

The Chairman stated that an inquiry had recently taken place in Edinburgh, the result of which was yet unsatisfactory, respecting the Architect of Heriot's Hospital. The names of four persons had been suggested; viz. Inigo Jones, Walter Balcanquhall, D.D., and two of the master masons who were first engaged in erecting the building.

The following Papers were then read:—

Ancient British Antiquities, No. 2.—Objects in Glass, by Edward Benn, Esq.; and DESCRIPTION OF TWO ANCIENT CARVED OAK PANELS. *By John Clements, Esq.*

The origin and history of these panels is not known. They may be local, but probably are not. When they came into the hands of their present possessor, they were covered with a thick coating of whitewash; in which state it is not probable that they had travelled far. They form a pair, each being eighteen inches long, by ten broad. They are a good deal worm-eaten, but still in good preservation. The carving is very rude.

#### No. 1.

This represents the legend of "St. George and the Dragon." The tail of the dragon is peculiar, being very short, and curled like that of a dog. The animal also wants wings, and has in general a less formidable appearance than usual. The lance or tilting spear of the Saint seems also to be omitted.

The Princess Sabra is placed at the top of the panel, holding a sheep in a leash. She stands apparently on a hillock, like an inverted bowl, and the sheep which seems struggling to obtain its liberty, is suspended in mid air. The horse of the Saint seems to move along the ridge of the dragon's back; a rabbit or hare has leaped up in front of the horse; and the Saint has his sword raised, no doubt actually to wound the dragon, but apparently to assail the rabbit or hare in front. The head of the horse is curbed in, and his eye, judging from the rude carving, looks forward with some alarm.

The arms of the princess are carved of a most unnatural length; she could easily touch the ground with her fingers, without stooping. Her dress too is peculiar; the falling band and flat cap reminding us of the costume of a boy in some of our charity schools. From the disproportion between the parts of the horse's body, the carver seems to have commenced at the head, without a complete drawing, till, finding that there would not be room for the whole animal on the panel, he made the best compromise he could with the hind quarters. The horse has a double girth, and the crupper is ornamented with bells, like hawks' bells.

The artist seems to have tried to represent the popular tradition respecting St. George, as conveyed in ballads and legends. The presence of the hare is difficult to be accounted for. From the square-toed Sollerets, the Lambois, the Bourgonet, and other indications in the armour, the date of the carving may be safely referred to the reign of Henry VIII.

#### No. 2.

This panel is partly heraldic, but the symbols have not been explained. The illustration of the mediæval legend is at the upper part of it, in two divisions. The scenes represented are from the well known story of "Reynard the Fox," which was translated and printed by Caxton in 1481. One portion of the carving is a scene from Chapter iii. of Caxton's book, and another from Chapter v.

The former is entitled "Chantecleer the Cock complaineth of Reynard the Fox;" and represents a procession of Chantecleer and his family to the king, carrying the body of *Copple*, one of his daughters, who had been killed by Reynard. He at the same time mentions the slaughter of various other members of his family. After an allusion to his happiness, and the extent of his family, he relates the treacherous manner \* in which Reynard had imposed upon him, and how at length the dead body of

\* "At last he came in the likeness of a hermit, and brought me a letter to read, sealed with your Majesty's seal, in which I found written that your highness had made peace throughout all your realm, and that no manner of beast or fowl should do injury one to another, affirmed unto me that for his own part he was become a monk or cloystered recluse, vowed to perform a daily penance for his sins; showing unto me his beads, his books, and the hair shirt next to his skin, saying in humble wise unto me, 'Sir *Chantecleer*, never henceforth be afraid of me, for I have vowed never more to eat flesh. I am now waxed old, and would only remember my soul, therefore

Copple his daughter had been rescued from Reynard's mail, by the interference of a pack of hounds.

The first illustration represents the dead body of Chanteceleur's daughter in Reynard's mail, with the head and neck hanging out. The attitudes of the bereaved father and children fully express their great sorrow.

In the next scene, the king sends Bruin the bear to bring Reynard to Court, to answer the accusations made against him, "And full of jollity the bear departed, if his return be as jovial, there is no fear of his well speeding." Reynard, however, tempts the bear with kind words and promises of great store of honey; and takes him to the house of Lanfert, a stout and lusty carpenter, in whose yard there was a large oak, which he and his sons had commenced to cleave. The bear was persuaded that there was an immense amount of honey in the tree, but when he had inserted his head, Reynard withdrew the wedges. Escape was now impossible; Lanfert, his family and friends,\* were thoroughly roused; and the bear at length succeeded in extricating his head. A vigorous attack was then made upon him, the last stroke being dealt by the carpenter's brother.

The second scene on the panel illustrates the concluding part. Lanfert's brother is dealing the final blow; and a flying bird probably represents one of the domestic fowl which had been roused by the noise and clamour.

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11th January, 1855. LITERARY SECTION.

PETER R. M'QUIE, Esq., in the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following Donations were laid upon the table:—

From John Hall, Esq., Lancaster. The London Magazine and Monthly Chronicle, for 1737.

Speed's account of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, with maps, 12mo. 1676.

A Volume of Pamphlets, f.cap. 4to., 1703 and 1704.

A volume containing the *Chester Chronicle* and other local newspapers, 1799.

From the Author, Dr. Kendrick. The Warrington Worthies, 4to. pamph. 2nd edition.

From Mrs. Matthew Gregson. Gregson's Fragments relative to the History of Lancashire, with additions. Sm. fol. 1807.

The Rev. Thomas Moore, M.A., exhibited maps, drawings, and prints illustrative of his paper.

The Secretary laid upon the table copies of the new Laws just printed off, and copies of the new List of Members.

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I take my leave, for I have yet my noon and my even song to say; which speaking he departed, saying his *credo* as he went, and layed him down under a hawthorn; at this I was exceeding glad, that I took no heed, but went and clocked my children together, and walked without the wall, which I shall ever rue."

\* "This army put Bruin into a great fear, being none but himself to withstand them, and hearing the clamour of the noise which came thundering upon him, he wrestled and pulled so extremely, that he got out his head, but left behind him all the skin and his ears also; insomuch that never creature beheld a fouler or more deformed beast, for the blood covering all his face and his hands leaving the claws and skin behind them, nothing remained but ugliness; it was an ill market the bear came to, for he lost both motion and sight, feet and eyes; but notwithstanding this torment, Lanfert, the priest, and the whole parish came upon him, and so beundgelled him about his body part, that it might well be a warning to all his misery, to know that ever the weakest shall still go most to the wall. \* \* \* The poor bear in this massacre, sat and sighed extremely, groaning under the burthen of their strokes, \* \* \* till Lanfert's brother, rushing before the rest with a staff, struck the bear in the head such a blow, that he could neither hear nor see, so that awaking from his astonishment, the bear leapt into the river adjoining."