

motto on a scroll above, “*Dominus Nobis Sol et Scutum*”, by way of informing those who are ignorant of the fact how remarkably zealous Banbury has ever been in all that appertains to orthodox theology. Here is the police-office; but owing to the peaceful character of the people, the magistrates not infrequently assemble on a Monday morning and find that there is not a single case to try. They have a comfortable chat together ... and then take their departure in the proud consciousness that they have satisfactorily discharged an honourable and arduous public duty.

On the ground floor, besides the police office, there are six cells, an office [used as an armoury by the rifle volunteers], a retiring room, and a council chamber, where the meetings alluded to are held, and where summary justice is dispensed by their worships of the county bench once a fortnight in petty sessions. Here, too, the aldermen and common councillors hold their quarterly or special meetings, and discuss those weighty “matters of the law” as to whether the next borough rate shall be threepence-halfpenny or fourpence, and how many buttons and of what sort shall grace the next tunics of the borough constabulary.

Nor must the museum of curiosities be forgotten. These are chiefly of a martial character, and are contained in a glass case at the end of the passage, so that every body who has business at the back door may see them. The museum, it is true, is not very extensive, nor are the relics of antiquity remarkable for their rarity. There are two battered breastplates... the broken fragments of a gigantic bombshell... balls of various sizes... cast in different moulds... a drinking cup... and a fragment of a stone pillar...

Such is the Town Hall and those who use it – judges and criminals, magistrates and thieves, lawyers and clients, policemen and prisoners, talkers, listeners, and short-hand scribblers. It was erected in 1853, at an expense of £5,737; towards which Mr Tancred gave a donation of £500, and Lord Saye and Sele, the High Steward of Banbury, £100. The sale of the corporation estates and funded property realised £4,887, leaving £250 to be taken from the borough general accounts.

[A description of the Borough’s various charters is given.]

On leaving the Town Hall, the visitor may observe a rather elegant looking building on the south side of the street, with half-a-dozen pillars of the Ionic order in front, which if not otherwise informed he might mistake for a theatre. But for a very different purpose was its foundation laid, and the structure was erected with a higher aim. It is a chapel pertaining to the denomination of “Particular Baptists” and was built in 1841 on the site of what was formerly the Altar-stone Inn. The interior is