided by three or four large earth banks to form the ponds. As he saw no gaps in the stream he concluded that pipes were used to maintain the water supply.

Mr. FERREY then read a paper on the Somerset type of church compared with that of some other counties. It will be found printed in Part II.

The PRESIDENT thanked Mr. Ferrey for a paper of considerable value. In one particular he thought Mr. Ferrey was mistaken. He had said that people were usually buried on the south side of the church, because the north was gloomy. His

own opinion was that the south side was used because the door was generally on that side, and the living thus had to pass the graves of their departed friends in going to and from the church.

Bishop CLIFFORD remarked that it was new to him that there should be any similarity between the churches of Cornwall and Devon. To his mind they formed an illustration of how the material of a district entirely changed the character of the church, and it appeared to him that in the churches of Cornwall, and the greater number of those in Devon, there was scarcely anything in common. He thought the beauty of the towers in Somerset was in a great measure owing to the destruction from natural decay, or otherwise, of the earlier ones, and the consequent re-building by the same architect. The question of how far the possibility of storms, earthquakes, and other phenomena had influenced the style in different districts was a wide one, upon which some information might be gained.

Rev. H. H. WINWOOD said that they had had one side of the shield held up to them, but there was another. As one who had dabbled in geology, he was exceedingly pleased to hear an architect refer to and recognise the influence of the local geological formation on the architecture of the country. The question as to how far the churches of a county derived their style and architectural features from the mother church of the district had been overlooked. If the mother church were a magnificent building as at Bath, or at Wells, the architect would with fair certainty take from these his idea for other edifices near them. They would thus very often find the details of the grander building copied in surrounding churches.

Mr. FERREY, in reply, reiterated his opinion that where the best stone was found, there was found the best architecture. He then remarked on the points of similarity between Cornish and Devon churches; but, structurally speaking, he would not say that they were similar. He did not think the fact of the entrance being usually on the south side had much to do with

the graves being on that side; nor could he agree that the mother church was taken as the model or pattern for other churches in the district.

The PRESIDENT then called on the

Rev. FREDK. BROWN, who read a paper on some Star Chamber proceedings, relating to events in the neighbourhood of Wiveliscombe, about three hundred years ago. He explained that the Star Chamber Court was established simply by an ordinance of Henry VIII, and was probably called the Star Chamber as being held in a chamber ornamented with stars.² The fines inflicted by this Court were so heavy that he wondered how they were ever paid. Yet it was a very lawless time, and perhaps some irresponsible power may have been necessary.

Mr. Brown's paper is printed in Part II.

Professor BOYD DAWKINS next contributed some remarks on the interesting collection of roughly-shaped stone implements exhibited by Mr. Elton in the Local Museum. These implements had been found in this district, and so far as he knew, only in one place, viz., the valley of the Axe. That they were of human origin there could be no doubt, and it was, therefore, clear that in ancient times man was living in the valley of the Axe, in a place which was now covered by twenty or thirty feet of sand and gravel. The question that would occur to them was "What sort of man was he?" and upon that point he thought they were able to get a tolerably clear idea. In the first place, these implements were of the rudest and roughest type—just the sort of implements that would be used for the purpose of knocking a man down, opening an oyster, or cracking a nut. Implements of this kind had been found in various places in association with various animals. For instance, supposing he were to take them to the neighbourhood

(2). This was so. In early documents it is called the "Sterred" chamber; showing clearly the origin of the name. The final 'ed' is hardly detected in conversation, and would be easily dropped.—E. G.

of Salisbury, he would show that these men hunted such animals as the mammoth, the rhinoceros, and the bear. He had no doubt that the men who left the implements in the valley of the Axe were in the habit of hunting these animals in that district. In putting these points before them he was dealing with the fringe of a very great subject. Implements of this sort were widely spread over the whole of Europe. They were found not only in the South of England, but in France, across the Pyrenees, on the sites of Madrid and Lisbon. Implements of the same sort had been found in the North-west of Africa, in Italy, and even in Egypt; and it was supposed that the ancient Egyptian civilisation was contemporary with the barbarism of these ages. When they saw these implements near the tomb of Memphis, they had evidence that even in the cradle of civilisation this barbarous sort of hunter once lived. They had evidence of his existence between Jerusalem and Jericho. It was a very remarkable fact that throughout the greater portion of the Indian Peninsula, south of the line traversed by the great rivers, these implements were found—sometimes with existing and sometimes with extinct animals. Some remains of buffaloes and other creatures were found with them in those regions. It was interesting to know that this hunter hunted these animals in the jungles of India. Even now he had not exhausted the inquiry. Some few years ago he had the good fortune to make an expedition to the United States, and there he had the opportunity of obtaining these implements in the valley of the Delaware. So they saw that this was a problem of no inconsiderable importance. In the valley of the Delaware they found with the implements a reindeer and the horse; so that in the new world, as well as in the old, they had evidence of this type of hunter; and they must look upon the implements they saw in that room as representing a world-wide type of barbarism. They would ask him what type it was. He could only tell them that these implements represented to his mind the very earliest race of man which they had met with up to

the present time. If he were asked to explain why it was they were so widely spread and so uniform, he could only answer in one way, namely, that these implements represented a primeval condition of barbarism, out of which mankind had through long ages gradually emerged. He did not know that he could add very much to that idea, but he might mention that occasionally fragments of human bones had been found in association with these remains. They were not sufficient to tell them anything about the physique of these people, but they told them one thing worth knowing—that this primeval man who used these implements was not a missing link—not half man and half monkey; but that he had bones very much as they had, and he did not know that he differed very much from the lower types of mankind at the present time. But they had a newer race of man, also found in Somerset, and also associated with those animals which he had mentioned, and which were so admirably represented in the Taunton Museum; that was to say, the man known under the name of the Cave Man. In Wookey Cave, Mr. Sanford and himself were fortunate enough to make a series of discoveries which pointed beyond doubt to the existence in that district of a higher type of man than that type which he had just mentioned. That man was essentially a hunter, unacquainted with the arts of agriculture, unaccompanied in that hunting even by the dog. He was just a rude hunter, but he was a higher type of hunter than the one who went before him, and he was in the habit occasionally of representing by illustrations the animals which he hunted. They found representations of the reindeer and the mammoth, in the caves of this country, as also in France, in Switzerland, and in Belgium. The general result of the whole of this line of inquiry was to show that he was in all probability identical in race with the Esquimaux. Thus among the primeval inhabitants they had first the nameless hunter to whom they might apply the term of the River Drift hunter, and then in the long course of ages they had the higher type of hunter known as the Cave Man.

Then, as to the interval which separated these two races of men, and these strange extinct animals to which he had alluded—the elephant, the rhinoceros, and other creatures which were hunted by them in this country—from the present order of things, he would say, that in the long course of ages, the animals which had become extinct disappeared gradually, and a new set of creatures came in, the latter represented by the domestic animals—pigs, cows, domestic horses, dogs, and the like, all under the guardianship of man. The arts of agriculture, too, appeared, and all these were associated with other implements which they would see in the Museum—those stone axes, which had been ground to a good edge, and which were now named the Neolithic axes, or the polished stone axes of a later age. Then came bronze implements, and subsequently iron was brought into use. Thus they found themselves confronted with the dawn of history in this part of the world. If they asked him how long these things were separated from the present day, he must frankly say that he was not able to offer even a guess. He could only fix his data by historical records—by written documents, in which he found not merely a certain string of events recorded, but in which he could also measure the intervals between events, and when he reviewed the documentary evidence in his survey of the remote past, he had no means of measuring the intervals in terms of years. Therefore it would be ridiculous in him to give them a date in terms of years of the time when these most ancient inhabitants of Somerset were living in the district.

Bishop CLIFFORD, in proposing thanks to Professor Boyd Dawkins, said the address given was especially of interest, as they must remember they were enquiring not only for antiquities, but on all points relating to natural history. It was a matter for great congratulation that they had Mr. Dawkins in their Society. When they were that day at Raleigh's Cross, Mr. Dawkins had given them an account, most interesting, and beyond value, of the origin of the veins of mineral in the earth.

He believed this was the first time that Mr. Dawkins had publicly propounded his theory. Any one who knew how carefully he worked upon such matters, and the influence accorded his opinion by scientific men, would feel sure that his theory would be ultimately adopted as the solution of a great difficulty.

Mr. A. J. MONDAY had prepared a paper on two early Somerset wills, but being unable to be personally present, one, that of Richard Yea, as especially relating to Wiveliscombe, was read by the Hon. Sec. Mr. Monday's paper will be found printed in Part II.

The HON. SEC. as he read, made some few comments in explanation, remarking on the then value of money, that the 20s. per annum bequeathed, would now be £20, and other values the same. The bequests to the Vicar, and for the repair of the Cathedral, were no doubt the remains of an old custom, so happily noted at Chard last year by Mr. E. B. Tylor. The bequest of silver, always found in these wills, and the great value set upon it, marks to us, with our many substitutes, a great change in this respect. All household goods and decorations were highly valued, as was the constantly recurring feather bed and belongings, not a cheap article now, if you get it, but then, without doubt, entirely home-made, and heavily filled. The testator takes care that his widow should have all that she brought to him—her napery, beades, and girdles. The mention of wagon and putt, with the wheels bound with iron, seems to show that such things were rare. By the bequest of the "table-board" in the hall, and the bar of iron with the pot-hangers in the chimney, we see that those things which we now leave for a scramble or for the auctioneer, were included. These wills are, in fact, almost catalogues, and, like our auction sale, they served all purposes for a division.

The HON. SEC. had ready a paper on the History of Dulverton, but as it was now time to separate, to prepare for the early start on the morrow, he asked that it might be taken

as read, especially as it did not relate to Wiveliscombe. The paper is printed in Part II.

The PRESIDENT then said that as this would be the last meeting in that hall, he took the opportunity to thank the Local Committee at Wiveliscombe for the great kindness the Society had received at their hands, and he would especially name the Secretaries—Mr. Luttley and Capt. Hancock.

The proposition was carried with acclamation.

Capt. HANCOCK, in acknowledging the President's remarks, on behalf of himself and Mr. Luttley, said that they, and their fellow-townsmen, most highly appreciated the visit of the Society, and were pleased that their efforts for their welfare had been so satisfactory.

The proceedings then terminated.