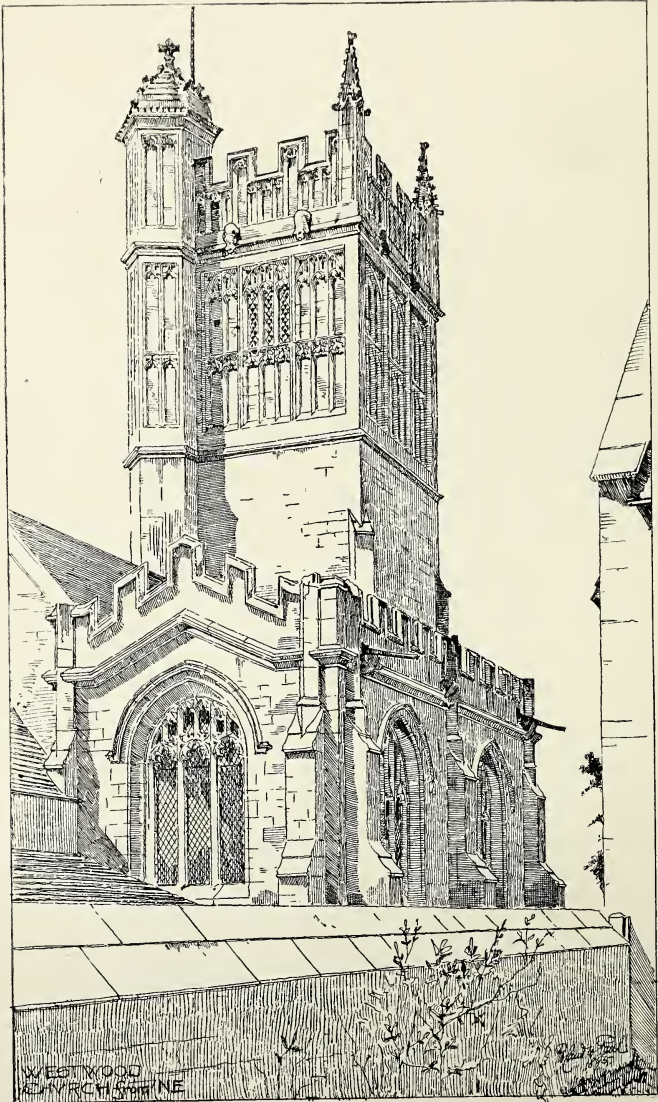


Notwithstanding a continuous fall of rain, and a very gloomy forecast, a large party started, under the able direction of Col. Bramble, and drove through Walcot, Batheaston and Box Hill to Chalfield Manor House, which was reached, after passing through fields and very primitive farm roads. The picturesque group of buildings at Chalfield\* soon aroused the enthusiasm of the visitors, who had no lack of information as to the history of the dwellings and its possessors, or as to its more noteworthy architectural features. With plans and pedigrees to secure accuracy, the Rev. E. Kingston, the rector, told the story of the house, and answered numerous enquiries, while Mr. E. Buckle, hon. diocesan architect, dilated on its artistic attributes. The house, he said, gave a good idea of the way in which an English country gentleman lived in the fifteenth century. Around him were his farmyard, granaries and other outbuildings; he, in point of fact, carried on all his farming operations under his own eye. Although the house was thoroughly Gothic in style, they would see that feeling for balance and symmetry beginning to find expression, which afterwards became so marked a feature of the Renaissance. Not only was the place noteworthy for this grouping together of the domestic and the agricultural buildings, but it was also striking from the

See *Frontispiece*.

way in which the church itself came within the moated area. Attention was called to the curious doorway and bell tower of the little edifice, as well as to the singular screen in the interior, with its heraldic emblazonry of the Tropenell family, who built the house and improved and beautified the church. Leaving the church, Mr. Bailey, the occupant of the house, kindly allowed the visitors to see the interior, which though sadly cut up, still presents several interesting features, suggestive of its former glories. Remounting, the party drove thence to Bradford, and having alighted at the Swan Hotel, proceeded at once to inspect the little Saxon chapel, which Mr. Buckle described as the most interesting object that would be visited this year. There was no doubt in his mind that it was a pre-Norman erection, although its precise date was uncertain, and the present stone edifice may have replaced one of wood which St. Aldhelm founded. At neither of the porches, north or south, were there doors, nor at the inside entrance. The interior was open to the winds; the only place, strange to say, where there was a door, was at the chancel arch, the jambs of which can still be detected. Another peculiarity was the absence of windows. No vestige of an original window remained, and it was difficult to see where any could ever have existed, except for one probably high up in the west wall. The two south windows were possibly Saxon in date, but were certainly insertions. As for the style the builder evidently had seen a Romanesque church and tried to produce a copy from memory, but not knowing how to produce the arcading outside, and the other ornamentation visible, cut it out of the solid stone after he had built the church. The childishness of this proceeding shewed the antiquity of the building and proved that it belonged to the earlier period of Saxon architecture. With regard to the angels above the chancel arch, Mr. Buckle suggested whether they might not have been part of an extensive piece of sculpture, the centre of which was the Crucifixion; but against this it was urged that there was no



WESTWOOD CHURCH SPIRE

W. G. B. 1874

trustworthy evidence that the heavenly messengers originally occupied the position in which they are now to be seen. Discussing these and other points, the company strolled into the parish church, the principal points of interest in which were again elucidated by Mr. BUCKLE.

After luncheon at the "Swan," the party proceeded to Kingston House, which was kindly thrown open by Mr. Moulton, and the beauties of which, both inside and out, especially the latter, were examined. Beneath the trees at the bottom of the lawn, Mr. F. SHUM read a paper on the mansion (published in Transactions of the "Bath Field Club") preceding it by a general description of Bradford and the noteworthy objects, as well as people identified with it.

Crossing the ancient bridge over the Avon, attention was given to the chapel still remaining in sound repair upon it. Here it was pointed out that chapels or oratories were a common feature upon mediæval bridges; that the building of bridges and repair of castles were, in early days, eminently works of piety, proved by the survival in the title of the head of the Roman Church, who is still Pontifex Maximus.

The

### Manor Barn

of the fourteenth century, once belonging to the Abbey of Malmesbury, was next visited. Its massive and elaborate roof was described by Mr. BUCKLE.

Thence the members were driven to

### Westwood,\*

to survey its pretty church and charming manor house. Here Mr. BUCKLE did not fail to draw attention to the old painted glass which the late Canon Jones collected from the aisle and placed in the east and two side windows of the chancel, and in which is so quaintly and strikingly depicted our Lord's Passion.

\* In vol. xxii is some account of Westwood.—[ED.]

The ornamental altar rails of old oak and the fine Jacobean pulpit were also brought under notice, the latter having been brought from a farmyard, where it had been lying no one knew how long. Whether it belonged to the church is not certain, but it was found to fit exactly the stone basement remaining, and from the top of which the minister was wont to preach without being enclosed. Great pleasure was also taken in the manor house adjoining, well preserved as it is, although after not a little mutilation in the past. The panelled and tastefully-decorated ceilings were deservedly admired; while amusement was caused at finding depicted in relief over the kitchen mantelshelf a mermaid with two tails, holding in one hand a looking-glass, and in the other a comb; a scene in which geese were hanging a fox which had vainly tried to decoy them into his maw, besides fishes, dogs, etc.

In a pelting shower the breaks were remounted, and driven along the margin of the beautiful Iford and Freshford Valley. Descending into the vale through Freshford, the journey was continued thence to

### Binton Charterhouse.

Here the remains of the ancient and wealthy Carthusian House, founded by Ella, daughter of Fair Rosamond, so roughly used, too, immediately after the dissolution of religious houses, were explored, as well as the charming manor house. Assembling in the chapter house (or what is supposed to be such) of the priory,

Mr. E. T. D. FOXCROFT, in the absence of the Rev. H. Gee, who had been expected, gave a brief account of the foundation and subsequent history of the priory, as well as of the fragments of it still *in situ* (printed in Part II).

Mr. Foxcroft having been thanked for his monograph, the company adjourned to the manor house, where tea and refreshments were kindly provided by Mr. and Mrs. Heathcote, who were cordially thanked for their welcome forethought and

hospitality. The way homeward was through Limpley Stoke and Claverton, and the Grand Hotel was reached at 7.15, all expressing themselves delighted with the excursion and the able way in which it had been conducted by the hon. secretary, Lieut.-Colonel J. R. BRAMBLE.