

THE RESULTS OF SOME EXCAVATIONS IN THE STREETS OF IPSWICH.

He said:—"Excavations have been made in Tavern-street, Westgate-street, and St. Matthew's-street, Ipswich, for the purpose of sewerage that part of the town. The trench dug for the sewer pipes went down to the previously undisturbed beds of the lower drift, so that a section could thus be seen of all the materials which had been collected and arranged since the settlement of mankind in this part of the world. In many places the trench was dug to the depth of ten feet. The first feature observed was a bed of virgin soil, covering a stratum of irregular sized pebbles and sand, at the end of Tavern-street, and in front of the Cornhill. This bed of undisturbed soil contained much vegetable matter, and occasional trunks of trees. Passing the Cornhill is the commencement of Westgate-street, and in tracing the bed of virgin soil it was found to undergo a remarkable change. The stratum on which it rested became more clayey and impervious to moisture, so that it was evident a kind of marsh had thus been formed. It should be stated that the progress of all the sewerage excavations is along the base of the high and suddenly rising ground which forms this side of the valley of the Orwell and Gipping. Many springs flowed from along this steep side, and the moisture would naturally collect at the bottom, especially if it happened to be capable of holding it. The virgin soil which covered the drier parts was changed to peaty matter under these circumstances. In some places this peaty soil was five feet in thickness. A "corduroy" road had evidently been carried through this marsh, for the logs of wood were piled on each other in alternate fashion, as if to bridge the marshy places. Near the opening of Providence-street into Westgate-street the section showed this corduroy road very plainly, and I had a piece dug out, when the logs were seen to be secured to each other by wooden pegs. In this part was found a bone-needle and a portion of a comb, also formed of bone. A similar portion had been met with in the virgin soil bed near the Cornhill about a hundred yards lower down. From the ornamentations I judge them to be of rude Saxon workmanship. The black soil was in places abounding in oyster and mussel shells. Bones of animals were also plentiful, especially of swine, deer, sheep, and oxen. In one place the skull of a horse was dug out. The quantity of red deer's antlers (all with burs attached, showing they were the antlers of slain animals) was surprisingly great. Many of these antlers had had the main shaft cut off, no doubt to serve as handles for whittles or knives. The great number of deer give evidence of the wild state of the surrounding country where they abounded. The bed of virgin soil, as well as what I may call its continuation into a bed of muddy peat, contained quantities of rude pottery, all broken into shreds. From the character of this pottery I judge it to be of Saxon workmanship. The bed of peat was very full also of trunks and branches of such trees as love to grow in swampy spots, such as alder, birch, and hazel. Five or six feet of "made" earth, and accretions from road mending overlaid the two beds

just mentioned. From this accumulated and overlaying material I obtained, first, some very broad-headed nails, used for tying waggon wheels, and also pieces of the iron tyres, both indicating that the wheels must have been very large and broad. An iron stirrup turned up, remarkable for its rude workmanship. In the uppermost part of the road material, a steel "strike-a-light" brought us up to the date of tinder-boxes. No coins whatever were met with in the older beds, and only a few of Anne and the Georges in the later road material. After passing the site of the ancient Westgate, on the outer part of it, in St.

Matthew's, we came upon five human skeletons, at a depth of six feet from the surface. The skull of one was broken into, as though its owner had died a violent death. No metal or coins of any kind were associated with these remains. Continuing the sewerage cutting up to the top of St. Matthew's (where for the present it terminates) we find it ascending higher ground. In the section, the place previously occupied by the virgin soil, and the peat bed, was taken by a layer of wiry peat, very dry, of about 18 inches in thickness. This I found to be almost entirely composed of roots and branches of the common heather. The absence of Roman remains is very remarkable. The ancient history of the town of Ipswich, is very poor in incident, and this chapter in its early physical history may in some measure help us to realize its first beginnings as a group of rude huts, inhabited by as rude inhabitants."

THE CHRISTCHURCH MANSION.

Mr. T. N. Fonnereau kindly granted permission to visit the Christchurch (Elizabethan) mansion, and the large party, on leaving the Museum, proceeded thither at 4.30.

The Rev. EVELYN WHITE read from copious notes in the dining hall. He stated that the mansion occupied the site of the old Christchurch or Holy Trinity Priory, established in 1172—one of the earliest monasteries in the town. It was inhabited by Augustine Canons, but was not large. He invited the company to inspect a fine monumental slab, now used as a door-step outside the conservatory, stating that he had very little doubt in his mind that it formerly covered the remains of the founder of the priory and his wife Norman and Langeline, notwithstanding that the slab only dated from the 13th century probably. Tracing the history of the priory, Mr. White said he had been informed by Mr. Fonnereau that the late Mr. Powell Hunt, a local antiquary, stated with much assurance that remains of a Druid temple were found during excavations on the bowling green. Fragments of tessellated pavement had been discovered at the spot where the ice-house now stands, where there was also a covered well, no doubt used by the inmates of the Priory; fragments of ornamental masonry were constantly being turned out, showing clearly that the mansion was largely made up of material which in olden days formed another building. The date of the mansion (1549) was stated in a stone over the chief entrance, and there are several interesting inscriptions of