

A Brief Abstract of the Proceedings of the Society.

(CONTINUED FROM VOLUME 2.)

1863.

THE second meeting of the session (the first for the year 1863,) was held at the Society's Rooms, on February 2nd; the Rev. Canon Blomfield in the chair.

The Rev. CHAIRMAN expressed the pleasure he felt in again meeting his friends and fellow-members of the Chester Archaeological Society, with whom in that room he had spent so many agreeable and instructive evenings. He trusted the present might prove as prosperous a session as the one which had preceded it, and that all those who could help forward its success, either by contributing original papers or bringing forward objects of antiquarian interest for exhibition, would at once place themselves in communication with the secretaries.

Dr. McEWEN read a paper "On the ancient Church and Sanctuary of Pennant Melangell, Montgomeryshire, with remarks on the law of sanctuary as it prevailed in the Middle Ages." The privilege of safe asylum, he said, was traceable back to the most remote ages of the world. The "cities of refuge" of Jewish times (and, he might have added, the "mark" put upon Cain,) were instances of the early prevalence of the custom in Bible history, while cases abounded in classic story of the like universal application of the privilege of sanctuary. In England the principle could be traced to early Saxon times. In Scotland the sanctuary was called *Gortholl*, or *Gyrthol*, which meant, in simple terms, safety or protection. Until the reign of Henry VIII

every church or churchyard was a sanctuary, except as against treason and sacrilege, which were offences not lightly to be forgiven by either the State or the Church. Criminals who escaped thither took an oath before the coroner to abjure the realm, and not to return without leave of the king, and had thereupon a safe conduct to the nearest port of embarkation for a foreign land. From the reign of Henry II., in 1154, to that of Henry VIII., the law of sanctuary continued in pretty much the same state. Now and then, but only occasionally, as in the case of A'Becket at Canterbury, the right of asylum was invaded; but in most cases the Church took care to let it be known that punishment, human or divine, or both, fell heavily upon those who dared to violate the sanctuary. At length, abuses of a serious nature having engrafted themselves upon the system, the privilege was formally abolished in the 21st year of the reign of James I.

The little church of Pennant Melangell, erected in a secluded nook in the northern part of Montgomeryshire, was chiefly remarkable, not so much for its architectural features, as for the legendary story connected with it, and from the fact of its still retaining the original wall which had once marked the bounds of its ancient sanctuary. The legend in question, which was quoted entire by the lecturer, from a M S. in the Wynnstay Library, may be epitomised as follows:—Early in the 7th century one Brochwel, consul of Chester, a liberal and good man, ruled as Prince over the districts of Powys. Brochwel, while hunting one day in the neighbourhood of Pennant, a part of his principality, entered a great wood with his dogs in pursuit of a hare, which took refuge in the lap of a beautiful virgin, engaged there “in divine contemplation and prayer.” In vain the huntsman sought to blow his horn, for the instrument stuck fast to his lips; in vain, too, the Prince strove to urge on the dogs, for farther and farther away they retreated at every call, obstinately refusing, the legend assures us, to approach the chaste person of the virgin. Explanations ensued, from which it appeared that the lady had for 15 years dwelt a recluse in that thicket, eschewing the face of man; that her name was Monacella; that she was the daughter of Iochwel, king of Ireland, and had fled from her home and country, rather than be wedded to a man whom her conscience disapproved; and that further, with the Prince's permission, there in those woods she would remain, and end her days in peace. Brochwel, astonished at her words, at once acceded to her wishes, and founded on the spot a church and religious house; erecting it into a

perpetual asylum, refuge, and sanctuary in honour of Melangell or Monacella, who was constituted first Abbess, and who died and was buried there some thirty years afterwards. Pennant ceased to be a sanctuary in the reign of James I., but the spirit of Melangell retained its hold upon the people of the district for more than two centuries afterwards; for until comparatively recent times it was held to be scarcely less than criminal to pursue a hare into that privileged region, the peasants always greeting their favorite animal with "God and Monacella be with thee!" The church was apparently a Perpendicular structure; but the circular Norman font, and some capitals built into one of the walls, point to a fabric some 400 years older than the present church. The churchyard contained two dilapidated stone effigies; one in armour, attributed to Iorwerth Drwyndwn, eldest son of Owen Gwynedd, and the other, a lady, said, but erroneously, to represent the virgin saint Monacella. Within the sacred precincts were also several yew trees, into one of which the sheep were wont in winter time to climb for shelter among the branches. In front of the west gallery of the church was a curious piece of carved wood work, representing in quaint fashion the principal incidents of the Monacella legend, as already detailed. Of this carving, as well as of the church, churchyard, font, windows, monuments, &c., the late Mr. J. Peacock exhibited a series of elaborate and artistic drawings, which contributed more than a little to the interest of the paper.

The Rev. CHAIRMAN offered the thanks of the meeting to the lecturer; after which an interesting and vigorous discussion ensued, of which, as no reporter was present, we regret our inability to give more than the merest digest.

The Rev. C. BOWEN thought much misapprehension prevailed as to the exact meaning of the term "sanctuary" in early times, and, as several legal antiquaries were present, would be glad of some further information upon the point.

Mr. WYNNE FFOULKES explained that in former days every church and probably churchyard was a privileged asylum, to which offenders might flee for temporary shelter (viz. for 40 days), provided they were free from the brand of murder, treason, sacrilege, and a few other heinous crimes. The practice dated back in England certainly to the times of the Saxons, as it was referred to both in the laws of Ina and Alfred, and, he believed, in the yet earlier Welsh laws of Howel Dda. There were, too, he thought, but few instances on record of its violation.

Certain churches, as apparently this one of Pennant, had special rights of sanctuary attached to them ; but in later times the privilege was extended, and some of our larger towns enjoyed the prerogative of being public sanctuaries. Manchester, for instance, was erected into an asylum in 1540 ; but, immediately growing tired of the distinction, it was transferred to Chester in 1541.

References to sanctuaries in other parts of the kingdom were made by several members, and especially by Dr. McEwen to that at Holyrood, Edinburgh, for debtors only, the privileges of which had been exercised within living memory.

Mr. T. HUGHES would supplement Mr. Wynne Ffoulkes's remarks on the sanctuaries of Manchester and Chester by observing that before the privilege, such as it was, had been three months located at Chester, the mayor and other civic dignitaries had been despatched to London to secure its immediate removal, inasmuch as the city had thereby become the common resort of criminals of the worst description. At their instigation Chester ceased to be a sanctuary, and the distinction was thereupon transferred to Stafford. In the days of the Norman earldom there were three special sanctuaries established in Cheshire, one being at Hoole Heath, near Chester, its boundary extending to the outer limits of the city north-eastward ; another at King's Marsh, an extra-parochial district near Farndon ; and a third at Rudheath, near Sandbach. These were sanctuaries in the fullest sense of the word, and sheltered the fugitive for life, if he committed no fresh depredation, and kept within the privileged bounds ; he erecting, by the bye, no house of habitation, but dwelling solely in booth or tent. Very similar to the asylum at Holyrood was the debtor's sanctuary formerly at Chester. Here, whenever a citizen could prove to the mayor that he was unable to pay his just debts, he was placed in the "free-house," near Northgate prison, and might walk at large, and with perfect impunity, within its boundaries, which extended to the then corn-market on the north side, and from the Water Tower to the Phoenix Tower on the City Walls. This privilege had fallen into disuse towards the commencement of the present century.

Mr. MORRIS said that the old churches in Montgomeryshire were rather famous for their rood-screens, though several had been mutilated, and portions of them fixed up in different parts of the church, as he believed was the case at Pennant Melangell. With respect to the curious font at Pennant, he might observe that there was one somewhat

similar at Chalk Church, in Kent, though the font there had the shaft smaller in circumference in proportion to the bowl, which, however, was of the same shape.

Dr. McEWEN thought it might be worth mentioning that there were some large bones preserved in Pennant Church, which some had imagined to be the bones of a deceased Welsh warrior or giant, but in his opinion they seemed more like parts of the skeleton of a whale. Some pleasantries having been exchanged among the various speakers about Welsh giants,

Mr. WYNNE FFOULKES remembered to have assisted in opening a tumulus in Denbighshire, wherein was found the skeleton of a man at least six feet seven in height.

Mr. R. MORRIS referred to some bones in the porch of Mallwydd Church, Montgomeryshire, of much larger dimensions than those mentioned by Dr. McEwen, which were said to be the remains of some antediluvian animal found in close proximity to the church,

In the discussion which followed on this and other topics incidental to the lecture, the Mayor, the Rev. Canon Blomfield, J. Kilner, W. B. Marsden, and other gentlemen took part.

Mr JOHN JONES (Curzon Park) having presented to the Society's Museum a large cylinder of lead, discovered in May, 1862, in Eaton Road, Mr. Wynne Ffoulkes introduced it to the notice of the meeting, explaining that it was found a few feet below the surface, on the site of the new houses recently erected by Mr. J. Jones behind the old Maypole in Handbridge. He was not personally present at its discovery, but he understood from Mr. Jones that, on its being broken open, the cylinder, which is of sheet lead, hermetically sealed at one end and similarly secured by a band up the side, was full of burnt bones, principally human, though some few had been pronounced to be the bones of animals, a circumstance not uncommon in such deposits. Close to the cylinder were found three Roman coins in fair condition, considerably sent by Mr. Jones for exhibition at the meeting. He had no doubt the cylinder contained the calcined remains of a Roman citizen, although it was most uncommon to find bones deposited in such a vessel as that then before the meeting. He had noticed similar remains in all sorts of vases and domestic vessels of clay, but this was the first time he had fallen in with such a burial in lead. He believed Mr. Peacock had been in communication with Mr. C. R. Smith, and he would perhaps favour them with that gentlemen's opinion upon the subject?

Mr. PEACOCK read Mr. Roach Smith's letter, in which he pronounced the cylinder and its contents to be unequivocally Roman. A similar vessel to this curious Chester example had been found some years ago at Rouen, but he (Mr. Smith) was unable to point to any other instance of so early a period in England or elsewhere.

Mr. HUGHES, in confirmation of Mr. Smith's opinion, reminded the meeting that this discovery was made on the site of what had been long known to be the principal cemetery of Roman Chester, which extended southward from that point to Heron Bridge. On almost every acre of this site Roman sepulchral remains had been found whenever the land was disturbed to any depth. He believed the cylinder, which was much battered at the top, was in a far more perfect state when first found, but had been thus injured by the workmen, who imagined it to be full of money instead of nothing but, to their eyes, useless and uninteresting bones. Possibly the top and bottom had been similarly secured at the time of the original interment.

The CHAIRMAN and Mr. Wynne Ffoulkes thought, from the oxidation of the lead and from the testimony of others, that the cylinder was originally deposited in the state it presented to the meeting, Mr. Ffoulkes conceiving that it had been used simply as a makeshift in the absence of a more appropriate vessel of clay. To this it might be replied that the cylinder is very massive, and that its value in mere lead, particularly in Roman times, must have been considerable. But in any case, this will be acknowledged to be an interesting discovery, and one well deserving the attention it has now received at the hands of the local antiquarian Society. (See further notice and illustration at page 255 of our present volume.)

Feb. 19. The MAYOR of CHESTER occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance of members.

The Rev. CANON BLOMFIELD read a curious and valuable Paper on "The LIFE OF THOMAS HARRISON, architect of Chester Castle and the Grosvenor Bridge." This Paper is an exhaustive biography of our great local architect, and will appear at length in the next section of the Society's Proceedings. In the discussion which followed Mr. C. Potts, Mr. Ayrton, the Mayor, Mr. Hughes, and the Rev. Lecturer took part, and many new facts were elicited, which will be embodied in the Paper when printed in the Society's *Journal*.

April 13. A meeting was held in the Society's Rooms on Monday evening, under the presidency of the Right Worshipful the Mayor (J. Williams, Esq.), who briefly introduced to the meeting Mr. R. B. Edmundson (of the firm of Edmundson & Son, Stained Glass Works, Manchester), the lecturer of the evening.

Mr. EDMUNDSON proposed to confine his present paper mainly to the history of window glass manufacture, reserving the more elaborate subject of stained glass for treatment in some future lecture. [Mr. Edmundson very shortly afterwards dying, this promise became impossible of fulfilment.] Sir J. G. Wilkinson, in his able work on the "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," proves that glass in a manufactured state was known to the Egyptians before the Exodus of the Children of Israel from that land, 3,500 years ago. Mr. Edmundson, having gone at some length into the Egyptian aspect of the question, then proceeded to trace the manufacture from the East. The Phœnician cities of Sidon and Alexandria, following in the wake of their sister city Tyre, became afterwards celebrated for the manufacture of glass. To these cities the art was almost exclusively confined for centuries, and they alone during that long interval supplied the wants of the world in this particular. From Syria the manufacture of glass, like "the sway of empires, ruled towards the west," Greece and Rome gradually acquiring and profiting by the art. Glass works were established in Rome by Tiberius, and, so great was the estimation in which the art was held, that ornaments, vases, and goblets of glass were preferred by many to those made even of the precious metals. It was even thought by some writers that glass was made for windows at this time; for it was certainly used in mosaics, and in ornamenting the walls of rooms, as a substitute for marble.

Venice appears to have known the art of glass-making almost as early as the foundation of the city itself, it having been probably transferred thither, or rather to Murano, from Rome. In Venice the workers in glass were looked upon as gentlemen, and were considered eligible to marry into the families of noblemen, in which case their issue were regarded also as noble. The glass so far described was all *blown*, and afterwards flattened, casting not being then known. From Venice the art penetrated into France, where it soon attained to great perfection. One Abraham Thevart, of Paris, discovered a method of casting plate-glass of much larger dimensions than had been previously thought practicable. To the astonishment of the

artists of that day, the first plate he cast measured 84 by 55 inches. Plates are now made up to 150 inches long and 100 wide. In France, like Venice, workers in glass were held to be, *de facto*, gentlemen, and it was ordained that none but the sons of noblemen or gentlemen should venture to engage, even as artisans, in any of its branches. About the same time the art found its way into Bohemia, Germany, the Netherlands, and soon afterwards to England.

Glass-making was certainly practised in this country early in the 16th century, and, as some conceive, at least a hundred years before. In 1557 the finest sort of window-glass was made at Crutched Friars, in London. If glass was really made in England early in the 15th century, it was most likely the spread or broad glass, made in cylinders and then flattened out; but, in any case, it was of so inferior a quality, and long so continued, that for the better class of work it was made a condition that no glass should be used save that manufactured "beyond the seas." This national inferiority continued more or less down to 1832, when Messrs. Chance and Hartley, of Birmingham, and Messrs. J. Hartley and Co., of Sutherland, introduced the improved cylinder glass, and brought over from France and other parts of the Continent workmen of the best class; and by constant energy and perseverance were soon able to equal and, indeed, now surpass the foreign makers. Samples of coloured glass from this eminent firm were on the table for exhibition, and he (the lecturer) might add that Messrs. Hartley make more coloured glass and of every description than almost all the other makers united.

As before stated, broad or cylinder glass was the first made, but that was superseded in the 16th century by glass made on the rotary principle. Bohemia adhered to the cylindrical form, and carried the art to such perfection that whenever large and pure glass afterwards was needed in France, &c., they had to import it from Bohemia. Early in the 18th century the French themselves took the business up, by importing workmen from Bohemia; and, achieving great success, the art rapidly extended itself in the Lyonnais in the north of France, then to Belgium, and afterwards to England. Broad glass continued to be practised until 1845; but on the excise duties on glass being equalised, and finally taken off all together, the manufacture was shortly afterwards abandoned. The oldest manufactories of broad glass in England were at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and were carried on by the ancestors of the present Sir M. W. Ridley. There were others also in Staffordshire and elsewhere.

Crown-glass making was introduced into England by Germans, about the year 1620. They first erected works on the Tyne, at Whickham, near Newcastle, but on the Durham side of the river. They afterwards removed to Howden, on the same river, subsequently settling in Newcastle itself, where the manufacture of crown and broad glass was carried on until about twenty years ago. The Germans brought with them the old continental notions about the gentility of their craft, and in some degree maintained their position as "gentlemen" in the eyes of their inferior workmen; but the English spirit ultimately rejected the idea that the terms "workman" and "gentleman" were or could be synonymous, and the pretensions thus set up by their foreign competitors are now entirely obliterated. The lecturer related some amusing anecdotes of this assumption of dignity, which in years gone by he had heard from his father and other very old glass-makers.

From the Tyne the artists in glass working made their way to Bristol, then, it would seem, to St. Helens, in Lancashire, then to Birmingham, Leeds, and Warrington. These last-named works he (Mr. Edmundson) had the management of for several years. Thence it passed to West Derby, near Liverpool. Strange to say, the Tyne—where crown glass was first made in England, and the manufacture cultivated to an extent surpassing all others, the fame of which, too, was so great that architects never neglected to quote in their specifications "the best Newcastle glass"—has now entirely lost its position in this respect, as not a single "table" of crown glass is made on the Tyne!

Plate-glass, especially for mirrors, was of very early date. Glass mirrors were used as early as the 13th century. No plates at this time could have been large, as casting was not then known, nor indeed until the close of the 17th century, when, as before described, it was invented by Thevart, a working manufacturer of Paris. Plate-glass for looking-glasses, coach windows, &c., was made at Lambeth, in 1673, by Venetian workmen brought to London by the Duke of Buckingham; also at Messrs. Cookson's establishment at South Shields, in 1728. The latter firm continued the process of blowing as well as casting down to the early part of the 19th century. He (Mr. Edmundson) had known and conversed with old glass-makers who had been blowers of plate-glass at these works.

The great improvements that had taken place in the art in France through Thevart's invention found their way into England in a somewhat curious manner, as related to the lecturer by Mr. Fincham, a gentleman who for many years had had the sole management of the works in question. Admiral Affleck, somewhere about the year 1770, was travelling on the Continent, and expressed a great desire to see the manufacture of plate-glass in actual operation; but our Gallic neighbours were too much afraid of being robbed of this noble art to allow him to gratify his curiosity. This so enraged him that he swore, as admirals can and sometimes *will* swear, that if he might not see their glass house he would let them see that he would have one of his own in England. Certainly he it was that originated the first company, and obtained a charter in 1773, getting over French workmen to carry on the works. The manufactory was established at Ravenhead, near Prescot, in Lancashire, by the title of the British Plate Glass Works. He (the lecturer) had seen the tombs of some of the French workmen, who helped to establish these works, in the little cemetery of Windleshaw Abbey, near St. Helens. These works became very eminent, and indeed retain their good name to the present day. England could not boast of producing the originators of cast plate-glass, but she could boast of something connected with it of equal, nay greater importance, viz., the invention of the steam-engine, that mighty agent which has revolutionised the world. In 1788 this company ordered from Messrs. Boulton and Watt, of Birmingham, a steam-engine, said to have been the second ever erected; and in the following year they commenced the machinery for grinding and polishing, previous to which all such work was done by hand labour. This machinery, by the bye, which the rapid progress of the last 80 years had little, if at all, improved, was invented by a Lancashire man,—a native, he believed, of Liverpool.

Mr. Edmundson went on to explain the various processes of window-glass making, exhibiting actual samples of the ingredients and its manufacture, and showing the gradual effects of the several refining trials, from the time it left its parent earth till it reached the highest point of crystal purity. A series of sepia drawings, prepared specially for the purpose and displayed upon the walls, gave additional interest and value to his very practical remarks. In his *viva voce* observations, he was recording, in fact, the results of nearly 40 years' intimate

acquaintance with the various branches of the art, having, as he stated, been in his early youth a working glass-maker, afterwards manager of a glass works, having himself made thousands of feet of all colours and tints of glass then known, and practising glass-staining and painting at the same time. This naturally afforded him rare opportunities of gaining by actual experiment what very few, if any glass painter, in this country could hope to do.

This long career of study entitled him to take exception to certain statements and errors in Winston's celebrated work on Stained Glass, to which, however, as the work of an amateur, he awarded a large meed of praise. The Rev. G. A. Poole, another writer on stained glass, had, on the contrary, by some crude and ill-natured remarks in *The Builder*, during 1861-2, laid himself fairly open to criticism; and certainly Mr. Edmundson dissected his faulty theories with no sparing or "prentice hand." This portion of the lecturer's address was perhaps the raciest and best of the whole, but our space forbids us to go into it at any length. It will suffice to say that Mr. Poole, in assuming the poverty of our modern stained glass, had laid great stress upon the semi-opacity or translucency of the old as an object yet to be attained. Mr. Edmundson showed by actual experiment on some very old cathedral glass that that translucency was all a myth, for that when cleaned and polished it was as transparent as, if not more so than, the modern glass. Then, again, according to Mr. Poole, there was a *tone* or mellow crust upon the old glass altogether wanting in modern examples. Here, too, Mr. Edmundson was at issue with his critic, proving once more by experiment that the normal condition of these ancient windows was that of perfect freedom from that tone so much and, he would confess, so properly extolled in the present day. He would venture to say that if Mr. Poole had lived in the times when those windows were set up, he would have found *no tone, no translucency there then*; and he would further undertake to prophesy that if Mr. Poole could awake out of his grave a couple of hundred years hence, he would require no spectacles to find both the one and the other on the window glass of this derided 19th century. Both results were simply and solely the effect of age, and could be legitimately produced in no other way. It was almost like blaming an infant at the breast for its lack of grey hair or manly vigour. Several other groundless objections of Mr. Poole's were disposed of in like manner; Mr. Edmundson thus concluding a lecture

which occupied from first to last nearly two hours in its delivery, and which elicited in its progress numerous outbursts of applause.

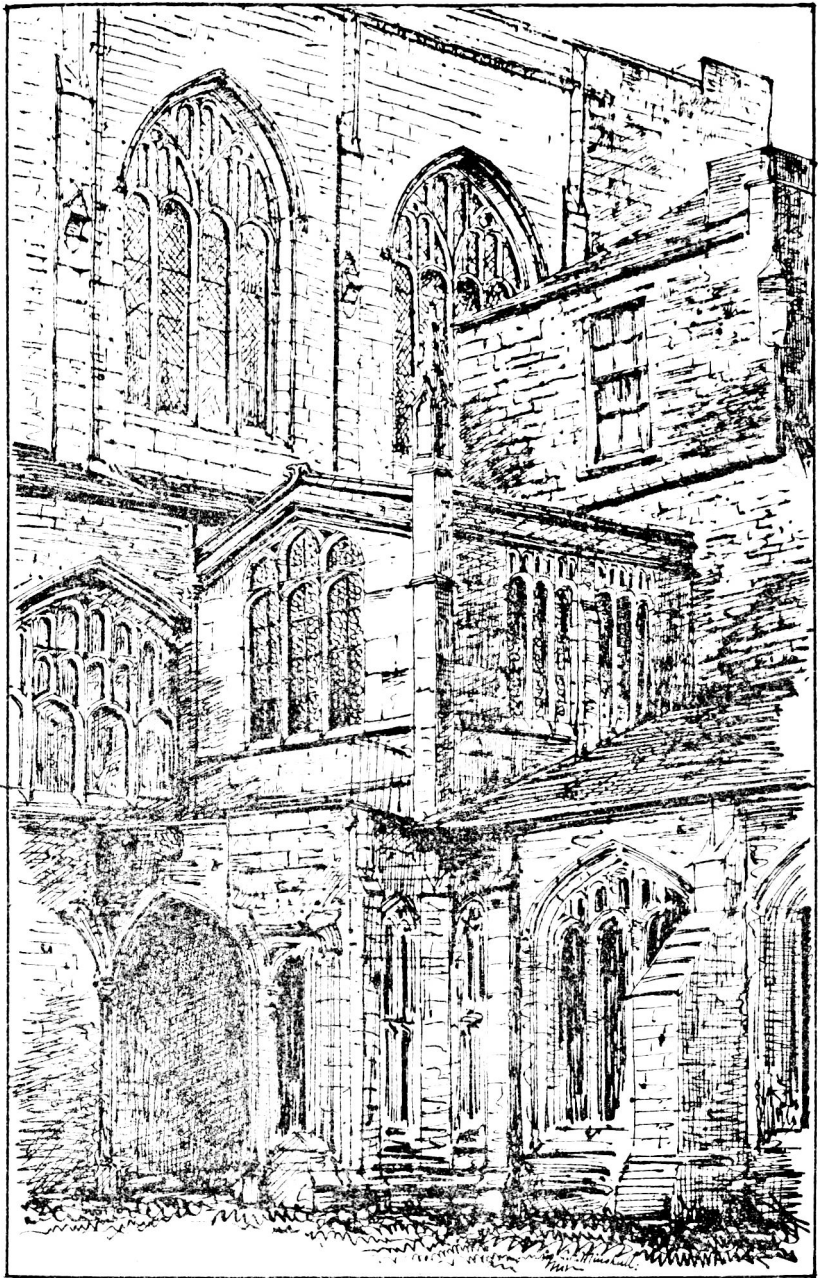
Major EGERTON LEIGH wished to know if there was any truth in the popular notion that many old colours and stains had been lost, and that no real substitutes had as yet been found.

Mr. EDMUNDSON replied that not only was there no colour of ancient times not reproduced in all its vigour now, but there were many new colours now known to the glass stainer which were never dreamt of by the older artists. Specimens of the old and new glass upon the table would, he contended, amply corroborate, on comparison, all he had advanced.

Mr. T. HUGHES would at that late hour only say that, within the last ten days, he had conversed with a gentleman who had recently returned from the east, and who wore in his scarf a pin, the head of which was formed of an Egyptian glass *scarabeus*, probably 3,000 years old. The owner informed him that he was present when an ancient tomb was exhumed, and that the sacred beetle in question was taken out of the case in which the mummy had lain for so many centuries. The small domestic chapel attached to the bishop's palace at Chester crowned the south west corner of the cloisters of the cathedral. The windows of this chapel, when he was a boy, were filled with ancient circular quarries of what was then known vulgarly as "oystershell glass." This glass has now, he believed, wholly disappeared from the chapel windows; but Mr. Albert Way, their distinguished honorary associate, once assured him that this was the last apartment in England which retained that ancient form of glazing, a distinction which he regretted to feel it could not now boast, for the eternal love of change afflicted episcopal as well as commercial heads in the present generation.

The MAYOR tendered the thanks of the meeting to the lecturer, which being suitably acknowledged, and a similar vote having been accorded to the chairman, on the motion of Major LEIGH, the meeting separated.

JUNE 8. At this meeting Major (afterwards Col. Egerton) LEIGH, M.P., read a Paper on "The Ancient Ballads and Legends of Cheshire," before a large and appreciative audience. Although the Ballads, &c., were subsequently issued in a handsome volume, there is much that is essentially *per se* about this Paper, as read before the



BISHOP'S CHAPEL, CHESTER CATHEDRAL,
Shewing Oyster-shell Glass formerly in Windows.

Members : it will in all probability be printed in the next division of our *Journal*, and the rather so in that the volume referred to is now, and has long been, quite out of print.

June 23. At a numerous-attended meeting held this day, the Rev. C. P. Wilbraham delivered an extempore lecture on "The Alhambra and the Kremlin." The Lord Bishop of Chester was present, and the Rev. Canon Hillyard took the chair.

Mr. WILBRAHAM said that when requested to give this lecture he at first wished to evade it, but he felt that it would be selfish to withhold such account as he could supply of the remarkable ancient buildings of the world. There were various styles of architecture, which embodied the characters and religions of various nations. The old Egyptian superstitions were enshrined in the massive temples and pyramids which he had seen on the Nile. One hundred thousand workmen were engaged for twenty years in building the Great Pyramid. When he mentioned this fact to a number of stonemasons, who attended one of his lectures, they rose and gave a loud cheer; but on hearing subsequently the statement of Herodotus, that the workmen received no wages and only three onions a day, they raised an appalling groan. (Applause and laughter.) In estimating the buildings of the ancients, we must bear in mind that the nations they subdued were compelled to labour as bondmen for their conquerors, as was notably the fate of the Jews. The lecturer referred to the remains of Solomon's works. His pools are still extant, each about 600 feet long, hewn in the solid rock. He had also seen in Mount Lebanon the foundations of Raalbec, called in the Scriptures "costly stones." Three of these stones, each 63 feet long, 14 feet deep, and 12 feet high, had been brought the distance of a mile over rugged ground, and raised 25 feet up in the wall. He had measured, in the quarry, another stone 68 feet in length. It was unknown by what mechanism Solomon had removed these enormous masses, and the natives still cling to the belief that the wise king had Genii to do his bidding. (Hear, hear.) The next noticeable style was that of the Greeks, remarkable for taste, proportion, and elegance. In passing on to the Moorish architecture, Mr. Wilbraham observed how civilization had flowed westward in three distinct streams. The central one had carried eastern art to Greece, Italy, and France; while there

had passed from the Baltic to Germany and England a knowledge of Gothic art, of which valuable remains had been seen by the lecturer in Sweden. The third channel of art was the north of Africa, along which the Mahomedans passed, and, crossing the Straits of Gibraltar, had covered those lands with architectural remains of remarkable beauty. The skill of Owen Jones had reproduced in the Crystal Palace the delicacy of Arabian art, which culminated in the Alhambra. In contrast to the massiveness of the Egyptian style, the Moorish is of gossamer lightness. Each of the styles had become connected with peculiar forms of religion. Paganism, the poetical mythology of Greece, had appropriated the old heathen architecture, Mahomedanism the Moorish, while the Gothic and Byzantine represented Christian architecture. Mr. Wilbraham remarked, that the interest of ancient buildings was greatly enhanced by the associations connected with them, and that the study of history threw a charm over sites hallowed by events which had happened thousands of years ago. (Hear, hear.) Without such historic knowledge, travelling became a mere senseless rushing from inn to inn and from water to water. Viewed in this historic light the inroads of the moors into Spain were of vivid interest: and one of our great historians holds, that, had not the Saracens been defeated at Tours by Charles Martel, the West would have become Mahomedan, and the Koran would have been taught in the schools of Oxford. We might then have had Alhambras of our own, but they would be bought too dearly if the Muezzin called the hours of prayer on Chester Cathedral, and an Imaun usurped the functions of the venerated Dean. The Moorish architecture of the Alhambra was remarkable for external plainness. Towers of massive masonry overhang the picturesque valley of the river Darro, and none would dream that within those recesses were such lovely treasures of taste and art. And if so noble in its decay, imagination cannot realize what it must have been, when the Caliphs held their court there. It was an evil day for art, when Ferdinand and Isabella vanquished Granada and drove out Boabdil the last Moorish sovereign. The long cherished hate of Moor and Spaniard found vent in the destruction of these priceless remains. The monks with fanatic zeal obliterated every symbol of the rival creed, and soon after Charles V. pulled down one half of the Alhambra in order to build on its site a Flemish palace which was never completed. One special type of the Alhambra architecture is the "Horse Shoe Arch."

Unlike the Norman or the pointed arches of our own cathedrals, the Moors adopted the graceful curve of a horse shoe with eminent success. It was sad to hear of the injuries inflicted on the Alhambra by the Spaniards: one court was used as a pigstye. The Governor's wife kept her donkey in the chapel, and when Mr. Wilbraham visited the Alhambra, he was refused admittance to one of the finest courts because the governor's hens were laying, and might be disturbed. Washington Irving, the eloquent historian of the Alhambra, has thrown a poetic halo round three restorers of its courts, Tia, Dolores, and Mateo; but stern prose represents the two former as "crabbed own women," and the last as a "blundering blockhead." The walls are in tasteful desigus, inscribed with sentences from the Koran, speaking the goodness and glory of God. The architecture of Rome, to which the lecturer next alluded, was of a very practical character. Aqueducts, such as that at Segovia, though of untold grandeur, were not even mentioned by classic writers, so universal were they in the Roman empire. Cisterns too had been constructed in the colonies of Africa, and Mr. Wilbraham had seen one at Carthage, said to contain supplies of water for 200,000 inhabitants. Even in the remote Decapolis beyond Jordan, he had found theatres said to contain 15,000 spectators, and all the world knew of the Coliseum. "Panem et circenses," was the cry of the people, "bread and games." It would be a mistake to consider architecture as a sure test of civilization. It needed only some few master minds to conceive works, which the basest slaves might execute. It was probable that our own grand cathedrals and churches were erected by rude and fierce men. The lecturer proceeded to describe the Byzantine character of Russian architecture. Its principal feature is the abundance of domes and cupolas. He had reached Cronstadt at sunset, and had seen the golden cupolas of St. Petersburg gleaming in the last rays of the sun like balloons of fire, a vision of unearthly beauty. Nor could he ever forget a moonlight walk he had made round the Kremlin at Moscow. The sixty golden domes of that ancient pile had been newly gilt in honour of the Czar's coronation, and glittered in oriental splendour. Some persons had an erroneous impression that the Kremlin was a dark and gloomy pile; far from it, all is whiteness and gaudy colour. It is a palace, fortress, and cathedral in one, surrounded by a wall and Tartar towers. The Cathedral of the Assumption is the "Holy Place" of Russia, and attests the gorgeousness of the Eastern Church. The

screen is a sheet of solid gold, 5 feet by 4, and about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick. Its very magnitude saved it from French spoliation, as the invaders never dreamed of such costly booty being within their grasp. The lecturer alluded to the patriarchal position of the Emperor as the head of Church and State, and expressed a hope that the abolition of serfdom might lead to social improvement; and, with reference to Poland, that the rulers might learn to govern their citizens as citizens ought to be governed, which might God grant. (Hear, and applause.) The Kremlin stands on high ground overhanging the river Moskwa. From a wooded cliff in the distance the French invading army caught its first sight of the Kremlin, and burst into a triumphant cheer at the happy accomplishment (as they then deemed it) of their arduous toils. Mr. Wilbraham described the interior of the Kremlin, the old Tartar thrones, also the memorials of Peter the Great, and the regalia of the Empire. The costliness of the new Russian cathedral, built by the Emperor Nicholas, was also described. The walls of this gigantic building were entirely covered with marbles brought from Italy, and the cupolas were lined with real gold, circumstances that explain the astonishing fact that eleven millions of pounds were spent upon it. The lecturer concluded by saying that some of his hearers might perhaps envy him the sights of wonder he had endeavoured to describe, and might regret that they, too, could not wander through the courts of the Kremlin and the Alhambra. He begged to comfort them by the assurance that England contained some of the most valuable architectural remains in the world; these were within reach of all, and amply repaid careful research. They knew how suitable Gothic architecture is for Christian worship, and in our English Cathedrals and Abbeys we had some of its noblest types. It was remarkable that, whilst Greek art went upon the principle of drawing the eye "downwards" with heavy impediments, Gothic art, on the contrary, ever studied to carry the eye "upwards" in pinnacle and tower. While in Grecian buildings the human figures were represented in marble as bending under the superincumbent mass, the Gothic statue seemed to be flying heavenward, and with the mere touch of the finger, uplifting the vault and buttress, as if to soar upward were their true gravitation. Hence the impossibility of blending these two styles. Mr. Wilbraham stated that the late eminent Professor Schlegel (whom he had known in Germany) described architecture as "frozen music." The idea was a beautiful one, signi-

fyng harmonies suddenly arrested and fixed,—harmonies for the eye, not for the ear. It was gratifying to know that the feeling which impelled men to make the houses of God reverent and beautiful had revived amongst us, and he hoped that the spirit of devotion which had reared such noble temples to our Maker would ever exist. (Mr. Wilbraham sat down amidst applause.)

Colonel HAMILTON (Gresford) submitted to the company some specimens of the Arabesque patterns taken from the Alhambra. There were some written inscriptions on these remains: upon which Mr. Wilbraham remarked that the people of that creed were not allowed to reproduce animals, still less man, on their works, and were consequently obliged to confine themselves to flowers and fruits.

Mr. T. HUGHES remarked that the lecturer had omitted, in the course of his observations, any reference to the Temple of Jerusalem and the mosque connected with it. The lecturer had spoken of the bridges and aqueducts of the ancients, but he (Mr. Hughes) wished to mention that we had in Chester a bridge erected by Mr. Harrison, crossing the Dee, unequalled in many points by any which Greece or Rome had built. He would also remark to the Archaeological Society, that a hypocaust had, the day before, been excavated in Bridge-street, on the site of the old Feathers Hotel, and he supposed it might have some connection with the one under Mr. Beckett's shop. One of the most learned antiquaries connected with the Society, Dr. Brushfield, had undertaken to give a paper on Baths and Hypocausts, when some reference would no doubt be made to the one recently discovered. [This promise was amply fulfilled by an exhaustive treatise on *Roman Chester*, printed at an earlier page of our present volume.]

Mr. WILBRAHAM replied that the question suggested by Mr. Hughes was a very interesting one. There was so much perplexity at the present moment about the Mosque of Omar, that he purposely evaded the subject in his lecture. From the discoveries made by Mr. Cattermole and others, it seemed probable that the mosque covered the great stone of sacrifice of the first Jewish temple; nor was it impossible that it might yet be proved that the crucifixion took place on that identical site.

A unanimous vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Wilbraham for his interesting lecture.

Nov. 17. The Rev. C. Bowen, rector of St. Mary's, occupied the chair.

Mr. ROBERT GEORGE KELLY, artist, of Birkenhead, read an learned and interesting Paper on "The Origin, Nature, and Influence of Art." Mr. Kelly illustrated his subject by the exhibition of numerous water-colour drawings, most of them the production of his own easel, and received a hearty vote of thanks at the conclusion of the lecture.

Jan. 14, 1864. The ordinary monthly meeting was held in the Society's Rooms, on Monday; the Rev. Canon Blomfield in the chair. The Rev. Chairman briefly introduced

Mr. ROBERT MORRIS, who had undertaken to read a Paper before the Society on "Ancient Customs and Superstitions relating to Baptism." In commencing, Mr. Morris gave a short account of the meaning of the words "custom" and "superstition," with their present and past significance. He then proceeded to remark upon Christian names, touching upon their peculiarities, and the origin of some, whether from rivers or places. He next treated of Scriptural and Puritanical names, and gave some very interesting examples, among which a jury empannelled in Sussex was the most peculiar, forming as it did an almost unequalled list of odd names, such as "Fight the good fight of faith," &c. In reference to Scriptural names, Mr. Morris read several examples from Cheshire and different parts, and gave as a reason why the names of the daughters of Job were frequently used, that they were considered as the fairest in all the land, and that as all parents were of opinion that their own baby was the best, they thought they could not do better than use those names. He also adverted to the privilege of the bishop to change any profane name at confirmation, and quoted as an example Lord Chief Justice Gawdy. In allusion to the giving of presents by sponsors, such as the usual set of "knife, fork, and spoon," Mr. Morris deduced it from the old custom of giving "Apostle-spoons," of which opulent sponsors gave the whole twelve, those in middling circumstances four, and the poor only one, which had upon it the figure of the saint in honour of whom the child received its name. He then quoted several extracts from the plays of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and also from Addison's "Drummer Boy," in reference to the use of these spoons in their time. Another present

alluded to was the familiar coral and bells, the use of which Mr. Morris considered to be derived from the old superstition that the coral would change colour if the wearer were sick, and would preserve from harm all places it was in, from devils, storms, tempests, and evilspirits; and that as the bells were also considered to drive away the imps of wickedness at the sound of their ringing, the combined influence of both would most certainly protect the baby from every kind of harm. Turning then to feasting, Mr. Morris gave some very peculiar and interesting extracts from several authors, which he had had to refer to in the course of his study in getting up the lecture, and gave an amusing account of the feast at a Scotch baptism, when, after the more solid viands had been cleared away, a general scramble was made for the sweetmeats, which formed a most important item on these occasions, and to which allusion is made in an old almanack for 1676. He also read a bill of fare of a banquet given at the christening of a clergyman's daughter at Clockley Cley, which clearly showed that plenty was the order of the day. In the conclusion of this part of the subject reference was made to the evident decrease of both the customs of feasting and giving presents in the words—

Especially since gossips now
 Eat more at christenings than bestow,
 Formerly they used to trowl
 Gilt bowls of sack; they gave the bowl,
 Two spoons at least, an use ill kept,
 'Tis well now if our own be left.

Reference was then made to the use of chrism; and the travels of Sir John Chardin were quoted, he having seen it used under the term *myorne*. Mr. Morris also mentioned the works of Tertullian, Irenæus, and other old authors, in reference to the use of it in olden times. He then introduced the term "chrysome child," and endeavoured to explain the true meaning of the word, some doubt having arisen as to whether it was a child who had been baptised, or who had died before the celebration of that sacrament. No doubt had ever been started as to its being a child who died within a month after birth, or that its origin is derived from the *vestis chrismalis*, or chrysome cloth, put upon the child's head at baptism, and which was worn before the Reformation for seven days after baptism, to represent the seven stages of man's life, and taken off on the eighth. After the Reformation, it seems to have been the custom for the mother to bring it at her churching, or purifi-

cation, when it was given to the priest. Some old Cheshire and other parish registers were also referred to, in which the term was used. Allusion was next made to the use of chrism for other purposes than baptism, an old Pontifical at Rouen, relating to the "Dedication of an Anglo-Saxon Church," mentioning its use for that purpose; and also that the crosses found on the old stone altars were intended to point out the places which had been anointed with the chrism; and that the crosses once inlaid with metal, found in Salisbury Cathedral and elsewhere, were also intended for that purpose. Mr. Morris then instanced the small silver box or vase which was used to contain the chrism, and was called the chrismatory; it was divided into three parts, to hold the different oils used in the celebration of the sacrament. In conclusion he related some old superstitions respecting the birth of children on "old Christmas day," and the prophecies connected with them.

The CHAIRMAN having invited remarks illustrative of the Paper, the Rev. W. B. Marsden and others contributed some anecdotes and historical facts in reference to the subject of baptismal observances. Mr. Marsden produced a little bottle containing water brought from the River Jordan, that river in which the first Christian baptism was administered, the sacred waters of which were only recently employed at a baptism in our own Royal Family.

Mr. T. HUGHES exhibited a presumed original letter from Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, in which were some curious references to marriage and baptism among the Quaker fraternity. This letter had been kindly lent for the occasion by Mrs. G. Ransome, of Chester.

A vote of thanks to the lecturer and chairman closed the proceedings.

Feb. 8. The Rev. Canon Blomfield delivered a lecture on the "*Black Death*, or the Great Mortality of the Fourteenth Century," under the presidency of J. Williams, Esq. The room was crowded, and amongst those present we observed Mr. Charles W. Potts, Mr. T. Roberts, Mr. Williams (Old Bank) and party, Mr. Charles Leet, Mr. E. Owen, the Ven. Archdeacon Ffoulkes, Mr. H. Ff. Taylor (Christleton), Mr. and Mrs. Meadows Frost and the Misses Frost, Mr. and Mrs. James Dixon, Mrs. John Harrison, Miss Wilbroham, Dr. Davies, Dr. and Miss Waters, Rev. J. and Miss Harris, Mr. Bork-

hardt, Dr. Brushfield, Rev. E. R. Johnson, Mrs. Payne and family, Mr. and Mrs. C. T. W. Parry, Rev. W. Grindrod, Dr. and Mrs. McEwen, Mrs. J. B. Taylor, Rev. C. and Mrs. Bowen, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Ffoulkes, Mr. R. and Miss Morris, Mr. J. Ralph, Rev. J. M. Kilner, Mr. C. Brown, Miss Feilden, Mrs. Blomfield and party, Mrs. H. and Miss Ford, Mr. Gill, Rev. W. B. and the Misses Marsden, &c.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. J. Williams, Treffos,) introduced the Rev. Canon to the meeting in a few appropriate remarks.

The Rev. Canon BLOMFIELD, in commencing his lecture, said he thought he was addressing none but those who were Members, or at least friends to Archæological enquiry; and most probably those present had attended lectures of the Society on previous occasions, and had perhaps heard him express an opinion, three or four years ago, that the store of material for Archæological lectures was pretty nearly exhausted. Therefore they might say that he had dug deep in the mine to find so obscure and apparently uninteresting a subject as the one he had chosen for delivery that night, namely, the "Black Death, or the Great Mortality of the Fourteenth Century," which spread all over Europe, indeed he might say all over the world, in the reign of Edward the Third. His attention had been drawn to this subject, not so much by any enquiry of his own as by the assistance of a friend of his, an able and accomplished young man, who had given much attention to it as bearing upon the economical condition of the poorer classes of this country, and he had given him (the rev. lecturer) statistics from which a good part of his information had been drawn. There could be no question that the subject was one of a peculiar, although perhaps not of a very interesting, character; still it fell within the province of Archaeology, and bearing, as it did, on the Black Death, assumed a decidedly *grave* aspect. They saw none of the pictorial illustrations on the walls which usually adorned the place and gave a flavour to the lectures, nor any specimens of antiquarian relics on the table, with one or two exceptions; nor could he hope to enliven his remarks by any anecdotes to form episodes in the history of the event. He must throw himself on their patience while he gave a statement of the facts of the "Great Pestilence," which probably were unknown to most of the persons in the room, details which were curious in themselves, and which he believed were very little known even to the student of mediæval history. It was very remarkable that a dispensation of Providence so

awful in itself, so destructive to the whole of Europe and of the world then known, bearing so extensively upon the physical and social condition of nations, and leaving such considerable and permanent results, should occupy so very small a space in the page of our national history. They might be aware that Hume, Henry, and Rapin dismissed this great question in a single sentence; Lingard had given somewhat more attention to it; while Hallam, with his usual accuracy, spoke of it in strong terms, but regarded the accounts of it as exaggerated. Froude, in his brief sketch of the antecedent events which bore upon the state of the English people as it was in the time of Henry VII., made no allusion whatever to the fact; though it had a very marked influence upon the social and economic condition of the people at that date; indeed he ascribed to entirely different causes circumstances which were clearly traceable to the results of the Great Pestilence. The fact was, perhaps, that such events as that did not fall much within what was usually considered the province of history. The substance of all early portions of our history was drawn from peculiar sources, from state papers, public records, royal ordinances, treaties, conventions, and other documents emanating from kings and princes and governments, which had been carefully preserved in chronological order in the successive periods of our history. Those all related to public events connected with the acts of the governing powers, and recorded the history of the sovereigns, their feats in war, or their proceedings in home administration. But there were no public and official records of the ordinary course of events, of which the life of a nation was made up. Even the most striking and terrible visitations of Providence,—however overpowering for the time all human conflicts and setting at nought all human arrangements,—passed away unrecorded, except by some private individuals, who kept a register of the events of their own time, and whose reports were after regarded as partial, exaggerated, or altogether apocryphal. So that history, which dwelt on events of far less real importance both at the time and in their effects on the subsequent conditions of the people, made light of these; and succeeding generations were almost left in ignorance of their occurrence. Take, for instance, the fact of the Great Mortality which occurred in the reign of Edward the Third. It occurred just four years after the Battle of Cressy, and six years before that of Poitiers. Now of these two great victories we had ample details, filling pages of all our histories, and highly-wrought

pictures of the terrible slaughter which was made of the knights and nobles and common soldiers, who in the former battle were said to number 36,000. But of the far more dreadful havoc that was made among the whole population of Europe by the Great Mortality in the intervening period,—when the deaths in one year throughout the continental kingdoms were said to exceed twenty-five millions,—when in England alone two-thirds of the whole population were swept away ; of that no public record existed, no official account was ever taken. It was only incidentally referred to in one or two Acts of Parliament or royal precepts, and we had to gather the facts of it from the private reports of individuals who happened to keep a register of events at the time. Now those reports, coming from private individuals, were not usually regarded with the same respect as those of public records, and it had been rather the fashion with historians to undervalue them, and to pronounce them overdrawn and highly exaggerated. It so happened, however, that we were enabled at the present day to corroborate the narratives of the Great Pestilence from other authentic sources, and to show that the accounts which had been handed down to us of the Black Death were literally true ; and they proved it to be the most extraordinary, the most extensive, and the most appalling visitation of Providence which ever occurred in the history of the world. They would no doubt be familiar with the graphic account of the Great Plague of London, in 1665, given by Defoe. Probably the incidents of the Plague would have passed away from the memory of mankind if it had not been preserved in Defoe's account ; but as it was, it had become a household book, and the details of that scourge had reached the minds of even our children. Passing on to the subject in hand, the Great Mortality commenced in the remote East, probably in China, where it carried off 23 millions of people—swept across the Asiatic continent and appeared at Constantinople, thence it followed a westerly course into Italy, devastating the Continent.—afterwards it appeared in England, and finally settled in the North : there was no place of Europe, in fact, he might say, of the then known world, where its fatal results did not occur. Boccaccio, in describing the horrible miseries he witnessed at Florence during the plague, said that numbers fled from there to escape its ravages. There was another writer in Italy, Matthea Villani, who had written a treatise on the plague, of which he himself died, and whose history was taken up by his brother. Then if they

went to France they had another celebrated surgeon, Guy de Chauliac, who saw it in Avignon, and had left an account of it behind him. In England they had only one full, and direct account of the Mortality (which did not reach these shores till 1348), written by De Knighton, in Latin; and he had given not only an account of what he saw, but a view of the whole state of the kingdom under the ravages of the Pestilence. It differed from the "Sweating Sickness," a subsequent plague, described by Caius in 1485. which was much milder in its nature than the one under consideration. With regard to the Black Death, he would read to them one or two passages respecting the visitation, and the first was—

"In the year of Our Lord 1348, there happened at Florence a most terrible plague, which, whether owing to the influence of the planets, or that it was sent from God as a just punishment for our sins, had broke out some time before in the Levant, and, after passing from place to place and making dreadful havoc all the way, had now reached the West; where, in spite of all the means that art and human foresight could suggest, in the spring of the preceding year began to show itself in a sad and wonderful manner, and differing from what it had been in the East, where bleeding from the nose is the fatal prognostic; here there appeared tumours in the groin or under the arm, some as big as a small apple, others as an egg, and afterwards purple spots in most parts of the body—in all cases the messengers of death! Those attacked generally died on the third day. I saw with mine own eyes cases in which animals, having merely touched something belonging to infected persons, died in a very short time."

Boccaccio also gave an account of the dreadful nature of its infectious character, for he said—"I saw the rags of a poor man just dead thrown into the street, and two hogs coming by and rooting amongst them, and shaking them about in their mouths, in less than an hour turned round and died on the spot. The lower sort fell sick daily by thousands—some in the streets, and others in their own houses, where their deaths were only known by the stench which came from them. Every place was filled with the dead. The effect of the mortality was to make people very selfish and cruel, leaving the infected to die unattended and uncared for. Laws, human and divine, were disregarded, those who should enforce them being all dead. Every one did just as he pleased. Brother fled from brother; wife from her husband; a

parent from its own child. Trenches were dug, and bodies thrown in by hundreds. Upwards of a hundred thousand perished in Florence, which was not supposed to contain so many people."

Again the same author said, "Palaces depopulated to the last person; estates left with no one to inherit; numbers, after dining with their friends here, supped with their departed friends in the other world." Having enumerated the immense numbers which perished in Italy, Florence, Avignon, Germany, and other places, he would now confine himself to England, two-thirds of the people of which were swept away by the scourge. Henry de Knighton, who was a monk of Leicester, said "In this and the following year there was a general Mortality throughout the world. It first commenced in India, passing through Persia and the Saracens, to the Christians and Jews. There died at Avignon, in one day, 1,312 persons, on another day more than 400. Of the preaching friars in Provence 358 died in Lent. At Montpellier, of 140 there only remained 7. At Marseilles, out of 150 not one remained. This destructive Pestilence first appeared in England at Southampton, and then at Bristol, and the whole adult population of each town seemed to die off at once—very few kept their beds for more than three days; most of them died in six hours. In Leicester, in the small parish of St. Leonard, more than 380 perished; in that of St. Cross, 400; in that of St. Margaret more than 700; and so throughout the town."

In the same year, said Knighton, there was a great destruction of sheep throughout the kingdom, so that in one pasture ground there died more than 5000 sheep, and their bodies became so offensive that neither beast nor bird would touch them. The cattle strayed through the pastures and corn fields, and no one attempted to drive them away. They dropped down dead in vast numbers in the ditches, and no one cared to remove them, for labourers and servants were dead too. The Scots, hearing of the calamity which had befallen their neighbours, ascribed it to the hand of God as a punishment, and, assuming that the terrible vengeance of God must have destroyed the power of the English, they attempted to invade the border, but the same Pestilence attacked them, and in a very short space of time about 5000 died. The account which he had read by Knighton was generally objected to on standard authority, giving, as it did, a detailed account of the subject written by a private individual, who would be anxious to exaggerate

and colour the particulars of the plague. That was the view most historians took of it, therefore it became them to look into the same, with the collateral evidence they had, to confirm the statement of Knighton as to the destructive character of the scourge. For instance, they had now had published by the Record Office the writings of John Capgrave, who was born in 1390, who said "It was supposed that the Pestilence had not left in England a tenth part of the people. He said also that the rents of the lords of lands and the tithes of the priests had ceased; that because there were so few labourers the land lay uncultivated, and so much misery was in the land that it never regained the prosperity it had before." That was a fact (said the rev. lecturer) which he should be able to show them more distinctly from other evidence. He would now point out some local particulars—some local facts—to illustrate what occurred in certain localities in the kingdom, and which might be taken as specimens of what happened elsewhere. For instance, a manuscript found in the British Museum, which had reference to Meaux Abbey, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, written in 1390, stated that the plague was so severe that only ten monks were left in London. Another document had reference to the Abbey of Croxton, in Lincolnshire, which had the Royal authority (Edward III) and which told them that no one remained in the convent but the Abbot and Prior.

In 1450 the people of Winchester complained to the King that nine out of its 16 streets were in ruins. Statistics were quoted showing how many clergymen died during the plague in the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire, Bristol, Oxford, and other places, as well as showing the diminution of the population in various counties. They had, moreover, very specific information of the ravages in the Eastern counties, more so, perhaps, than anywhere else, as they were the most important manufacturing counties in the kingdom; they were the principal commercial districts. Having enumerated some of the towns where the direful disease spread amid the greatest consternation and alarm, and stating the probable number of churches that fell into disuse through the depopulation, the Rev. Canon said that from statistics the population of the country was greater before the plague than at the present day; and it was very probable that England, for 300 or 400 years at least, did not recover her prosperity, her population, her wealth, or the condition of her people. He dwelt at some length on

the decay of towns caused by the "Black Death," and quoted various authors to substantiate his remarks. The Great Mortality commenced on the 31st of May, and ended on the 29th of September; therefore all the dreadful ravages and accumulation of death must have occurred in six months. Now the state of the country under such an awful pestilence as that described, causing as it did the whole population to be deprived of its physical power, could be more easily conceived than described. It was not the fashion in those days to describe in graphic terms events of that nature, and they could only judge of them from the facts, and allow their imagination to draw the picture for themselves. The moral effects of the Great Mortality were remarkable as they were described by Boccaccio and others. It seemed to have divided the people into two classes, the anxious-minded and the reckless. The latter, feeling that death was at hand, adopted the principle, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," and would break out into the grossest licentiousness, ending their lives in that way. On the other hand the anxious-minded persons went to the extreme of fanaticism, and employed the whole of their time in extraordinary exercises, considering them to be necessary devotions to the Saints and the Virgin Mary, made under enormous sacrifices of time, in the hope that they would obtain pardon in this world and be saved in the world to come. It might be interesting to enquire more or less into the cause which led to the fearful ravage and pestilence. Amongst the causes to which they were able to look for the periodical visitations of Providence, by which such havoc was made amongst the nations of the world, they could only discover those which were physical and apparent to the senses. They could not tell whether it might not have been necessary in the economic dispensations of the Divine Government to keep down by those means the overgrowth of the population, at a period when there were no means open to relieve it in other ways. An overpopulated country would in those days have been a scene of great misery and of physical and moral degradation. Subsistence could not have been found for the people, and famine and pestilence would have been the periodic scourges. In these days, not only were the internal resources of the country enormously developed, and the means of external supply indefinitely increased, so as to admit of an addition of millions to our population, but emigration opened the door for escape for all the occasional surplus, and those who could not find a subsistence

here could take to themselves wings and fly away to new countries to make themselves a home there. He said that Hallam, Froude, and others moderated the numbers of the population before the plague broke out, as was clearly shown by facts which had since come to light ; and the millions of people that perished caused a scarcity of labourers to till the land. Several Acts of Parliament were quoted, one statute in particular, showing how the labourer, or the working classes—who, in those days were neither more nor less than serfs—obtained their independence by being allowed to go into the market and obtain the greatest amount of wages for their labour. The independence of the working classes dated from the “ Black Death ” in the 14th century. He spoke of the introduction of stocks (a pair of which he believed to be in Chester at the present day), glanced at the law of settlement, and said that they had in this history no bad argument against the theory of the subdivision of land amongst a multitude of small owners,—a system of peasant proprietorship, which seemed to the minds of some persons the best, if not the only, remedy for the hardship and depressed state of the labouring classes. The dissolution of the ancient bonds of feudal serfdom tended on the Continent generally, as it was now doing in Russia, to the system of small ownerships ; peasants having patches of land granted to them out of the extensive commons and wastes, which were, if not created, yet greatly increased by the depopulation of the country by the Great Pestilence. On these few acres they lived by personal labour in cultivation, deriving an independent but very scanty and miserable subsistence, not so good as that of the old service under the old lords of the soil, not so good as that of the labourer, who had no land, but depended upon wages for the work done. And this still remained a true account of the condition of a great part of France and Germany, where certainly the physical condition of the poorest classes is in no respect better, if it is not worse, than that of our own poor. The people, it was true, were not crowded together in vast masses in certain manufacturing districts ; but neither were there great centres of manufacturing and commercial enterprise, sources of the wealth and prosperity of the country—the Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Glasgow. These have been created entirely by the independence of the labouring classes, they not being small proprietors or attached to the soil, but at liberty to seek for a good market for their labour wherever they could find it. If the masses of British peasantry had ever come (or

should ever come) into a condition of peasant proprietorship by innumerable small investments in land, their moveability from place to place would be put an end to, and the drawing them together in vast nests of population for the use and benefit of the manufacturer would become impossible. And that perhaps was not a result which those who gave them the advice would think altogether desirable or wish to see. He explained how the foundation of our agricultural system came about, and read an amusing manifesto issued by the College of Surgeons in Paris, respecting the cause of the Black Death. After some further remarks he concluded by saying—When the experience, so slowly and dearly bought, has been applied to the perfecting of sanitary arrangements, so that we have now no reason to dread the approach of these tremendous scourges, and when, if milder epidemics do occasionally visit us, they are met by an amount of medical skill and science under which they are greatly modified and soon disappear; then also (and it is a far greater blessing) we are able to meet these and all other calamities of human life with a different mind and a more enlightened spirit of Christian faith and patience, to trace them to their true source, to receive them as instruments of moral discipline, and to find comfort under them in an intelligent belief that all things are working together for our good.

Mr. T. HUGHES, in local illustration of the Rev. Canon's remarks, said that a reference to Ormerod's *Cheshire* would show that the incumbents of nearly half the parishes of Cheshire died during that eventful year 1348-9, and most of them, no doubt, of the fearful Black Death.

The CHAIRMAN moved a vote of thanks to the Rev. Canon for his excellent lecture, which was accorded with much cordiality.

Feb. 23. The fourth monthly meeting of the session was held at the Society's Rooms, Dr. Brushfield (Medical Superintendent of the Cheshire Lunatic Asylum,) was called to the chair. There was a numerous gathering of members.

The Rev. EDWARD R. JOHNSON (Minor Canon of the Cathedral, afterwards Rector of Northenden, Cheshire) delivered a lecture "On the Roman Wall between the Tyne and the Solway," of which we regret our space enables us to give only a very meagre abstract. Born and long resident in the vicinity of "the wall," Mr. Johnson brought to his subject an antiquarian zeal and topographical knowledge which only a native and an intelligent observer could command. He com-

menced by stating that the Roman Wall (as it was commonly called) must be regarded as quite distinct from the general subject of Roman remains as ordinarily existing in this country, and might fairly claim the first place in interest and importance. The historical circumstances connected with it afforded ample proof that it was considered of vast importance by the Romans themselves; for when we remembered how many Generals and Emperors bestowed their attention and skill upon its construction and maintenance, when we found that again and again their labours were mocked by the indomitable energy of the wild Caledonians, we might fairly conclude that this *vallum barbaricum* was an object of constant interest to them, as well as a frequent cause of anxiety. To us, also, even in its ruined desolate condition, it became a special object of interest, if only as illustrating so forcibly those iron qualities for which the Roman character was notorious. This barrier was something very much more than a wall, being rather an elaborate and stupendous system of defensive works, comprising a series of fortified stations about five miles apart, and as many acres in area; connected by a line of wall averaging 8 feet in thickness, and a fosse of 35 to 40 feet wide, both facing towards the north; connected also by a military road of the usual Roman construction running through them and yet again connected (or in some parts not connected, but protected) towards the south by a triple rampart of earth and a ditch. Moreover, in addition to the walls and stations, at the distance of every Roman mile along the whole course, from the Tyne at Walls-end to Bowness on the Solway—70 miles—there was a castle or fort some 60 feet square, and between each castle four turrets or watch towers. The nature of the country over which this complicated barrier stretches was described as hilly in the central district, especially for some ten or fifteen miles, where an abrupt basaltic ridge crops up, presenting a precipice to the north, and a more gradual slope to the south; while east and west the barrier descends to the lower slopes which bound the rich valleys of the Tyne and tributaries of the river Eden, care being taken always to keep the rivers on its southern side. The wall with its fosse, stations, and mile castles, unflinchingly adhered to the highest ground, ascending to the edge of the basaltic ridge, dipping down into the gaps, and turning aside for nothing; the triple rampart towards the south, with its ditch, accompanied the wall along the more moderate heights, but in the central district fell off towards the south,

and pursued the lower ground. The traces of the barrier towards the east and west extremities were very slight, but in the central district, for some ten or fifteen miles, considerable remains still existed, showing some four or five courses of the Wall, and the stations and mile castles are surprisingly perfect, in fact, the whole system of the works might be clearly followed out. The more perfect preservation in this district was said to arise from the fact that, that wild and less thickly populated district having been the stronghold of the moss-troopers, the works had been left undisturbed; even antiquaries dared not to enter the district, Camden telling us it was impossible, on account of "the rank robbers thereabouts." So little was this locality traversed that, in 1745, General Wade could not convey his artillery across from Newcastle to Carlisle. It was stated that great difference of opinion exists as to the origin of this barrier, some authorities thinking that it was all one grand design—Hadrian being the author of it—others that it was the work of successive Generals, and others thinking that it was in some of its parts quite a late work, constructed by Britons, aided by the Romans before they took final leave of the country. The Wall itself was described as composed of a double facing of rough but regular courses of masonry, filled in between with concrete—the concrete poured in apparently in a liquid state—the stones very uniform in dimensions, placed lengthways into the wall (there being no bonding tiles), and presenting their ends (about 9in. by 8in.) to the face of the Wall. The stones of which the *station* walls were constructed were invariably smaller, with the exception of those of the gateways, which were of the most massive and imposing character, the largest of the stones showing the luis-holes by which they had been raised to their positions. Most interesting inscriptions were said to exist in the various quarries of the district, recording the names of the officers under whom the different companies of certain legions had worked out stone for the construction of the works. A detailed description was given of two of the most perfect stations—Homesteads (the Burcovicus of the *Notitia*), and Birdoswald (Amboglanna)—of which the former was the most interesting specimen, its walls, some 5ft. high, complete all round; its four double gateways, showing the holes in which the pivots of the gates have turned, the deep ruts of chariot wheels, and the great stone in the centre of the way, exactly similar to the "stepping stones" found in the streets of Pompeii. The streets.

the lecturer added, were clearly defined, buildings laid bare, and the ground strewn with interesting remains. An amphitheatre, some 100 feet in diameter, was said to exist outside the wall, supposed to have been a "stadium castrense," used by the soldiers of the guard for their amusement; and very recently a gateway had been discovered in the wall, as if for a special means of exit to this stadium. Hypocausts, supposed by the rustics to be "The Kitchens of the Fairies," had been discovered here and at other stations, the dimensions and position of them indicating that they were used for the purpose of warming the better class of houses, as well as for the more special purposes of the bath: pipes had been found attached to the walls of the rooms, evidently intended to conduct the heat from the hypocaust; in one instance, instead of a hypocaust, a flue had been found running round three sides of the apartment. The construction of these hypocausts seemed absolutely identical with that of the one recently discovered in Chester, only excepting that flags were employed instead of tiles to support the floor of concrete; and the lecturer expressed the opinion that hypocausts also existed under several floors laid bare, but which it had been thought undesirable to disturb. He was led to this conclusion partly by the fact that buttresses, which were never found in connection with the main wall or station walls, were found supporting the walls of some of the larger buildings—one such, 92 feet long, at Birdswald, had moreover narrow slits between the buttresses, apparently having some connection with the hypocaust, which he doubted not would one day be brought to light. Among the numerous objects of interest discovered were altars, dedicated not only to the ordinary Roman deities, but to the Sun, the Syrian Hercules, Astarte, and Baal; showing that the troops quartered along the barrier had come from far distant provinces of the Empire. An altar to *Discipline*, "*Disciplinæ Augusti*," was specially mentioned as remarkable, and as illustrating so forcibly the mind and habit of the Roman soldier; as in the case of the Centurion in the Gospel, who, accustomed to pay and exact instant obedience to the commands of authority, could at once believe in the Saviour's power to heal his servant with a word. Another altar was described as dedicated to Silvanus by the Hunters of Banna, which had created much perplexity, no such place as Banna being known; but a bronze cup had been discovered in Wiltshire, on which were found the names of some of the stations of this barrier, and Banna among them; this confirmed

the reading of the altar inscription, but still where Banna had been was a mystery unsolved. Millstones of various dimensions and in large numbers were discovered, some evidently of stone not found in this country; also mortars, with round stones used as pestles, or rather rolled about in the mortar for the purpose of bruising the corn; round and conical stones, supposed to have been balista-shot; Samian ware in great quantities; coins also in abundance, but only two with the Christian monogram, and these of the date of Magnentius, A.D. 350. Lastly, some very valuable gems, found at Petriana (Walton House,) were described; two especially, of sardonyx, with very remarkable devices, of which most carefully executed drawings were exhibited, but of which no explanation had yet been given; and a third was described as a rare specimen of an imitation onyx, the composition being of glass-paste.

The lecture was illustrated by a general plan of the barrier in its entire length, sections of the works at various points, a ground plan of a station, and three large sketches in neutral tint, one representing the barrier as it makes its way along and over the highest ground; another representing one of the eastern gateways into the station at Ambo-glanna; and a third showing one of the mile-castles. The lecturer expressed himself as much indebted to the works of Dr. Bruce, of Newcastle, and to the Duke of Northumberland, who had caused a survey to be made of the whole barrier, and had presented a copy of the work to all the proprietors along the line.

The CHAIRMAN (Dr. Brushfield) stated that the old Roman Wall at Chester was of the same quality, and made in the same peculiar manner, as the one which had just been so ably described by Mr. Johnson; the outside stones being in each case laid dry and without any of the bonding courses of tiles usually found in Roman work, more especially towards the south, of which the "old wall" at Wroxeter might be quoted as an example. Allusion was then made to the various inscription stones, and the interesting fact that at the station of *Bremenium* (now called High Rochester,) one of the tablets had been erected by a detachment of the 20th Legion, the same that had so long encamped at Chester. Dr. Brushfield also drew attention to the form of the various stations along the wall, as shown by Mr. Johnson's illustration, and compared it with the old Roman *Deva*; the four principal streets running right through the city, intersecting in the middle,—as well as the shape of the walls, the corners being rounded off instead

of square, to which circumstance the late secretary of this Society, Mr. Massie, had drawn attention. As to the first seal exhibited by Mr. Johnson, he (Dr. B.) had one which it closely resembled in its principal features; these were known to be characteristics of amulets used by the Gnostics, the followers of Simon the Sorcerer, mentioned in the "Acts of the Apostles." This peculiarity consisted in the engraved figure being formed of heads, human or animal, so that whichever way you looked at it a different head was presented. The Chairman concluded with a vote of thanks to Mr. Johnson for his very able and interesting lecture.

Mr. JOHNSON made an appropriate reply, and gave a sketch description of the best way to see "The Wall," to those inclined to undertake the journey.

March 14. The fifth meeting of the present session was held in the Society's Rooms, on Monday; Alderman Williams in the chair.

The Rev. Dr. HUME, F.S.A., of Liverpool, delivered a lecture on "Monumental Brasses," which was of a highly-interesting character. A large number of beautiful "rubblings" were exhibited by the lecturer, from some of the best examples now existing in this country.

Mr. W. FFOULKES exhibited the skull of a Saxon, found in a large gravel bed in Bedfordshire, it having evidently been a Saxon burying-place, as gold ornaments, Saxon urns, glass cups, &c., had been found there. Many thousand skulls had been examined; it had become a scientific study; and from the facts obtained professors stated that they were able to tell whether a skull was that of a Saxon or not. He handed round the room a piece of lead, declared to have been dug up at the new hotel in course of erection at Charing Cross, London, and which he said had puzzled a great many antiquaries. It was, however, neither more nor less than a forgery; hundreds of them were manufactured in London over and over again, and were sold for a few pence to workmen, who often sold them to the curious for large sums of money. It was, therefore, highly desirable for those in the room to see a specimen of the lead, in order that, if they went to London, they might not be imposed upon. He concluded by proposing a vote of thanks to Dr. Hume for his excellent lecture, which vote was accorded with acclamation,

April 27. The Rev. Canon EATON in the chair. By the personal exertions of the Secretaries, aided by the cordial sympathy of numerous friends of the Society in Chester and the neighbourhood, a choice collection of Shakesperian and other Elizabethan relics and reminiscences was brought together, such as perhaps had never before been exhibited in this city.

The Rev. HENRY GREEN, M.A., of Knutsford, delivered a lecture on "Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers of the 16th Century, especially Geoffrey Whitney, of Cheshire." After some preliminary observations on the Tercentenary Festival, and on the causes that had induced him to turn his attention to the subject of this Paper, the lecturer said the first English Emblem book was composed by Geoffrey Whitney, submitted by him in manuscript to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in 1586, and printed in the following year at Leyden. Whitney was a member of an old Cheshire family, and was born in or near Nantwich, and educated at Christ Church, Oxford. He afterwards resided for a considerable period in the Netherlands. The question for them to consider was whether Shakespeare made any use of Whitney's Emblems or others like them, published in the 16th century. Which of them passed under Shakespeare's notice we might not be able to say with certainty, but that he knew of them and used them, either directly or indirectly, there could be no reasonable doubt. After a variety of illustrations, the lecturer concluded as follows: "Nor—after the evidence adduced, and comparing the picture Emblems which I have submitted to your inspection with passages of Shakespeare which are their complete parallels, as far as words can be to drawings—are we required any longer to treat it as a mere conjecture that Shakespeare, like others of his countrymen, was acquainted generally with the popular Emblem Books of the sixteenth century, and especially with the "Choice of Emblemes," by Geoffrey Whitney, of Cheshire, the earliest and, I may dare to name him, the best of our English Emblem writers. Others might be more pungent, more polished, or more elaborate in their conceits, or in the language in which they clothed them; but there were none of greater purity, more abundant learning, or a more thoroughly religious spirit. As he was characterised by those who knew him when his work first appeared, so might he be spoken of now: Chaucer was the Homer of England, Whitney its Hesiod. And surely it is not in Cheshire people at this time, when such general testimony is being

given to one immortal memory, any unreasonable pride to be zealous for the fame of that poet of our county who nearly three hundred years ago, when Avon's banks first resounded with Shakespeare's songs, celebrated the praises of the Cholmondeleys, the Wilbrahams, the Mainwarings, the Cottons of Combermere, the Brookes and the Corbets of Elizabeth's glorious reign,—who along with them made mention of the Calthorpes, the Drakes, the Jermyns, the Norrisses, the Russells, and the Sidneyes, and whose humbler descriptions and thoughts and expressions the mighty genius of Shakespeare did not disdain to use, to elevate, and to ennoble!

The Rev. C. BOWEN: Shakespeare, in every point of law, was always accurate, which proved that he must have been a close observer of the legal profession, for he never made a mistake. It was very singular, too, how truthfully the great poet translated foreign languages, which showed that he must have been a linguist.

The Rev. LECTURER: Yes, but he was not learned in that respect in the sense of Erasmus, and other great men of that class.

Mr. J. RALPH: It was true that every allusion Shakespeare made to law was correct, and a pamphlet published a short time ago tended to prove that he must at one time of his life have been a lawyer's clerk. (Laughter.)

The LECTURER said: When he was at College at Glasgow, where he was educated, a young man gave in a long exercise on the various terms of law, and so wouderfully correct was the production that the professor doubted his having written it. However, the young man did write it, and it showed that a person might get up a case very accurately according to law without intending to plead in a court of equity. (Laughter, and hear, hear.)

The Rev. CHAIRMAN expressed his full concurrence with the line of argument taken up by the lecturer.

Mr. T. HUGHES, as one of the secretaries of the Society, asked the attention of the meeting while he touched upon or described the various objects of surpassing interest and value then displayed before them. He would first instance the rich series of photographs scattered broadcast about the room by Mr. Green, and prepared at that gentleman's cost in illustration of his lecture. Probably an outlay so large had seldom before been incurred under similar circumstances in the whole history of the Society; and it was only due to the lecturer that the

additional illustrative light thus thrown upon the subject should not be lost sight of, or unacknowledged by those who listened to his remarks. It would be now his (the speaker's) duty, as the personal trustee for the moment of so much valuable literary and historic property, to describe somewhat in detail the various objects of interest then exhibited. In the first rank he would place the magnificent compliment paid to the Society by Mr. J. Fitchett Marsh, of Warrington, who had indulged them with a treat, the like of which had never before been experienced in that or any other room in Chester. He alluded to the splendid series of early Shakespeares, embracing perfect copies of the first folio edition of 1623 (a duplicate of which was sold last month by auction for £273), the second folio of 1632, the third folio of 1664, and the fourth folio of 1685; together with an almost perfect series of the separate quarto plays of Shakespeare, original editions published during the lifetime of our national bard. Similar original quartos of contemporary authors, including Ben Jonson, Marlowe, Dekker, Heywood, Greene, Beaumont, Armin, Fletcher, and others, from the same valuable collection, gave additional lustre to the exhibition; it was probable, indeed, that the mere money value of the Shakespearian literature exhibited by Mr. J. F. Marsh and others at the meeting was not far short of one thousand pounds. From the same stores came a choice copy, but wanting the title page and one preliminary leaf, of Holinshed (our Cheshire historian's) Chronicle, the first or Shakespeare edition of 1577, so called from its being the probable source of the historical information on which he founded his various plays. Gold, silver, copper, and bronze medals of the Shakespearian Club, a fine miniature of Shakespeare on ivory, copied from Jansen's original portrait, and framed in wood taken from the poet's own mulberry tree; a tablet and snuff-box finely carved from the same wood, and a portfolio of rare and varied portraits of Shakespeare from every imaginable source, completed the list of Mr. Marsh's contributions. Dr. Kendrick, of Warrington, had also cordially responded to his call, and had sent a plaster mask from the head of Shakespeare on his monument at Stratford, and an "apostle" spoon of silver, bearing the English mintmark of 1616 (the date of the poet's death,) and long a heir-loom in his (the Dr.'s) family. From the Warrington Free Museum came an ancient leathern bottle, or "pocket pistol," illustrative of a passage in the play of "Henry VIII.," and other relics. Miss Cowley, of Warrington, contributed a box of

the far-famed mulberry tree wood, and Mr. J. T. Picton, of the same town, a piece of the oaken linden of the fire-place at Shakespeare's house at Stratford. This block had been recently sawn into, and within it had been discovered a pretty little palmwood cross, which had at some ancient date been secreted in the chimney-piece, probably as a charm against witchcraft. Mr. Green, the lecturer, on behalf of a friend, and Mr. Mark Cann, of Plymouth, respectively exhibited copies, neither of them quite perfect, of the second folio Shakespeare of 1632. Dr. Brushfield had also entrusted to the speaker a volume of rare playbills, connected with the Chester Theatre in the olden time, prominent among which he would direct their notice to the bill of the Theatre in Foregate-street, traces of which had endured even to the present day, up a passage on the south side of that street. A pair of embroidered ladies' shoes and pattens to match, of Elizabethan date, came from the stores of Mr. Edwards (Blue School); and last but not least, there was exhibited by Mr. F. Butt, silversmith, an elegant original miniature portrait, upon ivory, of Mrs. Sarah Siddons, the greatest Shakespearian actress England has ever known, and sister of the equally celebrated John and Charles Kemble. This handsome locket was also inlaid at the back with a movable brooch, containing the hair of the lady and her initials, "S.S.," in gold, within an oval of pearls. So far as he (Mr. Hughes) could learn, this portrait had never been engraved, and was, indeed, until quite recently never out of the Siddons family. This beautiful work of art is now (1876) in the collection of Sir Philip Grey-Egerton, Bart., at Oulton Park. From his own personal collection, Mr. Hughes exhibited copies of Whitney's and other Cheshire authors' books of Elizabethan times, as also a very rare plan of the city of Chester, as it appeared in Shakespeare's day, in which were shown churches and other public edifices which had since wholly disappeared.

May 25. Mr. ROBERT MORRIS read a carefully-compiled paper on "The Baptism of Bells, and on some Legends attaching to the Bells of Cheshire." It is possible that a digest of this lecture may be given in a future number of the *Journal*.

The CHAIRMAN thanked Mr. Morris for the entertainment he had afforded the meeting, and after a suitable acknowledgment from that gentleman,

Mr. T. HUGHES (Hon. Sec.) observed that the existence of a solitary ancient bell in so many of the old Cheshire churches was a circumstance, to his mind, easy of explanation. Prior to the Reformation most of the English parish churches had in their steeples melodious peals of bells; but when the fiat went forth for the dissolution of religious houses, the commissioners appointed by Henry VIII., entering largely into the rapacious spirit of their master, played fearful havoc, not only with the temporalities of the church, but also with its decorations and furniture. It was one of the Puritanical notions of the hour that bells were papistical, and tended to propagate heresy; and as they possessed withal considerable money value, the commissioners uniformly decreed their removal, usually leaving just one bell to summon the parishioners to service under the new regime. It was thus at St. John's in this city, but in that instance the commissioners went further still, for they removed every fother of lead that they found upon the roof, leaving a church in ruin as their legacy to the parish. The lecturer had spoken of "St. George's Bell" as the precursor of the celebrated Chester Cup. For some reason he (Mr. Hughes) could not explain, this race, which had for more than 100 years been run on the old Roodeye at Chester, was early in the last century transferred to Farn-
don, on the Dee, a few miles from the city. While it was essentially a Chester prize, the corporation were large annual subscribers to it, in conjunction with the several trade companies of Chester; and when it was transferred to Farn-
don the subscription from the city was not withdrawn, the public bellman going round on the day of the race to announce the race to the citizens. There was an old Cheshire saying, "You must go to Holt to see Farn Races," the fact being that the racecourse at Farn-
don was so situate that the race could only be seen to advantage from the Holt or Welsh side of the river. Mention had been made of the bell of St. Sepulchre's, London, tolling at the execution of criminals at Newgate. A similar custom prevailed at Chester, for when a condemned felon was removed at midnight from the Castle to the City Gaol, then situate at the Northgate, the bell of St. Mary's Church tolled its solemn dirge until the fatal cart reached the limits of the Castle boundary at Glover's Stone, the bell of Holy Trinity Church taking up the knell as the procession moved along Nicholas Street, on its way to the place of execution at the Northgate.

Oct. 3. The Rev. C. P. WILBRAHAM delivered an excellent lecture on "Ancient Architecture," being a sequel to his discourse on "The Kremlin and the Alhambra."

The LECTURER confined his observations almost* entirely to his adventures in Russia and Spain, and to the objects of historic and antiquarian interest he had there personally visited. He graphically described the battle-fields on and in the neighbourhood of the Douro, and the exploits of the British army there, under the great Duke of Wellington. The Russian Imperial house at Peterhoff, and the ceremonies he had witnessed there in connection with the marriage of the Grand Duke Michael; the great aqueduct of Segovia, with its beautiful cathedral and Moorish castle, were all in turn described; and he compared the civility of the Spanish muleteer, and the obsequiousness of the Russian serf, with the brusqueness of the American cabman, who would say to his fare "I am the *gentleman* that is to drive you, and you are the *man* that is going!" Mr. Wilbraham concluded a most instructive and interesting lecture amid applause.

In the course of the discussion which ensued, the Rev. H. VENABLES remarked that the port of Chicago in America had originally been built too low, and the Americans had actually raised the whole town eight feet.

The Rev. C. P. WILBRAHAM: I was there when it was done. (Great laughter and applause.) I may add that in America, whenever you get tired of your neighbour, you put your house on rollers and move off. At New Brunswick they had actually moved a church across a river at a time when it was frozen over. When they got to the middle the ice seemed on the point of cracking, but they got safely across. They construct their buildings on a framework of timber.

Mrs. Vaughan Lloyd sent for exhibition some photographic views of Bramhall Hall and Marple Hall, near Stockport; the former being a splendid specimen of the old timber houses of Cheshire, and the latter celebrated as the birthplace of the learned and notorious John Bradshaw, President of the Council which consigned Charles I. to the scaffold.
