At 5.30 there was a Public Dinner at the Hind Hotel: and at 7.30 there was a second

PUBLIC MEETING

in the Town Hall, CAPTAIN PEARSON (in the unavoidable absence through indisposition of the President) in the chair.

MR. JAMES THOMPSON was first called upon to read his Paper:

THE SECULAR HISTORY OF LUTTERWORTH.

No history tells us when this town began to exist. All that can be ascertained concerning the matter, is inferred from the general history of the times in which the place originated. It is known, for example, that in the sixth century the Angles—a people who came over to this island from the coast near the north of the Elbe, and who were of Teutonic origin—settled in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, and extended their power over Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, and thence over Leicestershire and other districts, until they reached the borders of Wales. At this time no counties were known, but the Anglian authority was established over the tracts of country subsequently designated counties. The settlers took possession of the land, which their chiefs divided among themselves by lots. Each chief, on taking his share, placed his dwelling upon it, occupied it with his household and followers, and marked out his allotment by boundaries, and often gave it his own personal name, or that of his race or family. The habitation of the settler consisted of a building or buildings, one storey high, built of mud and timber, round an area enclosed by a moat and rampart, provided for security and defence. To most of these places, the designation *tun* or town, *worth*, *by*, *thorpe*, or *ham* was given in a final syllable—signifying an enclosure or settlement, or a smaller place, as a thorpe or hamlet—and to this last syllable was usually prefixed another, expressive of some distinctive peculiarity, some personal or family name, or some accidental circumstance. Thus we have in Leicestershire—Carlton, the town Charles; Kilworth, Kibworth, and Bosworth; Kirkby, the habitation where a "kirk" or church was standing when the place received its enduring name; Countesthorpe, the thorpe of a countess living in Saxon times; and many others.

Lutterworth would seem to have been originally the "worth" or enclosure of some Anglian settler named "Lutter". That Lutter was known to the early Germans as a pre-name is evidenced by the existence of places similarly named in the Duchy of Brunswick, called Lutterberg and Lutter.

The situation of Lutterworth, close to the ancient highway through England, called the Watling Street, formed long before

the Angles were known in our island—close to a stream of water—and occupying a pleasant slope, was inviting to an adventurer, half military and half agricultural, such as Lutter was undoubtedly; and therefore he would make it his fixed abode, and it would become his freehold, descendible to his family. But his history and theirs has long since passed into oblivion. In accordance with the usage of the age, however, it may be reasonably stated that either the first settler, or one of his descendants, built a structure of wood, covered with thatch, for a priest to say prayers in, and gave the said priest a patch of land to live upon, somewhere in the seventh century.

All this time the country around remained in forest, heath, and waste; there being only a small portion cleared and under cultivation. Leicester was now a ruined Roman station, with a heap of falling structures lying within its walls, and here and there in the region around were the remains of a Roman villa, standing as left deserted by its former proprietors. There were no roads except the few left by the Romans, and outside the town-lands the country was unappropriated. The Saxon thanes who tilled the soil at Lutterworth, one after another, lived just such a life as English farmers did in sequestered villages, before the railways disturbed their monotonous tranquility, and the regularly-recurring labours of the season. For, after all, country life was for centuries very much the same everywhere. Men were occasionally called away from the fields to put on their helmets, and to carry sword and lance and shield in bloody battle. The lords of the manor lived in their moated and stockaded enclosures like stout, hearty yeomen, among their serfs and cattle; and the festivals of the Church, and its daily and weekly services, perhaps roused them periodically from the stagnant dulness of purely field labours and pursuits.

The grand event of all England, which turned the current of all its subsequent history into new and strange channels, was the conquest by the Normans. The Lutterworth people had often heard of the Danes, and seen the ferocious, red-haired visages of those burly men, and had encountered their battle-axes, and dreaded their sudden inroads with torch and brand; but these wild marauders, in comparison with the Normans, were as banditti by the side of regular soldiers. In the year 1066 the great battle of Hastings took place, and Leicester and the surrounding district were subjugated by the invaders two or three years later. Among those who came over with William the Conqueror were a multitude of adventurers by profession, all the outcasts of Western Europe, to whom good pay and the plunder of England was promised on their listing under his banner. Every tall and stout man who would serve the leader with spear, sword, and cross-bow, was told he would make his fortune, if he joined William and helped him to obtain a victory over the English. Crowds came by all roads, from far and near,

from the north and the south. Some arrived from the province of Maine, and from Anjou, from Poitou and Brittany, and other parts of the Continent. The English proprietor of Lutterworth was dispossessed of his estate by the conquerors, and a man from Brittany put in his place. This was Ralph Wayer, Guader, or de Waer, who had lands also at Stoughton and Welham, with other property at Thorpe and Misterton. He was the owner of the castle of Guader in the province of Brittany, and had been appointed Earl of Norfolk and Suffolk by the Conqueror. He conspired against his master, however, and found it necessary to leave the country in an expedition against the Turks at Jerusalem; when his possessions reverted to the Crown; so that when Domesday Survey was taken in the year 1086, Maino the Breton was the proprietor of Lutterworth in his stead. Norman clerks (who probably could not speak a word of English) set down in their account that the place was called *Lutresurde*. They gave the following particulars, which are translated from the cramped Latin of the ancient document:—

"Maino the Breton holds of the king Lutresurde. There are thirteen carucates of land. Nine ploughs were there. In the domain are three ploughs and two serfs and one bondswoman; and six villains, with seven bordars, and twelve sokemen, have four ploughs. There are twelve acres of meadow. It was worth, and is worth, seven pounds."

Rendered into modern ideas, all this means that Maino the Breton had a tract of land equivalent to 1,500 or 1,600 acres. There was a population here of twenty-seven males; twelve of an inferior class of landowners called sokemen, living under the jurisdiction of the foreign lord of the manor; seven cottagers holding small allotments, in return for which they performed menial services for the lord of the manor; six villains, or peasant farmers, holding by a mixed tenure not clearly defined; and two serfs, who were at the arbitrary disposal of their lord, their lives and limbs only being under legal protection. Besides these, there was one bondswoman. On comparison with the number of sokemen in other market towns of similar position in the present day, Lutterworth, at the time of the Conquest, seems to have had relatively a larger proportion than they; pointing to the existence of a more numerous independent class here than at other places. Altogether, assuming the twenty-seven male inhabitants to be heads of families consisting of five individuals, there would be a population of 135.

Maino the Breton was followed in the ownership of this manor (if an ancient charter be not misread) by one Hamo, supposed to be his son. He conveyed the town to Bertram de Verdun in a document which is thus rendered into English:—

"Hamo the son of Maino to all his Frenchmen and Englishmen,

as well present as to come, health! Know ye that I have rendered and granted to Bertram Verdun and his heirs, Lutterworth, with all the appurtenances, by hereditary law, to be held of me and my heirs, by one knight's fee. And, in consideration of this, Bertram has given to me thirteen marks of silver, and a coat of mail, and greaves, and three horses. These being witnesses: Henry the son of M., Alan his brother, and M. de Verdun, Ricalan de Verdun, William Mansell, and Allan son of Geoffrey, and Roger the clerk."

The terms of this ancient charter illustrate the usages of the time shortly after the Conquest. The holding by a knight's fee meant that Bertram de Verdun, the new proprietor, was under the obligation of finding a cavalry soldier for forty days in the year, when called on by the king; and it is equally characteristic of the martial spirit of the age to observe, that the grantee presented the grantor with a coat of mail, with greaves or armour for the legs, and with three horses, in addition to thirteen marks of silver. Such was the price paid for the manor.

Bertram de Verdun thus became connected with Lutterworth; though it was not his home. He was one of the earliest members of one of the most illustrious houses of England, whose castle was at Alveton, or Aulton, in Staffordshire. His stronghold stood on a crag near a ravine, familiar to the eyes of the modern tourist who visits that far-famed spot which a late Earl of Shrewsbury converted from a scene of barren wildness into fairy land. Seven hundred years ago, the cliff which overhangs the path of the modern iron-way at Alton was crowned by the lofty towers and battlemented walls of de Verdun's fortress; just as the robber chieftain's castle on the Rhine now projects over the swelling waters of that "exultant and abounding" river. Here, generation after generation, the de Verduns, lords of the manor of Lutterworth, lived in feudal grandeur; only knowing this town by an occasional visit, or through the reports of their stewards, who presided in their courts and received their rents and the service due from the tenants.

Into the personal history of each lord of the manor in succession it would be beyond the purpose of our narrative to enter. A recital of their names and a few facts connected with each of them may, however, be desirable. On his decease, Bertram de Verdun was succeeded in the year 1139 by his son, Norman, who paid 100s. to King Stephen for the transfer to him of his father's possessions in Leicestershire. He seems to have been long-lived, as he held the estates until the year 1192. Probably he was very young on succeeding to his inheritance. After Norman de Verdun followed another Bertram, who was sheriff of the counties of Leicester and Warwick for several years. He was twice married; his second wife being Roesia—a lady who has left her name behind her lastingly identified with this county, as foundress of the nunnery of Gracedieu and (jointly with her son) of the hospital of St. John,

near this town. Her effigy, clothed in the costume of the age in which she lived, was placed over her last remains in the church at Gracedieu, but subsequently removed to Belton, where it still remains. It will enable the modern visitor to realize the appearance of this devout lady, as she was when she walked among her relatives and neighbours.

Bertram de Verdun, her husband, only held the family property for three years, this is, from 1192 to 1195, having probably succeeded to it late in life. By his wife, Roesia, he had two sons—Thomas and Nicholas. Thomas held his father's position only four years, and was followed by his brother, Nicholas, who in 1199 was the head of his house. Roesia de Verdun endured a long widowhood, of which the latter part was probably passed in religious seclusion, and to this circumstance may be attributed her foundation of the institutions we have named, in which work she associated her son, Nicholas, with herself. The hospital was built on a piece of land adjoining to land in Misterton, called the Warren. It was intended to provide a home for one priest and six poor men, and to keep hospitality for poor wayfarers—a mediæval refuge for the destitute.

Nicholas de Verdun held the manor (with a short interval of dispossession, on his joining the insurgent barons in 1216) until the year 1230. While he was lord of the manor the king made him a grant of a market for Lutterworth in 1214. He was succeeded by his only child, a daughter, named after her grandmother, Roesia. At this date, the wealthy heiresses of estates held under the crown had no freedom of choice in the selection of their husbands. Like members of the royal family at the present time, they were disposed of in marriage for State reasons. By the command of Henry III., then, the hand of Roesia de Verdun was given to Theobald le Butiller. Her exceptional position enabled her, after marriage, to retain the name and arms of her ancestors; and her descendants accordingly did not bear the name of Butiller, but of de Verdun. She died in 1247, and was succeeded by her son, John, who remained lord of the manor until 1273, when his brother Theobald, aged twenty-two, followed in the line of inheritance.

At this period an Inquisition—a State enquiry—was made into the state of the manor of Lutterworth, which revealed some interesting particulars. The officers of the Crown thus reported:—

"Lutterworth is of the fee of Verdun; and Theobald de Verdun holds the same town, with its members, by one knight's fee, from the king; and the same Theobald returns yearly for the custody of the Castle of Northampton, 10s. The same Theobald has in domain three virgates of land and a half and one water mill. The same has in villainage forty virgates of land which thirty-six serfs hold. The same has in free tenure sixteen virgates of land, which six free

tenants hold. The prior of the Hospital of Jerusalem holds in the same five virgates of land in perpetual alms; by what warrant is not known. Twenty-five burgesses [*burgenses* in the original] hold forty-three burgages in the same. William de Walcote holds one toft, with the advowson of the church, for the term of life of Eleanor de Verdun. And the said Theobald has six virgates, warren in the field, and a market and fairs. And the aforesaid tenants do not pay scutage. And he [Theobald] has royal and other liberties aforesaid, by what warrant is unknown. They are quit of suits of the county and the hundred for three palfrey marks per annum, and there are seven virgates of land of the same fee in the tenure of the Hospital of Lutterworth, given by Nicholas de Verdun and Roesia de Verdun."

From this return we ascertain much information respecting the land and the inhabitants. The virgate of land is an indefinite quantity, but in parts of this county it is proved to have meant 15 acres. At this estimation, Theobald de Verdun had in domain —in his own hands—52 acres, and another plot of 90 acres in another direction, in the same position; the two farms, perhaps, cultivated by his own resident steward. Besides these, he had 600 acres, worked by 36 serfs, and 240 acres in the hands of 6 free tenants, giving 40 acres each. The prior of the Hospital had apparently 75 acres for his maintenance, and 105 for the poor wayfarers. But there were, besides, not land-tenants, 25 burgesses holding 43 burgages, which were small plots of land with houses upon them, qualifying the tenants to be burgesses. As there was usually a burgess for every burgage, it would appear that the number of burgesses had sunk from 43 to 25, from some unrecorded cause or other. These burgesses were free of suits of the county and the hundred; in other words, they were not compelled to obtain justice in the County Court or the Hundred Court, as they had their own independent town court. Hence Lutterworth was at this time—six hundred years since—a borough in its simplest form; and, as we have heard, had its market and fairs. It contained within itself, indeed, the germ of a separate municipality, and had an individual existence accordingly.

At this date the population was composed of 36 serfs, 25 burgesses, and 6 free tenants, with other men not specially designated; these, with their wives and families, making a total of probably 350 persons. In this small community the servile population was larger than the free classes. Living on the two sides of the main street, in thatched houses and mud cottages, their lives were passed in the unvarying round of humble duty, and their destiny did not raise them to the dignity of history. There were, however, great names and distinguished persons once associated with the place—not only the de Verduns, but another house still more lofty in its pretensions—the Fieldings, descendants of Hapsburgs, and directly

connected with the imperial family of Germany. Of this race, the first known in England was Geoffrey, Earl of Hapsburg, who settled in this country in the reign of Henry III., and his son, Geoffrey, married Matilda Colville; this lady, as the daughter of Cecilia de Verdun, being the representative of a junior branch of the family. Her father, John de Colville, married a second wife, Joanna, the daughter and heir of Thomas Fielding, who had settled in Lutterworth before the arrival of the other Fieldings in England. This lady conveyed to her husband's daughter by his first wife—the Matilda of whom we have spoken—her property in Lutterworth; adopting her and her children for her heirs, in consideration of this alliance. In this way, Geoffrey de Hapsburg (who took the name Fielding) acquired for himself and descendants a manor here, subordinate to and dependent on the older one of the de Verduns, in the earlier part of the fourteenth century. His wife, Matilda, had her residence in the town, in Ely Lane—sometimes called the "high house," where she dwelt in state, living on her property in the lordship.

In the fourteenth century the Fieldings had evidently multiplied, and were among the principal persons in the place. In the thirty-eighth year of Edward III., a conveyance of a burgage was made which may be still extant, with many others, among the archives of the Earl of Denbigh. It gives so vivid a glimpse of the customs of the times that it is worthy of reproduction. It was executed in the court of the lord of the manor, at this place, in presence of Walter Steven, William Bonifaunt, and Thomas Baker, of Lutterworth, and Thomas Deskine, of Poulteney, and Roger of Thorpe, on the Tuesday of the Feast of S. George. The property conveyed was a half burgage built, lying in the High Street, between the burgage of John Fielding on the one side, and the messuage of William Milner on the other; the persons to whom it was conveyed being John Fielding, and Agnes, his wife, and John, his son by his first wife, Matilda. The person who conveyed the property was Thomas Fielding, of Lutterworth, with the consent of Elizabeth his wife. An annual rent of twelve silver shillings was to be paid to the said Thomas, who was bound to render to the lords of the fee the services due and accustomed.

Here, living as neighbours in Lutterworth, about 1365, are John and Thomas Fielding, probably younger brothers of Sir Geoffrey Fielding, Knight, and lineal descendants of the count whose brother was Rodolph, Emperor of Germany. One of them was a burgess—the other a richer man. From John, the grantee, sprang Sir Geoffrey, who was Lord Mayor of London in the reign of Henry VI. Of this resident family also was that Fielding whose effigy still lies in the parish church, habited as he was when alive, in his long gown, belted round him; his wife at his side, clad in a long loose dress with a mantle over, her head in veiled head-dress, reposing

on a cushion; the two giving an accurate idea of the substantial people of Lutterworth four hundred years bygone.

To return to the ancient lords and ladies of the manor; Theobald de Verdun, the son of Theobald le Butiller and Roesia de Verdun, held the lordship until 1319, when another Theobald succeeded him. He was the last of this family in the male line, and he died at Alton Towers in 1316. He had three daughters by his first wife, and one by his second, from whom descended the Ferrerses and the Greys. It was while the Ferrerses were lords of the manor John Wyckliffe was the vicar. For ten years he ministered to the spiritual wants of the people of this parish and promulgated his views of religious and ecclesiastical reformation. His life and labours have, however, been so extensively treated on by various authors, that any particulars concerning him would be out of place in this Paper on the Secular History of Lutterworth.

The manor remained in the hands of the Greys till it was forfeited to the Crown by the attainder of Henry, Marquis of Dorset, the father of Lady Jane Grey, in the year 1554.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as we have seen, there were some substantial people in the town and district independently of its great lords. Among these there were several public benefactors. In the reign of Richard III., Richard Palmer, gent., and Roger Smith, gent., and Alice, his wife, gave lands at Sapcote; in the reign of Henry VII., John Hutt, gent., gave other lands and tenements at Sapcote; in the same reign, William Cox, of Lutterworth, gent., gave lands and tenements at Lutterworth; in the same reign, Edmund Wells, of London, gent., gave lands and tenements at Lutterworth; in the same reign, William Pawley, of Lutterworth, gave lands and tenements in the same town; and in the reign of Henry VIII., Sir William Fielding, of Newnham, gave lands and tenements at Willey; all for repairing the roads and streets, and other charitable purposes.

The former borough of Lutterworth became considerably enriched in these reigns; its property appropriated to civic and public uses was extensive. To have secured its proper application it would have been well had the town been incorporated as towns with populations as small, and property as considerable, were in the sixteenth century.

When in this condition, and with these acquisitions in the year 1510, Leland, the antiquary, visited the town. This is the description he gave of it: "From Leicester to Lutterworth, a market town, a ten miles towards Warwickshire. The town is scant half so big as Loughborough: but in it there is a hospital of the foundation of two of the Verduns, that were lords of ancient time of the town. * * There riseth certain springs in the hills a mile from Lutterworth; and so coming to a bottom they make a brook that passeth by Lutterworth."

Besides the property applied to secular objects, there was that with which Edmund Muryall had endowed the chantry within the church, to find a guild priest to pray for the souls of the founder and others in the parish church. On the dissolution of the lesser chantries in 1534, this also, in all probability, fell into the public hands, and was applied to secular purposes of common benefit. Shortly before the Reformation, this property brought in, in the money of the period, 45s. 3d. yearly.

Between the time of Theobald de Verdun, in 1276, and the middle of the sixteenth century, the population had made some advance. It is recorded that in 1564 there were 106 families resident here, who, at an average of five in a family, would muster —men, women, and children—530 persons; an addition of 180 in 188 years. The progress was slow in the old times, when the means of subsistence were limited, the chances of employment few, and the remuneration of labour low and stinted.

It seems the chief manor of Lutterworth was vested in the Crown during the reign of Queen Mary, and for a considerable portion of that of Elizabeth The place evidently prospered in the sixteenth century; as when Burton, the county historian, wrote of it at the commencement of the seventeenth century, he said: "This town standeth on exceeding good soil, and is very much frequented, standing not very far from the street way; having also a very good market upon the Thursday, to which is brought exceeding good corn in great abundance, and all other commodities, such as the country affordeth. It hath a fair upon Ascension or Holy Thursday, called heretofore the *Lord Ferrers' Holiday*, who sometime was lord of the town. It hath a very fair and large church with an high and neat spire steeple."

In the reign of Charles I. (in the year 1628), the manor was granted in fee-farm to the Mayor and Commonalty of London; in the year following it was conveyed to Basil Fielding, Esq., and George Farnham, gent., for £1650. The manor carried with it rents of Assize from four Courts; rents of tenants at will; all tolls belonging to the Manor; all fairs and markets, piccage, stallage; all houses and shops in the occupation of Thomas Farmer and his assigns; with all lands and tenements, and so forth, belonging to the manor, all perquisites of courts there, and all the rents of other belongings of the manor, with certain specified exceptions.

A suit-at-law was tried in the year 1631, which must have stirred up the minds of the townsfolk; it involved an old right, a relic of feudal authority, which must have been felt irksome and irritating —the right of the lord of the manor to compel the people to take all their corn, grist, and malt to be ground at the Lodge Mill and Malt Mill. The trial ended in an order requiring the inhabitants to conform to the ancient custom; giving them, however, the option of going to the Spittle Mills, if their corn, or grist, or malt, were not ground within twenty-four hours.

Some insight is obtained into local events by means of the entries in your town books. In the Churchwardens' Accounts, beginning in the year 1639, there are numerous entries of amounts of money given to relieve strangers in a destitute condition who passed through the place—to Germans, Irishmen, soldiers, and others. When the Civil War was going on between the King and Parliament, it must needs be there would be many incidents occurring which arose out of the distractions of the times, indicating the state of every part of the country. In May, 1643, Prince Rupert passed by or near the place, as we find this entry:—

"Paid to Prince Rupert's Trumpeters, £2."

Again, a significant entry in the same year:

"Paid to William Pettifor for writing out the Covenant, 6d."

There are items paid also to wounded soldiers and their wives passing through the town, but none of very special interest have come under my observation.

The Constables' Account Books present a grim list of entries of men and women whipped according to law; in fact, the first entry on the first page of the book is—

"The names of those vagrants which have been taken up and whipped in Lutterworth from the 15th October, 1657, to the 30th of September, 1658, per Thomas Cattell and Henry Pope, Constables."

Besides the cat-o'-nine tails, Lutterworth rejoiced in a penal institution long since forgotten; it had a cuck-stool in which the constables ducked scolding and foul-mouthed women in the adjoining river. It is thus mentioned in the account book:—

"1654, April 3, for repairing the cuck-stool, and for new wheel to it, 11d."

There was also a lock-up house called a "cage," in use here for the benefit of evil-doers, as is here shown:—

"1656.—Paid Carter for mending the cage and lock for the same, 1s. 6d."

It was humorously observed by Sydney Smith that the existence of a gallows in any country was one of the "signs of civilization."

By this standard, Lutterworth may be said to have been, with its whip, its cuck-stool, and its cage, in a sufficiently advanced stage of civilization in the middle of the seventeenth century. It seems the cuck-stool was actually called into requisition in the year 1657, as this entry shows;—

"May 20. Paid Warde for erecting the cuck-stool for labour, timber, and expenses, 10s."

I regret that time has not permitted me to proceed farther into the pages of your books, which of themselves would furnish material for an entertaining lecture.

In the latter half of the seventeenth century three tradesmen of Lutterworth issued tokens to supply the deficiency of small coins.

These were Edward Revell, at the George Inn, Peter Mackerness, and W. H. E. Dyer. These coins were current between the years 1660 and 1666.

The town seems to have made progress as a market for agricultural produce during the sixteenth century, and subsequently. For some reason not now known, an enquiry was instituted into the local charities in the year 1710, under the authority of the Court of Chancery, when Commissioners sat at Leicester, calling before them witnesses who, on oath, deposed to certain facts and statements. It was found by the Commissioners that messuages, lands, and tenements in Lutterworth, Sapcote, and Willey, which had heretofore been given for the repair of the highways, and for defraying the general charges of the inhabitants, and otherwise for their common benefit, had been granted to certain feoffees in trust; the only remaining trustees being Basil, Earl of Denbigh, the Hon. W. Fielding, and Thomas Bradgate, Esq.; that Robert Poole, of Lutterworth, had given to trustees about half an acre of land and half a yardland, in order that the yearly rents might be paid for the setting out to apprentice of poor boys taught in the school of Lutterworth; and that the rents and profits of two houses in Leicester, near St. Sunday's Bridge, had been from time to time applied to finding a schoolmaster to teach four poor boys of the school. By further enquiry, it was reported there had been a court leet and court baron of the Earl of Denbigh, held yearly for his manor of Lutterworth, within the month after Easter, to nominate and elect two persons yearly to collect the rents of the town property and dispose of the same, who were called Town Masters, who had the letting, setting, receiving, and disposing of all the messuages, cottages, closes, lands, and so forth. The Commissioners made a decree, directing certain things to be carried out; among which was the creation of a new feoffment, with a new body of trustees, requiring that vacancies should be filled up, when the number fell off to seven, by the inhabitants in a public meeting; the number to be raised to twenty. Two sufficient persons, called Town Masters, were to be elected in the court leet every year. When any of the messuages, lands, or other properties were to be let, the Town Masters were to give public notice to the inhabitants in the church, that they might meet to inspect the letting and setting the same, to the end they might be let for full value.

Of the operation of the system here mentioned I have no means of giving an account; nor does it fall within the scope of this Paper to present one. Its purpose being to treat on the ancient history of the place, I do not continue the narrative later than the eighteenth century, in which there occurred here few events calling for detailed notice. A trial took place in the year 1758, at Leicester Assizes, which revived the old dispute about the right of the

inhabitants to grind their corn, grist, and malt where they pleased; when the Court decided in their favour, and allowed them costs to the amount of £300. Between the year 1750 and 1778 the town was in a very deplorable state in regard to health; small-pox and putrid fever visiting it, and occasioning many deaths. The population in 1789, reckoning five persons to a household, was 1800; there being then 360 houses. Between 1564 and 1789, then, an increase had taken place from 530 to 1800; evidencing the progressive prosperity witnessed in 225 years. Some clue is given to the cause, by a return made about the same period, which stated there were 60 worsted looms, 31 shoemakers, and 17 teams in the parish.

I here conclude this rapid and necessarily imperfect review of the Secular History of Lutterworth; leaving it to convey to each hearer its own suggestions. Perhaps it will produce in all a deeper interest in the past, and a desire to promote the future prosperity of your interesting borough. Should it do so, in any degree, the writer will be repaid the labour he has bestowed in compiling this paper.

The Rev. Ernest Tower, Rector of Elmsthorpe, was next called upon to read the following paper:

THE HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF ELMSTHORPE, IN THE COUNTY OF LEICESTER, DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME, 1783, BY RICHARD FOWKE, OF ELMSTHORPE.

There are two classes of subjects which the Archæologist delights to revert to. There are those which speak of the past and bear only upon the past; and there are those which speak of the past and yet bear upon the present. He discusses, for instance, the dress of our forefathers, their illiterate forms of conveying and holding property, etc., etc., simply from the love of antiquarian lore. He does not care to revive them: he searches them out wholly and solely on account of their history: they belong to the past. But the other class of subjects which bears upon the present he cares for in a pre-eminent degree. Under this class comes the whole history of Architecture, which is remarkable for its power of uniting past and present. Indeed there is hardly a part of ancient domestic, or of ancient sacred Architecture of any pretension, which is not being revived again and again; their styles and forms being reproduced in every sort of way. The Roman villa with its central *atrium* is even becoming again a favourite plan for a new family residence; and when a Church is to be built, the more ancient the Christian style, the more correct it is considered. That which was old and ready to vanish away is more congenial to