



COFFIN CHALICE AND PATEN FOUND AT EAST DEAN.

A COFFIN CHALICE AND PATEN.

BY REV. A. A. EVANS.

BUT few mortuary or coffin chalices and patens have come to light in Sussex. Doubtless many exist buried in ancient churchyards and churches with the bones of priests of long ago, but in the exhaustive account of Sussex Church plate, which Mr. Couchman has given in Vols. LIII., LIV. and LV. of the Collections, only three are mentioned, all taken from graves in Chichester Cathedral of early bishops. Of these sets of funerary vessels, two are of silver, and belong to the thirteenth century, and one, which is possibly of late twelfth century date, of pewter.

At East Dean—that of East Sussex—during the summer of 1882, some workmen engaged in restoring the church disturbed the grave of a pre-Reformation priest, just outside the chancel at its north-east corner, and unearthed from among his bones a pewter chalice and paten of early design. It passed from the then vicar into the possession of Major F. J. Maitland, of Friston Place. Recently he has given it back to myself as vicar of the parish, on condition, a quite proper one, that it is housed in a glass case and exhibited to the many visitors who find their way over the Downs and visit the ancient church. With the chalice and paten is also given back, for the same purpose, a key found in Friston churchyard of mediæval date and unusual design.

The Keeper of the Mediæval Department at the British Museum gives the date of the chalice (and paten) as between 1200 and 1250 A.D. It has the characteristics of type A in Mr. St. John Hope's differentiation of ancient chalices, *i.e.* a round foot, spherical knot on stem, and bowl broad and shallow. It is all of one piece, and the measurements of the chalice are: height, 4 inches; width of bowl, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches; depth of bowl, $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches; width of foot, $3\frac{3}{8}$ inches. The bowl has a quasi lip. Diameter of paten, 4 1-16 inches; depth, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.