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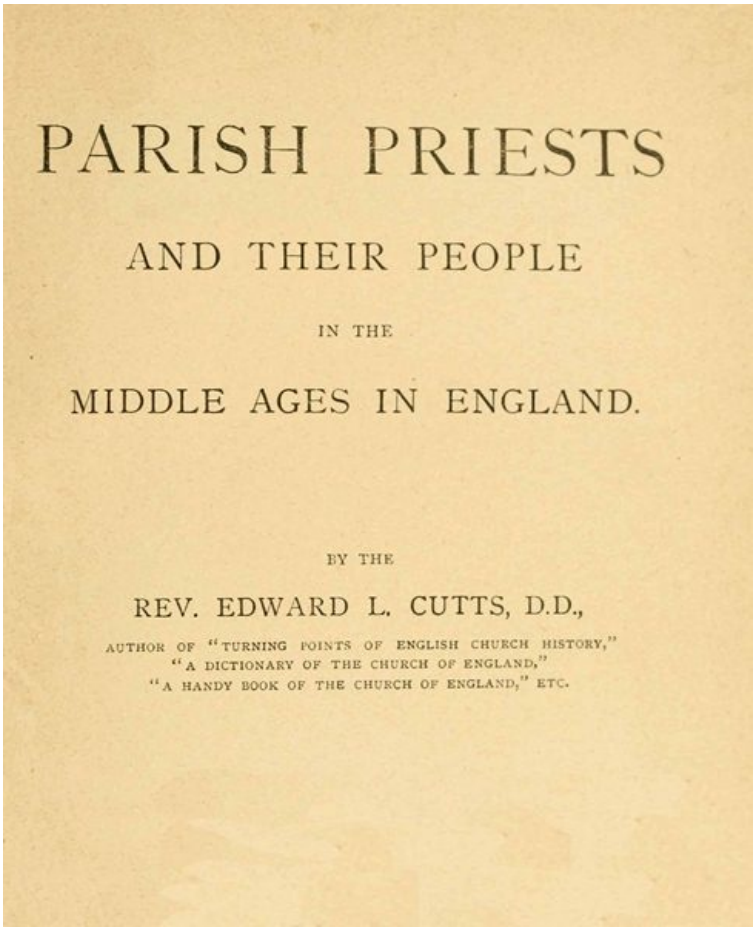
PARISH PRIESTS

AND THEIR PEOPLE

IN THE

MIDDLE AGES IN ENGLAND.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD L. CUTTS, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "TURNING POINTS OF ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY,"
"A DICTIONARY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,"
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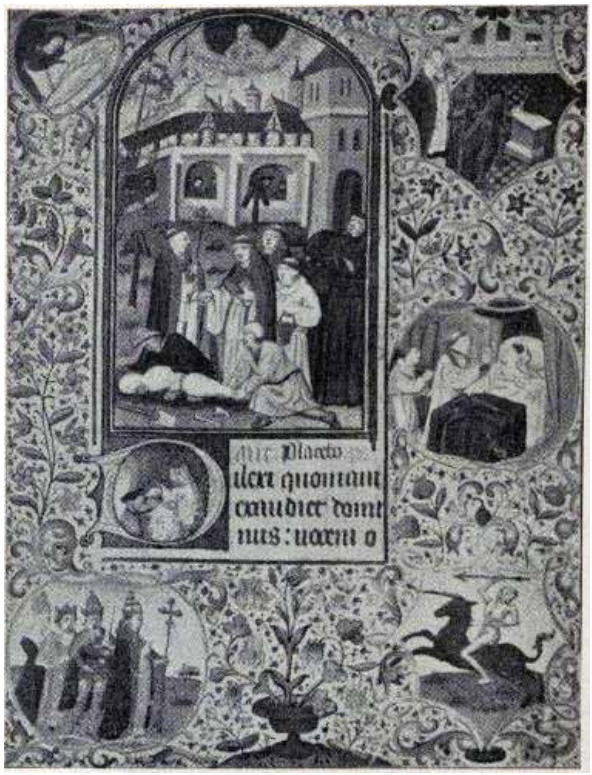

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FROM THE XV. CENT. MS., EGERTON 2019, f. 142.

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PREFACE.

A great mass of material has of late years been brought within reach of the student, bearing upon the history of the religious life and customs of the English people during the period from their conversion, in the sixth and seventh centuries, down to the Reformation of the Church of England in the sixteenth century; but this material is still to be found only in great libraries, and is therefore hardly within reach of the general reader.

The following chapters contain the results of some study of the subject among the treasures of the library of the British Museum; much of those results, it is believed, will be new, and all, it is hoped, useful, to the large number of general readers who happily, in these days, take an intelligent interest in English Church history.

The book might have been made shorter and lighter by giving fewer extracts from the original documents; but much of the history is new, and it seemed desirable to support it by sufficient evidence. The extracts have been, as far as possible, so chosen that each shall give some additional incidental touch to the filling up of the general picture. [Pg vi]

The photographic reproductions of illuminations from MSS. of various dates, illustrating ecclesiastical ceremonies and clerical costumes, are enough in themselves to give a certain value to the book which contains and describes them.

The writer is bound to make grateful acknowledgment of his obligations to the Bishop of Oxford, who, amidst his incessant occupations, was so kind to an old friend as to read through the rough proof of the book, pointing out some *corrigenda*, making some suggestions, and indicating some additional sources of information; all which, while it leaves the book the better for what the bishop has done for it, does not make him responsible for its remaining imperfections.

The writer has also to express his thanks to the Rev. Professor Skeat, Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge, and to the Rev. Dr. Cunningham, formerly Professor of Economic Science, K.C.L., for their kind replies to inquiries on matters on which they are authorities; and to some others who kindly looked over portions of the book dealing with matters of which they have special knowledge.

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DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD — *Frontispiece*

The illustration taken from a French MS. of the middle of the fifteenth century [Egerton 2019, f. 142, British Museum] will reward a careful study. Begin with the two pictures introduced into the broad ornamental border at the bottom of the page. On the left are a pope, an emperor, a king, and queen; on the right Death, on a black horse, hurling his dart at them.

Go on to the initial D of the Psalm *Dilexi quoniam exaudiet Dominus vocem*: "I

am well pleased that the Lord hath heard the voice of my complaint." It represents a canon in surplice and canon's fur hood, giving absolution to a penitent who has been confessing to him (note the pattern of the hanging at the back of the canon's seat). Next consider the picture in the middle of the border on the right. It represents the priest in surplice and stole, with his clerk in albe kneeling behind him and making the responses, administering the last Sacrament to the dying person lying on the bed. Next turn to the picture in the left-hand top corner of a woman in mourning, with an apron tied about her, arranging the grave-clothes about the corpse, and about to envelope it in its shroud. In the opposite corner, three clerks in surplice and cope stand at a lectern singing the Psalms for the departed; the pall which covers the coffin may be indistinctly made out, and the great candlesticks with lighted candles on each side of it. All these scenes lead us up to the principal subject, which is the burial. The scene is a graveyard (note the grave crosses) surrounded by a cloister, entered by a gate tower; the gables, chimneys, and towers of a town are seen over the cloister roof; note the skulls over the cloister arches, as though the space between the groining and the timber roof were used as a charnel house. The priest is asperging the corpse with holy water as the rude sextons lower the body into the grave. Note that it is not enclosed in a coffin—that was not used until comparatively recent times. He is assisted by two other priests, all three vested in surplices and black copes with a red-and-gold border; the clerk holds the holy-water vessel. Three mourners in black cloak and hood stand behind. The story is not yet finished. Above is seen our Lord in an opening through a radiant cloud which sheds its beams of light over the scene; the departed soul [de—parted = separated from the body] is mounting towards its Lord with an attitude and look of rapture; Michael the Archangel is driving back with the spear of the cross the evil angel disappointed of his prey. Lastly, study the beautiful border. Is it fanciful to think that the artist intended the vase of flowers standing upon the green earth as a symbol of resurrection, and the exquisite scrolls and twining foliage and many-coloured blossoms which surround the sad scenes of death, to symbolize the beauty and glory which surround those whom angels shall wait upon in death, and carry them to Paradise?

Gives the Eucharistic vestments of bishop and priest, a priest in cope and others in albes, the altar and its coverings, and two forms of chalice.

Gives the vestments of that period. The man in the group behind the bishop, who is in surplice and hood and "biretta," is probably the archdeacon. Note the one candle on the altar, the bishop's chair, the piscina with its cruet, and the triptych.

He is habited in a red tunic and cap, the clergy in blue tunic and red hose and red tunic and blue hose.

The illustration is taken from a French Pontifical of the 14th century in the British Museum [Tiberius, B. viii.], and represents part of the ceremonial of the anointing and crowning of a king of France. We choose it because it gives in one view several varieties of clerical costume. There was very little difference between French and English vestments, *e.g.* the only French characteristic here is that the bishop's cope is embroidered with fleur-de-lys. On the left of the picture is the king, and behind him officers of state and courtiers. An ecclesiastical procession has met him at the door of the Cathedral of Rheims, and the archbishop, in albe, cope, and mitre, is sprinkling him with holy water; the clerk bearing the holy-water pot, and the cross-bearer, and the thurifer swinging his censer, are immediately behind him. Then come a group of canons. One is clearly shown, and easily recognized by the peculiar horned hood with its fringe of "clocks." Lastly are a group of bishops, the most conspicuous bearing in his hands the ampulla, which contains the holy oil for the anointing.

The photograph fails here as in other cases to give the colours which define the costumes clearly and give brilliancy to the picture. The king's tunic is crimson, and that of the nobleman behind him blue. The archbishop has a cope of blue *semée* with gold fleur-de-lys; the water-bearer, a surplice so

transparent that the red tunic beneath gives it a pink tinge; the cross-bearer, a blue dalmatic lined with red over a surplice; the canon a pink cope over a white surplice, and black hood. The first bishop wears a cope of blue, the second of red, the third of pink. The background is diapered blue and red with a gold pattern. The wall of the building is blue with a gold pattern; the altar-cloth, red and blue with gold embroidery.

The bishop in blue chasuble and white mitre, people in red and blue tunics, two knights in chain armour, late 13th century.

The male sponsor holds the child over the font, while the priest pours water over its head from a shallow vessel. He wears a long full surplice, his stole is yellow *semée* with small crosses and fringed. The parish clerk stands behind him, 15th century.

Here the priest wears an albe apparelled and girded, and an amice, but no stole; the sitting posture of the child occurs in other representations, 14th century.

The bishop wears albe, dalmatic, cope, and mitre, the other clergy surplice and “biretta.”

The ciborium, partly covered with a cloth, as in the illustration, which the priest carries, is silvered in the original illustration, and consequently comes out very imperfectly in the photograph.

Two clerics in surplice hold the housel cloth to catch any of the sacred elements which might accidentally fall.

The priest in furred cope, the rood veiled; the altar has a red frontal. The two men are in blue habit. The woman on the right is all in black; the other, kneeling at a bench on the left, is in red gown and blue hood.

It represents the marriage of the Count Waleran de St. Pol with the sister of Richard, King of England. The count is in a blue robe, the princess in cloth of gold embroidered with green; the groomsman in red, the man behind him in blue, the prince in the background in an ermine cape. The ladies attending the princess wear cloth of gold, blue, green, etc.; the bishop is vested in a light green cope over an apparelled rochet, and a white mitre. The bishop (and in other representations of marriage) takes hold of the wrists of the parties in joining their hands.

The mourners in black cloaks are at the east end of the stalls; the pall over the coffin is red with a gold cross; the hearse has about eighteen lighted tapers; the ecclesiastics seem to be friars in dark brown habit (Franciscans).

The abbot is vested in a gorgeous cope and mitre; one of the monks behind him also wears a cope over his monk’s habit.

References to other pictorial illustrations in MSS. in the British Museum are given in Appendix III., p. 567.

[Pg 1]

PARISH PRIESTS AND THEIR PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

OUR HEATHEN FOREFATHERS.

When we have the pleasure of taking our Colonial visitors on railway journeys across the length and breadth of England, and they see cornfields, meadows, pastures, copses, succeed one another for mile after mile, with frequent villages and country houses, what seems especially to strike and delight them is the thoroughness and finish of the cultivation; England seems to them, they say, like a succession of gardens, or, rather, like one great garden. This is the result, we tell them, of two thousand years of cultivation by an ever-increasing population.

[Pg 2]

On the other hand, we are helped to understand what the land was like at the time of the settlement in it of our Saxon forefathers, by the descriptions which our Colonial friends give us of their surroundings in Australia or Africa, where the general face of the country is still in its primeval state, the settlements of men are dotted sparsely here and there, the flocks and herds roam over “bush” or “veldt,” and only just so much of the land about the settlements is roughly cultivated as suffices the wants of the settlers.

For in England, in those remote times of which we have first to speak, the land was, for the most part, unreclaimed. If we call to mind that the English population about the end of the sixth century could only have been about a million souls—200,000 families—we shall realize how small a portion of the land they could possibly have occupied. A large proportion of the country was still primeval forest, there were extensive tracts of moorland, the low-lying districts were mere and marsh, the mountainous districts wild and desolate. The country harboured wolf and bear, wild cattle and swine, beaver and badger, wild cat, fox, and marten, eagle, hawk, and heron, and other creatures, most of which have entirely disappeared, though some linger on, interesting survivals, in remote corners of the land.

Their possession of the country by the English was the result of recent, slow and desultory conquest. Independent parties of adventurers from the country round about the mouth of the Elbe had crossed the German Ocean in their keels, landed on the coast, or rowed up the rivers, and pushed their way slowly against a tenacious resistance. Then, when a party of the invaders had made good their conquest, came its division among the conquerors.

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Our own history tells us so little of the details of the Anglo-Saxon conquest, that we have to call in what we know of the manners of their Teutonic neighbours and Scandinavian relatives to help us to understand it. The late Sir W. Dasent, in his “Burnt Njal,” says that the Norse Viking, making an invasion with a view not to a mere raid, but to a permanent settlement, would lay claim to the whole valley drained by the river up which he had rowed his victorious keels; or, landing on the coast, would climb some neighbouring height, point out the headlands which he arbitrarily assigned as his boundaries on the coast, and claim all the hinterland which he should be able to subdue. The chief would allot extensive tracts to the subordinate leaders; and the freemen would be settled, after their native custom of village communities, upon the most fertile portions of the soil which their swords had helped to win. In the broad alluvial lands of the river valleys there would be ample space for several neighbouring townships; in forest clearings or fertile dales the townships would be scattered at more or less wide intervals. The unallotted lands belonged to the general community; it was Folk land, and its allotment from time to time, probably, in theory needed confirmation by a Folk-mote, but was practically made by the supreme chief.

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Every township possessed a tract of arable land, which was divided by lot yearly among the families of the freemen; a tract of meadow, which was reserved for hay, cultivated and harvested by the common labour; a wide expanse of pasture, into which each family had the

right to turn a fixed number of cattle and sheep; and into the forest, a fixed number of swine to feed on the acorns, mast, and roots.[1] The people were rude agriculturists, not manufacturers, not traders, not civilized enough to profit by the civilization which the Romans had established in the country; they stormed and sacked the towns, and left them deserted, and selected only the most fertile spots for occupation.

It is a subject of dispute among our most learned historians to what extent the native Britons were slain or retired before the invaders, or to what extent they were taken as captives, or reappeared from their fastnesses after the slaughter was over, to be the slaves of the conquerors. When we first get glimpses of the situation of things after the conquest, we find that the British language and religion have disappeared from the Saxon half of the country; and this implies the disappearance of the great body of the people. The fact of the continuance of some ancient place-names, chiefly of great natural features, as hills and rivers, and of a few British words for things for which the Teutons had no names, would be sufficiently accounted for by the survival of a very small remnant.

In their native seats the social condition of these Angle and Saxon freemen was patriarchal and primitive; they venerated their chiefs as Woden-born; they elected one of them as their leader in battle; but they did not obey them as their subjects. On questions of general importance the chiefs and wise men advised the Folk-mote, and the people said “Aye” or “No.” But their circumstances in their new conquests led to changes. It was necessary to maintain some sort of permanent military organization not only for the defence of their new possessions, and the extension of their conquests against the old inhabitants of the island, but also against the encroachments of rival tribes of their own countrymen. And a supreme chief, to whom all paid a kind of religious veneration, who exercised permanent military authority over lesser chiefs and people, soon became a king; limited, however, in power by the ancient institutions of the Council of the wise men, and the assent or dissent of the Folk-mote. [Pg 5]

The several parties of invaders gradually extended their conquests until they met, and then made treaties or fought battles with one another, until, finally, by the end of the sixth century, they had organized themselves into seven independent kingdoms.

The freemen of each Township managed their own affairs in a town meeting; a number of neighbouring townships were grouped into what was called by the Saxons south of the Humber a Hundred, by the Angles north of the Humber a Wapentake; and each township sent four or five of its freemen to represent it in the Hundred-mote every three months. [Pg 6] Three times a year, in summer, autumn, and midwinter, a general meeting of the freemen was held—a Folk-mote—at some central place; to which every township was required to send so many footmen armed with sword, spear, and shield, and so many horsemen properly equipped. At these Folk-motes affairs of general interest were determined, justice was administered by the chief and priests,[2] and probably it was at these meetings that the great acts of national worship were celebrated. Except for these periodical meetings, the scattered townships existed in great isolation. A striking illustration of this isolation is afforded by laws of Wihtred of Kent and of Ine of the West Saxons, which enact—or perhaps merely record an ancient unwritten law—that if any stranger approached a township off the highway without shouting or sounding a horn to announce his coming, he might be slain as a thief, and his relatives have no redress. A subsequent law of Edgar[3] enacts that if he have with him an ox or a dog, with a bell hanging to his neck, and sounding at every step, that should be taken as sufficient warning, otherwise he must sound his horn. The local exclusiveness produced by this isolation, the suspicion and dislike of strangers, survive to this day in secluded villages in the wilder parts of the country.

These Teutonic tribes were heathen at the time of their coming into the land. Of their religion and its observances our own historians have given no detailed account, and few incidental notices. Our names for the days of the week, Sun-day, Moon-day, Tuisco’s-day, Woden’s-day, Thor’s-day, Frya’s-day, Saeter’s-day, make it certain that our Anglo-Saxon ancestors worshipped the same gods as their Scandinavian neighbours, and probable that their religion as a whole was similar. Their supreme god was Odin or Woden, with whom were associated the twelve Æsir and their goddess-wives, and a multitude of other supernatural beings. In their belief in an All-father, superior to all the gods and goddesses—we recognize a relic of an earlier monotheism. They had structural temples, and in connection with their temples they had idols, priests, altars, and sacrifices. They believed in the immortality of the soul, in an intermediate state, and a final heaven and hell. The souls of the brave and good, they believed, went to Asgard, the abode of the Æsir; there the warriors all day enjoyed the fierce delight of combat, and in the evening all their wounds healed, and they spent the night in feasting in Valhalla, the hall of the gods; the wicked went to Niflheim, a place of pain and terror. But the time would come when the earth, and sun, and stars, and Valhalla, and the gods, and giants, and elves, should be consumed in a great and general conflagration, and then Gimli and Nastrond, the eternal heaven and hell, should be revealed. Gimli—a new earth adorned with green meadows, where the fields bring forth without culture, and calamities are unknown; where there is a palace more shining than the [Pg 8] sun, and where religious and well-minded men shall abide for ever; Nastrond—a place full of serpents who vomit forth venom, in which shall wade evil men and women, and murderers [Pg 7]

and adulterers.

A knowledge of their religious customs would help us to judge what hindrance they opposed to the reception of the system of the Christian Church; or, on the other hand, what facilities they offered for the substitution of one for the other; but it is only from the assumption that the religious customs of our English ancestors were similar to those of the Norsemen that we are able to form to ourselves any conception on the subject.

In Iceland, conformably to the constitution of its government, each several district (the island was divided into four districts) had its priest who not only presided over the religious rites of the people, but also directed the deliberations of the people when their laws were made, and presided over the administration of justice (Neander, "Church Hist.," v. 418).

Sir W. Dasent says that after the Norse conqueror had marked out his boundaries and settled his people on their holdings, and chosen a site for his own rude timber hall, he erected in its neighbourhood a temple in which his followers might worship the gods of their forefathers, and that this was one means of maintaining their habitual attachment to his leadership.[4] The evidence leads to the conclusion that both Scandinavians and Teutons had very few structural temples, perhaps only one to each tribe or nation; and perhaps only [Pg 9] three great annual occasions of tribal or national worship. We get a glimpse of one of these structural temples in the story of the conversion of Norway.[5] The great temple at Mære, in the Drontheim district, contained wooden images of the gods; the people assembled there thrice a year at midwinter, spring, and harvest; the people feasted on horseflesh slain in sacrifice, and wine blessed in the name and in honour of the gods; and human victims were sometimes offered.

The English townships, generally, it is probable, had no structural temples, but sacred places of resort, as an open space in the forest, or a hilltop, or a striking mass of rock, or a notable tree or well. The religious observances at such places would probably not be a regular worship of the gods, but such superstitions as the passing of children through clefts in rocks and trees, dropping pins into wells, and others; these superstitions survived for centuries, for they are forbidden by a law of Canute,[6] and one of them, the consultation of [Pg 10] wells, so late as by a canon of Archbishop Anselm;[7] and, in spite of laws, and canons, and civilization, and a thousand years of Christianity, some of them survive among the peasantry of remote districts to this very day.

In the "Ecclesiastical History" of Bede, we find notices of only three structural heathen temples in England. The first is that at Godmundingham, which Coifi, the chief of the king's priests, with the assent of King Edwin and his counsellors and thanes, defiled and destroyed on the acceptance of Christianity at the preaching of Paulinus. Of this we read that it had a *fanum*, enclosed with *septis*, which contained *idola* and *aras*;[8] and since the temple was set on fire and thus destroyed, it seems likely that the fanum was of timber. The second temple named is the building east of Canterbury, in which King Ethelbert was accustomed to worship while yet a heathen, which, on the king's conversion, was consecrated as a church and dedicated to St. Pancras, and was soon afterwards incorporated into the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul built on the site. This was probably a stone building, and recent researches have brought to light what are possibly remains of it. The third temple is that in which Redwald, King of the East Anglians, after his conversion at the Court of Ethelbert, [Pg 11] worshipped Christ at one altar, while his queen continued the old heathen worship at another altar in the same building. It will be observed that all these were the temples of kings, and this accords with the supposition that such structural temples existed only in the chief places for worship of tribes and nations; just as the twelve tribes of Israel had only one great national temple, while they had numerous altars on the "high places" all over the country.[9]

Again, there is a remarkable absence all through the history of any mention of, or allusion to, the existence of a priesthood ministering among the people. The only priest clearly mentioned is the worldly-minded Coifi spoken of above, but as he is mentioned as "the chief of the king's priests," we assume that there was a staff of them, probably attached to the [Pg 12] king's temple at Godmundingham. We suppose that Ethelbert of Kent, and Redwald of East Anglia, would also have a priest or priests attached to their temples; but we find no trace or indication of any others.

This all tends to confirm our belief that there were few structural temples, one for each kingdom, or perhaps one for each of the great tribes which had coalesced into a kingdom; and that the priests were only a small staff attached to each of these temples; while all the rest of the temples were open-air places to which the neighbouring inhabitants resorted for minor observances, without the assistance of any formal priesthood.

Another possible source of information on the subject is the ancient place-names. Godmundingham naturally invites consideration, and looks promising at first sight; but analyzed and interpreted it means the home of the sons of Godmund, and Godmund merely means "protection of God" as a *name*.[10]

The Saxon word Hearh[11] means either a temple or an idol.[12] Hearga is the word by which the *fanum* at Godmundingham and Redwald's *fanum* is translated in Alfred's version of Bede. It seems possible that this word may be the root of such place-names as Harrow-on- [Pg 13] the-Hill, Harrowgate, Yorks, and Harrowden, Northants. Such place-names as Wednesbury,

Wedensfield, Satterthwaite, Satterleigh, Baldersby, Balderstone, Bulderton, and those of which Thor or Thur is the first syllable, may possibly indicate places where a temple or an idol or well has existed of Woden, or Saeter, or Baldur, or Thor; as Thrus Kell (Thor's Well) in Craven.[13]

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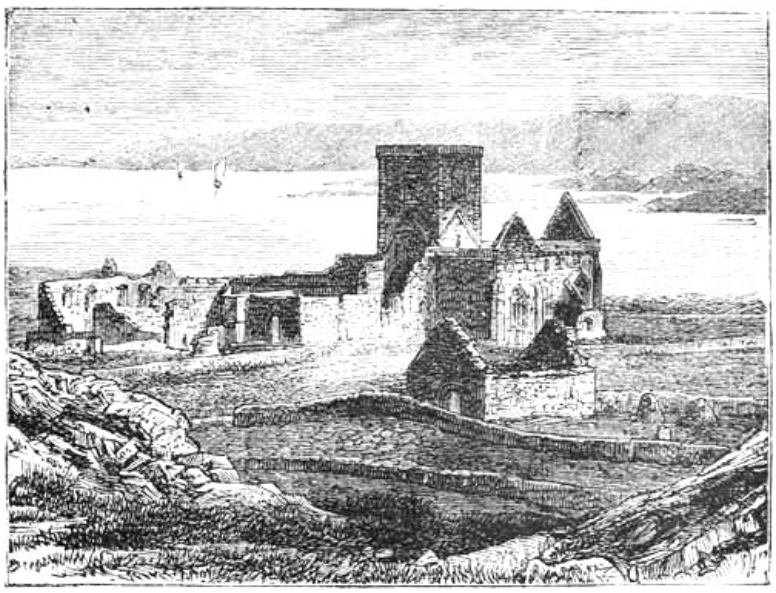
CHAPTER II.

THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH.

The history of the conversion of our heathen forefathers has happily been told so often in recent times that it is not necessary to repeat it here. It is sufficient for our purpose to recall to mind how when Augustine and his Italian company came to Kent, they addressed themselves to King Ethelbert, who had married a Christian princess of the House of Clovis, and were permitted by him to settle and preach in his kingdom; how King Oswald, on his recovery of his ancestral kingdom of Northumbria, sent to the Fathers of Iona, among whom he had learnt Christianity during his exile, for missionaries to convert his people; how Sigebert, King of the East Saxons, and Peada, sub-King of the Middle Angles in Mercia, obtained missionaries from Northumbria; how Sigebert, King of the East Angles, invited Bishop Felix to give to his people the religion and civilization which he had learnt in exile in Burgundy; how the Italian Bishop Birinus came to the Court of King Cynegils, and converted him, and taught among the men of Wessex; and, finally, how Wilfrid of York began the conversion of the South Saxons.

[Pg 15]



In the Apostolic Age, the conversion of people in a condition of ancient civilization began among the lower classes of the people, and ascended slowly man by man through the higher classes, and it was three hundred years before the conversion of the Emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the empire. In the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, the work began in every case with the kings and the higher classes of the people; and the people under their leadership abandoned their old religion and accepted Christianity as the national religion, and put themselves under the teaching of the missionaries, as a general measure of national policy. [Pg 16]

The explanation of this probably is that their Teutonic kinsmen, Goths, Burgundians, and Franks, who had carved for themselves kingdoms out of the body of the Roman empire, having accepted the religion and the civilization of the people they had conquered, were growing rapidly in prosperity and the arts of civilized life. Christianity was the religion of the new Teutonic civilization, and heathenism was a part of the old state of barbarism. The Angles and Saxons, when they fastened upon this derelict province of the empire, were too barbarous to appreciate civilization, and destroyed it; but by the time that they had been settled for some generations in their new seats they had outgrown their old wild heathenism; and their kings had become sufficiently politic to desire to learn how to raise the new kingdoms which they governed to an equality with those of the kindred Continental nations. Hence, some of the heptarchic kings sought for Christian teachers to help them, and others were willing to receive them when they offered themselves.

Our previous study of the organization, religion, and customs of the people will help us to understand the process of the revolution. The kings, when converted, put the matter before the constitutional council of chiefs and wise men, and with their assent, and perhaps after a reference of the question to a folk-mote, formally adopted the new religion. The history which Bede gives of the first acceptance of Christianity in Northumbria, under the teaching of Paulinus, affords a profoundly interesting example of the process—the long hesitation of the king, the discussion in the witan, the general acceptance of the new faith, the zeal of the chief priest in destroying the national temple, the flocking of the people to the preaching of Paulinus, and their baptism in multitudes in the neighbouring rivers. [Pg 17]

In no instance were the missionaries persecuted; in no instance did the kings coerce their people into the acceptance of the new religion.[14] In such a wholesale transition from one religion to another, it is not surprising that there occurred partial and temporary relapses, as in Kent and Essex, on the death of King Ethelbert, 616, in Wessex on the death of Cynegils, 643, and again in Essex, after the plague of 664; still less surprising that old superstitions retained their hold of the minds of a rude and ignorant people for centuries.[15]

If we are right in our conjectures that every kingdom had a national temple at the principal residence of the king with a small staff of priests, and a few smaller temples with their priests under the patronage of some of the subordinate chiefs, and that these temples were resorted to by the people for special acts of common worship at the great festivals three or four times in the course of the year, then it would not be difficult for the new religion to supply to the people all that they had been accustomed to of religious observances. Churches on the sites of the old temples, with their clergy, and services on the great festivals of the Christian year, would satisfy the customs of the people; and, in fact, the circumstances of the Christian missionaries led in the first instance to arrangements of this nature. [Pg 18 & 19] [Pg 20]

In every kingdom the king, who had been the patron of the old religion, took the new teachers under his protection, and made provision for their maintenance by the donation of an estate in land with farmers and slaves upon it; thus Ethelbert gave to Augustine a church and house in Canterbury, and land outside the city for a site for his monastery, and estates at Reculver and elsewhere for maintenance; Oswald gave to Aidan the isle of Lindisfarne, under the shadow of his principal residence at Bamborough; Ethelwalch gave Wilfred eighty-seven hides at Selsey, and Wilfrid began his work, as probably the other missionary bishops did, by emancipating his slaves and baptizing them; Cynegils, on his baptism, gave Birinus lands round Winchester, and his son Coinwalch endowed the church there with three manors; a little later, Wulfhere of Mercia gave Chad a wild tract of a hundred thousand acres between Lichfield and Ecclesfield. This was the “establishment” and beginning of the “endowment” of the Church in England.

The bishop in every kingdom first built a church and set up Divine service, then simultaneously set up a school, and invited the king and chiefs to send their sons to be educated. Aidan took twelve youths of noble birth as his pupils, and added slaves whom he purchased. The young men of noble families showed themselves eager to avail themselves of the teaching and training of the missionaries, and readily offered themselves to training for Holy Orders. The ladies at first, before there were monasteries for women in England, went to the monasteries at Brie and Chelles near Paris, and at Andelys near Rouen, which were under the government of members of the Frankish royal families. From his central station the bishop went out and sent his priests on missionary journeys to the neighbouring townships, to teach and baptize. [Pg 21]

We know that all the first missionary bishops, except Felix and Birinus, and perhaps they also, and most of their clergy, had been trained in the monastic life of that time, so that it was natural to them to live in community, under the rule of a superior, a very simple and regular life, with frequent offices of prayer, and duties carefully defined, and scrupulously fulfilled; a beautiful object-lesson on the Christian life for the study of the king and his household, and the people round about the bishop's town.

Bede gives some interesting stories which illustrate this early phase of the English conversion. He tells us how Paulinus preached all day long to the people at Yeverin and Catterick[16] in Northumbria, and at Southwell[17] in Lindsey, and baptized the people by hundreds in the neighbouring rivers. He tells us how Aidan preached to Oswald's Court and [Pg 22]
people, and the King interpreted for him;[18] how Aidan travelled through the country on foot, accompanied by a group of monks and laymen, meditating on the scriptures, or singing psalms as they went;[19] not that he needed to travel on foot, for King Oswin had given him a fine horse which he might use in crossing rivers, or upon any urgent necessity; but a short time after, a poor man meeting him, and asking alms, the good bishop bestowed upon him the horse with its royal trappings.[20] We learn from the same authority that the company which attended a missionary bishop in his progress through the country were not always singing psalms as they went. Herebald, a pupil of St. John of Beverley, relates how one day as that bishop and his clergy and pupils were journeying, they came to a piece of open ground well adapted for galloping their horses, and the young men importuned the bishop for permission to try their speed, which he reluctantly granted; and so they ran races till Herebald was thrown, and, striking his head against a stone, lay insensible; whereupon they pitched a tent over him.[21]

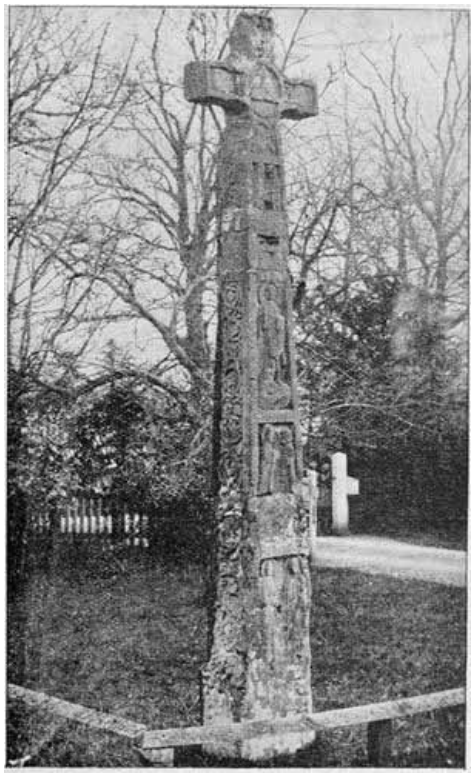
An "interior" picture is afforded by a sentence in the life of Boniface,[22] who was afterwards to be the Apostle of Germany. When the itinerant teachers used to come to the township in [Pg 23]
which Winfrid's father was the principal proprietor, they were hospitably entertained at his father's house; and the child would presently talk with them as well as he could, at such an early age (six or seven years), about heavenly things, and inquire what might hereafter profit himself and his weakness (A.D. 680).

Finally Bede sums up the work of this period. "The religious habit was at that period in great veneration; so that wheresoever any clergyman or monk happened to come, he was joyfully received by all persons as God's servant; and if they chanced to meet him on the way, they ran to him, and, bowing, were glad to be signed with his hand, or blessed with his mouth. On Sundays they flocked eagerly to the Church or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants flocked together to hear the word of life; for the priests and clergymen went into the village on no other account than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in short, to take care of souls."[23]

So Cuthbert, a little later, not only afforded counsels and an example of regular life to his monastery, "but often went out of the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and repaired to the neighbouring towns, where he preached the way to such as were gone astray; which had been also done by his predecessor Boisil in his time. He was wont chiefly to visit the villages seated high among the rocky uncouth mountains, whose poverty and barbarity made them inaccessible to other teachers. He would sometimes stay away [Pg 24]
from the monastery one, two, three weeks, and even a whole month among the mountains, to allure the rustic people by his eloquent preaching to heavenly employments."[24]

It seems likely that the itinerating missionaries, on arriving at a township, would seek out the chief man, first to ask hospitality from him, and next to engage his interest with the people to assemble together at some convenient place to hear his preaching. When the people were converted, he would make arrangements for periodical visits to them for Divine service, and the "convenient place" would become their outdoor church; and there is good reason to believe that in many cases a cross of stone or wood, whichever was the most accessible material, was erected to mark and hallow the place.[25]

Even after a priest was permanently settled, and a church built at the ville of the lord of the land, the scattered hamlets on the estate would still, perhaps for centuries, have only open-air stations for prayer. It is very possible that some of these were the places where the [Pg 25]
people, while unconverted, had been used to assemble for their ancient religious ceremonies.



Saxon Cross at Ruthwell, c. 680 A.D.
(For its history and description, see “Theodore and Wilfrid,” by the Bishop of Bristol.)

Some of the Saxon churchyard crosses which still remain, as at Whalley, Bakewell, Eyam, etc., possibly were station crosses. Possibly the well which exists in some churches and churchyards, and the yew tree of vast antiquity found in many churchyards, would carry us back, if we knew their story, to pre-Christian times and heathen ceremonials. [Pg 26]

Churchyard Cross, Eyam, Derbyshire.

In time a church or chapel was built in this accustomed place of assembly, as we shall find in a later chapter. But here we have to throw out a conjecture as to an intermediate state of things between the open-air station and the structural church. We have before us the curious fact that usually the rector of a church is liable for the repair of the chancel, and the people for the repair of the nave. This seems to point to the fact that the forerunner of the rector built the first chancel, and left the people to build the nave; and we suggest the following explanation; at first in the worship of these stations, a temporary table was placed on trestles, and a “portable altar” upon that, and so the holy mysteries were celebrated. But in rainy weather this was inconvenient and unseemly; and the rector of the parish provided [Pg 27] a kind of little chapel for the protection of the altar and ministrant; indeed, there is an ancient foreign canon which requires rectors to do so. Then the parishioners, for their own

shelter from the weather, built a nave on to the chancel, communicating with it by an arch through which the congregation could conveniently see and hear the service.

Base of Acca's Cross, c. 740 A.D., from
"Theodore and Wilfrid," by the Bishop of Bristol. S.P.C.K.

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CHAPTER III.

THE MONASTIC PHASE OF THE CHURCH.

We have seen how the bishops who introduced the Christian Faith into the heptarchic kingdoms established themselves and their clergy as religious communities, on the lands, and with the means which the kings gave them, built their churches and schools, and made them the centres of their evangelizing work. The next stage in the work was the multiplication of similar centres. The princes and ealdormen who were in subordinate authority over subdivisions of a kingdom would have two motives for desiring to have such establishments beside them. First they had very likely in some cases been the patrons of a temple or an idol, and a priest, near their principal residence, and would desire to maintain their influence over their dependents and neighbours by keeping up a similar place of religious worship for them. Secondly, as enlightened men and zealous converts, they would be glad to have near them some of these new teachers of religion and civilization, and to establish one of these centres of light and [Pg 29] leading to the neighbouring country. The bishops also obtained grants of land from the king in suitable places, in order to found on them new centres of evangelization.

Thus in Kent, Ethelbert founded the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul, which is better known to us as St. Augustine's (A.D. 603), and his son Eadbald founded an offshoot from it at Dover (630). In 633 the latter king founded a nunnery at Folkestone as a provision for his daughter Eanswitha, who became its first abbess. And when, in the same year, his sister Ethelburga arrived as a refugee from Northumbria, he made provision for her by the gift of an estate at Lyminge, where the widowed queen founded a monastery. On the death of Earconbert, 664,

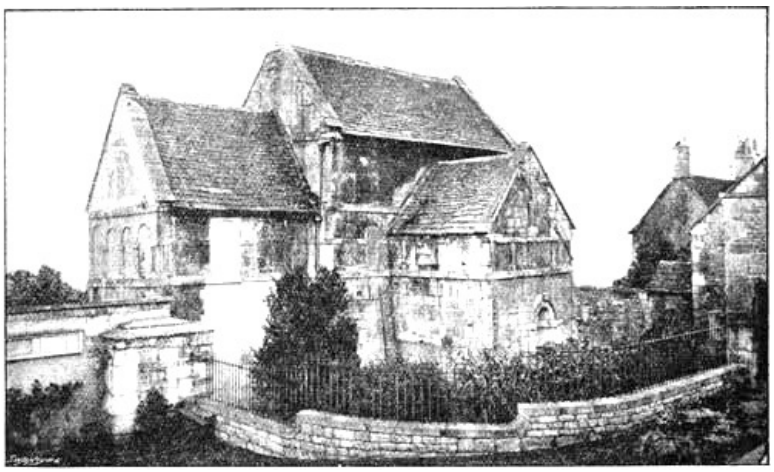
Sexburga, his widow, built for herself a nunnery in the Isle of Sheppy. Sexburga was succeeded at Sheppy by her daughter Eormenhilda, and she by her daughter Werburga. Eormenburga, granddaughter of King Eadbald, built a nunnery, of which she was the first abbess, in the Isle of Thanet; and was succeeded by her daughter St. Mildred. Lastly, King Egbert, in 669, gave Reculver to his mass-priest, Bass, that he might build a minster thereon.

In Northumbria, King Edwin built a church at York. Oswald gave Aidan the Isle of Lindisfarne as the site of a religious house to be a centre of missionary work in Northumbria. Aidan encouraged Hieu, the first nun of the Northumbrian race, to organize a [Pg 30] small nunnery on the north bank of the Wear, and to remove thence to Hartlepool; there she was succeeded by Hilda, the grand-niece of King Edwin, who subsequently removed to Whitby. Besides organizing that famous double house, Hilda founded Hackness and several other cells on estates of the abbey. The nunnery at Coldingham was founded by Ebba, sister of King Oswald, who was herself the first abbess. King Oswy, on the eve of battle with Penda (655), vowed, in case of victory, to dedicate his infant daughter Elfleda to God, and to give twelve estates to build monasteries. In fulfilment of his vow, he gave Elfleda into the charge of Hilda, at Hartlepool (655), and gave six estates in Bernicia and six in Deira, each of ten families (= hides of land), of which probably Whitby was one, and perhaps Ripon and Hexham were others. Benedict Biscop, a man of noble if not royal descent, received grants of land from King Egfrid to found his famous monastery at Wearmouth in 674, and eleven years later (685) at Jarrow. King Oswy built a monastery at Gilling to atone for the crime of the slaughter of his brother there (642), that prayer might be daily offered up for the souls of both the slain and the slayer. King Ethelwald, son of Oswald and sub-king of Deira, gave Bishop Cedd of the East Saxons a site for a monastery at Lastingham, Yorkshire, that he might himself sometimes resort to it for prayer, and might be buried there. Cedd left the monastery, on his death, to his brother Chadd, afterwards Bishop of Lichfield. Wulfhere, [Pg 31] King of Mercia, gave Chadd fifty hides of land for the endowment of his abbey at Barton-on-Humber.

In the fen country of the Girvii, between Mercia and East Anglia, the two kings, Peada of Mercia, and Oswy of the East Angles, concurred in the foundation of a monastery at Medeshamsted (Peterborough, 655), and this was followed by the foundation of Croyland (716) and Thorney (682). When Etheldreda, the daughter of Anna, King of the East Angles, and virgin wife of Egfrid of Northumbria, at length obtained her husband's leave to enter upon the religious life, she built herself a double monastery on her own estate in the Isle of Ely (673). On her death, she was succeeded as abbess by her sisters Sexburga, Eormenhilda and Werburga, each of whom had previously been abbesses at Sheppy.

Among the West Saxons, a small community of Irish monks, at Malmesbury (675), was enlarged by Aldhelm, a man of royal extraction, into a great centre of religion and learning; and he and Bishop Daniel founded a number of small monasteries, as Nutcelle (700) and Bradfield, up and down that kingdom.[26]

[Pg 32]



Saxon Church at Bradford-on-Avon.
(Probably one of Bishop Aldhelm's churches.)

The four priests whom Peada, the son of Penda, on his conversion, took back with him from Northumbria to his Princedom of the Middle Angles, lived together in community for some years, till, by the death of Penda, his son attained the Kingship of Mercia, and then Diuma [Pg 33] was consecrated Bishop of the Mercians, and established his see at Lichfield. Earconwald (who was afterwards Bishop of London, 674), a man of noble birth, built a monastery for himself at Chertsey in Surrey, and a nunnery at Barking in Essex, for his sister Ethelberga. "The vales of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire were famous for the multitude and grandeur of their monastic institutions." A monastic cell is said to have been founded at Tewkesbury in 675, and one at Deerhurst, by Ethelmund the ealdorman, at a still earlier

date. Osric, the Prince of Wiccii, was probably the founder of St. Peter's Nunnery, Gloucester, and of Bath Abbey. Apparently his brother Oswald founded Pershore Abbey; and their sister Cyneburga was the first Abbess of Gloucester. Saxulph, Bishop of Lichfield, founded a little religious house of St. Peter, at Worcester, which became the see of the first Bishop of Worcester, when that diocese was founded by Archbishop Theodore (680). Egwine, Bishop of Worcester, founded a monastery at Evesham (702), and laying down his bishopric, retired thither to spend the remainder of his life as its abbot.[27]

The following names will nearly complete the list of religious houses up to the end of the eighth century: Abingdon, 675; Acle, seventh century; Amesbury, 600; Bardney, seventh century; Bedrichsworth (St. Edmunds), 630; Bosham, 681; Bredon, 761; Caistor, 650; Carlisle, 686; Clive, 790; Cnobheresbury (Burgh Castle), 637; Congresbury, 474; Dacor, seventh century; Derauuda, 714; Dereham, 650; Finchale, seventh century; Fladbury, 691; Gateshead, seventh century; Glastonbury, fifth century; Ikanho (Boston), 654; Ithanacester, 630; Kempsey, 799; Kidderminster, 736; Leominster, 660; Oundle, 711; Oxford St. Frideswide, 735; Partney, seventh century; Petrocstow, sixth century; Peykirk, eighth century; Redbridge, Hants. (Hreutford), 680; Repton, 660; Rochester, 600; St. Albans, 793; York St. Mary's, 732; Selsey, 681; Sherborne, 671; Stamford, 658; Stone, Staff., 670; Stratford-on-Avon, 703; Tetbury, 680; Tilbury, 630; Tinmouth, 633; Walton, Yorks., 686; Wedon, 680; Wenloch, 680; Westminster, 604; Wilton, 773; Wimborne, 713; Winchcombe, 787; Winchester, 646; Withington, seventh century.[28] [Pg 34]

The fashion of founding religious houses spread among the smaller landowners, and some begged land of the king on which to found them.

Some of these religious houses were great and solemn monasteries, like those of Italy and France, with noble churches and frequent services; and their inmates lived a secluded life, devoted to learning, meditation, and prayer. St. Augustine's monastery at Canterbury was the earliest of them. Benedict Biscop's monasteries at Wearmouth and Jarrow, and Wilfrid's at Ripon and Hexham, and others, were of this type. [Pg 35]

The life of these greater monasteries was led according to a strict and ascetic rule. St. Augustine would certainly adopt at Canterbury the rule which his master, Gregory, had drawn up for his own house of St. Andrew on the Cœlian Hill. Benedict Biscop built his houses and framed his rule after repeated visits to Italy and France and a careful study of the most famous of their religious communities; Wilfrid would certainly introduce a similar rule into the monasteries over which he presided; these would follow the main lines of the Benedictine rule; though that, in its entirety, was not introduced till the reformation of the monasteries in the time of King Egbert and Archbishop Dunstan. The monastery at Lindisfarne would naturally follow the customs of Iona and the less rigid life of the Scottish religious houses; and is to be regarded rather as a citadel of Christian learning, and a centre of evangelization, than as a place devoted to seclusion and contemplation. The other religious houses which owed their existence to the missionaries from Lindisfarne would be likely to follow its customs.

Some of the smaller religious houses were conducted on the same lines of strict ascetic discipline as the greater monasteries; but in many of them the life was little more "regular" or ascetic than that of an ordinary household—say that of a church dignitary—scrupulous in the attendance of all its members at the daily services in the oratory, and in the strict decorum of their daily life. This opened an easy door to abuse, and in a short time the discipline of many of the monasteries had become very lax. [Pg 36]

One remarkable feature of these early monasteries is that many of them were hereditary properties, and the rule over them often descended from father to son and from mother to daughter. We have seen the successions in the Kentish monasteries and at Ely from sister to sister and from mother to daughter. Cedd bequeathed his monastery of Lastingham to his brother Chad. Benedict Biscop saw the danger of the custom, and declared that he would not transfer his monasteries to his own brother unless he was a fit person to be abbot. Whitgils built a small church and monastery at Spurnhead in Holderness, and left them to his heirs; they came at last, by legitimate succession, to no less distinguished a person than Alcuin; who was, therefore, not only Abbot of Tours, with its vast territory on which there were 200,000 serfs, but also of this little monastery in his native country. Hedda, who styles himself mass-priest, in 790 bequeathed his patrimonial inheritance, consisting of two large parcels of land, with a minster on one of them, limiting the succession of the latter to clergymen of his family considered capable of ruling a minster according to ecclesiastical law, and in default of such heir, it was to go to Worcester Cathedral, where he had been bred and schooled ("Cod. Dipl.," i. 206).[29]

It is easy to understand how it was that in process of time many of these semi-secular religious houses passed easily into the status of parochial rectories; and, on the other hand, how a rectory, which often had a number of chaplains and clerks to assist the rector in [Pg 37]

ministering to the mother church and its outlying chapels, came to be called a “minster.”

In the Danish invasions and occupations, most of these religious houses were plundered and ruined, the greater houses were not at once reoccupied on the restoration of order, and most of the smaller houses disappeared.

In the course of the revival of religion in the reign of Edgar under the influence of Dunstan, it was the boast of the king and his ecclesiastical advisers that they had restored not less than forty of the old monasteries, and brought them to the discipline of the Benedictine rule. A few monasteries were restored or founded after that time, notably by Canute at Bury St. Edmunds, and at Hulme in Norfolk, and by Edward the Confessor at Westminster; but at the time of the Conquest there were probably not more than about fifty monasteries in the country of any account; and in the latter part of the period the monastic zeal of Dunstan’s revival had cooled down to a level of average religiousness.

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CHAPTER IV.

DIOCESAN AND PAROCHIAL ORGANIZATION.

The English Conversion forms a remarkable chapter in the general history of Christian missions; the piety, simplicity, zeal, and unselfishness of the missionaries are beyond praise; not less remarkable is the earnestness with which the English embraced the new faith and the civilization which came together with it. The fact bears witness to the intellectual and moral qualities of the people that in the very first generation of converts there were men of learning and character like Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop, like the pupils of Hilda of Whitby, like Ithamar and Deusdedit in Kent, worthy of taking place among the bishops and abbots of their time.

The royal and noble ladies who played so important a part, in the influence they exercised in affairs, or in the foundation and rule of religious houses which trained bishops and priests, present a spectacle, almost unparalleled in history, of which their descendants may well be proud.

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The English kings and nobles put themselves frankly under the guidance of their teachers not only in religion and literature, but in the arts of civilization. The three codes of law which have remained to us—the first written laws of the English race—carry proof on the face of them that they were compiled under the influence of the Christian teachers. The princes sought their counsel in the Witenagemot, and put them beside the secular judges in the administration of justice at the hundred and folk motes. “In a single century England became known to Christendom as a fountain of light, as a land of learned men, of devout and unwearied missions, of strong, rich, and pious kings.”[30]

By the third quarter of the seventh century the first fervour of the English conversion had cooled down, and circumstances produced a kind of crisis. One of those plagues which at intervals ravaged mediæval Europe—it was called the Yellow Pest—during the summer of 664 swept over England from south to north. Earconbert, King of Kent, and Deusdedit, the first native bishop of the Kentish men, died on the same day; Damian, Bishop of Rochester, probably died a little before his brother of Canterbury. In the north, Tuda, recently appointed Bishop of Northumbria, died, and Cedd, Bishop of the East Saxons, then staying at his monastery of Lastingham. The half of the East Saxons who were under the rule of the sub-king Sighere, thinking the pest a result of the anger of the ancient gods, apostatized from the faith. The differences between the two “schools of thought,” the Continental in the south of the country, and the Scotic in the north, were causing friction and inconvenience, so much so that the bishops elect of the Continental school hesitated to receive consecration from the bishops of the Celtic school; Wilfrid of York had at this very time gone to seek consecration from the Frankish bishops. In this crisis, Oswy, King of Northumbria, agreed with Egbert, who succeeded Earconbert in Kent, to send a priest acceptable to both schools to Rome, to study things in that centre of Western Christendom, to get consecration from the Bishop of Rome, and then to return and reduce the ecclesiastical affairs of England to a common order. Wighard, a Kentish priest, sent in pursuance of this wise plan, died in Rome; and, to save time, at the request of the English Churches, Vitalian, the Bishop of Rome,

[Pg 40]

selected Theodore of Tarsus, a learned priest of the Greek Church, consecrated him, and sent him to be archbishop of the English.

With Theodore (668-690) begins a new chapter in our history. His antecedents, as a member of the Eastern Church, eminently qualified him to look impartially upon the two schools, the Italian and the Scotic, into which the religious world of England was divided, and to address himself with broad views of ecclesiastical polity to the task of organizing the Heptarchic Churches into a harmonious province of the Catholic Church.

In 673, at the instance of Theodore, and under the presidency of Hlothere, King of Kent, a [Pg 41] synod was held at Hertford, attended by all the English bishops but one, and by the kings and many of the principal nobles and clergy, at which the independent national Churches agreed to unite in an Ecclesiastical Province, with the Bishop of Canterbury as its metropolitan; it was further agreed that the bishops and clergy should meet in synod twice a year, once always in August at Clovesho, the other was probably left to the convenience of the moment as to time and place, but was usually held at Cealchyth. Augustine and his successors at Canterbury had never been practically more than bishops of the Kentish men, with the titular distinction of archbishop which Gregory gave them. Theodore, says Bede, was the first archbishop whom the Churches of the English obeyed. This gave Theodore the authority necessary for the carrying out of his plans for the peace and progress of the Church.

One feature of Theodore's policy was the breaking up of some of the larger sees. This was not done without opposition. There was much to be said in favour of the idea of "one king one bishop;" it fell in with the political organization and it had the prestige of ancient use. But Theodore, looking at the subject from his point of view, as the ruler of an ecclesiastical province, saw the desirableness of breaking it up into dioceses of more manageable size. He was opposed by Wilfrid of York, who resented the diminution of his great position as Bishop of the Northumbrian kingdom, by the division of the diocese into four, York, Lindisfarne, [Pg 42] Hexham, and Whithern; but his opposition was overborne by the firmness of the King of Northumbria and the archbishop. Wilfrid carried his complaint to Rome, which is the first example of an appeal from the English to the Roman Court, and raises the question of the relations of the English Church to the Bishop of Rome. It is sufficient to say here in reference to the Roman decision in Wilfrid's favour on this and subsequent occasions, that neither Archbishop Theodore, nor the clergy, nor the king and thanes of the Witan, showed any disposition to accept the intervention of the Bishop of Rome, or to defer to his judgment in the matter; and that Wilfrid was punished by the king with imprisonment and exile for his contumacy.

The Bishop of Mercia, backed by the king, resisted the subdivision of that vast diocese; and it was not until after Theodore's death that his plan was carried into effect of dividing it into four, Lichfield, Hereford, Worcester, Leicester, with Sidnacester for Lindsey, recently reconquered from Northumbria. It was not till 705 that the great diocese of Wessex was divided into two, Winchester and Sherburn, and further subdivided in the time of Alfred the Great by the erection of sees for Somerset, Wilts, and Devon. A new English see in Cornwall, on its conquest by Athelstan, completed the list of Saxon bishoprics.

The annual meeting of the Churches in synods was a very important consequence of their organization into a province. Kings and their councillors and great thanes came to the [Pg 43] synods, as well as bishops and clergy. It is probable that the laymen had no formal voice in the ecclesiastical legislation, but their attestation and assent would add to the authority of the acts of the councils in the estimation of the people. The general synods would promote the regular holding of diocesan synods.[31] One direct result of these frequent assemblies would be to give a stimulus to the work of the Church all over the land. Another incidental result would be to afford a stable centre of affairs, and to promote the growth of a sentiment of nationality. Political affairs were in a state of great disturbance. In some of the kingdoms rival pretenders waged civil war, and now one, now another won the throne, while the bishop maintained his position undisturbed. Nations warred against one another, now Mercia reduced other kingdoms to dependence, and again Wessex asserted a supremacy over others; but the synods continued to unite the bishops and clergy of the kingdoms south of the Thames in frequent consultation for the common good.

Theodore's idea in setting himself to divide the national bishoprics was to multiply episcopal centres of orderly Church life, adequate to the needs of the Christian flock. The settling of priests among the scattered people to take pastoral charge of them was a natural sequel to [Pg 44] the former movement. The practical way of effecting it was to induce the landowners to accept and make provision for a resident priest who should have the pastoral care of their households and people.

It is not historically true that Theodore invented this idea of parochial organization, because it already existed in countries where the church had been longer established. Rome was virtually divided into forty parishes before the end of the third century. The system of appointing a priest to take charge of all the souls within a definite district existed in the city of Alexandria in the time of Athanasius, and in some country districts of Asia Minor at a very

early period; it was a natural outcome of the Christian idea of the pastoral office of the ministry. The Emperor Justinian[32] had encouraged the system, by a law of 541, which decreed that a man who should build an oratory and furnish a competent livelihood for a priest, might present a clerk thereto, by himself and his heirs, and the bishop finding him worthy should ordain him. To come nearer home, a Synod of Orleans, in A.D. 541, ordained that, if any one desired to have a "diocese" on his estate, he should first allot sufficient lands for the maintenance of the church and of the clerks who should fulfil their offices there.[33]

In Italy parishes were beginning to be founded in the time of Gregory the Great. From one of [Pg 45] his letters it appears that Anio "Comes Castri Aprutiensis," having built a church in his castellum, wished to have it consecrated;[34] and the Bishop of Fermo had referred to Gregory on the question. He allows it to be done on condition that the count shall provide a proper endowment for a resident priest. His business-like statement of what the endowment is to consist of, gives a kind of standard of what, in the circumstances of that time and in the judgment of a wise and practical bishop, was a proper endowment of a country parish. It was to consist of a farm with its homestead and a bed, a yoke of oxen, two cows, and fifteen head of sheep, and the proper implements of a farm, and four pounds of silver as the working capital. In another letter Gregory bids Felix, Bishop of Messina, to consecrate a church built by Subdeacon Januarus in the city, on the condition that it be properly endowed; and in this case he expressly denies the founder any rights (*e.g.* of patronage), except admission to Divine service.

The canons of the Council of Toledo, a little earlier than this, and a capitulary in 823 of Charlemagne,[35] a little later, show that it was about this period that country parishes, with their separate endowments and legal rights, were being founded throughout Europe.[36] [Pg 46] Theodore knew what had been done in the East, and he is said to have encouraged the great landowners to adopt the system here. We may accept it as highly probable that we owe to Theodore the diocesan and parochial organization of the Church of England, which provides a pastor to look after every soul in his own home, as against the previous system of monastic centres from which missionaries went forth for occasional ministrations, and to which the people resorted in their spiritual needs.

The kings would be likely to set the example. They were accustomed to divide their time among their principal estates. Aidan's head-quarters were at Lindisfarne, but he had also a church and chamber at Bamborough, the chief residence of the Northumbrian kings; and, if we rightly understand Bede's words,[37] he had a church and chamber at other of the principal houses, where the king and his court used to live for months together. It would be natural that the king should provide for the permanent residence of a priest to serve each of these royal chapels, for the well-being of the people on the several royal estates; and the subsequent history of royal free chapels confirms the conjecture that he did so. The great landowners would be among the first to follow the king's example; and we find some evidence of it in an incidental notice by Bede[38] of the consecration by St. John of Beverley (705-718), then Bishop of Hexham, of a church at South Burton, in Yorkshire, for the Ealdorman Puch, and another at North Burton, in the same county, for Addi the Ealdorman. [Pg 47] What Puch and Addi were doing on their estates, probably others of the great Thanes were also doing, though no marvel occurred at the consecration of these other churches to lead the historian to mention them.

House of a Saxon nobleman. The hall in the middle, the church on the right hand. The nobleman and his wife are distributing alms to the poor. From Harl. MS. 603.

Not only kings and nobles, but the bishops themselves, and the great monasteries with [Pg 48]

outlying estates, would naturally make provision for the religious interests of the people dependent upon them. In the south we gather from the canons of Clovesho, in 747, that the collegiate and conventual bodies had erected churches on their outlying estates, and that the lands of the lay proprietors had been divided into districts by the bishops, and committed to the care of resident priests.

A letter written by Bede, the most learned and most revered Churchman of the time, to Egbert, on his consecration to the See of York, is a very valuable piece of evidence as to the condition of the Church in the north at that point of time (734). We learn first that the discipline of the monasteries had become lax. Many reeves had obtained land under pretext of founding a monastery, and under that pretext claimed freedom for their land from state burdens, and called themselves abbots, but were living with their wives and families, and servants, very much like other lay folk, and handing down their abbeys as hereditary fees. He says that there are towns and hamlets in the most inaccessible places which are taxed for the support of a bishop—an early notice of the general payment of tithe—but never see one, and are moreover without any resident teacher or minister—which implies that towns [Pg 49] and hamlets in more accessible places have a resident minister, and are visited by a bishop for confirmation. The venerable old man gives advice to the youthful prelate for the mitigation of the evils which he points out. He advises him to obtain the fulfilment of the original plan of Gregory the Great, viz. the formation of the churches north of the Humber into a northern province, with York as the metropolitan see, and to obtain the king's leave to subdivide the northern dioceses to the number of twelve in all, using some of the monasteries of whose decadence he complains for the new episcopal sees; he exhorts him to ordain more priests to preach and administer the sacraments in every village; and, lastly, he suggests the translation of the Creed and Our Father out of Latin into English for the instruction of the people.

Egbert followed Bede's advice so far as to obtain his recognition as archbishop of the second province which embraced the country north of the Humber, with York as its metropolitan see; but he did not procure the subdivision of the existing dioceses. He did, however, accomplish a great work by raising the schools of York to such an eminence in learning and religion that they were famous throughout Europe. The schools of Wessex, under Aldhelm, rivalled those of Northumbria; the clergy generally could hardly fail to be influenced by the spirit of these great centres.

Meantime churches were being built, and rectors of them settled upon the estates of the [Pg 50] landowners. The seventh canon of Graetley, 928, in the reign of Athelstan, dealing with the question of penance for perjury, directs that the parish priest, *sacerdos loci illius*, is to certify the bishop as to the penitent's behaviour; which implies that local priests were sufficiently widely scattered to keep in view every member of the small population.

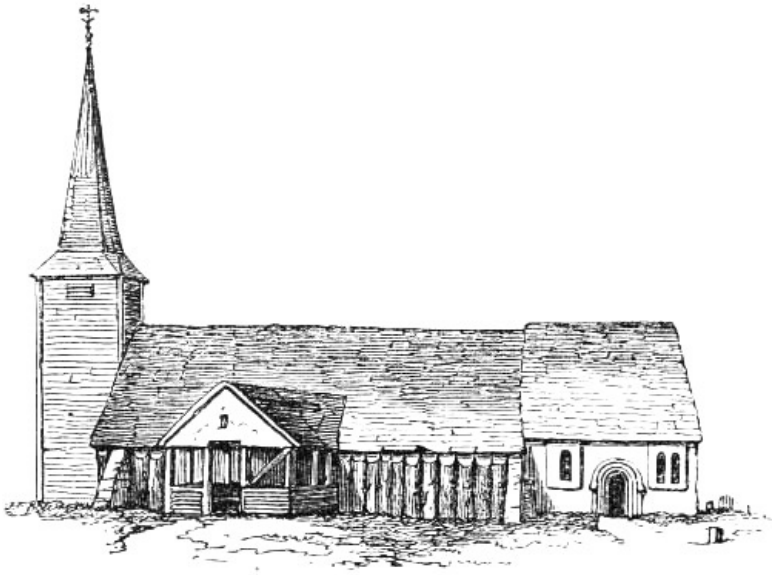
The Parish Priest was not merely one who ministered in spiritual things to those who chose to accept his ministrations, he had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over a definite territory and over all who dwelt within it. Just as the jurisdiction of the heptarchic bishops extended over the kingdoms, so in the parish the jurisdiction of the priest was conterminous with the estate of the lord or thane who invited the priest to minister to himself and his people.

Some of these estates were very extensive, comprising vast tracts of forest and waste around the cultivated land, and therefore some of the parishes were of great extent. Probably the parish priest, in addition to his work in the principal village, would also partially adopt the old system of itinerant mission work by visiting remote hamlets within his jurisdiction at certain times for the preaching of the Word and celebration of Divine worship. It is certain that at a very early period in the history of parishes the rector was assisted by chaplains in the maintenance of the frequent services of the mother church and in the visitation of the people.

Thus there gradually arose another class of Churches. As population increased and forest [Pg 51] was assarted and waste brought into cultivation, new centres of population grew up at a distance from the original village. The Saxon laws encouraged the enterprise of the people by assigning to them a higher rank in proportion to their possessions,[39] which involved not only social dignity but also legal privileges; a law of Athelstan enacted that "if a 'ceorl' throve so that he had fully four hides of his own land, church and kitchen, 'bur geat settl,' and special service in the king's hall ('sunder note' or 'sundor note') then was he thenceforth of thane-right worthy."[40]

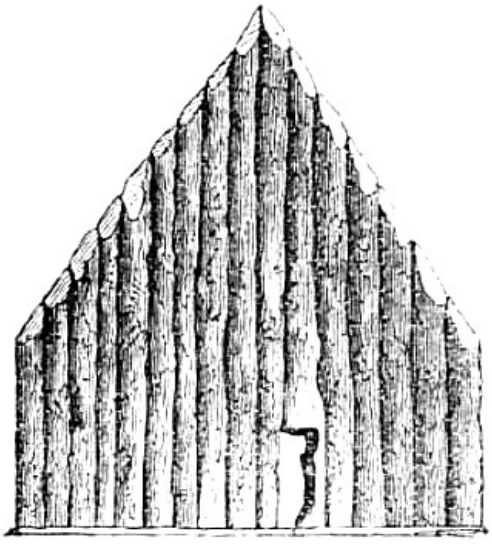
It is in the nature of things that many of these successful ceorls would be energetic and enterprising men who had looked out a tract of good soil in some neighbouring dale or amidst the surrounding waste, and brought it under cultivation, and created what was virtually a new township. The occasional visits of the parish priest or his chaplain would hardly satisfy the inhabitants of the new settlement for long. The new proprietor, in imitation of his betters, would be ambitious of having a church on his ground, and the law of Athelstan encouraged his laudable ambition. But the customary jurisdiction and revenues of [Pg 52] the mother Church extending over the whole district were jealously guarded against encroachment on the part of these new foundations. A "canon of Edgar" enacts (1) that tithe

be paid to the Old Minster to which the district belongs; (2) if a thane has on his boc-land a church at which there is not a burial-place, then of the nine parts let him give to his priest what he will; and let every church scot and plough-alms go to the Old Minster. A later law of King Canute enacts that if a thane has erected on his own boc-land (freehold or charter land) a church having a legerstowe—a burial-place—he may subtract one-third part of his tithes from the mother Church, and bestow them upon his own clerk.[41]



Saxon Church of timber, at Greenstead, Essex.

A law of Canute incidentally describes four different classes of churches which, "though divinely they have like consecration," hold a different rank and have a different penalty attached to the violation of their right of sanctuary. The classes are called: (1) the heafod mynster, chief minster; (2) the medemra mynster, translated *ecclesia mediocris*; (3) the læssa mynster, translated *ecclesia minor*; (4) the feld-cirice, literally field-church, where there was no burial-place. These are probably (1) cathedral or mother churches; (2) churches of ancient date with wide jurisdiction; (3) smaller parish churches; (4) district or mission chapels. [Pg 53]



West end of Greenstead Church, Essex.

The continual increase of the population and the consequent bringing of more land into cultivation, and the gathering of this population upon the newly cultivated lands, caused the constant growth of new lordships or townships, or, in later times, manors, and the constant building of new churches to supply their spiritual wants. The jurisdiction and rights of the mother Church had to be dealt with in all these cases; but in many cases, by agreement with the mother Church, or by the assumption of a lord of the land too powerful for its priest to withstand, or by long usage, many of these new churches acquired the status of independent parishes; and at length, in the time of Edward the Confessor, the legal status of parish churches was given to all which by ancient custom had the right of administration of baptism, marriage, and burial. [Pg 54]

The Domesday Survey gives, so far as it deals with the matter, a view of the condition of the Church and clergy at the close of the Saxon period—*tempore regis Edwardi*. It is to be borne in mind that its object was not to make a complete terrier and census of the kingdom, but to ascertain the rights and revenues due to the Crown. The commissioners who made the survey in the different counties took somewhat different lines in making their returns, particularly in those details which are of special interest in the present inquiry. In most of the counties churches and clergy seem to be named only where they were liable to some payment to the Crown. In some counties all the churches seem to be named; in others all the presbyters; in others there is no mention of one or the other. Thus, in Lincolnshire 222 churches are named, in Norfolk 243, in Suffolk, 364; in Leicestershire 41 presbyters, in Rochester diocese about 65,[42] in Sussex 42, of which seven are described as *ecclesiolæ* chapels. In the returns for the counties of Cambridge, Middlesex, Lancaster, and Cornwall, neither church nor presbyter occurs. In the whole there are only 1700 churches named. But there seems no reason why Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk should have had a larger proportion of churches to population at that time than the other counties; and if the other counties were proportionately subdivided into parishes and equipped with churches, we [Pg 55] arrive at the conclusion that there were nearly as many churches (including chapels) and clergy before the Norman Conquest, when the population was about two millions, as there were at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the population had increased to nearly nine millions.

Saxon tower, Sompting Church, Sussex.

From the same source we learn that the usual quantity of land assigned to a church was from five to fifty acres; in some cases the glebe was larger. Bosham, in Sussex, was one of the largest; in the time of Edward the Confessor it had 112 hides. Barsham, in Norfolk, had [Pg 56] 100 acres; Berchingas, in Suffolk, 83; Wellingrove, in Lincolnshire, 129 acres of meadow and 14 of other land.

The private origin of ecclesiastical benefices, together with the feudal ideas of the tenure of property, produced in the minds of the owners of advowsons a certain sense of property in the benefices which shows itself in various ways: in the bargaining with the presentee for some advantage to the lord, as a present, or a pension, or the tenancy of part of the land.

The advowson descended with the manor, and was often subdivided among the heirs.[43] In later times we not infrequently find a rectory held in medieties, but in Domesday Book we find a benefice divided into any number of fractions up to one-twelfth.[44]

CHAPTER V.

THE SAXON CLERGY.

The sources from which we obtain the fullest details of the religious life of the Saxon priests and people are the laws of their kings and the canons of their synods; and perhaps the most convenient way of presenting the information which these contain will be partly to give a series of quotations from them in chronological order, with such explanations as may seem necessary; partly to group them according to their subject; using one method or the other as may seem best to serve our purpose.

Of the earlier part of the period three codes of law have come down to us—that of Ethelbert of Kent, between 597 and 604; of Ine King of the West Saxons, probably 690; and of Wihtred of Kent, 696. We must bear in mind that the bishops and chief clergy of the kingdom were present at the Witan of the Saxon kings, as well as the chiefs and wise men; and that the kings and chief laymen were often present at the ecclesiastical synods; so that both laws and canons express the mind of the whole people. [Pg 58]

The laws of Ethelbert are the earliest written code of the English race. They begin with the enactment, "If the property of God (*i.e.* of the Church) be stolen, twelve-fold compensation shall be made; for a bishop's property, eleven-fold; a priest's, nine-fold; a deacon's, six-fold; a clerk's, three-fold; church frith, two-fold; minster frith, two-fold." A law of Earconbert of Kent (640) commanded the destruction of the temples and idols in that kingdom.

The laws of Ine, King of the West Saxons (688-725), are said in the preamble to be made "by the consent and advice of Ceadwalla, his father, and of Heddi, his bishop, and of Earconwald, his bishop, and with all his ealdormen, and the distinguished Witan of his people, and also with a large assembly of God's servants (the clergy)." The first of his laws is (1) that God's servants rightly hold their lawful rule. Then it goes on to enact (2) that children be baptized within thirty days, under a penalty of 30*s.*, and if one die unbaptized the father shall make bôt[45] for it with all that he has. Then come enactments (3, 4, 5), against doing any work on the Sunday, on the payments to be made to the clergy, and on the privilege of sanctuary, which will be more conveniently grouped with similar enactments later on; (6) if a man fight in a king's house he shall forfeit all his property; if in a minster, he shall make bôt of 120*s.*; (7) if a man before a bishop belie his testimony he shall forfeit 120*s.*; (61) church scot shall be paid according to where a man's roof and hearth are at midwinter; (76) inflicts a special fine for slaying a godson or godfather—if it be a bishop's son,[46] it is to be half the amount. [Pg 59]

The preamble to the laws of Wihtred of Kent, in 696, states that they were made at "a deliberative convention of the great men," the Archbishop Birhtwald and Bishop Gebmund of Rochester being present, "and every degree of the Church of that province spoke in unison with the obedient people." The first law (1) gives the Church freedom in jurisdiction and revenue; (6) a priest guilty of misconduct or negligence to be suspended till the doom of the bishop; (9, 10, 11) on the observance of Sunday, are the same as in the laws of King Ine, quoted p. 79; (12, 13) seek to suppress the old heathenism by imposing on a man forfeiture of all his substance for making offerings to devils, and the same on his wife if she shared in his offence; a theowe for the same offence is to forfeit 6*s.* or "pay with his skin;"[47] (14, 15) impose penalties for not abstaining from flesh on fasting days; (16, 17) relate to the value of the oaths of various classes of people, and are dealt with at p. 77. One of the most important laws of Wihtred is that which is called "the privilege of Wihtred," given at a Witan held at Bapchild, attended by the king and nobles, as well as by the two bishops and clergy, which released the lands of monasteries from gabel or land-tax, and obliged the tenants only to attend the king in war and to pay burgh bôt and brig bôt, *i.e.* payments levied for the repair of town-walls and bridges. This privilege was confirmed in the first year of King Ethelbald of Mercia at the Council of Clovesho (716). It was granted by other Saxon kings also in their charters. [Pg 60]

The decrees of a council at Clovesho, in 747, require a few words of preface. In 745 Boniface, "the Apostle of Germany," had presided at a synod of Frank bishops, at Augsburg, [48] which had made canons for the reform of abuses, and had formally accepted the supremacy of Rome. Boniface sent a copy of these canons to his friend Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, clearly wishing him to take like measures.

The first canon of this Synod enacted that metropolitans should be obliged to apply to Rome for their pall, and obey the orders of St. Peter in everything according to the canons. Another canon to the same end decreed that if the people refuse to submit to the discipline [Pg 61] of the Church, the bishops shall appeal to the archbishop of the province, and the archbishop to the Pope.

Two years afterwards Zacharias, Bishop of Rome, sent letters by the hands of two legates "to the English inhabitants of Britain," in which he admonishes them to reform their lives, and holds out threats of excommunication against those who neglect to do so.[49]

The Pope's action was clearly intended to induce the English Church to imitate the submission of the Frankish Church. A synod was assembled at Clovesho, A.D. 747, attended by twelve English bishops of the dioceses south of the Humber and a number of their clergy, and by Ethelbald, King of the Mercians, who was over lord of all the English kingdoms south of the Humber. The Pope's letter was read in Latin and English, and then the synod proceeded to draw up a number of canons.

A Saxon bishop and priest.
(From Cotton MS., Claudius, B. iv.)

The omissions, compared with the canons of the German Council, are the most important part of the document. The first canon decreed that every bishop should be careful to support his character (*i.e.* his status as a bishop), execute every part of his office, and maintain the canons and constitutions of the Church against encroachment; and the second that the [Pg 62] bishops and clergy should be careful to keep a good correspondence with each other, without any flattering applications to any person, considering that they are the servants of one master, and entrusted with the same commission; and, therefore, though they are divided by distance of place and country, they ought to be united by affection and pray for each other that every one may discharge his office with integrity and conscience. Then there follow disciplinary canons: (3) that the clergy should call together the people of all ranks and degrees in each place, preach to them the word of God, and forbid them to follow the [Pg 63] heathen customs; (2) that the bishops should visit their dioceses every year; (4, 5, and 7) relate to monasteries; (6) bishops not to ordain priests without examination as to learning and morals; (8) priests to abstract themselves from worldly affairs and give themselves to reading, prayer, etc.; (9) to preach, baptize, and inspect the morals of the people in those precincts and districts assigned to them by their bishops—which implies the existence of subdivisions of dioceses into various jurisdictions, and the existence of parishes; (10) priests to be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrines and services of the church, to teach the Creed and Lord's Prayer, and explain the sacraments; (11) to be uniform in their preaching and ministration; (12) regulates church music and ceremonies, canons not to intrude upon things which belong to the bishop; (13, 14, 15, 16, 18) on the observance of Sundays, holy days, the seven hours of prayer, rogations, and ember days; (17) appoints that the days on which St. Gregory and St. Augustine died shall be kept as holy days, and their names be included in the litanies.

Canons (21) and (22) enjoin on the clergy sobriety and propriety of conduct, and ever-fitness

for celebration and reception of Holy Communion. (26) enjoins the bishops to convene their clergy and abbots, and communicate to them the decisions of the council, and command their observance; and if there is any disorder too strong for the bishop's correction, he is to report it to the archbishop at the next meeting of the synod—but not a word of a reference beyond him to the Pope. (27) is on the singing of the psalms with recollection and pious dispositions and posture of respect, and of prayers—and among them of prayers for the departed;[50] and those who do not understand Latin are to pray in the vulgar tongue.

[Pg 64]

(26) and (27) are specially notable as directed against what seem to have been growing errors; they explain that alms are not to be given to commute penance and dispense with the discipline of the Church, and so procure a liberty of sinning; that those who think that God can be bribed thus, make their alms useless to them, and add to their guilt. Also that it is folly and presumption to think that a man condemned to penance may procure others to fast, say psalms, and distribute charity on his behalf; that if a man may thus buy his punishment and get others to repent for him, a rich man would be sure of salvation, and only the poor be in danger. The last canon enjoins that kings and princes and the whole body of the people be publicly prayed for in church.[51]

It is to be observed that the Northumbrian king was not present with his nobles and bishops at this synod; for eleven years previously (in 736) the Bishop of York had obtained the dignity of an archbishop with the Northumbrian churches as his province. The Papal legates visited the north, but we have no account of their doings there.

[Pg 65]

The laws of King Alfred are prefaced by a recapitulation of the early history of the Church, and recite the decree of the apostles at the Synod of Jerusalem. Then the king goes on to say that many synods were assembled in the old times, among the English race, after they had received the Faith of Christ, and ordained a "tort" for many misdeeds. Out of those laws which he had met with, either of the days of Ine his kinsman, of Offa, King of the Mercians, or of Ethelbryht who first among the English race received baptism, the things which seemed to him most right he had gathered together and rejected others. He had then showed them to the witan, and they declared that it seemed good to them all that they should be observed. We conclude that the codes of Ethelbert, Ine, and Offa (which last has not come down to us) were the principal codes then known. We select several of the laws of Alfred which deal with new matter.

1. If a man pledge himself and break his pledge, he is to surrender his weapons and goods to the keeping of his friends, and be in prison forty days in a bishop's town, and suffer there whatever the bishop may prescribe; his friends to find him food; if he have none, then the king's reeve to do it; if he escape, to be excommunicated of all Christ's churches. If a man seek a church and confess an offence not before known, let it be half forgiven—*i.e.* let him pay half the penalty.

[Pg 66]

One of the laws agreed upon between King Alfred and Guthrum was, if any man wrong an ecclesiastic or a foreigner as to money or life, the king or earl and the bishop shall be to the injured in the place of kinsman and protector.

Among the laws of Athelstan (925-940), (3) directs that there be sung, every Friday at every monastery, a fifty (of psalms) for the king, and for all who will what he wills, and for others as they may merit; (7) describes the ordeal by fire and by water.[52]

Among the laws of King Edmund (940-946) made at the Synod of London, "Odda, archbishop, and Wulfstan, archbishop, and many other bishops being present," it was ordered (1) that those in holy orders who have to teach God's people by their life's example keep their chastity according to their degree; (5) that every bishop repair the houses of God in his [district (?)], and also remind the king that all God's churches be well conditioned.

The "Canons of Edgar" (A.D. 959-975)[53] were made under the reforming influence of Archbishop Dunstan, and were intended as a standard of life and duty for the clergy. They begin with the recognition, which is amplified and emphasized in the laws of subsequent reigns, that the great duty which the order of the clergy perform in the service of the nation is to celebrate the worship of Almighty God, and offer up prayers on behalf of the king and people. We give the substance of the canons as briefly as possible, but without any material omission, so that the reader may feel assured that he has the whole body of the legislation before him.

[Pg 67]

They decree that the ministers of God devoutly serve and minister to God, and intercede for all Christian folk; be faithful and obedient to their seniors (bishops, abbots, etc.); ready to help others, both Godward and manward; and be to their earthly lords true and faithful; that they honour one another, the juniors diligently hearing and loving their seniors, and the seniors diligently teaching the juniors.

That every one come to the synod yearly, attended by his clerk, and an orderly man as his servant; that he bring his books and vestments,[54] and ink and parchment for the

constitutions;[55] and food for three days. That the priest report to the synod if any one has done him any serious injury, and that all should regard it as done to themselves, and obtain compensation according as the bishop shall determine. He shall also report if any one in his [Pg 68] parish lives openly against God, or has done mortal sin, whom he cannot move to amendment, or dare not for fear.

That no dispute between priests shall be brought before secular judges, but reconciled by their fellows or referred to the bishop; no priest shall desert the church to which he was ordained, but hold to it as his lawful spouse. That he do not deprive another of anything which belongs to him either in his church or parish or gildship; he shall not take another's scholar without his leave; that in addition to lore, he diligently learn a handicraft; that the learned priest do not throw scorn on the half learned, but correct him; that the well-born priest do not despise the low-born, for if he will consider all men are of one birth; that he administer baptism as soon as asked, and bid every one to bring his children to be baptized within thirty-seven days[56] of their birth and not defer too long to have them confirmed by the bishop.

That he diligently promote Christianity, and banish heathenism, and forbid well-worship, necromancy, augury, man-worship, incantations, and many things which they practise with various spells, and "frithsplottum,"[57] and wich-elms and various trees and stones, and other phantasms by which many are deceived, and that devil's craft whereby children are drawn through the earth, and the merriment that men make on the night of the year (New Year's Eve).

That every Christian diligently train his child and teach him the Paternoster and Credo;[58] [Pg 69] that on festivals men abstain from profane songs and devil's games, and on Sundays from trading and folk motes; that men cease from lies and foolish talking and blasphemy; and from concubinage, and have lawful wives; that every man learn the Paternoster and Credo if he desire to lie in holy ground [at his burial], and be considered housel-worthy [fit to receive Holy Communion], because he is not a good Christian who is not willing to learn these, nor may rightly be a sponsor at baptism nor at confirmation; that there be no contentions on festival or fasting days, nor oaths, nor ordeals.

That the priests keep the churches with all reverence for the Divine ministry and pure worship, and for nothing else; nor do anything unbecoming there nor in the vicinity; nor allow idle talking, idle deeds, unbecoming drinkings, nor any other idle practices; nor allow dogs in the churchyard, nor more swine than a man is able to manage [or no dog nor swine so far as a man can prevent it], that nothing unbecoming be placed in the church; that at the church-wake men keep sober and pray diligently, nor practise drinking, nor anything else unbecoming; that no one be buried in church unless he was known when living to be so well pleasing to God as to be worthy of it.

That the priest do not celebrate the Eucharist in any house, but only in the church, except in case of extreme sickness, and do not consecrate except upon a consecrated altar,[59] [Pg 70] and not without book and the canon of the mass before his eyes, that he make no mistakes, and that he have a corporal when he celebrates, and a *subuculum*[60] under his albe, and all necessary things rightly appointed, and have a good and correct book, and not without some one to make the responses; that every one receive fasting except in case of extreme sickness; that the priest reserve the host ready for any that need; that he celebrate with pure wine and pure water; that no priest celebrate mass without partaking, or hallow it unless he is holy. That the chalice be of molten material, never of wood; that all things which approach the altar or belong to the church be purely and worthily appointed, and that there be always lights in the church at mass; that there be no negligence about anything consecrated, holy water, salt, incense, bread, nor anything holy; that no woman come near the altar while the priest celebrates.

That at the right times the bell be rung, and the priest say his hours in church, or there pray and intercede for all men.[61] That no priest come into the church or into his stall without his upper garment, or minister without his vestment. That no man in orders conceal his tonsure, or leave it badly shaven, or wear his beard long; that priests be not ignorant of fasts or [Pg 71] festivals, lest they lead the people wrong.[62]

That every one accompany his fasts with almsgiving; that "priests in ecclesiastical ministries be all on one equality, and in a year's space, be like-worthy in all ecclesiastical ministries;"[63] that they diligently teach the young handicrafts, that the Church may be helped thereby.

That priests preach every Sunday, and well explain. That no Christian eat blood of any kind. That they teach the people to pay their dues to God, plough-alms fifteen days after Easter, the tithe of young at Pentecost, fruits of the earth at All Saints, Peter's penny on St. Peter's day, and church scot at Martinmas. That priests so distribute people's alms as to please God, and dispose the people to almsgiving; they shall sing psalms when they distribute alms, and bid the poor pray for the people. That priests avoid drunkenness, and warn the people against it; that they eschew unbecoming occupations, as ale-scop or glee man, but behave discreetly and worthily; abstain from oaths and forbid them; not consort too much with women, but love their own spouse, that is, their church; not bear false witness, or be the confidant of thieves; that the priest have not to do with ordeals or oaths, or be compurgator with a thane, unless the thane take the first oath; be not a hunter, or hawker, or dicer, but

occupy himself with his books, as becomes his order.

That every priest hear confession and give penance, and carry the Eucharist to the sick, and [Pg 72]
anoint him if he desire it, and after death not allow any idle customs about the body, but bury it decently in the fear of God. That every priest have oil for baptism, and also for anointing the sick. Let him promote Christianity in every way, as well by preaching as by good example, and he shall be rewarded by God Almighty; and let him remember when he fetches the chrism [at the yearly synod] to say the prayers for the king and the bishop.

The laws of King Ethelred (979-1016), made with the counsel of both the ecclesiastical and lay witan, are conceived in a very Christian spirit, and expressed with considerable eloquence. We think it worth while to give in full some of them which relate to the general desire of the authorities in Church and State to promote religion. (1) This, then, is first, that we all love and worship one God, and zealously hold one Christianity, and every heathenship totally cast out, that every man be regarded as entitled to right, and peace and friendship be lawfully observed. (2) That Christian men and uncondemned be not sold out of the country, and especially into a heathen nation, that those souls perish not that Christ bought with His own life. (3) That Christian men be not condemned to death for all too little, and in general let light punishments be decreed, and let not for a little God's handiwork and His own purchase which He dearly bought be destroyed. (4) That every man of every order readily [Pg 73]
submit to the law which belongs to him; above all, let the servants of God, bishops and abbots, monks and mynchens, priests and nuns,[64] live according to their rule, and fervently intercede for all Christian people. (5, 6) Monks are not to live out of minster, but to observe specially three things: their chastity and monkish customs, and the service of the Lord. (7) Canons, where their benefice is, so that they have a refectory and dormitory, are to keep their minster rightly; and mass-priests to keep themselves from the anger of God. (9) Full well they know that they have not rightly, through concubinage, intercourse with women; he who will abstain from this and serve God rightly, shall be worthy of thane-wēr, and thane-right both in life and in the grave; he who will not, let his honour wane before God and before the world. (10) Let every church be in grith (protection) of God and the king, and of all Christian people; let no man henceforth reduce a church to servitude, nor unlawfully make church-mongering, nor turn out a church minister without the bishop's counsel. (11) God's dues are to be willingly paid, plough-alms, tithe of young, earth fruits, Rome fee, and light scot thrice a year,[65] and soul scot at the open grave, or, if buried elsewhere, to be paid to the minster to which it belongs. (13-19) Sundays and holy days are defined as in [Pg 74]
previous laws, and at those holy tides let there be to all men peace and concord, and be every strife appeased. (22) Let every Christian man strictly keep his Christianity, and go frequently to shrift and housel. (23) Let every injustice and wrong-doing be carefully cast out of the country, and (26) God's laws be zealously loved by word and deed, then will God soon be merciful to this nation.[66] Lastly (34), it is the duty of us all to love and worship one God and strictly hold one Christianity, and totally cast out every kind of heathenism; and (35) let us faithfully support one royal lord, and all defend life and land together as best we may, and to God Almighty pray with inward heart.

The canons which go under the name of Elfric, and are of the end of the tenth century, add a little to the knowledge we have already gleaned. The 10th canon gives a list of the seven orders of the clergy under the degree of bishop, viz. ostiarius, lector, exorcist, acolyte, subdeacon, deacon, and priest, and defines their several offices. (17) reckons a priest and a bishop to be of the same order. (19) requires the priests and inferior clergy to be at church at the seven canonical hours: *Uhtsang* (Prime) about 4 a.m., *Primsang* (Matins) 6 a.m., *Undersang* (Terce) at 9, *Middaysang* (Sext) at noon, *Nonsang* (Nones) at 3 p.m., *Æfensang* (Vespers), and *Nightsang* (Nocturns). (21) Every priest before ordination to be furnished [Pg 75]
with correct copies of the Psalter, Book of Epistles and Gospels, Missal, Hymnary, Penitential, and Lectionary. (23) The parish priest, every Sunday and holy day, is to explain to the people in English the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Gospel for the day. (25) Not to celebrate in a house except one be sick. (27) No priest is to take money for baptism or other office. (28) Priests are not to remove from one parish to another for the sake of advantage, but to remain in the cure to which they were ordained. (29) Not to turn merchant, soldier, or lawyer. (30) To have always two oils, one for children, the other for the sick. (33) Orders the canons of the first four councils to be regarded like the four Gospels; "there have been many councils held in later ages, but these four are of the greatest authority." (36) "The housel is Christ's body, not bodily but spiritually, not the body in which He suffered, but the body about which He spake, when He blessed bread and wine for housel.... Understand now that the Lord who could before His passion change the bread to His body and the wine to His blood spiritually, that the same daily blesses, by the hands of His priests, the bread and wine to His spiritual body and blood."

An important feature in the administration of criminal law was the recognition of the right of

Sanctuary to the house of the king and the churches, which had probably been introduced from the imperial law by the influence of the missionaries. The laws of Ine recognize the right of sanctuary to a church; a murderer taking sanctuary is to have his life but to make bôt, according to law, a theowe who has incurred scourging shall be excused the penalty. [Pg 76]

The laws of Alfred allow three days' sanctuary in the "mynsterham," which is free from the king's farm, or any other free community, with a bôt of 120*s.* for its violation, to be paid to the brotherhood; and seven days in every church hallowed by the bishop, with the penalty of the king's "mund and byrd" and the church's "frith" for its violation. The Church ealdor is to take care that no one give food to the refugee. If he be willing to give up his weapons to his foes, then let them keep him thirty days, and give notice to his kinsmen (that they may arrange the legal bôt[67]). King Athelstan's laws further modify the right of sanctuary; a thief or robber fleeing to the king or to any church, or to the bishop, is to have a term of nine days; if he flee to an ealdorman, or an abbot, or a thane, three days; and he who harbours him longer is to be worthy of the same penalty as the thief. The king's grith (protection) is to extend from his burhgate where he is dwelling, on its four sides three miles three furlongs and three acres breadth, and nine feet nine palms and nine barley-corns. A law of Canute already quoted (p. 53) assigns different values of grith (protection) to the different kinds of churches, the grith bryce (penalty for violation of grith) of a chief minster is £5; of a minster of the middle class, 120*s.*, and of one yet less where there is a small parish (lytel þeoþðom, in the laws of Henry I.), provided there be a burial-place, 60*s.*, and of a field-church, where there is no burial-place, 30*s.* [Pg 77]

Akin to this privilege of sanctuary is the penalty for acts of violence in certain places and before certain persons. By the laws of King Ine, if any man fight in a king's house he shall forfeit all his property; if in a minster, make bôt of 120*s.* By the laws of King Alfred, if a man fight or draw his weapon before an archbishop he shall make bôt of 150*s.*; if before a bishop or an ealdorman, 100*s.* The laws of Alfred enact that if any man steal from a church he shall restore it and lose his hand, or redeem his hand at the amount of his "wergild;" it is to be remembered that churches were used as places of deposit for valuables, and the law probably is intended to protect these as well as the movables belonging to the church itself.

The laws of Wihtred of Kent make the word of a king or a bishop incontrovertible without an oath; a priest, like a king's thane, is to clear himself with his own oath at the altar; he is to stand before the altar in his vestments, and laying his hand upon the altar, to say, "*Veritatem dico in Christo, non mentior*;"[68] the superior of a monastery is to make oath like a priest; a clerk, like a "ceorlish man," to make like oath at the altar, but to have four compurgators. The rank of a priest as equal to that of a thane is frequently recognized.[69] The laws of Ine (15 and 19), make the oath of a man who is a communicant worth twice as much as that of a man who is not.

It is convenient to gather into one view what the laws say about the *Tithe and other Payments* which the people made to the church. The laws did not then for the first time enact these payments. The first missionaries had no doubt taught the people that it was the duty of Christian men to maintain the church and the clergy by tithes and offerings. If the assertion be true that the people had been accustomed to pay tithe to their heathen priests, and there is evidence in favour of the probability, then it came the easier to them.[70] The kings and their witans, in this as in many other matters, recognized and gave the sanction of law to existing custom. The payment of tithe was recognized as obligatory in the Legatine Council of Cealchythe in 785, which being attended and confirmed by the Kings of Kent, Mercia, Wessex, and Northumbria, and their ealdormen, had the authority of a Witenagemot, just at the time that similar measures were being taken in the Frank dominions. From that time the payment was frequently mentioned in the laws. The laws of King Alfred define the tithe as of "moving and growing things." The laws of King Edmund enact that every man pay tithe, church scot, Rome fee, and plough-alms on pain of excommunication. The laws of Edgar define to whom the payment shall be made, viz. to the old minster to which the district belongs; a thane who has a church at which there is a burial-place, may pay a third of his tithe to his own priest; if the thane's church is without a burial-place, he is to pay his tithe to the minster, and church scot and plough-alms are also to be paid to the minster, and the thane may pay to his priest what he will. They also recite the times at which these payments are to be made on penalty of the full "wite" (fine to the king) which the Doom-book specifies. They also prescribe a process for the recovery of tithe; the king's reeve and the bishop's reeve, with the priest of the minster to whom it is due, are to take the tithe by force, and the rest is to be forfeited half to the king and half to the bishop, whether the defaulter be a king's man or a thane's. The payment of the "hearth penny" (St. Peter's penny) is to be enforced by a very curious process: the defaulter is to be taken to Rome—perhaps it means to the house of the pope's agent, for the collection of Peter pence—and, in addition to what is due, is to pay 30*d.*, and bring a certificate of the payment, and then is to forfeit 120*s.* to the king; if he refuse, he is to be taken again to Rome, and on his return to forfeit 200*s.*; and if he still refuse, he is to forfeit all that he has. The severity of the enactment suggests the question whether there was at that time on the part of some persons a special unwillingness to pay the "penny of St. Peter." [Pg 78] [Pg 79]

The *religious observance of Sunday* was the subject of frequent enactments. The third of the

laws of Ine enacts that if a theow work on Sunday by his lord's command, the theow shall be exempt from penalty, but his lord shall pay 30*s.*; if the theow work of his own accord (since he has no money), he shall "pay with his skin," *i.e.* shall be scourged. If a free man work on that day without his lord's command, he shall forfeit his freedom or pay 60*s.*; a priest offending shall be liable to a double penalty. The laws of Wihtred of Kent contain enactments to the same effect. The laws of Alfred encourage the observance of other holy days by the enactment that "to all free men these days be given" (*i.e.* free men are not to be required by their lords to work on these days): twelve days at the Nativity, Good Friday —"the day on which Christ conquered the devil," St. Gregory's day, seven days before Easter and seven days after, St. Peter's day and St. Paul's day, in autumn a full week before the festival of St. Brice (Nov. 13), one day before All Saints, and the four Wednesdays in the four fasting (Ember) weeks. The law does not free theowes from work on these days, but suggests to their masters to give them, in God's name, such relaxation from work on such of these days as they shall deserve. The laws of Edgar define that Sunday is to be kept from noontide of Saturday till dawn of Monday. At the Council of Eynsham (1009), it was further enjoined that there be no markets or folk motes (the laws of Canute also forbid hunting) on Sundays; that all St. Mary's feast tides be honoured with those of every apostle, and Fridays be kept as a fast. Festivals of English saints were from time to time added to the Kalendar. We have seen that the Council of Clovesho (747), decreed the observance of days in honour of St. Gregory and St. Augustine. In the decrees of the Council of Enysham we find: "The witan have chosen that St. Edward's mass day shall be celebrated all over England on the XV. Kal. Apr." (March 18). The laws of Canute repeat the obligation of the previous holy days, and after mention of the witan's appointment of a festival of St. Edward, add a festival of St. Dunstan on XIV. Kal. Junias (May 19).

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Slavery was a recognized institution of the society of those times. The class of "theowmen" was probably made up partly of conquered Britons and their descendants, partly of captives taken in the mutual wars of the heptarchic kingdoms, partly of freemen who had been condemned to this penalty for their crimes or incurred it by poverty. A prominent feature of the influence of Christianity was the encouragement it gave to masters to treat their theowes with kindness, and its success in promoting their manumission as an action well-pleasing to God. Several of the codes of law deal with the subject. We have seen already how the legislation on the observance of Sundays and holy days did not go so far as to interfere with the right of the masters, but did invite them, for the love of God, to give their theowes some relaxation of labour on the great festivals of the Church. A law of Wihtred, King of Kent, defines that if any one give freedom to his man at the altar, he shall be folk-free, though it retains to the freedom-giver the heritage and wergild and mund of his family. A law of Ine enacts that he who sells over sea his own countryman, bond or free, though he be guilty, shall pay according to his wēr.

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A law of Alfred enacts that if any man buy a Christian slave, he shall serve for six years, and on the seventh he shall go out as he came in, with the same clothes, etc.; if he came in with a wife he shall go out with her, but if the lord have given him a wife, she and her children shall still belong to the lord. A law of Ethelred (978-1016) enacts that a slave (uncondemned) shall not be sold out of the country.

The Church set the example of the manumission of its slaves.[71] At the Council of Cealchithe (816) it was unanimously agreed that each prelate at his death should bequeath one-tenth of his personal property to the poor, and set at liberty all bondsmen of English descent whom his Church had acquired during his administration, and that each bishop and abbot who survived him should manumit three of his slaves, and give 3*s.* to each. The laity followed the example. In the English wills published by Thorpe[72] a considerable number occur in which the testator gives freedom to serfs, *e.g.* Queen Æthelflæd sets free half of her men in every vill; Wynflæd gives a long list of serfs by name who are to be freed, and the freedom of penal serfs is given in nine other wills.

Still the institution continued. At the end of the Saxon period, a thriving trade in the export of English slaves was carried on at Bristol, till Bishop Wulstan put an end to it. The Twenty-ninth Canon of the Synod of Westminster, held under Anselm in 1102, enacted that there should be no buying and selling of men in England as heretofore, as if they were kine or oxen. But this did not put a stop to it. Slaves were bought and sold by Church dignitaries as late as the fourteenth century, as we shall see in a later chapter, and the status of serfdom continued to the sixteenth century.

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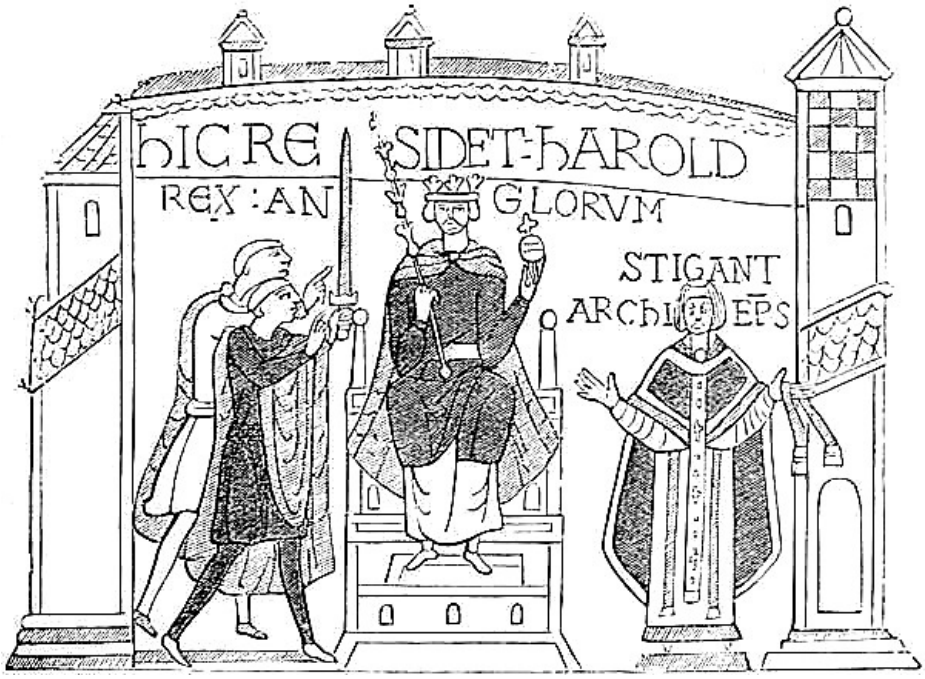

Coronation of Harold by Archbishop Stigand. Bayeux tapestry.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

One immediate result of the Norman conquest was that Archbishop Stigand and several other bishops and abbots were ejected, and foreign ecclesiastics put in their place. It is not necessary to suppose that William acted solely on the desire to put men devoted to his interests into these positions of power and influence, for Edward the Confessor had already appointed some foreign bishops with the object of raising the tone of learning and religion in the English Church; and all William's nominees were men of character, learning and practical ability. The removal of some of the sees from unimportant villages to the principal town of the diocese was a wise measure. It is said that some of the Norman bishops desired to make the further improvement of replacing the monks, where they existed, in their cathedrals, by canons, but were thwarted by Lanfranc.[73]

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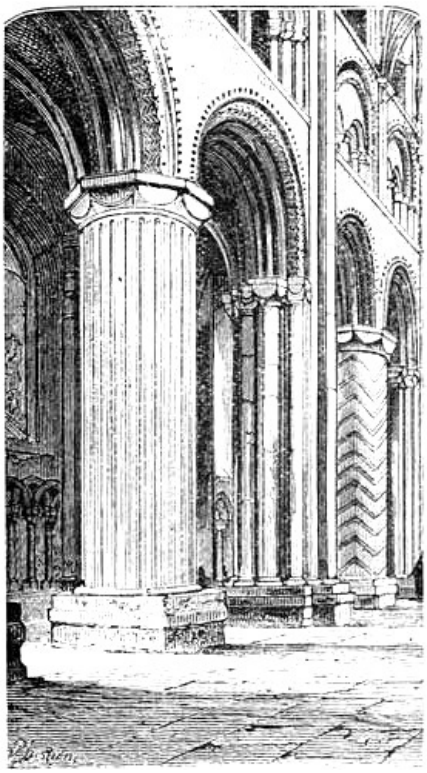
The parochial clergy seem to have been left undisturbed in their benefices; only, as the benefices fell vacant in the usual course of things, the new Norman lords of the manor, who had in so many cases supplanted the old Saxon thanes, not unnaturally appointed relatives or countrymen of their own to at least the more valuable of the parochial benefices in their gift.

The Norman conquest of England opened up this country more fully to the influence of the political and religious life of the Continent. The patriarchal authority of the Roman see had long since been acknowledged by the Saxon Church, but hitherto had very rarely intervened and as seldom been appealed to; henceforward it was to become a much more important factor both in the political and ecclesiastical life of this country. The foreign bishops appointed by Edward the Confessor and William, and the foreign parsons introduced by the new lords into their parishes, brought with them the Hildebrandine theories of the relations of the Pope to the Church and to the State. William sought to limit the exercise of the Papal authority in his new kingdom by a decree that the Pope should send no legates and no bulls without the consent of the Crown, and that his own subjects should make no appeal to Rome without the Crown's permission. But, in fact, a considerable change gradually took place in the practical relations of the English Church to the Roman see. The Saxon Church had been

isolated, the bishops and clergy had been eminently a national clergy, with practically no one above them and no one between them and their flocks. The appearance of two legates at the synod of Winchester (1070), which deprived Stigand the archbishop, and, by consequence, several bishops of his consecration, was the beginning of a series of very important interventions of the Pope for good and for evil, which, together with the multiplication of appeals to Rome, modified very much the previous practically autonomous condition of the English Church. Another important change was made by the separation of the civil and ecclesiastical Courts determined upon by William “in the common council, and by the advice of all the bishops and abbots, and all the princes of his kingdom.” It abrogated the old Saxon custom set forth in the laws of Canute (1016-1035),[74] that the bishop should sit with the sheriff in the shire mote, and assist in the administration of justice and the determination of causes; and enacted that, for the future, civil causes should be determined by the secular judge; while, on the other hand, no lay judge should interfere in the laws which belong to the bishop, or in any causes which belong to the cure of souls. The results went further than perhaps William had foreseen. One result was the setting up of independent courts of ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all clerical persons, down to the lowest of the men in minor orders, and in all religious cases, including matrimonial and testamentary causes and questions of oaths. This made the whole body of the clergy a [Pg 87] privileged class under a law and judges of their own, and this privilege the Church maintained successfully against the endeavour of Henry II. to bring the clergy under the jurisdiction of the King’s Courts, and continued down to the “submission of the clergy” in the reign of Henry VIII. With this brief general review of the constitutional changes effected at the time of the Norman Conquest we proceed to our more humble task of noting the history of the parochial clergy and of their flocks.



Durham Cathedral.

The new men, military adventurers though they were, among whom the Norman conqueror had divided the lands of England, did not, like the Anglo-Saxon conquerors, trample out Christianity under their feet; nor, like the Danes in their turn, plunder the monasteries and churches; on the contrary, the Normans behaved like Christian men who, having come into power in a country which was in a backward religious condition, set themselves to effect religious improvements in their newly acquired possessions. Every bishop set to work to [Pg 88] rebuild his cathedral church, or to build a new one in the place to which his see had been removed. This leads to the inference that the old Saxon cathedrals were comparatively small, in an inferior style of architecture, and perhaps out of repair. Many of the lords of manors seem to have rebuilt the parish churches, and to have built new churches in remote parts of their estates.[75] The bishops also made provision for the spiritual wants of the people more especially dependent upon them; Lanfranc, for example, built two churches and two hospitals in Canterbury, and erected several churches in the manors belonging to the archbishopric.

If we consider the way in which the landed property of the kingdom was resettled after the Conquest, each great tenant of the Crown subdividing his vast estates among the lesser lords who had fought under his banner, we shall see the likelihood that each of these new

lords of manors, as soon as the country had settled down in tranquillity, would set himself to make the best of his new acquisitions; to add to their value by breaking up new waste land; to consult his dignity and comfort by improving upon the rude old hall of his Saxon predecessor, or building himself a new manor house. If his manor had only a chapel with [Pg 89] imperfect privileges, he would not be content without obtaining for it the status of an independent parish; and the Norman taste for building would lead him to replace the rude timber chapel by a stone church in the improved style of architecture which had lately been introduced. In some cases the new lord built himself a manor house on a new site at a distance from the old one, and a church near to it, and adopted the new church as the parish church, leaving the old one to serve as a chapel to those who lived near it.[76] A great number of village churches in nearly all parts of England still remain, in whole or in part, [Pg 90] whose architectural characteristics show that they are of about this period. Ordericus Vitalis, the historian of the conqueror's sons, says[77] that especially in the reign of Henry I.,[78] by the fervent devotion of the faithful, the houses and temples built by Edgar and Edward, and other Christian kings, were taken down to be replaced with others of greater magnitude and more elegant workmanship, to the glory of the Creator.

Old Shoreham Church, Sussex.

The life of Orderic himself supplies an example. His father was a priest, a man of some learning, who had come over at the Norman Conquest in the train of Roger of Montgomery, afterwards created Earl of Shrewsbury, and received from his lord lands on the Meole, three miles east of Shrewsbury. He found on this estate of Atcham, a chapel built of timber dedicated to S. Eata, and replaced it by one of stone. He had his son Orderic baptized by the Saxon priest of the parish, who also stood as his sponsor, and gave his own name (sometimes spelt Ulricus) to the child. At the age of five years, he entrusted the child to the care of a priest named Siward, to be taught the first rudiments of learning; and five years afterwards, on the death of his noble patron, he devoted both himself and his son to the monastic life in the monastery at Shrewsbury, which the earl had lately founded.[79]

The greatest ecclesiastical work of the Normans was, however, the revival of the monastic [Pg 91] system, and the filling of the country with noble and wealthy monasteries. The ascetic spirit had been revived in Italy and France by Odo of Clugny, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and others, who had founded new orders of the Benedictine and Augustinian rules. The Norman nobles brought this new enthusiasm with them; and just as in the early Saxon period every [Pg 92] thane thought it incumbent upon him to build a parish church on his estate, so now it became almost a fashion for every great noble to found a monastery upon his lordship. The nobles, while thinking first of the glory of God, and the spiritual advantages of the prayers of a holy community for the founder, his family and descendants, were conscious also of the dignity which a monastery reflected upon the family which founded and patronized it, and not insensible to the temporal advantages of the establishment of a centre of civilization and religion in the midst of their dependents.

Norman bishops and abbots. (From the twelfth century MS.)

William led the way by his foundation of a great Benedictine abbey on the field of his victory at Hastings, to which was given the name of Battle Abbey. William of Warrenne built a priory at Lewes (1077), into which he introduced the new Cluniac Order. The canons regular of St. Augustine were introduced into England at Colchester c. 1100; the Cistercians at Waverley in Surrey, in 1128; the Carthusians at Witham in Somerset in 1180; and by the end of the twelfth century religious houses of various orders had been founded in every part of the country. We have seen that at the end of the Saxon period there were only about fifty religious houses in England; under William and his two successors upwards of 300 new ones were founded.

The religious fervour of the monks, who abandoned the world and practised self-denial as a means to spiritual perfection and closer communion with God, naturally excited awed admiration; the picturesque surroundings of their profession, the frock and hood, the shaven [Pg 93] head and mortified countenance, the hard life of the cloister and the manifold services in the church, impressed the imagination; and consequently the popularity of the monks threw the secular clergy into the shade. The great churches of the monasteries rivalled the cathedrals in magnitude and splendour; the great abbots—relieved by the pope from the jurisdiction of their bishops, exercising themselves jurisdiction over their own estates, summoned to parliament, wealthy and learned—were the rivals of the bishops; and the “lord monks” held a higher rank in public estimation than the parish rectors. The importance of the political part they played in the life of the Middle Ages was hardly, perhaps, commensurate with the space they occupied in it. The Benedictines cultivated learning, and the Cistercians were enterprising agriculturists; the Augustinian orders were useful as preachers in the towns, and managers of hospitals; the nunneries of various orders were schools for the daughters of the gentry; they were all citadels of religion and learning over the length and breadth of the land; but from the point of view of public utility, abbots and monks seldom took any important part in the political events which made history, or were employed in the administration of the government, or made their mark as men of learning, as the bishops and secular clergy did in every generation.

The principal relation between the monasteries and the parish priests is a sinister one; when [Pg 94] the popularity of the monks waned, and the secular clergy in the thirteenth century regained the confidence of the people, the mischief was already done which has never been undone. Nearly half the parishes of England had been stripped of the best part of their endowments, in order to found and enrich the monasteries; but a small portion was rescued from their hands by the bishops on the reaction of the thirteenth century; the rest the monks retained till the Reformation of the sixteenth century; and then it was swallowed up by the king and his new nobility. But the history of the impropriation of benefices, and the subsequent foundation of perpetual vicarages, requires a chapter to itself.

ORDINATION OF A PRIEST. FROM THE LATE XII. CENT. DRAWING, HARL. ROLL, Y 6.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE FOUNDATION OF VICARAGES.

The Norman founders of monasteries not only gave to them lands and moneys, but also the parish churches, of which they had the advowson. It can hardly be said that in so doing they gave what was not theirs to give, for the idea was still prominent in men's minds that the church which a landlord or his antecessor had built for himself and his people was, in a sense, his church, and that he was at liberty (as he is to this day) to give his rights in it to some one else; moreover, the ancient custom of assigning the tithe of his lands to various religious uses, at the owner's discretion, was still not obsolete,[80] so that the assignment of part of the tithe away from the parish in which it was raised to a religious community at a distance shocked no one's conscience. Already before the Conquest, in France, the admirers of the new monastic orders had [Pg 96] largely adopted the practice of endowing the new religious houses which they founded with the parochial benefices in their patronage; and the practice had found some imitators in England.[81] The Norman lords, between their thank offerings of English benefices to their monasteries at home, in Normandy and elsewhere, and their zeal in founding monasteries on

their new English estates and endowing them with their parish churches, in a very short time bestowed a great number of parochial benefices upon the religious houses.

Sometimes a manor was given to a monastery with the appendant advowson of the rectory, which merely put the religious house in the position of any other patron; but in such cases the community usually, either at once or before very long, obtained some share of the income of the benefice, and ultimately, in most cases, its absolute appropriation.[82]

But in the more usual case the benefice was given to the religious house in such a way that the community became the “rector” of the parish, with, on one hand, all the responsibility of the cure of souls and the maintenance of the charities and hospitalities of the parish, and, on the other hand, with possession of all the endowments, fees, rights, and privileges of the [Pg 97] rector. It is only charitable to suppose that the lords of manors, who thus gave over their advowsons, thought that they were doing two good things: first, putting the spiritual interests of the parishioners into the hands of men of superior unworldliness and spirituality, who would do better for them than the old squire-rectors and their hired chaplains; and secondly, devoting the surplus revenues of the benefices to the maintenance of religious organizations, which would use them to the glory of God and the spiritual profit of the people in many ways. These benefices were called appropriate benefices, from the customary phrase used in their conveyance, *ad proprios usus* of the abbot and the community.

The spiritual duties of the parish were sometimes served by one of the community in holy orders, or by a cleric attached to the house; sometimes by a stipendiary priest who was paid according to private agreement, and dismissed at pleasure.

A short experience showed that the monks told off to take charge of these appropriate parishes did not generally make very efficient parish priests—how, indeed, should they? The pastoral work of a parish requires other qualities, ideas, sympathies, than those which are proper to the cloister. And, on the other hand, it was soon found that where clerks were employed to fulfil the parochial duties, the parishes were under the disadvantages—with which some of us are well acquainted in these days—of one supplied during a vacancy by temporary help; the clerk had no status in the parish, and no permanent interest in it. In [Pg 98] both cases it was found that the duties were often perfunctorily performed, and that the spiritual life of the parish languished.

Abbot presenting clerk for ordination. (Harl. MS., 1527.)

At the great national synod of Westminster, held by Anselm in 1102, which was attended by some of the lay nobles, an attempt was made to mitigate the evil. It was decreed (canon 21) that monks should not possess themselves of parish churches without the sanction of the bishop, and that they should not take so much of the profits of appropriate parishes as to impoverish the priests officiating therein. But the evil continued and increased until the Court of Rome took up the question and lent its authority to the movement. A decree of the Lateran Council in 1179 forbade the religious to receive tithes from the laity without the consent of the bishops, and empowered the bishops to make proper provision for the

spiritual work of the appropriate parishes. The English bishops, strengthened by the Papal authority, set themselves to provide a remedy. This took the form of the foundation of Perpetual Vicarages in the appropriated parishes. The bishop required that the convent, [Pg 99] instead of serving the parochial cure by one of the brethren, or by a clerk living in the monastery, or by a chaplain resident in the parish on such a stipend as the convent chose to give, and removable at pleasure, should nominate a competent parish priest, to the satisfaction of the bishop, who was to institute him as perpetual vicar. His title of "Vicarius" implied that he was the representative of the rector; his tenure was permanent and independent; he was answerable to the bishop, and to him only, for the proper fulfilment of his duties; and the bishop required that out of the revenues of the parish a house and such a portion should be assigned for a perpetual endowment as would enable the vicar of the parish to maintain his position in decent comfort.[83]

The pecuniary arrangement usually made was that the small tithes—"*i.e.* the tithes of every kind except of corn—and the customary offerings and fees, were assigned to the vicar; while the religious house took the 'great tithes,' *i.e.* the tithe of corn." Sometimes the vicar took the whole revenue of the parish of all kinds, and paid a fixed yearly sum of money to the appropriators. Sometimes the community took the revenue, and gave the vicar a fixed sum. [84] There was an appeal open to both sides if it turned out that the original agreement [Pg 100] seemed, on experience of its working, to be inequitable; and there are many cases in which vicars did appeal, and obtained an augmentation of their incomes.

A canon of Otho, 1237, required that a man instituted into a vicarage should be a deacon at least, and proceed to take priest's orders in the course of his first year.

The details of a few special cases will illustrate these general statements, and will help to admit us into the inner life of the mediæval parishes from a new point of view, and so increase the knowledge we are seeking of the day-by-day religious life of the parish priests and their people.

Thurstan, son of Wini, in the time of King Edward the Confessor, gave the Manor of Harlow to the great monastery of St. Edmund, recently restored by Canute; with the manor the church appendant to it; the convent nominated to the rectory as any other patron would do, until Pope Boniface IX.—for the monastery claimed exemption from episcopal jurisdiction, and regarded no one but the Pope himself as its superior—gave the abbot licence to appropriate the church, and to provide for the cure of the parish either by one of the monks or by a secular priest as the abbot should think fit.

In 1398 the abbot, in obedience to the canons, was willing to have a vicarage appointed for [Pg 101] the well-being of the parishioners; the vicar was to have the *mansum* of the rectory for his residence, and the tithe of all sorts of things, except the tithe of corn. It is worth while to give the list of the tithes allotted to the vicar, as an example once for all of what was included under the comprehensive name of small tithes, viz. of wool, lambs, calves, pigs, and geese; pears, apples, and other fruits of trees and orchards; flax, hemp, fallen wood, wax, honey and cheese; besides the tithes of a mill and a pigeon-house, and a money payment of 4*s.* 8¼*d.* a year, which probably was an existing composition for payment in kind or some small endowment for lights or what not. Then come some further stipulations. Seeing that the substitution of a poor vicar for a wealthy rector might affect the customary charities, the abbot was to pay 10*s.* a year to the parishioners to be distributed to the poor,[85] in compensation for any damage to them by means of the appropriation. Also the vicar was to pay a marc (13*s.* 4*d.*) to the Bishop of London in lieu of certain profits which the see would lose by the new arrangement.[86]

St. Hugh of Lincoln is said to have settled the vicarage of Swynford, Lincolnshire, in 1200, an early example. His successor, William of Blois (1203-1209), as one of the earliest acts of [Pg 102] his episcopate, required the Canons of Dunstable to endow a vicarage for their church of Pullokeshull with the altar dues, ten acres of land, and a third of the tithes. From the register of his successor, Hugh of Wells (1209-1235), it appears that three hundred vicarages were ordained in his long episcopate. In 1220 he made a visitation of Dunstable Priory, and made the monks settle vicarages in five of their churches. The Pope gave his successor, Bishop Grostete (1235-1254), authority to visit the exempt[87] orders, and to make them endow vicarages for their churches.

And what the Bishops of Lincoln were doing in their vast diocese, other bishops were also doing all up and down the country; the episcopal registers abound in records of these "taxations," as they were called.[88] We take two or three examples from the register of Walter de Gray, Archbishop of York, 1215-1256.

The name of Kirkby Malamdale shows that it was an ancient parish. A charter of King John confirmed the gift of it by Adam Fitz Adam to the canons of West Dereham in Norfolk, *quod suos in usus convertant proprios, salvâ tamen decenti et honorifica administratione ejus* [Pg 103] *ecclesiæ*. The abbot and canons appear, however, to have failed to fulfil the provisions stipulated for in the charter, for Archbishop Walter de Gray, in 1250, peremptorily summoned them "to appear before him on the morrow of the Lord's Day on which is sung *Lætare Jerusalem* (fourth in Lent), wherever in his diocese he should happen to be, to show how the vicarage was endowed and under what authority, taking notice that whether they were present or not, if it should appear to be insufficient, he should proceed to augment it both by the apostolic authority (*i.e.* of the Apostolic See) and by his own."[89]

These arrangements were (as has been said) universally subject to future modification. For example, in settling the Vicarage of Gerneby (Granby), which was in the presentation of the Prior and Convent of Thurgarton, Notts, the archbishop describes what the vicar is to have, and concludes that the Prior and Convent are to have the residue, "unless it should appear that an augmentation is needed."[90] Appeals from vicars for an augmentation are not infrequent; for example, "Magister Orlandus, the perpetual vicar of Cunigbur (Conisborough), having urged against the prior and Convent of Lewes that his vicarage be taxed (= surveyed and valued and dealt with), we do so. The corn tithe, demesne lands and meadow of the church, and the tenants' rents to belong to the prior and convent; the lesser tithes, etc., with two tofts, which we have assigned for a manse, to belong to the vicar."[91] [Pg 104]

In the ordination of the churches of Dalton, Urswick, Millum and Kirkby Ireleth belonging to Furness Abbey, the archbishop orders that Dalton shall be a vicarage of 15 marks, Urswick shall continue as it is, the mediety of Millum the abbot and convent shall retain *ad proprios usus*, and the other mediety of Millum and Kirkby and its chapels shall be at his own disposition; and that each mediety of Millum shall have a vicarage of 15 marks.

In the ordination of the churches belonging to the prior and canons of St. Oswald of Nostell, he says, that in consideration of the poverty and religious and honourable life of the prior and canons, he gives, grants, and confirms to them in pure and perpetual alms a pension of 20 marks of silver a year from the church of South Kirkby, which is in their advowson; and a pension of 15 marks from Tikhill, which is in their advowson. A little later, making a new ordination of the churches of Tikhill, South Kirkby, Rowell (Rothwell), Bouelton (Bolton), Wyverthorpe, and the mediety of Mekesburgh (Mexborough), he orders, that in the chapel of Slayneton (in the parish of Tikhill), since it has a baptistery and a cemetery on account of its distance from the mother church, there shall be a perpetual vicar, who for the maintenance of himself and of the lights and other necessaries of the chapel, shall have the whole altarage of Slayneton, with the lands belonging to the said chapel. The Vicar of South Kirkby [Pg 105] shall have with him a fellow-priest (*socium sacerdotum*). The Vicar of Rothwell, for the maintenance of himself and a fellow-priest, shall have all the altarage with a competent manse. He assigns to the Church of York for ever the Church of Wyverthorpe (with the reservation of competent vicars), and both the mother church and the chapel of Helperthorpe; and he appoints that in the mother church of Wyverthorpe there shall be a perpetual resident priest vicar, with 24 marks a year, and in the chapel of Helperthorpe, on account of its distance from the mother church, there shall be a resident priest vicar, who for his sustenance and that of his clerks, that he may the more fully and honourably serve the said chapel, shall have 10 marks yearly.

In the ordination of the churches of Sherburn, Fenton, and St. Maurice, in York, which were appropriate to one of the prebendaries of York, he decrees that each shall have a perpetual vicar with cure of souls, who shall sustain the burden of their churches and their chapels; the Vicar of Sherburn to have the altarage of the church and its chapels, and pay to the canon 35 marks sterling a year; the Vicar of Fenton shall have all the altarage, paying 6 marks to the canon; and the Vicar of St. Maurice in Monkgate, York, shall pay 4 marks.

In the register of Bishop Bronscombe of Exeter (1258-1280) there are frequent records of the assignment of vicarages; in the majority of cases, the vicar is given a house and the small tithes, and is required to sustain all due and customary charges.

The ordination of a vicarage in a parish in which assistant-chaplains had been used to be [Pg 106] employed, often stipulated for their continued employment and maintenance by the vicar, and often made other conditions as to the efficient service of the church and parish. For example, in settling the vicarage of the prebendal church of Sutton, Lincolnshire, 1276, it was ordained that the vicar should be assisted in the service of the church by a deacon and a clerk; and that he should maintain six candles and a lamp in the chancel at his own cost.[92]

> In ordaining a vicarage in St. Mary's Church in 1269, Bishop Bronscombe, of Exeter, requires that the vicar shall keep with him, at his own cost, two chaplains who shall serve the chapels in the parish.[93] Again, in 1283, in constituting a vicarage at Glasney, the same bishop requires that the vicar, by himself and by two chaplains maintained at his own cost, shall serve the mother church and its chapels as has been accustomed to be done.[94] In the following year the same bishop calls upon the Vicar of Harpford to maintain a chaplain to serve the Chapel of Fenotery.[95] Bishop Quivil, in 1283, requires the Vicar of St. Crantoch and St. Columb Minor to maintain a chaplain for the chapel at his own cost (Quivil's "Register," p. 371).

In 1327, Walter, Vicar of Yatton, Somerset, one of the prebends of the Cathedral of Bath and Wells, complained to Bishop Drokensford that he had not enough for the maintenance of himself and two chaplains. The prebend was worth a hundred marks and the vicarage ten. [Pg 107] The bishop accordingly assigned to the vicarage a portion of the tithe.[96] Other bishops' registers, no doubt all of them, contain similar cases.[97]

In 1439, Archbishop Chichele remarks on the poverty of some vicarages, and the difficulty the vicars have in obtaining an augmentation of them from the rectors and proprietors of churches, and orders ordinaries to allow such vicars to sue *in formâ pauperis*, and to take care that they have not less than twelve marks a year, if the whole value of the living will

extend to so much.

On the other hand, there were sometimes appeals from the appropriators to the bishop to diminish the sum assigned to the vicar. For example, the Rectory of Kettlewell, co. York, was given to Covenham Abbey, and a vicarage ordained in 1344, on the unusual condition of the assignment to the vicar of the rectory house, and an annual payment of seven marks; in 1359 a new "taxation" of the vicarage was made, and the money payment reduced to five marks. The Rectory of Whalley was given to the Abbey of Stanlaw in 1284, and a vicarage ordained at the same time; in 1340, on the representation that the endowment of the vicarage was excessive, and that the religious community were involved in the costly work of [Pg 108] building their new house and church at Whalley, the Bishop of Lichfield considerably reduced the endowment.

The monasteries did not always fulfil their obligations. Sometimes they seem, when a vacancy occurred in the vicarage, to have left it vacant, and served the parish by one of their own members, or in some cheaper way. To this abuse a constitution of Othobon was directed, in 1268, which orders that the religious should present a vicar with competent endowment within six months, and, if not, the bishop should fill up the vacancy. The monks of Whalley transgressed in this way from the year c. 1356 onwards by serving the parish church by one of their number. The abuse, however, continued, and at length provoked the interference of the Legislature. In 4 Henry IV. the Commons petitioned the king that curates non-resident, should incur the penalties of præmunire (Rot. Parl.). In the same year a statute was made providing, *inter alia*, "that henceforth in every church appropried a secular person be ordained vicar, and that no religious be in any wise made vicar in any church so appropried." But, unfortunately, no penalty was attached to a neglect of the law, and therefore it had little or no effect. Again, in the 10th Henry VI., a bill was proposed by the two Houses of Parliament requiring that "in every church appropried a secular person be ordained perpetual vicar, and that if any religious henceforth suffer a vicarage to be for six months without a resident vicar, the said church shall be disappropried and disamortized for ever;" but, unhappily, the king refused his assent to it, and the evil continued.[98] [Pg 109]

The institution of vicarages, like everything else, was liable to abuses. One of the abuses was where a rector instituted a vicarage in his own rectory, thus reserving the greater part of the income of the benefice to himself as a sinecure, and devolving the labour and responsibility upon another who received the lesser share. Thus, in the Lichfield Register, in 1328, the Rector of Walton was allowed to have a curate (vicar) on condition of setting aside for him a house in the parish, the oblations at the altar and at marriages and churchings, the tithes of a hamlet, and herbage of church and chapel yards; the curate was to find chaplains for the chapels, and a deacon at 20*s.* a year for the church.[99]

Another abuse, forbidden by the Synod of Oxford, in 1223, was for the parson of a parish to change himself into a vicar, and dispose of the rectory to another. This synod also ordained that vicars should serve the cure in person, should be in priests' orders or proceed to them immediately, and that every presentee should make oath that he had not given or promised anything or entered into any agreement on account of his presentation.

[Pg 110]

CHAPTER VIII.

PAROCHIAL CHAPELS.

At a rather early period, so the evidence leads us to conclude, all the great Saxon landowners had founded a religious house or a rectory on their estates, and these had, first by custom and then by legal recognition of the custom, obtained certain rights; on one hand, the sole right of spiritual ministration and pastoral jurisdiction among the people on those estates; and, on the other hand, to certain payments from them. Many of these estates were very large in area, embracing what at first were tracts of uninhabited and uncultivated country. But as population increased, and new lands were brought under cultivation, the spiritual needs of the new halls and new

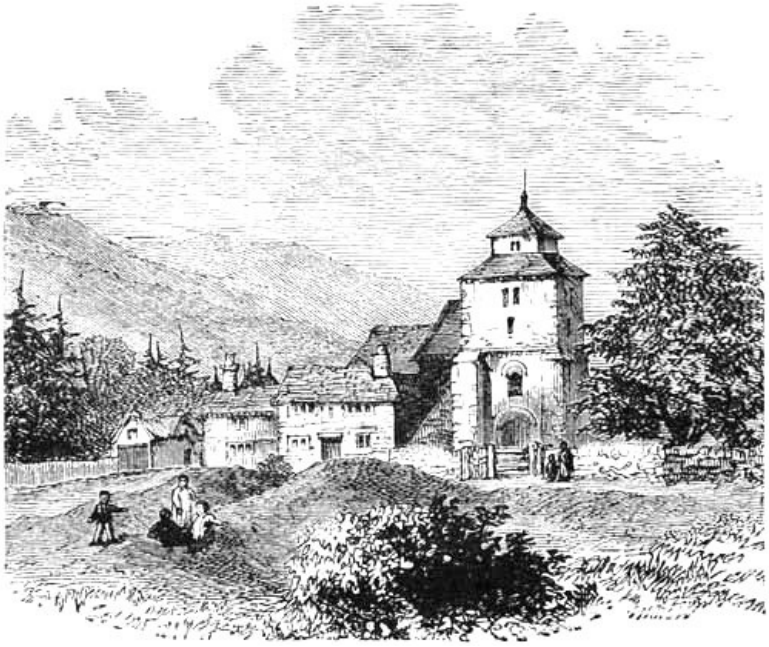
hamlets which came into being were supplied by chapels; these were built sometimes by the munificence of the lord of the whole estate, sometimes by the pious zeal of the rector who felt himself responsible for these new parishioners; sometimes by the mesne lord to whom the land of the new clearing had been granted; sometimes by the group of farmers whose labour had cleared the forest or broken up the waste. [Pg 111]

The old Saxon parish priests frequently had one or more chaplains and clerks living with them and assisting them in their duties;[100] and this continued to be the case down to the Reformation, the bishops taking such steps as they could to perpetuate the maintenance of these chaplains.

When these *chapels* were erected, care was taken of the rights of the mother church. Constitutions of Egbert, Archbishop of York in 750, decree that the mother church shall not be deprived of tithes or other rights by allotment of them to new chapels. The same is ordered in a council under King Ethelred, by the advice of his two archbishops, Alfege and Wulfstan.

Clun, Shropshire, is an example of the great Saxon parishes. In the time of Richard I., Isabel de Saye gave the church and its chapels to Wenlock Priory for the safety of her soul and the souls of her husband and son, her father and mother, and all her ancestors and successors. The chapels enumerated are at the vill of St. Thomas de Waterdene, de Clumbire, de Cluntune, de Oppetune, and the chapels de Eggedune and Sebbidune, and all other chapels and belongings. The donor, however, reserves her free chapels, viz. the chapel of her castle, and any others.[101]

Shawbury was a Saxon foundation mentioned in Domesday. A certificate of Bishop Roger de Clinton (1130-1148) shows that there were then four villes, viz. of Aston Reynald, Moreton Corbet, Grenvill, and Great Withyford, and that the bishop consecrated chapels in three of them, there being one already existing. The bishop decided that such lands and endowment as the lords of the fees had offered when he consecrated the new cemeteries were offered to the mother church. The church, with its chapels, was appropriated to Haughmond Abbey; the canons of Haughmond being required to present fit chaplains to the Church and assign them a proper sustenance, the residue they might appropriate to their own uses and the entertainment of guests.[102] [Pg 112]



Clun Church, Shropshire.

At length the multiplication of chapels was regulated by legislation. The synod of Westminster (1102), under Anselm, decreed that no more should be erected without the bishop’s leave. [Pg 113]

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the endowment of many of these chapels, the concession to them of the right of baptism, marriage, and burial, the assignment of a district within which the priest had pastoral jurisdiction, and the concession to the mesne lord of the patronage of the chapel which he had built and endowed, amounted to the practical elevation of such chapels to the status of parish churches. The natural tendency of things was in this direction. A landholder who had built a church for himself and his people would naturally desire that it should possess the dignity of a parish church, and was thus induced to provide a sufficient endowment for it. The people would naturally desire the convenience of having all the means of grace at their own church instead of having to carry their children to a distance for baptism and their dead for burial, and in some cases the more well-to-do

freeholders would be willing to contribute to the cost of it. The quotation of some actual examples will be the most interesting way of illustrating the general history of this development.[103]

> Domesday speaks of one church in the Hundred of Alnodestreu and County of Salop, viz. that of St. Gregory. When Bishop Robert de Betun (about 1138) granted this church to the Abbey of Shrewsbury, St. Gregory's became the priory church of Momerfeuld, or Morville, and it had three dependent chapels, which were also appropriated to the priory, viz. at Billingsley which had as its endowment half the corn tithes of the said ville and paid 6*s.* 8*d.* to the mother church, at Olbury which paid 5*s.* and at Tasley which paid 6*s.* 8*d.*[104] [Pg 114]
>
> Within a year or two Robert Fitz Aer[105] founded another chapel at Aston Aer, endowing it with sixty acres and a house and all tithes of the domain. Within ten years two other such chapels were built, viz. at Aldenham and Underdon with separate endowments. By the appropriation deed, which gives St. Gregory and its chapels to the convent, it is ordained that these chapels shall be subject to the mother church of Morville, so that on great festivals the people shall attend there, and the priest of Morville shall, if he pleases, have the dead carried thither for burial. Again, the same bishop consecrated a new chapel at Astley Abbots, endowed by the Abbot of Salop himself with thirty acres, a house, and a parcel of land worth 4*s.* per ann. [Pg 115]

These seven chapels in one parish, nearly all consecrated by one bishop, seem to mark a time of active extension. It is curious that, whereas Orderic Vitalis says that there was much building of monasteries and churches in the reign of Henry I., because the country had settled down, after the troubles of the Conquest, into peace and security,[106] Bishop de Betun says that he has consented to consecrate so many chapels as a protection for the poor, and out of regard to the warlike troubles of the time—for it was during the stormy reign of Stephen.[107]

> In many cases the owners of the estates on which the chapels were situated, or the tenants, or both together, made an agreement with the rector to augment the stipend of a chaplain so that he might give additional services and pastoral care in their ville. Thus, when Gilbert Norman (1130?) gave the church of Kingston-on-Thames to Merton Priory, the parish had already four chapelries, Thames Ditton, East Moulsey, Petersham, and Shene (now Richmond). In 1211 the inhabitants of Petersham complained of the paucity of services in their chapel, and the matter came before the Ecclesiastical Courts. It would appear that lack of funds was at the bottom of the deficiency of service. The prior and convent, "of their great piety, and for the good of the souls of their parishioners," granted to the vicar and his successors two quarters of corn, one of barley, and one of oats; and the Abbot and Convent of Chertsey, who were considerable landowners there, also of their good will granted a quarter of corn from their lands there, for the sustentation of a chaplain who should celebrate in the chapel thrice a week, viz. on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday.[108] A like complaint was made again in 1266, when the appropriators increased their grant to four quarters of wheat, one of barley, and one of oats; and seventeen of the parishioners for themselves and heirs granted a payment of one bushel of wheat for every ten acres of their land, making twenty-four and a half bushels. Other cases in which the people themselves contributed to the support of their priest will be found in the chapter on Chantries. [Pg 116]

Clearly the thing to be desired was to get resident chaplains appointed to all the villes with a considerable population, and to that end to get endowments for them, and much was done in this direction in the thirteenth century. We shall find ample illustrations of various features of the work in the forty years' episcopate of Archbishop Walter Gray. The archbishop wrote to the Pope, Gregory IX., on the subject, desiring, no doubt, to get the support of the Papal sanction for the measures which he desired to take. We gather from the pope's reply that the archbishop had represented to him that "many parishes in his diocese were so widely spread that the parishioners were at a great distance from their church, and were not able, without much inconvenience, to come to the Divine services; and that it often happened, when the priest was summoned by the sick, that before he could arrive they had died without confession and the viaticum;" and no doubt the archbishop had suggested what he desired to do; whereupon the pope grants to him leave that, after due consideration of the distance of places, the difficulties of the roads, and the number of the increasing population, in parishes of this sort, he should build oratories and institute priests in them.[109] [Pg 117]

The way in which the archbishop set to work (1233) to strengthen the existing machinery is admirably illustrated in the ordinance which he drew up with the concurrence of the dean for the vicarages with their chapels belonging to the deanery. There were three vicarages, Pocklington, Pickering, and Kellum. Pocklington had six chapels, Pickering four, and it does not appear that Kellum had any. First he strengthened the mother churches by the requirement that each of the vicars should, "besides all other necessary ministers," have a chaplain—an assistant priest—always with him. Then he consolidated the six chapels of Pocklington and the four of Pickering, two and two, into five vicarages, *i.e.* two neighbouring

chapels were formed into a vicarage, the incumbent of which was to have *in nomine vicaragiæ* certain endowments, and the vicar was to find the necessary ministers for both chapels; but the dignity of the mother churches was reserved by the provision that the new vicars were to pay a small annual sum to their mother churches *nomine subjectionis*.[110]

Another illustration of the way in which the improved condition of things was brought about [Pg 118] is in the case of Roundelay. Sir John de Roundelay and his heirs and the men of that ville had licence (A.D. 1231) to establish a perpetual chantry in their chapel every day in the year save Christmas, Purification, Easter ("Parasceues"), and All Saints, and if they had service on Palm Sunday, it was to be without procession and the blessing of the Palms; neither were they to have the celebration of baptism, marriage, or churching; on all these occasions they were to repair to the mother church, and the chaplain and people were to swear obedience to the mother church and its rectors. Sir John provided an endowment for the new incumbent, and the vicar of the mother church was to give him half a mark a year (6*s.* 8*d.*), in consideration, no doubt, that it had hitherto been a charge upon him to that extent or more to make provision for the partial services at the chapel.[111]

Again, Berneston Chapel, Notts, had been accustomed to have only three services a week. The people had the archbishop's licence to give an endowment to provide for having full services in their chapel *pro habendo plenario servitio* by a chaplain and clerk residing there.[112]

There are many other examples in the Archbishop's Register of similar extensions of the usefulness of the existing ecclesiastical machinery, but these are enough to show the way in which it was done. There can be no doubt that the work was done in the same way where it [Pg 119] was needed in the other dioceses of the kingdom.

There is a curious instance at Stokesay, in Shropshire. Before the Conquest, the parish church of that estate had been at Aldon, which is mentioned in Domesday. After the Conquest, the status of parish church had been given to a new church at Stokesay, on the same estate, and Aldon Church had been left in the status of a chapel. In 1367, the chief parishioners of Aldon took proceedings against the vicar, Walter of Greneburg, for neglecting them, and he was required by the bishop to find a chaplain to celebrate three days a week—Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday—except on great festivals.[113]

The following seems to be an instance of the transition of dependent chapels into independent parish churches, and an illustration of the way in which sometimes it came about. At Newnham, Gloucestershire, in 1260, an inquisition *post mortem* found that the Rector of Westbury held the chapels of Newnham and Munstreworth as pertaining to the Church of Westbury. In 1309, in the Pleas before the King, the jurors declared on oath that the churches of Newnham and Munstreworth were mother churches with cure of souls before the time of King Henry III., and in the presentation of the king.

Here is an example at Whalley of the way in which great landed proprietors brought new tracts of their forest and waste under cultivation, and created new manors. [Pg 120]

> In a suit in the reign of Edward III., the jurors found that in the time of King John there was not in the aforesaid place of Brandwode any manor or manses, but it was waste, neither built upon nor cultivated, and was parcel of the aforesaid forest of Penhul [Pendle], and it is said that in the time of Henry, the ancestor [proavus] of the present king, the then abbot [of Whalley] built houses on the aforesaid waste of Brandwode, and caused a great part of the waste to be enclosed, which is now called the Manor of Brandwode.[114]

And here is a late example of the people reclaiming waste, and building a chapel for themselves:—

> In the end of the fifteenth century the forest of Rossendale was inhabited only, or chiefly, by foresters and the keepers of the deer. Upon representation to King Henry VII., and afterwards to Henry VIII., that if the deer were taken away, the forest was likely to come to some good purpose, it was disafforested, and let forth in divers sorts, some for a term of years, some by copy of Court Roll; so that where there was nothing else but deer and other savage and wild beasts, by the industry of the inhabitants, there is since grown to be very fertile ground well replenished with people. And inasmuch as the Castle Church of Clitheroe, being their parish church, was distant twelve miles, and the ways very foul, painful, and perilous, and the country in the winter season so extremely and vehemently cold, that infants borne to the church are in great peril of their lives, and the aged and impotent people and women great with child not able to travel so far to hear the Word of God, and the dead corpses like to remain unburied till such time as great annoyance to grow thereby, the inhabitants about 1512, at their proper costs, made a chapel-of-ease in the said forest; since the disafforesting of the said forest from eighty persons there are grown to be a thousand young and old. At the same time, one Lettice Jackson, a widow, vested in feoffees certain lands for the use of the new church of our Saviour in Rossendale. The population seems to have continued to increase, for, thirty years afterwards, the people founded and edified a chapel in Morell Height in honour of God, our Blessed Lady and All Saints.[115] [Pg 121]

We have seen that the law carefully safeguarded the rights of the mother churches, as against the new chapels which sprang up. The Church also was careful to maintain their dignity in a way which calls for some remark. The curate of a chapel, on his institution, made a vow of reverence and obedience to his rector. Very generally some small payment was required from the chapelry to the rector *in nomine subjectionis*, as an acknowledgment of dependence. The people of the chapelries were required on several of the great festivals of the Church to communicate at the mother church, and on one or more of these festivals to visit the mother church in procession with flags flying.

There was another custom, very like this, on a larger scale, viz. the custom for the parishioners of all the parishes of a diocese to visit the cathedral church in procession on a given day in the year. This seems to have been a very old custom, for which Sir R. Phillimore quotes the Council of Agde and the Decretum of Gratian,[116] and suggests that it was [Pg 122] probably introduced into England at the Norman Conquest. We find it enjoined in the canons of several Diocesan Councils; and it is tolerably certain that it was a general custom.

We suggest that the idea at the back of these customs was not merely that the offerings of the people of the chapelries should not be lost to the rector of the mother church on the three great days of offering; and that the cathedral should receive a yearly tribute from every subject of the bishop. We suggest that the purpose of the custom was to maintain the idea of the unity of the Church. The chapels had received their Christianity from the mother church, and all the “houseling people” in recognition of it worshipped there three times a year. The mother churches received their Christianity from the bishop’s see, and were his spiritual subjects, and once a year went up in procession to worship at the cathedral as an act of homage. And these reunions would, in fact, promote the idea of brotherly communion and Christian unity, as the attendance of the Israelites on the three great festivals at their one temple in Jerusalem tended to maintain the national unity of the people as the people of God.

Nothing is free from abuse. We learn from the Register of Bishop Storey, of Chichester, that in 1478 the people who came yearly to visit the shrine of St. Richard on his commemoration day (April 3), had been accustomed to carry long painted wands, and in struggles for precedence had used these wands upon one another’s heads and shoulders; wherefore the [Pg 123] bishop directs that in future they shall, instead of wands, carry banners and crosses, that the several parishes shall march up reverently from the west door of the cathedral in a prescribed order, of which notice should be given by the incumbents in their churches on the Sunday preceding the festival.

Royal chapels were, on no sound ecclesiastical principle, but by an exercise of the royal prerogative, from an early period held to be outside any episcopal jurisdiction.[117] For example, a series of churches along the old Mercian border, Stone, Stafford, and Gnosall, Penkridge and Wolverhampton, Tettenhall, as having been built by King Wulfhere, or by Elfleda, the Lady of Mercia, claimed exemption from all control. Clinton Bishop of Lichfield (1129-48) tried to bring them under his rule by purchasing them of the king, and annexing them bodily to the possessions of his see but that did not hinder them from still claiming their ancient privileges.

The lawyers[118] say that the king may by charter license a subject to build a free chapel similarly free from the jurisdiction of the ordinary, but they are not able to quote any instances of it. Some barons, however, did claim freedom from jurisdiction for the chapels of certain castles; perhaps on the ground that the castles were royal castles, and that they held [Pg 124] or had received them from the crown with all their privileges and exemptions. For example, the chapel of St. Mary, in the castle at Hastings, enlarged, if not founded, soon after the Conquest, by the Count of Eu, for a dean and ten prebendaries, was claimed by successive lords of the castle to be a free chapel; and in spite of repeated attempts by the bishops of Chichester to assert their rights, the privilege was successfully maintained till the fifteenth century.

A number of chapels were called free chapels, apparently because they were free from subjection to the mother church of the parish. We have already seen that the free chapels, built for the convenience of outlying groups of population, were at first served by chaplains from the mother church; then the chaplains nominated by the rector resided at the chapelries; and when the chapels were endowed and assigned districts, and obtained the rights of baptism, marriage, and burial, still the patronage to the chapelries was in the rector, and the sentiment of subjection to the mother church was carefully kept up by the payment of a pension from the one to the other, and the custom of a procession to the service of the mother church on one or more great occasions. But in some cases a chapel became freed from this subjection by the action of the neighbouring squire, who, by purchase or agreement, obtained special rights over it; or some private patron built and endowed a new chapel with the stipulation for certain rights. We have seen that, when Isabel de Saye gave the parish of Clun and all its chapels to Wenlock Priory, the donor [Pg 125] reserved her free chapels.

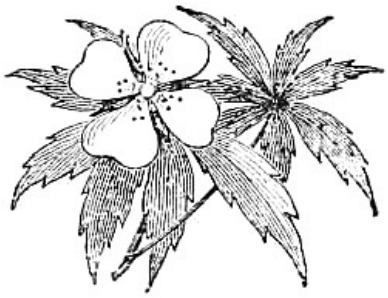
Here is an instance of a chapel which is called a free chapel, but was technically a chantry,

and clearly intended to serve also as a chapel-of-ease to the town in which it was situated.

In 1309, Edward Lovekyn, of Kingston-on-Thames, had leave to build a chapel there, and endow it with lands and rent. Robert Lovekyn, his brother and successor, withheld some of the income, and was compelled to restore it by threat of excommunication with bell and candle. In 1352, John Lovekyn rebuilt the chapel and increased the endowment for the sustentation of one or more additional chaplains, one to be warden (it does not appear that there ever were more than the warden and one brother), who had a manse. The rules and ordinances are given at length in the book from which we quote. They were to live together in the manse, with separate sleeping rooms, and a common table. The warden was to provide suitable provision, and give to each brother a gown of the same kind which he wore, and forty silver shillings a year for his other necessaries. The warden was also to provide a clerk to serve mass and wait upon the chaplains in their rooms; and to provide honest surplices and amyces furred with black fur to wear in chapel. The warden to be always in residence, and not to take any other cure; not to give or sell any corrody; the warden might have guests at table; if any other had a guest, he was to pay 3*d.* for his dinner and 2*d.* for any other meal.[119] Masses to be said for the founder and his family, and also to grace after dinner was to be added, "May the souls of John Edward and Robert Lovekyn, our founders, and of the Lord William, Bishop of Winchester, and all faithful deceased, rest in peace through the mercy of God." On the four principal feasts the chaplains were to attend the parish church and make their offerings like other parishioners. In consideration that John Lovekyn gave a manse to the vicarage, his chapel was to have all oblations which came to it.[120]

[Pg 126]

The calendar of the chapels, chantries, etc., at the time of the Reformation, mentions 432 chapels, of which 198 are called "free chapels."



[Pg 127]

CHAPTER IX.

THE PARISH PRIEST—HIS BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

The early Saxon bishops were very often men of royal and noble families. The religious houses, which were the centres of evangelization in the early missionary phase of the history, were often founded by royal and noble persons, who were not seldom themselves the first abbots and abbesses, and handed down their houses and offices as hereditary possessions. The parish churches were founded by the lords of the land, who made the advowson appendant to the manor, and very usually brought up a younger son to be the spiritual rector of the family estate. The natural result of all this would be that a large proportion of the Saxon clergy would be men of good family; not by any means exclusively, for we have seen that even slaves[121] were sometimes admitted to Holy Orders, and we have read[122] a kindly warning to priests of noble birth not to despise their brethren of humbler origin; and the law assigned to every priest—*qua* priest—the rank of thane (p. 77).

[Pg 128]

We know that the founders of the English churches established schools, and finding their

converts apt pupils, soon raised up a learned native clergy. The young men intended for the pastoral office were taught the learning and trained in the ascetic discipline of these monastic schools.[123]

The natural result would be that the Saxon clergy would not only be generally of good birth and breeding, but also religious, learned, and capable men; the natural spiritual rulers, teachers, and protectors of the population of freemen, villeins, and serfs who peopled the estate of which the civil lord and ruler was often the rector's father or brother.

The Norman Conquest introduced confusion for a time into both monasteries and parishes. Norman abbots intruded into the religious houses, sometimes quarrelled with the Saxon monks, and the first inhabitants of the newly-founded monasteries were usually imported from abroad; as the rectories fell vacant, they would be filled with the sons of the new Norman lords of manors, and there could be little sympathy between the Norman rector and the Saxon flock. But things soon settled down upon a new course. In a very few generations Normans and Saxons amalgamated. The old monasteries, revived and reformed, and the new [Pg 129] ones added to them, were filled with zealous English communities; and in the parishes an English lord of the manor and an English rector ruled an English people. With the thirteenth century we begin a new period of parish history, continuing down to the sixteenth century, and extending all over the country, of which the general features are very uniform; so that it is only necessary occasionally to point out new institutions and phases of character.

Perhaps the most striking social feature of these centuries is the way in which the Church opened up a career to all ranks and classes of the people. The great landed families still maintained friendly relations with the monasteries which their forbears had founded, and sometimes contributed one of their cadets to the cloister, and perhaps in time secured his nomination to the abbacy; the lords of the manors continued to present their younger sons to the rectories; so that there was always a strong aristocratic element among the clergy. The vicars were for the most part the nominees of the religious houses, and the conjecture that abbots and priors, and abbesses, and prioresses, and dignitaries of the houses, not infrequently presented their relatives, and sometimes clerks in the service of the house, is supported by some actual examples.

The middle classes supplied a great number of the clergy who filled the offices of parish chaplain (= assistant-curates), chantry priest, guild priest, and the like; and many of these, [Pg 130] by force of learning, character, and good service, rose to higher offices. Even young men of the servile class were not excluded from the ranks of the clergy. The slaves whom Gregory and Aidan, and others, redeemed and trained as priests, may have been young men of good family taken captive in war; but in the thirteenth and subsequent centuries young men born and bred serfs were not infrequently educated and ordained, and given fair chance of promotion. It is true they were under special legal disabilities. A serf could not be himself ordained, or send his children to school without his lord's leave, for they were *adscripti glæbe*, bound to the soil, and their labour and their children's labour (or a portion of it, carefully defined by law and custom) was an important part of the property of their lord; the canons of the Church, moreover, from a very early period, had made servile birth a disqualification for Holy Orders;[124] but in the thirteenth, and especially in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there are numerous examples in which a serf gave a fine to his lord for leave to send his son to school, and kindly lords not infrequently gave the right gratis to a promising youth, and his ultimate freedom; and the Church frequently, probably usually, as a matter of course, gave a dispensation *de defectu natalium*.

From the single manor of Woolrichston, in Warwickshire, we get these illustrations of the [Pg 131] text:—In 1361, Walter Martin paid 5*s.* for the privilege of putting his son *ad scholas*. In 1371, William Potter fined in 13*s.* 4*d.*, that his eldest son may go *ad scholas* and take Orders. Stephen Sprot fined in 3*s.* 4*d.*, that he might send his son Richard *ad scholas*. William Henekyn fined in 5*s.*, to marry his daughter Alice. In 1335, William at Water paid for licence for his younger son William *ad sacrum ordinem promovendum*.[125]

Here is another example. In 1312, the Bishop of Durham gave license to his *nativus*, Walter de Hoghington, clerk, to receive all Divine orders, and renounced his *jus domini*.[126]

And this liberal sentiment was based upon the profoundest principle. When the King's School at Canterbury was reorganized, at the time of the Reformation, some of the commissioners to whom the work was committed wished to limit the school to the children of gentlemen. It was for the ploughman's son, they argued, to go to plough, and the artificer's son to apply to the trade of his parents' vocation; and the gentleman's children are used to have the knowledge of government and rule of the commonwealth. "I grant," replied Archbishop Cranmer, who was one of the commissioners, "much of your meaning herein as needful in a commonwealth; but yet utterly to exclude the ploughman's son and [Pg 132] the poor man's son from the benefit of learning, as though they were unworthy to have the gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed upon them as well as upon others, was as much as to say that Almighty God should not be at liberty to bestow His great gifts of grace upon any person but as we and other men shall appoint them to be employed according to our fancy, and not according to His most goodly will and pleasure, who giveth His gifts of learning and

other perfections in all sciences unto all kinds and states of people indifferently."[127]

There were always some who took the less liberal view which the archbishop thus nobly rebuked. Even in the twelfth century, Walter Map (one of the clerks in the civil service of Henry II., holding various ecclesiastical preferments; he died in 1209) complains that villeins were attempting to educate their "ignoble and degenerate offspring" in the liberal arts.

The author of the "Vision of Piers Plowman" gives utterance to the same illiberal prejudices as the noble colleagues of Cranmer. He thinks that "Bondmen and beggars' children belong to labour, and should serve lords' sons, and lords' sons should serve God, as belongeth to their degree;" and complains that "bondmen's bairns should be made bishops, and that popes and patrons should refuse gentle blood and take Symond's son to keep sanctuary."[128]

In another place the same writer says, in the same strain— [Pg 133]

> Now might each sowter[129] his son setten to schole
> And each beggar's brat in the book learne,
> And worth to a writer and with a lorde dwelle,
> Or falsely to a frere the fiend for to serven.
> So of that beggar's brat a Bishop that worthen,
> Among the peers of the land prese to sytten;
> And lorde's sons lowly to the lordes loute
> Knyghtes crooketh hem to, and crowcheth ful lowe;
> And his sire a sowter[129] y-soiled with grees,
> His teeth with toyling of leather battered as a saw.

The writer of "Symon's Lesson of Wisdom for Children," in a much more genial spirit, jestingly encourages the children to be diligent in their lessons by holding out the prize of succession to the see:

> And lerne as faste as thou can,
> For our byshop is an old man,
> And therfor thou must lerne faste
> If thou wilt be byshop when he is past.[130]

The better spirit prevailed. The lower classes had the inevitable disadvantages of their origin to contend with, but every cathedral and religious house had its schools, which were ready enough to admit boys who were seen to possess those "gifts of the Holy Ghost" which might, if duly cultivated, make them useful in Church and State; and it was regarded as the duty of ecclesiastical persons to look out for such boys, and support them in their career. Richard II. rejected a proposal to forbid villeins to send their children to school "to learn clergee;" and the triumph of the more liberal sentiment was legally secured by the Statute of Artificers passed by Parliament in 1406, which enacted that "every man or woman, of what state or condition he be, shall be free to set their son or daughter to take learning at any school that pleaseth them within the realm." [Pg 134]

The career which was thus thrown open to all classes of the people was a much larger one than appears at first sight. Not only all the offices and dignities of the Church, from that of stipendiary chaplain to that of bishop or even of Pope, were open to all comers, but also all the offices of the State which required learning as a qualification were open to every clerk. For the kings took the officials of the civil departments of the Government very largely from the ranks of the clergy; and, by a great abuse of their patronage, paid them for their services to the State by promotion to the emoluments and dignities of the Church.[131] [Pg 135]

Some of the satirists found fault with this state of things, but, in fact, the man of humble birth, who had risen to high rank in the Church by force of his own learning and character, had little to fear from illiberal reflections upon the lowliness of his origin. The men who had risen from the grammar school of some village or obscure town to rank and wealth were so far from trying to hide the obscurity of their origin, that it was the general custom of dignified ecclesiastics to drop their patronymic and take the name of their birthplace instead. Thus, he whom we familiarly call Thomas-à-Becket was known to his contemporaries as Thomas of London; the family name of Thomas of Rotherham, Archbishop of York, was Scot; the family name of the illustrious bishop and statesman, William of Wyckham, was Longe; and that of William of Wayneflete was Barlow.[132] Another good custom was that such men frequently raised for themselves a lasting monument in their native place by founding a free school in the village, or a college or hospital in the town.[133]

From the school of the cathedral or monastery, or of the parish priest, the ambitious student whose means permitted it went to some more famous centre of learning: in Saxon times, to the schools of Canterbury or York or Winchester; in later times, to the universities which were organized under the auspices of the Church in the various countries of Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Bologna was famous as a School of Law; Paris took the lead in Theology; Salerno in Medicine. Here, in England, Oxford and Cambridge were centres of learning at the close of the twelfth century, and organized universities early in the [Pg 136]

thirteenth. Oxford in the thirteenth century had a European reputation second only to that of Paris.

The period from the awakening of new religious and scientific thought in the eleventh century through the two following centuries, was one of great intellectual activity throughout Europe. The isolated Saxon Church had been little affected by the new learning; but the first Norman archbishop, Lanfranc, was one of the foremost scholars of the time, and Anselm, his successor, was more than that, being one of the greatest thinkers of Christian Europe; and from their time onward Englishmen held a place among the most learned men of Europe.

In those days, as in these—and indeed in all days—men had different natural temperaments —some a contemplative and spiritual disposition, some an inquiring scientific turn of mind, others a rationalizing and practical bias; some leaned upon authority, others were speculative and self-confident. Great freedom of thought was permitted, and of the [Pg 137] expression of thought, and yet England was very little troubled by heresies. From the beginning of the English Church to the beginning of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the excessive doctrines of Lollardism in the fourteenth century—when they seemed to threaten the very bases of social order both in Church and State—alone called forth any serious action on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities against the open expression of religious opinion. These ages, therefore, had their various "schools of thought."

The most prominent feature of this awakened, religious, and scientific thought throughout Europe was the endeavour to give a rational exposition of the doctrines of the Faith, and to organize them into a scientific system; it pervaded more or less all the other schools of thought of these ages. It will be enough to mention here the two great representatives of the school. Peter Lombard, in the latter part of the twelfth century, wrote "Quatuor Libri Sententiarum" (Four Books of Sentences), in which he arranged under their various heads the opinions of some of the older teachers, especially Augustine and Gregory the Great,[134] and of the newer teachers, and sought to reconcile them by accurate distinctions into a body of doctrine; he gathered together in compact brevity so rich a store of matter, and treated it with so much sobriety and moderation, that his work became a standard manual, adopted by [Pg 138] the most distinguished teachers, who were content to teach and write commentaries on the "Sentences." "England alone is said to have produced no less than one hundred and sixty-four writers, who illustrated this famous text-book." The English Franciscan friar, Alexander of Hales (died 1245), was among the most important representatives of the scholastic theology. The greatest master of the school, however, was Thomas Aquinas, an Italian Dominican friar, who wrote in the third quarter of the thirteenth century. His "Summa Theologica" is the greatest work of its class, and served as a text-book to the students of Europe throughout the subsequent ages.[135]

Another school—of which Hugh, Canon of St. Victor in Paris (died 1141), was an eminent leader—included frequently men of great intellectual power, and skilled in the scholastic theology of their time; but the bent of the school was towards spiritual contemplation and practical piety. They drew their doctrines rather from the Bible itself and the older Church teachers; they dwelt on the Divine perfections and on the relations of the soul to God; their religion was of the affections rather than the intellect. The college of St. Victor was for a long period a centre of this school. Robert Pullein was an eminent representative of its teaching at Oxford. Richard the Hermit, of Hampole, popularized its teachings in the [Pg 139] fourteenth century in numerous tractates written in English; and its influence is easily recognized in many of the religious works of that and the subsequent century. "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis, a good example of the school, is at this day the favourite devotional book of tens of thousands of our devout people.[136]

Other Englishmen, who were among the most famous of the learned men of Europe, were John Duns Scotus, a Franciscan friar, who, at the end of the thirteenth century, displayed a great genius for mathematical science; and Roger Bacon (died 1292), another Franciscan, who possessed an extraordinary genius for physical science, and Occham. These, and such-like, were the men who ruled the thought of the time, and their teachings were eagerly studied and reproduced in the cathedral and monastic schools, and imbibed and assimilated by the scholars; and their general principles at least tinctured the teaching of the parish priests in their town parishes and country villages.

The course of reading in the Schools was four years in grammar (*i.e.* Latin language and literature), rhetoric, and logic, before the student could be admitted a Bachelor; three years in science, viz. arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, before inception as a Master; seven years' study before, as a Bachelor of Theology, he could lecture on the "Sentences;"[137] and, lastly, he must study the Bible for three years, and lecture on one of [Pg 140] the Canonical Books, before he could take his degree as a Doctor of Theology.

Students went up to the universities at an early age (fourteen or fifteen), and they went in great numbers. In the thirteenth century there were three thousand of them at Oxford. At first they lodged where they pleased, and were under no special oversight and discipline; but soon the university required that every student should be under the care of a recognized

tutor; and before long bishops and lay benefactors began to build hostelries or halls, and to provide stipends for students; and out of these arose the mediæval colleges, which provided a home and discipline and tutors, and pecuniary help to poor students; Merton College, at Oxford, was the earliest, founded by Walter of Merton, Bishop of Rochester (1264). The friars, at an early date after their institution, sent their more promising members to the universities; and they cultivated the study of theology, philosophy, and natural science with so much success that within a short time their teachers were famous in all the universities of Europe, and members of their orders were promoted to the highest offices in the Church. Among Archbishops of Canterbury, Richard of Kilwardby, a Dominican, was succeeded by John of Peckham, a Franciscan.

[Pg 141] Students of all nations flocked to the most famous seats of learning. Latin was the language in which all instruction was given, and was the *lingua franca* of all who pretended to learning; the students from the same country formed themselves into national clubs for mutual society and protection. The phrase, “The Republic of Letters,” in those days signified a more real cosmopolitanism than in our days, when men go to their national universities, and meet only their own countrymen there, and when even learned men have not the habit of colloquial Latin.

Our readers may remember Bishop Latimer’s naïve piece of autobiography in a sermon before the king, which affords us an example of the farmer who sent his clever son to the schools. “My father,” he says, “was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half a dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine. He was able, and did find the king a harness and his horse. I remember that I buckled on his harness when he went to Blackheath field. He kept me to school, or else I had not been able to have preached before the king’s majesty now. He married my sisters with five pounds, or twenty nobles, each, having brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor; and all this he did of the said farm” (“Sermons,” p. 101).

[Pg 142] Besides the youths whose fathers could afford to “keep them to school” out of their own means, the system produced a great host of poor scholars, many of whom out of term-time returned to their homes and supported themselves by their labour; others, with or without a special licence permitting them, travelled round the country, alone or in groups, asking for contributions to help them to maintain themselves and complete their education. Longfellow’s “Spanish Student” and “Hyperion” help their readers to realize the groups of students, some thoughtful and ambitious, some full of the gaiety of youth, wandering from town to castle, from monastery to manor house, asking alms with a laugh and jest; and the knight and his lady gladly gave them supper and a shakedown in the hall, for the sake of their hopeful youth; and the prior or rector gave them a donation and a kind wish, with a wistful recollection of his own bygone student days; and people of all classes gave a trifle, for it was a recognized act of piety to help poor scholars.

There are survivals to our own day. The clever Irish boys who used to be picked out by their priests and sent to St. Omer’s, where they were made into scholars and Irish-French gentlemen—a charming type—some of whom rose to high station in their church, is a thing of the recent past. In Scotland, the schoolmaster is still on the outlook for those among his peasant laddies who possess the natural qualities of a scholar; and the minister is ready to give them the higher teaching where the dominie halts; and not only the parents are filled with ambition that the boy should succeed, but the whole village is proud of the honour reflected upon his birthplace.

[Pg 143] Among this crowd of ambitious youths of all classes there were sure to be some whose career would be wrecked, by failure in intelligence, industry, and character, and these formed a rather numerous class of sham scholars and worthless clerics of whom we get glimpses from time to time.

> In the Norwich Corporation records of 1521, is a copy of the examination of Sir William Green, in whose sketch of his own life we have a curiously detailed relation of the way in which many a poor man’s son became a scholar and a priest. He was the son of a labouring man, Stephen-at-Grene, at Wantlet, in Lincolnshire, and learned grammar for two years at the village school, and then went to day labour with his father. Afterwards he removed to Boston, where he lived with his aunt, labouring for his living and going to school as he had opportunity. Being evidently a clerkly lad, he was admitted to minor orders, up to that of acolyte, by “Friar Graunt,” who was a suffragan bishop in the diocese of Lincoln. After that, he went to Cambridge, where he maintained himself partly by his labour, partly on alms, and availed himself of the opportunities of learning which the university afforded. At length he found an opportunity of going to Rome with two monks of Whalley Abbey, probably as one of their attendants; and there he endeavoured to obtain the order of priesthood, which seems to have been bestowed rather indiscriminately at Rome, and without a title; but in this he was unsuccessful. On his return to

England, he was for a short time thrown again on his labour for his living; but, going to Cambridge, he obtained from the vice-chancellor, Mr. Coney, a licence under seal to collect subscriptions for one year towards an exhibition, to enable him to complete his education and take his degree. Had he obtained money enough, completed his education, and obtained ordination in due course, it would have finished the story of a poor scholar in the regular way; but he fell into bad hands, forged a new poor scholar's letter, using the seal of the old letter, then letters of orders with a forged seal, and then went about begging alms as a destitute priest;[138] and we find him in the hands of the magistrates of Norwich under the charge of being a spy.

[Pg 144]

In the register of Lincoln diocese, in 1457, we find a record of one Hugh Bernewell, an Irishman, who went about pretending to be a priest, and undertaking to make a pilgrimage to Rome, and say prayers at the *Scala Cœli*, for any who would pay him. He was found to be an impostor, and was put in the pillory.[139]

The next step in the career of the parish priest was his ordination. We have seen that he might receive the minor orders with little difficulty while still a youth pursuing his studies; but when it came to the sacred orders, he had to obtain a "title," *i.e.* a definite place in which to exercise his ministry, and a competent maintenance to prevent the disgrace which pauper clergymen would bring upon the Church. The bishop who ordained a man without a title was liable to maintain him out of his own purse, and there are instances of the enforcement of the liability. A curious instance of it is recorded in the Register of Archbishop Winchelsea of Canterbury, 1297, in a decree that the executors of a bishop, who had ordained a priest without title, should provide for his maintenance when afterwards he became, without his own fault, mutilated so that he could no longer fulfil the office of priest.

[Pg 145]

But a title was not always a cure of souls; any kind of ecclesiastical benefice which afforded a prospect of maintenance was sufficient; for example, membership of a convent or a hermitage. No doubt there were many young men of good families who desired ordination, not with a view to cure of souls, but with a view to being capable of holding ecclesiastical benefices as the rewards of the career which they proposed to pursue in the civil service of the Crown, or of great men. This partly accounts for the ordinations *ad titulum patrimonii sui quo respondet se esse contentum* which are not uncommonly found in the Episcopal Registers, and the similar ones *ad titulum*, of lands and of a ville of five marks of annual rent, and of sixty shillings of annual pension, and the like.[140] A great many poor men's sons also got little pensions as titles, and then took chantry priest's places.

The Rules of Examination for Orders were precise and the same in all dioceses. The number of men ordained was very large, and went on rapidly increasing through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; for there were four Orders to be ordained, Acolytes, Sub-deacons, Deacons, and Priests; not only the parishes had to be supplied, but a proportion of the inhabitants of religious houses were also ordained by the bishop on the presentation of the abbot, the candidate's position in the house being a sufficient title.[141] In these ordinations there were frequent dispensations from canonical obstacles; servile condition, illegitimate birth, personal blemish,[142] and insufficient learning.

[Pg 146]

Some of the newly-ordained were at once instituted to benefices, and licence of non-residence was given to a large proportion of the new rectors, that they might go to school or university to acquire the learning which they did not yet possess.

ORDINATION OF A DEACON.
FROM A PRINTED PONTIFICAL (471 f. 2), A.D. 1520.

In Bishop Langton's "Lichfield Registers" we find, in the single month of February, 1300, licences were given on institution for one year's study, to Alexander de Verdon, Rector of [Pg 147] Biddulph, Roger Bagod, Rector of Alvechurch, Nicholas de Aylesbury, Rector of Pattingham, Roger Fitzherbert, Rector of Norbury, and Richard Birchal, Vicar of Tattenhill. In the same month Richard Touchet, Rector of Middlewick, and Simon Touchet, of Mackworth, were sent to college for two years, and Walter de Fordinghay, Rector of Mackworth, for three years. In 1309, William de Draco, a youth of fifteen, was, at the Pope's instance, licensed to hold a benefice, and Conrad Homerschilt, a German, Rector of Filingley, got five years' leave of studious absence.[143]

We will assume that the typical parish priest—whose parentage and education at school and university we have seen, and whose fortunes we are following—passed with credit the bishop's examination, was ordained without having need to put in a dispensation for canonical impediments, was instituted by the bishop without any wish for licence of non-residence, then went off to his living, and was inducted into possession of his church by the archdeacon, with a solemn sense of the responsibilities he undertook, and an earnest desire to fulfil his duty. It will be convenient to us here to divide our study of his life in the parish under several headings: his house and furniture; dress and daily life; and his duties as a parish priest.

CHAPTER X. [Pg 148]

PARSONAGE HOUSES.

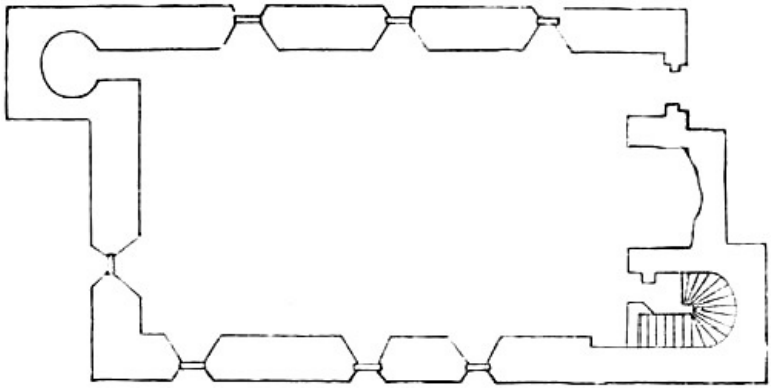
 here is no reason to suppose that the houses of the parochial clergy differed from those of lay people of corresponding income and social position, except in the one circumstance that they sometimes had to provide for the hospitality to travellers to which we will give special consideration hereafter.

The house of a rector, from Saxon times downwards, would be very like that of a lay lord of a small estate, but it is very difficult for us, with our ideas of absolutely necessary domestic accommodation, to realize how rude and simple were then the houses of people of comparative wealth and social position. The house consisted mainly of one room. This room, the hall, was oblong in plan, constructed, except in districts where timber was scarce and stone easily obtained, of timber framework, filled in with wattle and clay, with a lofty unceiled roof. The windows were few and high up in the side walls, not glazed until [Pg 149] comparatively modern times, but closed on occasion with shutters; a stone hearth stood in the middle of the hall, with iron fire-dogs on which the burning logs rested. In the better class of houses there was a raised daïs at the end furthest from the door, with a long rude oak table on it, and a single chair for the master of the house behind it; there were other tables of boards and trestles put up when needed, and taken away again when done with, and a couple of rude benches and a few stools; there was a cupboard near the "dormant table," as Chaucer calls it, on which were displayed the pewter dishes, and horn drinking-vessels, and in better houses, perhaps, a silver salt-holder, and a couple of silver drinking-cups. When there was some pretension to refinement, the roof-timbers would be moulded, the lower part of the walls hung with tapestry, and rushes strewn on the floor by way of carpet; a low screen of wood across the lower end of the hall at the same time made a passage ("the screens") through the house by which people might pass to the back premises without disturbing the company in the hall, and warded off the draught from the ever-open door. Any one of the hundreds of old halls which remain in all parts of the country may serve as an illustration of this general plan.

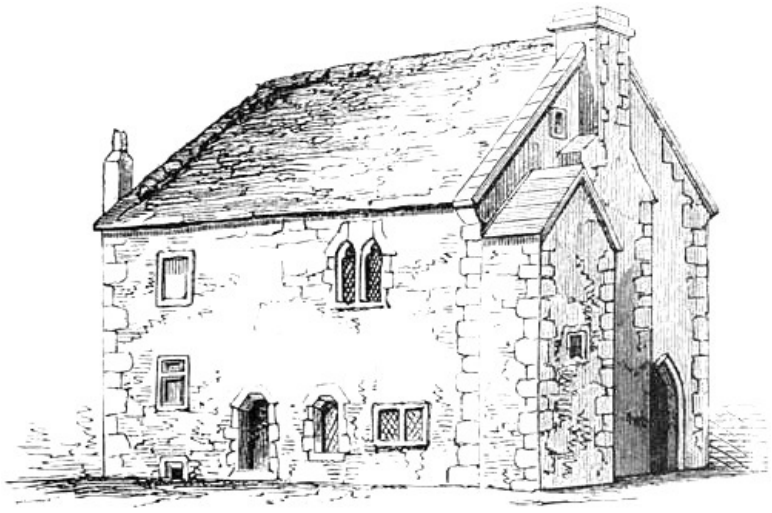
A separate building attached at right angles to the lower end of the hall, and opening into the screens just mentioned, contained the cellar, buttery, and kitchen, and might be prolonged to contain other offices, as a brew-house, etc. Another separate building was [Pg 150] attached at right angles to the upper end of the hall, usually of two stories, with its gable to

the front; the lower story was often a storehouse, sometimes a “parlour,” the upper story “the great chamber”—the special apartment of the lady of the house, and the one retiring room from the promiscuous company in the hall. This room had perhaps a bay window in its gable, and would be furnished with tapestry, and a few stools, a spinning-wheel, a couple of carved oak chests, and cushions in the window-seats.

As time went on, at the end of the thirteenth century, and in the succeeding centuries, a greater refinement of domestic customs was introduced, and other apartments were added. [144] In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the walls of the hall were built a little higher, and an upper floor put in so as to convert the roof into a sleeping loft, lighted by a couple of dormer windows; and this plan of a central hall with a loft over, its longer side to the front, flanked by a two-story building at one end with its gable to the front flush with the hall, and another building at the other end of the hall containing the offices, was the general plan of the houses of the middle classes of the people. Thousands of them, more or less disguised by later additions, still remain all over the country. [Pg 151]

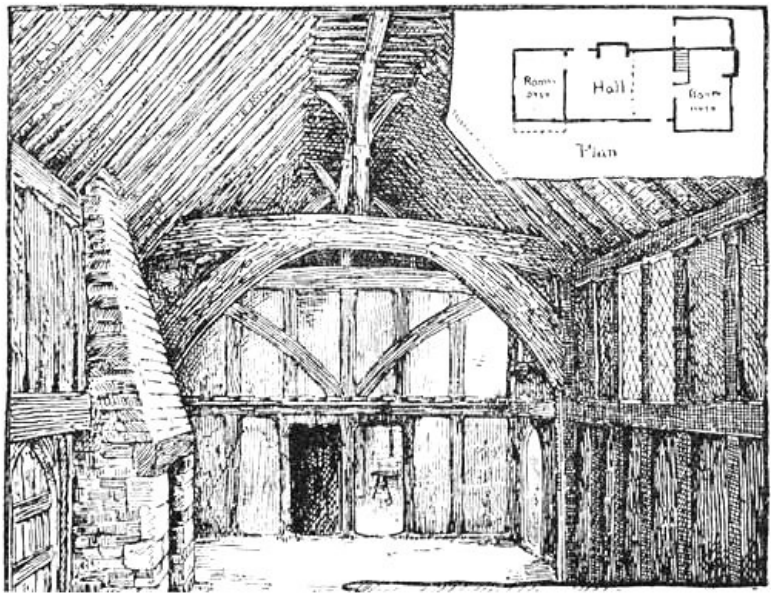


Plan of Rectory House, West Dean, Sussex.



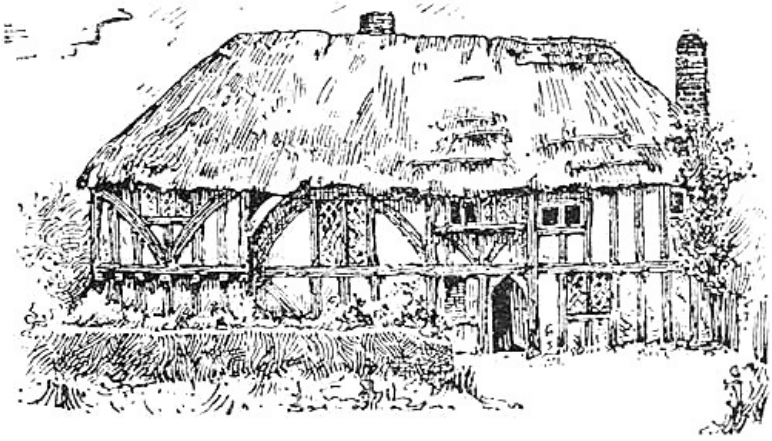
Rectory House, West Dean.

Few of the old rectory houses are left in their original condition. There is a good example of the hall at Weston Turville, Bucks.[145] The parsonage house at West Dean, Sussex, of the thirteenth century, is described and figured in Turner’s “Domestic Architecture.” It is built of stone; in plan a hall with a story over it, and the soler at the upper end, approached by a stone newel stair built in a projecting buttress on the north side. The windows of the story over the hall are lancets, those of the hall have a curious kind of tracery. The upper chamber or soler has a good fireplace and chimney-piece of stone, with deeply splayed windows. [Pg 152]



Pre-reformation Clergy House, Alfriston.
(By kind permission of the publishers of the *Builder*.)

There is a parsonage house at Alfriston, within three miles of Dean, Sussex, of the fourteenth century, so unchanged and well preserved that it has been made over to the National Trust for Preserving Places of Historic Interest. It has the usual hall, constructed of oak framing, the interstices being filled with “wattle and dab,” open to the roof with large cambered tie-beams and moulded king-posts. At the upper end of the hall is the soler, of two stories. [Pg 153]



Pre-reformation Clergy House, Alfriston.
(By kind permission of the publishers of the *Builder*.)

There are others of stone at Congresbury (Somerset), King’s Stanley (Gloucester), Wonstone (Hants.), Notgrove (Gloucester); of timber at Helmsley (Yorkshire); and many others. And, just as many farmhouses which were once small manor houses still retain their ancient mediæval features disguised by modern alterations, so there are many parsonage houses in which the original house of the fourteenth or fifteenth century still remains, and may be traced by a skilful eye amidst the subsequent additions. [Pg 154]

We derive our fullest information about the old parsonage houses, however, from literary sources, from the settlements of vicarages which describe the old rectory house, or dictate how the new vicarage house shall be built; from the old terriers which describe the then existing houses, and from the inventories of wills which go from room to room, naming the rooms, and detailing the furniture in them.

Thus a deed of 1356 describes the rectory house of Kelvedon, in Essex, existing at that date—and how long before that date we do not know—which the Abbot and Convent of Westminster, in the settlement of a vicarage there, assigned to the vicar as his residence. The deed describes it as—

> One hall situate in the manor of the said abbot and convent near the said church, with a soler and chamber at one end of the hall, and with a buttery and cellar at the other. Also one other house[146] in three parts, namely, a kitchen with a convenient chamber in the end of the said house for guests, and

> a bakehouse. Also one other house in two parts next the gate at the entrance of the manor for a stable and cow-house. He (the vicar) shall also have a convenient grange, to be built within a year at the expense of the prior and convent. He shall also have the curtilage with the garden adjoining the hall on the north side enclosed as it is with hedges and ditches.[147]

[Pg 155]

The present vicarage house occupies the old site, and its offices, gardens, and surroundings help to illustrate this description.

In a deed of Richard of Thornely, Chaplain of Wasseford, it is stated that when he was presented by the Prior and Convent of Hatfield to the vicarage of Silverley, he bound himself by his own free will to build a house there, with a hall, a chamber, and a kitchen.[148]

In 1352, the Bishop of Winchester decreed that the Prior and Convent of Merton, the impropriators of the benefice of Kingston-on-Thames, should provide

> a competent manse for the vicar, viz. a hall with two rooms, one at one end of the hall, and the other at the other end, with a drain to each, and a suitable kitchen with fireplace and oven, and a stable for six horses, all covered with tiles, and completed within one year, such place to remain to the use of the said vicar and his successors.[149]

The deed of settlement of the vicarage of Bulmer, Essex, in 1425, describes the vicarage house as consisting of—

> one hall with two chambers annexed, bakehouse, kitchen, and larder-house, one chamber for the vicar's servant, and a hay-soller (soler = loft), with a competent garden.[150]

Ingrave Rectory house is described in the terrier of 1610 as—

[Pg 156]

> a house containing a hall, a parlour, a buttery, two lofts, and a study, also a kitchen, a milk-house, and a house for poultry, a barn, a stable, and a hay-house.[151]

Ingatestone Rectory house, in the terrier of 1610, is described as—

> a dwelling house with a hall, a parlour, and a chamber within it; a study newly built by the then parson; a chamber over the parlour, and another within that with a closet; without the dwelling-house a kitchen, and two little rooms adjoining it, and a chamber over them; two little butteries over against the hall, and next them a chamber, and one other chamber over the same; without the kitchen there is a dove-house, and another house built by the then parson; a barn and a stable very ruinous.[152]

Here we have an old house with hall in the middle, parlour and chamber at one end, and butteries and kitchen at the other, in the middle of later additions.

Mr. Froude gives an inventory, dated 1534, of the goods of the Rector of Allington, Kent, from which we take only the incidental description of the house which contained them.[153]

> It consisted of hall, parlour, and chamber over the parlour, stairs-head beside the parson's bed-chamber, parson's lodging-chamber, study, chamber behind the chimney, chamber next adjoining westward, buttery, priest's chamber [perhaps for the rector's chaplain[154]], servants' chamber, kitchen, mill-house, boulting house, larder, entries, women's chamber; gate-house, still beside the gate; barn next the gate; cartlage, barn next the church, garden-house, court.

[Pg 157]

Here, again, we recognize the hall in the middle, the parlour and chamber over it at one end, with an adjoining study on the ground floor, and a chamber over it, as at Ingatestone, and at the other end the buttery, kitchen, larder, mill, boulting houses, with a priest's chamber, and a servants' chamber over it, women's chamber over the kitchen, etc.; and we observe that the additional chambers for the master of the house and his family are grouped about the parlour and great chamber, while the chambers for guests and servants are added to the kitchen and offices at the lower end of the hall. These two projections backward would partially enclose a courtyard at the back of the hall.

The rectory at Little Bromley, Essex, is described (1610) as—

> a large parsonage house compass'd with a mote, a gate-house, with a large chamber, and a substantial bridge of timber adjoining it; a little yard, an orchard and a little garden all within the mote, which, together with the circuit of the house, contains about half an acre of ground; and without the mote there is a yard in which there is another gate-house, and a stable, and a hay-house adjoining, also a barn of twenty-five yards long, and nine yards wide, and about seventy-nine and a half acres of glebe land.[155]

North Benfleet Rectory is described as consisting of—

[Pg 158]

> a hall with a loft over it, two cross ends, with lofts and chambers, a kitchen

with a hen-house, a barn and a little stable at the end of it, built in ancient time, a garden made, an orchard planned, a milk-house and a dove-house.[156]

West Hanningfield is described as—

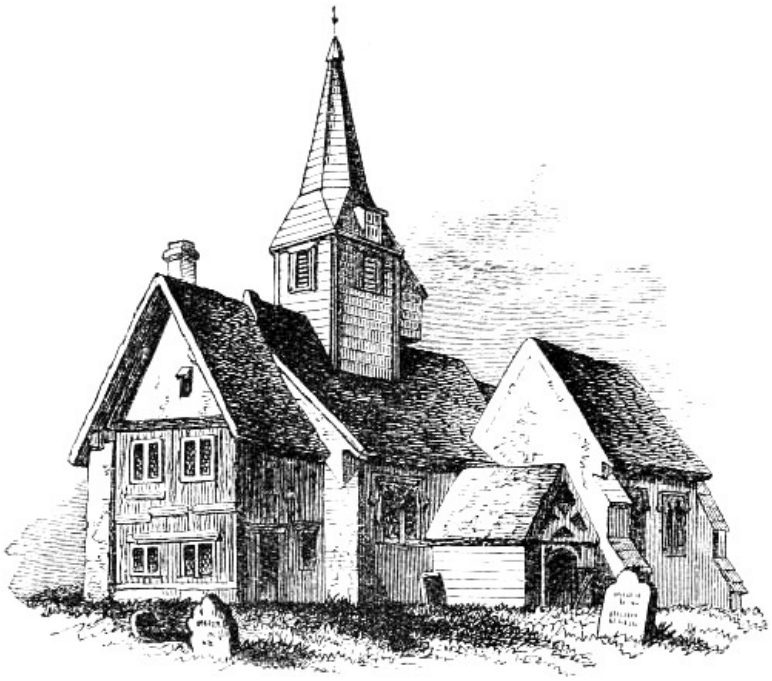
one dwelling-house tiled, having in it a hall with a loft over it for corn, a closet in the hall, two butteries, with a loft over them for servants' lodging, an entry, a large parlour, with two lodging chambers over it for servants, a study new built, also a kitchen tiled, with a corn-loft over it, a boulting-house with a cheese-loft over it, a brew-house newly set up, with a fair corn-lift over it, and a garret over that, and a hen-house tiled at the end of it, a barn newly built, and a porch thatched, a hay-house at the end of it, a hogs'-coat boarded, a stable, a quern-house, two small cotes to fat fowl in, a cow-house newly built, with a cart-house at the end of it; another cart-house newly built with a room over it to hold hay; one large hay-house with a cart-house at the end of it; another cart-house newly built; a gate-house, wherein is a milk-house, with a loft over it for cheese and fish; the site of the house and yards with two gardens contains two roods.[157]

We easily recognize the normal plan of the house; the large accommodation outside—some of it new—for carts and hay, and for the storing of corn inside the house, indicates that the rector was farming on rather a large scale.

[Pg 159] We have seen in the foregoing description of the vicarage house at Kelvedon, Essex, that a special chamber was provided for the entertainment of guests, and at Kingston-on-Thames a stable for six horses was attached to the vicarage house. This was no doubt needed because the one was on the high-road from London into Essex, and the other on the high-road from London into Surrey, and so westward, and the accommodation was needed for travellers. In those times there were no inns at convenient distances along the main roads of the country, nor even in the towns, except in some of the largest. Few people travelled except on business, so that hospitality was little liable to abuse; and travellers sought entertainment for man and horse at the monasteries and the parsonage houses.

It was regarded as a duty of the clergy to "entertain strangers," and to be "given to hospitality;" and the duty was fulfilled ungrudgingly, without fee or reward, and entailed a heavy charge upon the income of the clergy. One of the common reasons which a monastery[158] alleges for asking the bishop to allow them to impropriate an additional benefice is that their expenditure on the entertainment of travellers is beyond their means; the country rectors, also, in their remonstrance against the exactions of the popes, complain that they will be left without means to fulfil their duty of hospitality;[159] and the matter is [Pg 160] very frequently alluded to and illustrated by examples in mediæval history. Off the great roads, the rector would put an extra pewter platter and horn drinking-cup on the board for an accidental passenger who claimed hospitality—he brought his own knife, and there were no forks—and gave him a liberal "shakedown" of clean straw, or at best a flock mattress, in a corner of the hall. But, just as in the monasteries it was necessary to have a special guest-house for travellers, so that they should not interfere with the seclusion of the religious, so it would seem at the rectories along the great roads it was necessary that there should be special provision made for the frequent influx of guests. This is the explanation of the chamber for guests at Kelvedon, and for the vicar's six-stall stable at Kingston.

It is clear that some of the rectory houses thus described were like some of the smaller manor houses, enclosed by moat or wall, and the entrance protected by a gate-house, and that the house contained all the accommodation needed by a small squire.[160] But there [Pg 161] were smaller houses more suited to the means of a poor vicar or a parish chaplain.[161] Thus, on the settlement of the Vicarage of Great Bentley, Essex, in 1323, it was required that a competent house should be built for the vicar, with a sufficient curtilage, where the parish chaplain has been used to abide. At the settlement of the Vicarage of St. Peter's, Colchester, the impropriators, the Convent of St. Botolph, were required to prepare a competent house for the vicar in the ground of the churchyard, where a house was built for the parish chaplain. At Radwinter, Essex, in 1610, there were two houses attached to the benefice, on the south side of the church towards the west end, one called "the Great Vicarage, and in ancient time the *Domus Capellanorum*, and the other the Less Vicarage," which latter "formerly served for the ease of the parson; and, as appears by evidence, first given to the end that if any of the parish were sick, the party might be sure to find the parson or his curate near the church, ready to go and visit him." There are little houses in some churchyards which may have been houses for the parish chaplain. At Laindon, Essex, a [Pg 162] small timber-house is built on to the west end of the church.[162] The Chapel of our Lady at Great Horkesley, Essex, has the west end walled off and divided into two stories for a priest's residence.[163]



Laindon Church, Essex.

The question of dilapidations of the parsonage house and its dependent buildings is not a matter of much general interest, but it was then, as it is now, of much practical importance to the beneficed clergy, and it is worth while to say a few words about it. We find examples in the episcopal registers which we assume represent the universal practice.

In the register of John de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter, June 21, 1328, a commission was issued to inquire into the defects in the church and its furniture and the manse of the Rectory of Lydeford, by the carelessness and neglect of Stephen Waleys, late deceased. The commissioners were laudably prompt in action, for, on the 4th July, they made their return of defects, etc., to the amount of 42*s.*; and the bishop at once issued his mandate that the amount should be paid out of the goods of the defunct rector.[164] There was a similar process in the same year at Didesham. [Pg 163]

[Pg 164]

CHAPTER XI.

FURNITURE AND DRESS.

There was a continual fight going on all through the Middle Ages between the rulers of the Church and the rest of their brethren on the subject of the ordinary costume of the clergy. It seems to have been a part of the Hildebrandine plan of making the secular clergy a kind of semi-monastic order. Wherever there is a strong canon on enforcing celibacy, there we are sure to find another canon enjoining a well-marked tonsure, and forbidding long hair, and worldly fashions of dress and ornaments.

Consecration of Archbishop Thomas Becket. (MS., Royal 2 B., vii.)

It is not worth while to trouble the reader with a long series of laws and canons; it will be enough to quote one which condescends to be argumentative and persuasive as well as minatory. It is from the “Injunctions of John Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury,” made at St. Paul’s Cathedral, in A.D. 1342.

> The external costume often shows the internal character and condition of persons; and although the behaviour of clerks ought to be an example and [Pg 165] pattern of lay people, yet the abuses of clerks, which have prevailed more than usual in these days, in tonsure, clothing, horse trappings, and other things, have created an abominable scandal among the people; because persons holding ecclesiastical dignities, rectories, honourable prebends, and benefices with cure of souls, even men in Holy Orders, scorn to wear the tonsure, which is the crown of the kingdom of heaven and of perfection, and distinguish themselves by hair spreading to the shoulders in an effeminate manner, and walk about clad in a military rather than a clerical dress, with an outer habit very short and tight-fitting, but excessively wide, with long sleeves which do not touch the elbow; their hair curled and perfumed (?), their hoods with lappets of wonderful length; with long beards, rings on their fingers, and girded belts studded with precious stones of wonderful size, their purses enamelled and gilt with various devices, and knives openly hanging at them [Pg 166] like swords, their boots of red and green peaked and cut in many ways; with housings to their saddles, and horns hanging from their necks; their capes and cloaks so furred, in rash disregard of the canons, that there appears little or no distinction between clergymen and laymen; whereby they render themselves unworthy through their demerits of the privilege of their order and profession. Wherefore we decree that they who hold ecclesiastical benefices in our province, especially if ordained to Holy Orders, do wear the garments and tonsure proper to their condition, but if they offend by using any of the foresaid abuses, too wide sleeves or too short outer coats, or long hair, or untonsured head, or long beard, and do not when admonished desist within six months, they shall incur suspension from their office until absolved by the bishop—to whom their absolution is reserved—when they shall forfeit a sixth of one year’s income from their ecclesiastical benefices to the poor of their benefices; and if while the suspension lasts, they perform any act of their office they shall be deprived. [On the other hand] unbeneficed clerks publicly and habitually carrying themselves like clerks, if they exceed in these things, and do not, when admonished, correct themselves within four months, shall not be capable of holding a benefice. If living in universities, and bearing themselves as clerks, they offend in these respects, they shall be incapable of

ecclesiastical degrees or honours. Yet we intend not to abridge clerks of open wide surcoats called table-coats with fitting sleeves to be worn at seasonable times and places, nor of short and close garments while travelling in the country at their own discretion. Ordinaries are commanded to make inquiry by themselves or by others every year, and to see that this canon is observed.[165]

ARCHDEACON, CLERGY IN SECULAR COSTUME.
XIV. CENT. MS., 6 E VII., f. 197.

ARCHDEACON AND CLERGY.
XIV. CENT. MS., 6 E VI., f. 132.

We shall see hereinafter that by ages of worrying legislation the canons succeeded in compelling the clergy to keep their wives *in petto*; but the sumptuary canons were a dead failure. [Pg 167]

The authorities made attempts to get them observed. It is related that at a certain Visitation, the bishop ordered the canon to be read and then had the hair of the clergy cut short on the spot. Grostete of Lincoln refused to institute to a cure of souls a deacon who came to him untonsured, dressed in scarlet, and wearing rings, in the habit and carriage of a layman, or rather of a knight, and almost illiterate.[166] Some of the vicars of York Cathedral[167] were presented to the bishop in 1362 “for being in the habit of going through the city in short tunics ornamentally trimmed, with knives and basilards hanging at their girdles.” Similarly,

in the diocese of Bath and Wells, from an inquiry made by Bishop Beckington (1443-1465), we learn that the vicars of the cathedral affected the dress of the laity: they had the collars of their doublets high and standing up like lawyers, and the collars of their gowns and cloaks very short and low; against which practices the bishop made ordinances.

Many of the clergy, however, persisted in wearing the same sort of clothes as their neighbours of similar position in society, very much as they do now, with little differences which were enough to mark their clerical character. They wore the tonsure—the complaint was they would not make it larger, like the monks; they wore a special head-covering—or some of them did—which is mentioned in their Wills as a "priest's bonnet;"[168] but they persisted in wearing their hair cut like other people's, and short-skirted coats when it was convenient; their ordinary dress was of red or blue, or half a dozen other colours, instead of grey or black; and nothing could prevent them from wearing "zones" ornamented with silver, and a basilard—a hanger, or short sword—hanging at their silver zone, instead of a girdle of leather and a pair of beads. The mention of coloured gowns (togas) and of silver zones and basilards[168] in the wills of the clergy is so general as to produce the conviction that the wearing of them by the more well-to-do of the secular clergy was almost universal.

[Pg 168]

In the illuminated MSS. of all ages there are to be found representations of the secular clergy not only in their official robes, but also in their ordinary dress. The best and clearest examples of these which we have met with are in the Catalogue[169] of Benefactors of the Abbey of St. Albans, already quoted, and we are able to give engravings[170] of some of them.

[Pg 169]

Sir Richard de Threton.

Sir Bartholomew de Wendon.

On fol. 100 v. is a portrait of one Lawrence, a clerk, who is dressed in a brown gown (toga); another clerk, William by name, is in a scarlet gown and hood. On fol. 93 v. Leofric, a deacon, is in a blue gown and hood. The first of the accompanying engravings from fol. 105 represents Dom. Ricardus de Threton, sacerdos—Sir Richard Threton, priest—who was executor of Sir Robert de Thorp, knight, formerly chancellor of the king, who gave twenty marks to the convent. In the illumination, the gown and hood are of full bright blue, lined with white; the under sleeves which appear at the wrists are of the same colour; and the shoes are red. The next illustration from fol. 106 v. represents Dom. Bartholomeus de Wendone, rector of the church of Thakreston, and the character of the face leads to the conclusion that it is a portrait, and to the conjecture that all the others were intended to be so. His gown, hood, and sleeves are scarlet, with black shoes. Another rector, on fol. 105, Dom. Johannes Rodland, rector of the church of Todyngton, has a green gown and scarlet hood. Still another rector of the church of Little Waltham is represented at half length in pink gown and purple hood. On fol. 108 v. is the full-length portrait of Dom. Rogerus, chaplain of the chapel of the Earl of Warwick at Flamsted; over a scarlet gown, of the same fashion as those in the preceding pictures, he wears a pink cloak lined with blue; the hood is scarlet of the same suit as the gown; the buttons at the shoulder of the cloak are white (perhaps silver), the shoes red. It will be observed that they all wear the moustache and beard.

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Sir Roger, Chaplain.

The priest on horseback represents John Ball, who was concerned in Wat Tyler’s rebellion. He is in a churchyard, preaching from the pulpit of his saddle to a crowd of people on the left side of the picture.

The subject receives some illustration from literary sources; the “Instructions to Parish Priests” enjoins—

> In honeste clothes thow muste gon [Pg 171]
> Basdard ne bawdryke were thou non.

But “Piers Plowman” notes their contrary practice. It would be better, he says—

> If many a priest bare for their baselards and their brooches
> A pair of beads in their hand and a book under their arm.
> Sire John and Sire Geffrey hath a girdle of silver,
> A baselard and a knife, with botons over gilt.

John Ball, priest.
(From MS. of Froissart's "Chronicle.")

A little later he speaks of proud priests habited in patlocks (a short jacket worn by laymen), with peaked shoes and large knives or daggers.

In the poems of John Audelay, in the fifteenth century, a parish priest is described in—

> His girdle harneshed with silver, his baselard hangs by.

Examples will be found in the Wills and Inventories, which we have placed at the end of this chapter (p. 173, etc.). We may add here that the silver ornaments of these zones were probably plates more or less ornamented with repoussé work and sometimes with enamel and precious stones; that the plates must have been of considerable substance is indicated by the following— [Pg 172]

> Thomas Sufwyk, Rector of Burton Noveray (not dated—c. 1390), leaves to his parish church his great missal and best vestment, and also his best silver zone to make a chalice.[171]

Sometimes a clergyman had not only a basilard habitually hanging at his girdle, but also a sword for use on occasion. Chaucer says—

> Bucklers brode and swerdes long
> Baudrike with baselardes kene
> Sech toles about her necke they hong:
> With Antichrist seche prestes been.

Robert Newby, Rector of Whyttchurche, and official of the Archdeacon of Oxford, in his will made in 1412, leaves to his brother his best sword, and to his niece his scarlet gown;[172] and in the wills subsequently given it will be seen that the Vicar of Gaynford, in 1412, leaves his best suit of armour and all his arrows; the Rector of Scrayningham, in 1414, leaves a suit of armour; and the dean of the collegiate church at Auckland leaves his best sword and a complete suit of armour.[173]

There are some quaint illustrations of these offending clergymen in the MSS. so often quoted here, Royal 6 E. VI., and 6 E. VII. *Clerici pugnantes in duello* at 6 E. VI., f. 302 *verso*; *Clericus venator* at f. 303 *verso*. Under the title *De habitu Clericorum*, in 6 E. VII. f. 197, there are three clerics on the left properly habited in red tunic and blue cloak and blue tunic and red cloak, and on the right three startling examples of the costume against which the Canons wage war, of short tunics and belted swords. See Plate. [Pg 173]

Here are some brief extracts from various wills[174] which bear upon the subject.

> In the Bury St. Edmunds Wills, Adam de Stanton, a chaplain, A.D. 1370, bequeaths one girdle with purse and knife valued at 5*s.*, a considerable sum in those days. In the York wills, John Wyndhill, Rector of Arnecliffe, A.D. 1431,

leaves an amber pair of beads, such as Piers Plowman says a priest ought "to bear in his hand, and a book under his arm;" and, curiously enough, in the next sentence, he leaves an English book of "Piers Plowman;" but he does not seem to have been much influenced by the popular poet's invectives, for he goes on to bequeath two green gowns, and one of murrey, and one of sanguine colour, besides two of black, all trimmed with various furs; also one girdle of sanguine silk ornamented with silver gilded; and another zone of green and white, ornamented with silver gilded; and he also leaves his best silver girdle and a baselard with ivory and silver handle. John Gilby, Rector of Knesale, A.D. 1434-35, leaves a red toga furred with bryce, a black zone of silk with gilt bars, and a zone ornamented with silver. J. Bagale, Rector of All Saints, York, A.D. 1438, leaves a little basilard with a zone harnessed with silver to Sir T. Astell, a chaplain. W. Duffield, a chantry priest at York, A.D. 1443, leaves a black zone silvered, a purse called a "gypsire," and a white purse of "burdeux." W. Swerd, chaplain, leaves to H. Hobshot a hawk-bag, and to W. Day, parochial chaplain of Calton, a pair of hawk-bag rings, and to J. Sarle, chaplain, "my ruby zone silvered, and my toga furred with bevers;" and to the wife of J. Bridlington a ruby purse of satin. R. Rollerton, provost of the church of Beverley, A.D. 1450, leaves a "toga lunata" with a red hood, a toga and hood of violet, a long toga and hood of black trimmed with martrons, and a toga and hood of violet. J. Clyft, chaplain, A.D. 1455, leaves a zone of silk ornamented with silver.

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The following extracts from wills of clergymen are full of points of interest, which want of space compels us to leave, without note or comment, to the reader's discrimination:—

Roger de Kyrby, Perpetual Vicar of Gaynford, 1412, leaves his body to be buried in the choir of his parish church, near the altar, on the south side [where it still lies, with an inscription on a brass plate on the stone which covers his grave]. To a priest to celebrate for his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed for three years after his burial, £15. To the Abbot and Convent of Eglyston, 20*s.* To every priest of Castle Barnard present at his obsequies, 2*s.*; to every other priest present, 12*d.*; to be distributed on the day of his burial four marks. He leaves to the chapel of Castle Barnard a "Legenda Aurea" to Sir John Drawlace, junior chaplain, a book which is called "Gemma Ecclesiæ," and all his other books he gives and bequeaths to William de Kirkby, son of Ada de Kyrkby, my late brother, "and this if it so happen that he shall have been made a presbyter, but if not they shall be sold and the price of them given for my soul," as his executor shall think best. He leaves to Sir Thomas of Langton, chaplain, a toga of sanguine color furred; a chalice worth 40*s.*, or 40*s.* of English money (*monetæ Angliæ*), to keep up the altar light of the blessed Mary of Castle Barnard. He leaves to William, his brother, a horse, viz. Bay, and 20*s.*; to Thomas de Kyrkby, his cousin (*cognatus*), 6 stone of wool and 2 marks; to Richard de Kyrkby, his *cognatus*, a cow, viz. the best, and a bed suited to his condition, and 4 stone of wool, with 20*s.*; to Elizabeth, his *cognata*, a younger cow, a basin and ewer and a bed suited to her, and 2 stone of wool, with 13*s.* 4*d.* To Thomas of Gedworth, his chamberlain, a grey horse, a cow, a red bed, and all his arrows, a best hauberk, a "brestplate," and a pair of vambraces and also of rerebraces, a pair of "Whysshewes Grenyce," a basinet with aventale, and a pair of gauntlets of plate, and 20*s.* He leaves to Henry Smyth 9 matrices (ewes?), with 5 lambs, or the price of them, and two pair of sheets, and 6*s.* 8*d.* He leaves to Thomas de Kyrkby, clerk, a green toga and 6*s.* 8*d.* To Alice Kyrkby, his brother's widow, 12 best silver spoons worth 36*s.*, and a covered piece of silver (*unam peciam coopertam argenteam*) ... and a best bed, with 4 marks of lawful money (*monetæ legalis*). He leaves to John Drawlace, junior, chaplain, a silver piece not covered, and 6 silver spoons, and a best toga. To Thomas Sowrale, chaplain, another toga, viz. of Sendry, and a piece not covered, and 6 silver spoons. The rest of all my goods he gives and bequeaths to the foresaid John Drawlace and Thomas Sowrale, chaplains. Inventory:—In told money (*pecunia numerata*), £36 13*s.* 4*d.*; 3 pieces of silver with covers, 11 marks, 6*s.* 8*d.*; 2 pieces without covers, 12*s.*; a silver-gilded zone, 5 marks; another silver zone, 10*s.*; 3 silver basilards, 2*s.* 4*d.*; a pair of bedes of amber and an Agnus Dei, 10*s.*; two beds of red colour covered with tapestry, 20*s.*; two beds sanguine, 10*s.*; a little bed of sanguine worstett, 6*s.* 8*d.*; a white bed, 3*s.* 4*d.*; 2 coverlets (coopercla), 6*s.*; a whylt with 4 materesse, 6*s.* 8*d.*; 14 "lodices," 14*s.*; 19 pair of sheets, 31*s.* 8*d.*; a mantle of red "fresed," 20*s.*; 3 furred gowns, 40*s.*; a "pylche of stranlion," 20*s.*; 3 *togæ singulæ*, 13*s.* 4*d.*; 4 ells of woollen cloth, viz. of sendry colour with a web of russet, 26*s.* 8*d.*; "*armatura*," 26*s.* 8*d.*; 8 lb. of wax, 4*s.*; a pair of trussyngcofers, 4*s.*; a wyrehatte, 5*s.*; total, £62 6*s.* 8*d.* In the *hall*, 2 dorsors with a banwher (banker),[175] 13*s.* 4*d.*; 12 whysshynes (cushions), 12*s.*; 2 tables with trestles, 12*s.*; a cupboard (coppeburd), 6*s.* 8*d.*; 2 basins and ewers, 4*s.* In the *cellar*, a napkin (mappa) with 1 towel newly made, 3*s.*; 10 old napkins with 3 towels, 2*s.* 6*d.*; 38 ells of linen cloth, 11*s.* 1*d.*; 3 pair of silver knives, 6*s.* 8*d.*; 9 ells of linen cloth of lake, 4*s.* 6*d.*; 2 barrels and 4 stands, 2*s.* In the *kitchen*, 7 brass

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pots, 7*s.*; 4 griddles (*patellæ*), 2*s.* 6*d.*; 1 "*veru ferreum*," 8*d.*; 2 "dresshyng knyves," 7*d.*; one lead (*unum plumbum*) containing 32 bottles (lagenas), with 3 small leads, 8*s.*; 2 dozen *vasorum de electro*, 20*s.*; a dozen of old *vasorum*, 6*s.* 8*d.*; 5 plates (*perapsides*) and 10 dishes (*disci*), 2*s.*; a frying-pan, 6*d.*; a Rostyngiryn, 4*d.* In the *stable*, 2 grey palfreys, £4; 2 horses, 26*s.* 8*d.*; a mare, 4*s.* 4*d.*; 5 saddles with 4 bridles, 16*s.* 8*d.*; a cart bound with iron with all fittings (*omni apparatu*), 16*s.*; 3 cows, 20*s.*; 15 pigs with 5 little pigs, 30*s.*; 1 boar, 6*s.* 8*d. Granary*, 10 quart' of malt (*brasii mixti*), 33*s.* 4*d.*; wheat, barley, oats and peas not ground, £8. Owing to him, £10 10*s.*; 10 stone of iron, 5*s.*; other utensils, 10*s.*; sum total, £99 11*s.* 3*d.*[176] [Pg 177]

Peter de Bolton, Rector of Scrayngham, diocese of York (1414), leaves 2½ silver marks to the glass windows on the south side of the chancel of his church. To the poor parishioners of Howshom and Scrayngham, 20*s.* between them. For wax to be burned around his body on the day of his burial, 10 lb. in 5 wax candles and 2 torches; to the chaplain celebrating Divine service for one year in the said chancel for the safety of his soul, 100*s.* "if my goods amount to such a sum when my debts are paid." To the foresaid church of Scrayngham a chalice and a white vestment (*vestimentum*) with a chasuble (*casula*) powdered with red roses, and with albe, amice, stole, and fanula (*maniple*), and corporal, with "*singulo*" and frontal of the same work, and towell (tuall') annexed to the frontal, with another tuall' for the altar; provided that the parishioners of the said church of Scrayngham grant to him an old chasuble (*casula*), in which I intend to be buried. He leaves to John Haydok 40*s.* for his support at the schools; to William Bugdeyn 6*s.* 8*d.*; to Alice Laycester, of York, a toga talarem, long, reaching to the ancles of tawny; to his clerk a hauberk (*lorica*), with ventaled basenet, a pair of vanbraces and a pair of rerebraces, and a pair of gauntlets of plate; to Robert Rokesby, servant of Master Robert Ragonhyll, 6*s.* 8*d.*; to the said Master Robert Ragonhyll, 13*s.* 4*d.*; to Thomas Byrkdale, my cousin, a basilard ornamented with silver and 6*s.* 8*d.*; to the wife of William Bugden, 40*d.*; to Robert Saundby, 2*s.*; to Master John Stanton, 6*s.* 8*d.*; to Sir Gilbert Haydok, knyght, all my vessels of pewter; the rest to my executors.[177] [Pg 178]

Stephen le Scrop, Archdeacon of Richmond (1418), leaves, to the high table of the altar of the church of St. Peter of York, my great jewel, *ordinatum pro corpore Xti.* (to be appropriated to the Pyx?), and three silver chargers of the best of my vessels, and a gold crucifix, and an entire vestment of red cloth of gold with two copes of the same suit.... To the fabric of the said church, £20; to each residentiary canon with the precentor of the said church present at my obit, 6*s.* 8*d.*; to each parson, 2*s.*; to each vicar, 20*d.*; to each deacon, sub-deacon, and thuribularius of the said church present at my obit, 12*d.*; to the sacrist, 10*s.*; to the clerks (*clerus vestibuli*) of the said church, 10*s.*; to the "*mumdator*," 2*s.* To each of my churches of Esyngwald, Knaresburgh, Thorntonsteward, Clapham, Bolton, Arlecden, and Tallagham 10 marks, or a vestment of the value of 10 marks; to my church of Horneby, 5 marks; to my church of Bishophill, 5 marks, or a vestment at the discretion of my executors. To the monastery of the blessed Mary of York, 40*s.*, provided they ring and celebrate my obit; to the friars of St. Leonard of York, 20*s.*, provided they ring and celebrate my obit; to the house of Monkton, 100*s.*, and 2 pieces of silk of red and green colour, for the high altar; to every house of monks (*monalium*), and to each house of friars within my archdeaconry, 20*s.*; to the friars of St. Robert of Knaresburgh, 40*s.*; to his lady mother, a golden covered ciphum (cup) with the inscription on the cover **Good zere** to his brother William, 12 best silver dishes (discos) and 12 best silver "saucers;" to his sister Matilda, 10 marks and a covered silver ciphum with the inscription BENEDICTUS QUI VENIT IN NOMINE DOMINI, and a tablet of ivory of two leaves bound with silver; to Master John Ermyn, his official, a covered silver ciphum with the inscription CUJUS FINIS BONUS TOTUM IPSUM BONUM, and a silver salt cellar (*salsarium*) not covered; to Sir William Bamburgh a covered silver cipum with the name JESUS on the top; to Master Peter Meland, a covered silver ciphum with knop on the top; to the Hall of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, in Cambridge, in which *habitavi* his Catholicon, etc., and a tall silver-gilt covered ciphum with a long foot and *signatum* with "ivyn leves" (ivy leaves); to Brian of Plumpton, £10 and a covered silver ciphum, with the arms of Yvo Souche on the top; to William Normanvyle, 10 marks and a best ciphum not covered.... To John Semer, his chamberlain, his best scarlet robe with *armilansa*, tabard, hood, and their *pumates*, and fur trimmings, and 100*s.*, Stephen del Courte, armiger, John Hewet, his clerk, William Heth, Henry of the Kitchen, Robert del Myre, William of the Chamber, Peter of the Kichen, William Lynne, Walter Flette, his clerk, Godfrey the Cook, John Percy, Robert of the Bakehouse, John Brod, Robert Walton, Robert Scolle, page of his chamber, Thomas Baker; and whatever day of the year he may die that the fees or wages of his servants be paid in full for that whole year. Also he leaves a silver-gilt chalice cup, with a long foot, with a knop at the top, a homiletorium and pair of gold beads, a pair [Pg 179]

of beads of coral ornamented with gold and knops of perrle, 2 silver-gilt covered ciphum of a suit, viz. chalice cups with knops of azure; 6 dishes and 6 “saucers” of silver, with his arms, to John Newhouse, chaplain; 8 marks a year for 5 years to celebrate at the altar of St. Stephen,[178] in the Church of York, for the souls of himself, his parents, brothers, sisters, his lord the archbishop, William Plumpton, his friends, his servants, and of all the faithful departed, and that he say daily the *exequiæ defunctorum*. Also to William Tadcaster, [Pg 180] chaplain, the same sum for the same duties. 10 marks to the poor at his burial. He leaves books of Sextum and the Constitutions of Otho and Othobon, with John Aton, Decretales, Decreta, Hostiensis, to friends for life, and afterwards to the Library of York.

Thomas Hebbeden, Dean of the collegiate church of St. Andrew, of Aukland, leaves to John Holhom, his nephew, his best sword and *unam integram armaturam*.[179]

Sir Richard Towgall, priest, 1441 (apparently a chantry priest at one of the altars in Gateshead Church), leaves “unto Sir Johane huchinson, my sister’s soone, my best govne, and another govne that was Sir Will’m Goolands, my best tippett, the best bonet, ... a rachytt, a hangher, a mesbooke, a manuall, a doseyn aum’ beids with a gyemis ring, and all my books, with my bedde, that is to know a ffedour bedde, a bowster, 2 codds ... blankets, 2 coverletts, 2 scheyts.... To Robert huchinson my second gown, two dovbletts, and my hose. To the aforesayd Robert’s wyfe, a govn whiche I ware on Sondays, and to bessy chawmere, my blake govne. I give unto Jennet appelbe a yron chimnaye, a coffer, and a mantil. Unto Marg, his sistar, a counter and a pair of amber (avmer) bedys garded with silver gardis. To St. Cuthbart’s gilde, if it shall go on, 2 westments with ther albs, 2 altare cloythes, 1 towell, 2 candlesticks, 1 antiphonal, 1 prosessiner, a dirige book, and a pax. To Jennet Wawton 11*d.* and my dayly govne. My chalys unto the chirche of this condition, and if it please God that thair fawll a chantre within this forsayth chirche beyinge at the p’oshinars gyfte, and the p’oshinars be so good unto my cousinge, Sir Johane, as to gyve and promote hym beforr another, this doven, than this chalys to stand as gyft, and if not, to go to my executors.”[180]

By his will, dated 1491, Sir John Newys, Vicar of Tillingham, makes various [Pg 181] bequests to his church, and leaves £6 8*s.* 4*d.* for a priest to sing for his soul for a year; he gives to Sir Richard Mortimer, his parish priest [*i.e.* his assistant curate], his portuous, and his long gown of musterdeviles with the hood; he leaves, besides, to different people, his best gown, his two red doublets, and best pair of hozen, his satten doublet, his new furred gown, his long green gown, and his long russet gown, and his old hozen.[181]

Robert Hyndmer, Rector of Sedgefield’s will, 1558, is accompanied by a very full inventory of the house furniture and belongings of a well-to-do man. He leaves, among other things, a ring of gold with a dark ruby in it, and another gold ring with a red seal of an image; 180 ounces of plate at 5*s.* the ounce, and in money and gold, £116.

John Honynghym, Rector of Waldegrave, 1417, leaves 100*s.* for the making of a vestment for use at the high altar of the church of St. Peter, in Walgraf, London. He leaves his “best bible,” which begins In S^{o} filio dei in actibus [*sic*], also his portiforium of the Use of York. He leaves to William Bryht, Rector of S. Michael’s, Cornhill, a gilt zone, which is in his hospitium in London, as recompense for having kept a book of his called “Gorham Copwood”; and leaves his sword to Nicholas Dixon. He leaves a book called “Speculum Curatorum,” a book of sermons which the late Prior of Bartholomew’s composed, Gorham super Mattheum, Bartholomeus de Casibus, his great missal, and great new portiforium.

Robert Newby, Rector of Whyttchurche, and official of the Archdeacon of Oxford, 1412, leaves to his brother his sword, etc., and to his daughter his scarlet gown.

Thomas de la Mare, Canon of York, A.D. 1258, bequeaths 2 falcons to his [Pg 182] brother and cousin. He mentions his falconer among his servants, and leaves him a “laner” and 20*s.* He had several horses, the names of some being given; one was “Turnebull,” another, “Bayard de Wirethorp,” and a third, “Morell de Welwick.”

Says the author of “Dives and Pauper,” “These men of holy church that buckle their shoes of silver and use great silver harness in their girdles and knives, and men of religion—monks and canons and such like—that use great ouches of silver and gold on their capes to fasten their hoods against the wind, and ride on high horses with saddles harnessed with gold and silver more pompously than lords, are strong thieves and do great sacrilege, so spending the goods of holy church on vanity and pride, in lust of the flesh, by which

things the poor should live."

Some of these clergymen, it will be noticed, had one black toga, not for usual wear in Divine service, for we shall see elsewhere that the clergy wore their albes over the red and blue gowns of ordinary use, but perhaps for mourning occasions. Thus, in the presentations of York Cathedral, in 1519, "we thynke it were convenient that whene we fetche a corse to the churche, that we shulde be in our blak abbettes mornyngly (habits mourningly) w^{t} our hodes of the same of our hedes, as is used in many other places."

The use by the clergy of clothes of a dark colour was probably coming in in the latter part of the fifteenth century. Holinshed, the chronicler of Elizabeth, attributes this change to the influence of the universities:

> Before the universities bound their graduates to a stable attire, afterwards usurped also even by the blind Sir Johns, "the clergy wore garments of a light hue, as yellow, red, green, etc., with their shoes piked, their hair crisped, their girdles armed with silver, their shoes, spurs, bridles, etc., buckled with like metal, their apparel (for the most part) of silk, and richly furred, their caps laced and buttoned with gold."[182]

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CHAPTER XII.

FABRIC AND FURNITURE OF CHURCHES, AND OFFICIAL COSTUME OF PRIESTS.

It is not necessary to describe the churches of mediæval England, for happily they still exist of all periods and styles, from the rude Saxon church built of split oak or chestnut trunks, at Greenstead, in Essex, down to the noble perpendicular churches of the close of the fifteenth century.

We may, however, make two remarks upon them. First, the comparative magnitude and sublimity of the churches was far greater in the times when they were built. The contrast between the village church and the cots of the peasantry around it, and even the small, lowly, half-timber manor house in its neighbourhood; the contrast between the town churches and the narrow streets of timber houses; still more the contrast between the great cathedrals and monastic churches and all the habitations of men; fills us with admiration of the splendid genius of the men who designed them, and the large-minded devotion of the men who caused them to be built.

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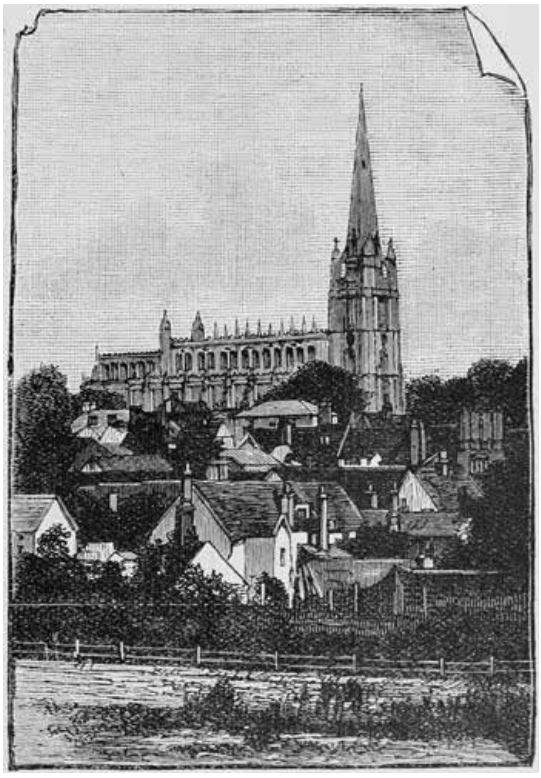

Saffron Walden Church, Essex.

The second remark which we have to make is that, though we have the old churches, they are, for the most part, stripped of all their ancient decorations and furnishing; and that it requires some ecclesiological knowledge and some power of imagination to realize their ancient beauty. If we want to replace before the mind's eye the sort of church in which a fourteenth or fifteenth century rector or vicar said the Divine service continually, we shall [Pg 186] have the advantage of finding the church still existing, perhaps with very little alteration in its general architectural outline; but we shall have to imagine the walls covered with fresco painting of Old and New Testament story; the windows filled with gem-like glass; the chancel screens and the rood loft with its sacred figures; the chantry chapels; the altar tombs with effigies of knight and lady; the lights twinkling before altar, rood and statue.

Market Harborough Church, Leicestershire.

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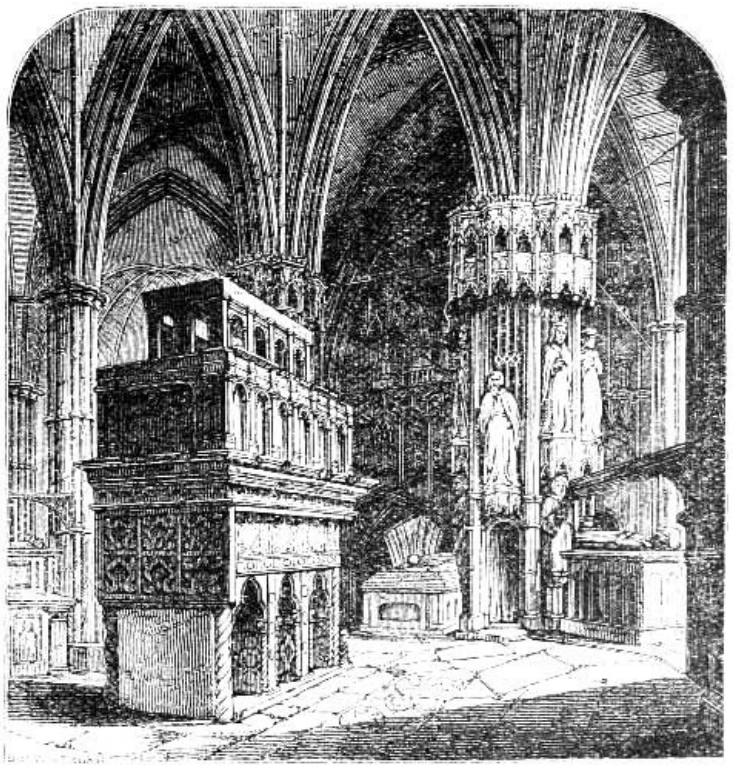


Chapel of Edward the Confessor, Westminster Abbey.

We shall see from the Constitution of Archbishop Gray, quoted below, that the parishioners were, by ancient custom, liable for the maintenance and repair of the body and tower of their church; the fifth of the "extravagants" of Stratford, Archbishop of York (1342),[183] records that this was done by means of a proportionate tax on the estates and farms of the parish. From the records of bishops' Visitations, we learn, further, that the bishops exercised greater power in the matter of church building in old times than they do now. They had not only the power to require that the church should be kept in good repair, but that, where necessary, it should be enlarged. Thus, Bishop Stapledon (1309) orders the parishioners of Ilfracombe, since the church is not capable of holding all the parishioners, to enlarge it by lengthening the body of the church by 24 feet at least, and adding two aisles, within two years, under a penalty of £40.[184] [Pg 188]

At a Visitation of Sturton parish church, in 1314, in the time of the same bishop, it was returned that, in addition to defects in the furniture, the church is too small (*strictus*) and dark; the nave of the church likewise. Therefore, "the lord bishop enjoins the rectors, vicar, and parishioners, that they cause the said defects to be made good, according to what belongs to them severally, before the next feast of St. Michael, under penalty of £20 to the fabric of the [cathedral] Church of Exeter; except the construction of the new chancel and the enlargement of the church, and they to be done before St. Michael day twelve-month."[185]

From the thirteenth century we have full information of the furniture and utensils, vestments, and books which the canons required to be provided in every church for the performance of Divine service and the ministration of the offices of the Church. Walter Gray, Archbishop of York, c. 1250, made a constitution which we subjoin; and similar lists occur from time to time, for both provinces, in visitation inquiries, inventories and constitutions; [186] *e.g.* in the Constitutions of Robert of Winchelsea, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1305. [Pg 189]

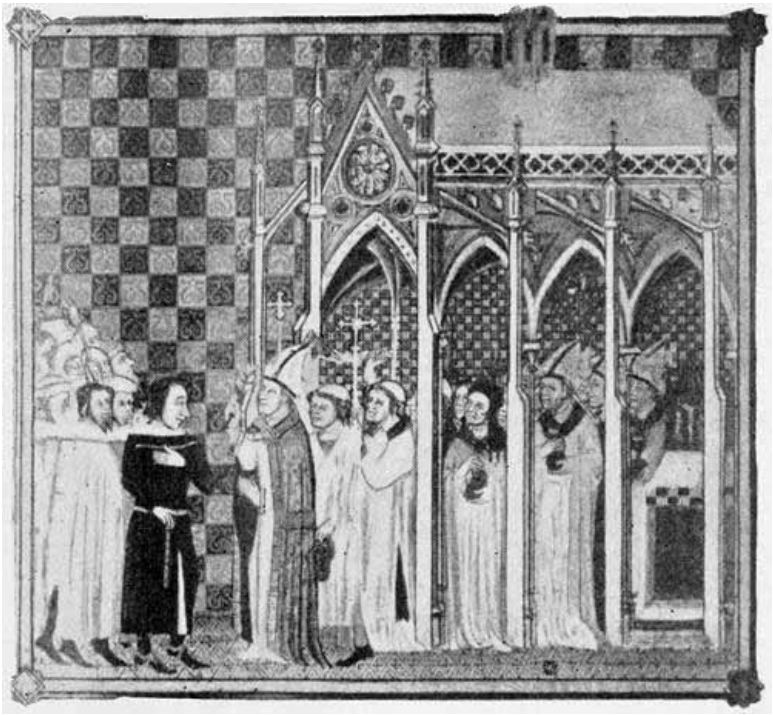
> Since much altercation has arisen between some of the rectors and vicars and their parishioners about the various ecclesiastical ornaments as to what it belonged to the rectors or their vicars to provide and maintain and what to the parishioners, we ordain and appoint that the parishioners provide a chalice, missal, the principal vestment of the church, viz. a chasuble, white albe, amice, stole, maniple, zone, with three towels, a corporal, and other decent vestments for the deacon and sub-deacon, according to the means of the parishioners and of the church, together with a principal silk cope for chief festivals, and with two others for the rulers of the choir in the foresaid festivals, a processional cross and another smaller cross for the dead, and a bier for the dead, a vase for holy water, an osculatory, a candlestick for the Paschal candle, a thurible, a lantern with a bell, a Lent veil, two candlesticks for the taper bearers; of books, a Legendary, Antiphonary, Gradual, Psalter, Topiary, Ordinale, Missal, Manual; a frontal to the great altar, three surplices,

[Pg 190]

a suitable pyx for the “Corpus Christi,” a banner for the Rogations, great bells with their ropes, a holy font with fastening, a chrismatory, images in the church, and the principal image in the church of the person to whom the church is dedicated, the repair of books and vestments so often as they require repair; and in addition to all the aforesaid things a light in the church, the repair of the nave of the church, with its bell-tower, internally and externally, viz. with glass windows, with the enclosure of the cemetery, with other things belonging to the nave of the church, and other things which by custom belong to the parishioners. To the rectors or vicars belong all other things according to various ordinances, viz. the principal chancel with its repairs both in walls and roofs and glass windows belonging to the same, with desks and forms and other ornaments suitable, so that with the prophet they may be able to sing, “Lord, I have loved the honour of Thy house,” etc. As to the manse of the rectory and its repair, and other things which are not written in this book, let the rectors or vicars know that they may be compelled by the ordinary of the place, to do according to this constitution and others in this case provided.[187]

This is the formal catalogue of the minimum which the law required the parson and the parishioners to provide and maintain. But people were not satisfied with doing only what they were obliged to do. A considerable number of inventories exist of the treasures which had gradually accumulated as the gifts of pious benefactors to the cathedrals and churches: shrines, reliquaries, statues, crosses, mitres, pastoral staves, lamps and candlesticks, chalices, patens, pyxes, paxes, censers, processional crosses of gold and silver, often set with precious stones; altar cloths, hangings, palls,[188] vestments of the costliest fabrics, many of them embroidered, and often ornamented with precious stones. When we add the paintings of stained and sculptured marble, and carved woodwork of the fabric, and the monuments with their recumbent statues, and call to mind that the best art of the period was devoted to these works, we recognize that the churches of the country were treasures of art. Even the humblest village churches often possessed noble tombs of the local lords, and their gifts of ornaments of costly material and fine workmanship.

[Pg 191]



PROCESSION OF BISHOPS WITH CROSS BEARER, THURIFER, HOLY WATER BEARER, PRIESTS, CANONS AND BISHOPS. FROM THE XV. CENT. MS., TIBERIUS, B VIII., f. 43.

If we wish to see our priests as they ministered in church, it will be necessary to describe the vestments which were worn by them in those days.[189]

It is a little doubtful what they wore at the very beginning of our English Church history. The British bishops, no doubt, from early times down to the sixth century, wore the white tunic with long sleeves, which from its general colour was called the albe. The bishops and priests of the Celtic school who clung to the old usages were probably still wearing the pallium when Augustine came to Kent. But about that time the pallium was being superseded by a newer vestment called the planeta or chasuble, a circle of linen or other material with a hole in the middle through which the head was passed, so that the garment fell in folds all round the person. Very likely Augustine and the Continental school of clergy wore this new garment, and it would be adopted by the Celtic school when they accepted the Continental

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usages. The chasuble continued to be worn at the altar down to the end of the Middle Ages with a slight modification in shape; the voluminous folds in which it was gathered over the arms, when the hands were in use, were practically inconvenient, and so the circle came to be contracted into an oval, and then the ends of the oval were shaped to a point.

The orarium, which afterwards came to be called the stole, was originally a prayer-veil worn over the head by the priests and people of heathen Rome when they attended a sacrifice. It had an embroidered border which fell round the neck and shoulders. In course of time the veil was narrowed to its embroidered border, and was lengthened into a kind of scarf, worn over the shoulders and hanging down in front. A deacon wore the stole over one shoulder.

In early times the priest and deacon bore a napkin, called the fanon or maniple, over the left arm, with which to wipe the edge of the chalice; but this also was in time reduced to a strip of embroidered material.

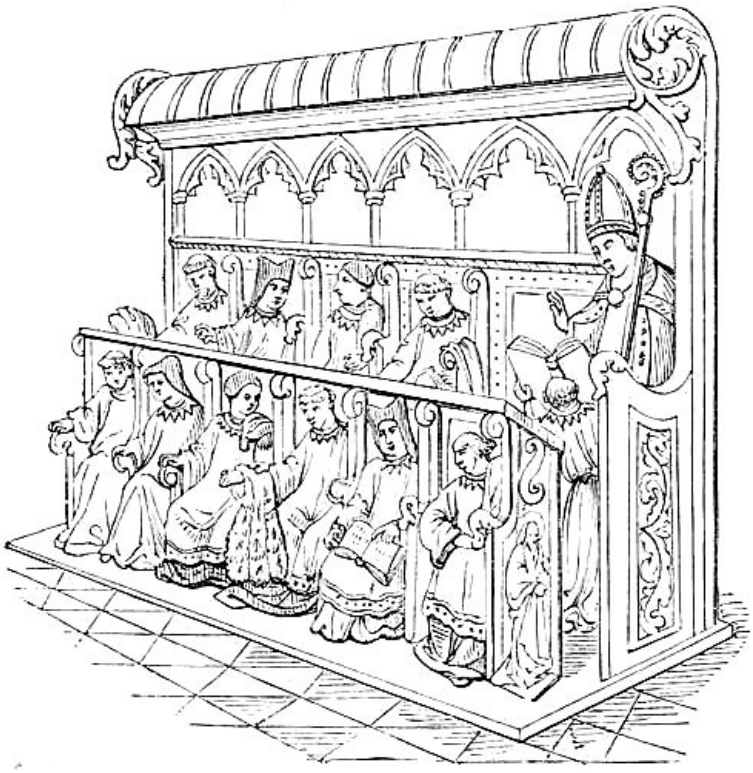
The amice was a linen hood worn with the chasuble, placed over the head while the chasuble was put on, and then thrown back; so that it was seen only like a loose fold of linen round the neck.

The dalmatic was another upper garment, in form like a wide short tunic slit up at the sides, with short wide sleeves; and about the tenth century it became the distinctive upper vestment of the deacon. A little later the sub-deacon wore a tunicle, which was a scantier dalmatic. [Pg 193]

We often find “a suit of vestments” mentioned in inventories and wills, and in several places it is defined in detail as a chasuble, two tunicles, three albes, and three amices, the vestments needed by the celebrant, his deacon, and sub-deacon; the chasuble and tunicles would be of the same material, colour, and style of ornamentation.

The cope was simply a cloak. The shape in which we first find it as an ecclesiastical vestment was an exact semicircle, usually with an ornamented border along the straight side, which, when worn, fell down in two lines of embroidery in front. It was originally a protection from the weather, as indicated by its name “Pluviale,” and by the hood, which is so integral a part of the original idea of the garment, that for centuries a flat triangular piece of ornamental work was sewn at the back of the cope, to represent this hood. It first appears as a clerical vestment about the end of the ninth century, and was worn in processions and in choir.

The surplice is the most modern of the clerical vestments. The fashion, introduced about the eleventh century, of having the tunic lined with fur, was found very comfortable by the clergy in their long services in cold churches; but the strait, girded albe looked ungraceful over it, and so the albe was enlarged into a surplice, to be worn in all minor offices over the furred robe, as its name, *superpelliceum*, indicates, while the albe continued to be used in the Eucharistic Service. [Pg 194]



Bishop and Canons, from Richard II.’s “Book of Hours,” British Museum.

The shape of the surplice differs much in different examples. We give some illustrations in which it will be seen that the surplice of a canon is long and ample, while that of a clerk is little wider than an albe, but has wide sleeves and is not girded. In an inventory of the goods of St. Peter, Cornhill, at the time of the Reformation, we find “gathered surplices” for the “curate,” and “plain surplices” for the choir.[190]

Canons in choir wore over the surplice a short furred cope or cape, called an amyss, with a fur-lined hood attached, of curious shape, as shown in several of our illustrations. Bishops wore the whole series of vestments with the addition of mitre, jewelled gloves and shoes, and carried a pastoral staff. [Pg 195]

The furniture of the churches and the vestments of its ministers were of very different degrees of beauty and cost—from altar vessels of simple silver of rude country make up to vessels of gold fashioned by great artists and enriched with jewels; from a simple linen chasuble up to copes and chasubles of cloth of gold, enriched with embroidery of high artistic merit and adorned with gems.

After these dry technicalities, we have only to illustrate the vestments as they appeared in actual use by some pictures from illuminated manuscripts and other sources, with a few explanatory notes where they seem to be necessary. Once granted that some distinctive dress is becoming and desirable for the clergy in their ministrations, and the rest is mere matter of taste. There is nothing mysterious about the mediæval vestments. They were all at first (except the Orarium) ordinary articles of everyday apparel, worn by clergy and laity alike. But it has always been thought right that the clergy should not be in too great haste to follow new fashions, and so they went on wearing fashions till they were obsolete; moreover, some of these copes and planetas were costly vestments given by kings and great men expressly to be worn in Divine service, and had been worn by saints, and had come to have venerable associations, and no one wished to discard them; and so they came to be distinctive and venerable. [Pg 196]

Imaginative people soon invented a symbolical meaning for the various vestments, and other imaginative people varied the symbolism from time to time. St. Isidore of Seville, in the sixth century, saw in the white colour of the albe a symbol of the purity which becomes the clerical character, and that was so obvious and simple, that it continued to be the recognized meaning all through the ages. Of the chasuble, St. Germanus of Constantinople, in the eighth century, says it is a symbol of our Lord’s humility; Amalarius of Metz, in the ninth century, says it means good works; and Alcuin, in the tenth century, takes it to signify charity, because it covers all the other vestments as charity excels all other virtues. Later writers made the dalmatic, because it is in the shape of a cross, signify the Passion of our Lord; the stole, the yoke of Christ; and so forth.[191]

There is a fashion in clerical vestments as well as in the clothes of the laity; the forms of the cope, chasuble, etc., at different times are sufficiently shown in our illustrations to make description unnecessary. We may make the one remark, that whereas the cope and chasuble of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are of pliant material and skilful fashion, and fall in graceful folds, the like vestments in the sixteenth century came to be made of stiff material unskilfully shaped; in the seventeenth century the chasuble has its sides entirely cut away, of necessity, because the arms were unable to act under the weight and rigidity of the material, while the back and front hang down like boards cut into the shape of a violoncello.[192] [Pg 197]

Goodrich, Bishop of Ely.
(From his monumental brass.)

It will be convenient to introduce here, from the monumental brass of Bishop Goodrich, [Pg 198]
1554 A.D., an example of late date, in which the vestments are very clearly drawn, and briefly to enumerate them. The albe reaches to the feet, the piece of embroidery upon it being one of five such pieces, in front and back at the feet, on the wrists, and on the breast, symbolizing the “five wounds” of our Lord. Over that may be seen the lower part of the sub-deacon’s tunicle; over that the ends of the stole; then the dalmatic; and over all the chasuble. The embroidered vestment round the shoulders is probably the “rationale,” an ornament rich with gold and jewels, worn by some bishops in this country. The plain fillet
round the neck is the linen amice. The jewelled mitre and the pastoral staff need no [Pg 199]
description. The hands are covered with gloves of gauntlet shape, and the tassel with which the wrist terminates will be evident to careful observation. The maniple will be seen hanging over the left wrist. The book held in the right hand is probably the Bible, and the seal dependent from the same hand is the badge of this bishop’s civil office of Lord Chancellor.

Abbot Delamere.

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE PUBLIC SERVICES IN CHURCH.

The public services on Sunday in a parish church were Matins, Mass, and Evensong. We do not propose more than to take an outside view of them; the reader who cares to do so may without difficulty obtain a missal and breviary, and study their contents. We may, however, make two remarks bearing upon the important general question of the popular religion of these Middle Ages. The first is that there is a widespread error on the subject of the "Mass" in the minds of those who have never opened a missal. It is taken for granted that it was the most corrupt and idolatrous feature of all the Roman corruptions; on the contrary, the Eucharistic service of the Mediæval English Church was very little altered in substance from that of the sixth century, and is so sound that it is inconsistent with some of the modern Roman corruptions in doctrine and practice. The Matins and Evensong of those times consisted of an accumulation of several of the "Hour" offices; and the Morning and Evening Prayer of our [Pg 201] Prayer-book consists of a condensation of those same "Hours;" so that the regular popular services were far more free from corruptions and superstitions than is commonly supposed. These were to be found chiefly in glosses on the services, and additions to them.

It is probable that the Sunday services were attended with fair regularity by the majority of the people.[193] Not only did the clergy exercise more authoritative oversight over their people than they do in these times, but it was the duty of churchwardens to present people who were flagrantly negligent of their religious duties, and of the Ecclesiastical Courts to punish them.[194]

The times of service varied in different times and places, but they were earlier than our [Pg 202] present usage.

It is certain that matins always preceded the Divine service,[195] and it is probable that the normal time for the latter was nine o'clock;[196] it was not considered right to celebrate it after twelve o'clock.

If not every Sunday, at least at certain times a sermon was preached, about which we shall have to speak more at large presently. All the people who were of age and not excommunicate were communicants, but the vast majority only communicated once a year, at Easter, some pious people a little more frequently, but the most devout not oftener than twelve times a year.[197] But at every celebration a loaf of bread, the "holy loaf," was blessed, and broken or cut in pieces, and given to the people. Here comes in a question whether the laity attended mass fasting. It would seem that it was not necessary, since they did not communicate, but that they may have done so out of reverence is suggested by a note in Blunt's Annotated Prayer-book, that those who had not come fasting to the service, did not eat their portion of the "holy loaf," but gave it to another, or reserved it for future [Pg 203] consumption. People dined no doubt immediately they reached their homes after service.

Probably the evensong at about three in the afternoon was not so well attended as the morning service; people who have some distance to go in all weathers from their homes to the church do not usually go twice a day. It was probably the general custom to catechize the children in the afternoon.

All this is illustrated by some extracts from the author of "Piers Plowman":—

> For holy church exhorteth All manner of people
> Under obedience to be, And buxom to the Law.
> First religious of Religion their Rule to hold,
> And under obedience to be by days and by nights;
> Lewd[198] men to labour, lords to hunt
> In friths and forests for fox and other beasts,
> That in wild woods be, And in waste places,
> As wolves that worry men, Women and children;

And upon Sunday to cease, God's service to hear,
Both Matins and Masse, And after meat in churches
To hear their Evensong Every man ought.
Thus it belongeth to Lord, to learned, and to lewd,
Each holy day to hear Wholly the service,
Vigils and fasting days Further to know.[199]

Sloth said, in a fit of repentance—

Shall no Sunday be this seven years, Except sickness hinder,
That I shall not go before day To the dear church,
And hear Matins and Masse, As if I a monk were;
Shall no ale after meat Hold me thence
Till I have Evensong heard, I swear to the Rood.[200]

This confirms our statement that on Sundays people generally went to matins and mass, and afterwards to dinner; and in the afternoon to evensong. Sloth is boasting when he says that in future he will go to church before day like a monk; ordinary lay people did not do so; and he admits the fault of sitting over the ale after dinner, instead of going to evensong. [Pg 204]

There seems to have been a certain laxity of practice in those days as in these. We all know that it was the custom in many country churches in modern times—and very likely still is so in some—not to begin the service until the squire came; we are shocked to find that it was so in those earlier times, and that the squire was sometimes very late. This is illustrated by two of the very curious stories in the "Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry."[201]

> I have herde of a knight and of a lady that in her (their) youthe delited hem to rise late. And so they used longe tille many tymes that thei lost her masse, and made other of her paryshe to lese it, for the knight was lord and patron of the churche, and therefor the priest durst not disobeye hym. And so it happed that the knight sent unto the chirche that thei shulde abide hym. And whane he come it was passed none, wherefor thei might not that day have no masse, for every man saide it was passed tyme of the day, and therefore thei durst not singe.

The other story is of

> a ladi that dwelled faste by the chirche, that toke every day so long time to make her redy, that it made every Sunday the parson of the chirche and the parisseners to abide after her. And she happed to abide so longe on a Sunday that it was fer dayes, and every man said to other, "This day we trow shall not this lady be kemed and arraied." [Pg 205]

ELEVATION AT MASS.
FROM THE LATE XV. CENT. MS. 25698, f. 2.

We read also of instances on fast days, when men might not eat till after evensong, of

evensong being said at noon.

After mass on Sunday, it was not very uncommon for a pedlar to take the opportunity of the assembling of the people to display his wares in the churchyard, in spite of injunctions to the contrary. And after evensong, the young people took advantage of their holiday to play at games, sometimes in the churchyard.[202]

An inquiry[203] by Cardinal Pole, in 1557, whether taverns and ale houses opened their doors on Sundays and holy days in time of mass, matins, and evensong, indicates that the law required them to be closed at those times, but permitted them to be open at other times on Sundays and holy days.

The churchgoing habits of clergy and people on other days than Sundays and holy days are not so easily arrived at. There is no proof that a daily celebration was ordered in the Saxon Church; after the Norman Conquest, a weekly celebration was ordered.[204] There is no [Pg 206] canon of the English Church which imposes a daily celebration on the clergy; by a Constitution of Peckham,[205] they are required to say mass once a week, and that, if possible, on a Sunday; at a later period it became the general practice for a priest to say his daily mass. Where the services of the church were regularly performed, it is probable that the parish priest said the Divine service every day, either in the parish church or in one of its chapels, if it had any; and that he also said matins and evensong; but it is not unlikely that in many country parishes there was an amount of laxity. We have seen that the inhabitants of hamlets who were solicitous about the services in their chapel were content with it on three days a week, viz. Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday; and we should not be surprised to be told that in many of the rural parish churches it was not said more frequently, or indeed more frequently than on Sundays and holy days.

As for the attendance of the laity on daily service, we have given reasons in the chapter on domestic chapels for believing that it was the custom of the nobility and those of the higher classes who had domestic chapels and chaplains to have a daily celebration of mass, matins, and evensong.

There is a passage in the “Vision of Piers Plowman” (Passus V.) which seems to indicate that [Pg 207] this was the case in churches also—

> The king and his knights to the church wenten,
> To hear matins and mass, and to the meal after.

But the services were likely to be duly performed in any church which “the king and his knights” were likely to attend, and in the principal churches in towns, and in well-served churches everywhere; we only doubt it in many of the churches and chapels in rustic parishes where devotion was cold and discipline slack, or the number of the clergy insufficient.

At the ordinary daily services in parish churches it is very likely that there was some congregation; for attendance on the Divine service was highly regarded as a pious exercise, and pious people who had the leisure—women especially—would be likely to attend it; the custom of gathering poor people into almshouses in which they formed a kind of religious community with their chaplain, chapel, and daily prayers, would be likely to have its counterpart in the attendance of the pensioners of the parish church at the daily service in it; but it is unlikely that it was ever customary for the middle class, still less the lower class of laymen, engaged in the active business of life, to attend daily mass, or matins, or evensong, as a habit of their religious life.

The Bidding Prayer, being in English, was a popular part of the service. It was usually, from the eleventh century onward, said from the pulpit before the sermon. It differed somewhat [Pg 208] in various places and at different periods; but the following example, taken from “The York Manual,” is a fair example of the class:

Prayers to be used on Sundays.[206]

> To God Almighty and the glorious Virgin Mother, our lady S. Mary, and all the glorious company of heaven.
>
> For the Pope and his Cardinals, for the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and for the holy cross, that God bring it out of the heathen men’s hands into Christian men’s keeping.
>
> For the Archbishop of this see, and the Bishops, etc.
>
> For the Parson of this church [and others] that hath the cure of men’s souls, that God give them grace well to teach their subjects, and the subjects well to work after heleful teaching, that both the teachers and subjects may come to everlasting bliss.
>
> For all priests and clerks who sing in this church, and any other, etc.
>
> For the King and Queen, the peers and lords, and all the good Commoners of

this land, and especially for those that hath the good council of the land to govern, that God give them grace such counsel to take and ordain, and so for to work thereafter that it may be loving to God Almighty, and profit and welfare to the royalme, and gainsaying and reproving of our enemy's power and malice.

For all that worship in this church, or any other, with book, bell, vestment, chalice, altar-cloth, or towell, or any other ornament, etc.

For all that give or leave in testament any good to the right maintenance and upholding of the work of this Church, and for all them that find any Light in this Church as in torch, taper, land, in worshipping of God or of our Lady or of any of His Saints. [Pg 209]

For all our good parishioners wheresoever they be, on water or on land, that God of His goodness save them from all manner of perils, and bring them safe where they would be in health of body and soul and also of goods.

For all that are in debt or deadly sin, that God for His great mercy bring them soon thereof; and for all those that are in good living, that God maintain them and give them good perseverance in their goodness; and that these prayers may be heard and sped the sooner through your prayers, every man and woman that here is, help them heartily with a *Pater Noster* and an *Ave Maria*, etc.

Deus misereatur [the whole Psalm].
Gloria Patri.
Kyrie Eleyson, etc.
Pater noster ... et ne nos ... sed libera.
Sacerdotes tui induantur justitia.
Et sancti tui exultent, etc.
Et clamor meus ad te veniat.
Dominus vobiscum. Et cum spiritu tuo.
Oremus [three Latin prayers].

Ye shall kneel down devoutly and pray for the brethren and sisters of St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley, St. Wilfred of Ripon, and St. Mary of Southwell; and specially for all those that be sick in this parish or any other, that God in His goodness release them from their pains in their sickness, and turn them to the way that is most to God's pleasure and welfare of their souls.

We shall pray for all those that duly pay their tendes [tithes] and their offerings to God and to the holy Church, that God do them meed in the bliss of heaven that ever shall last, and they that do not so that God of His mercy bring them soon to amendment.

We shall pray for all true pilgrims and palmers wheresoever they be, on water or on land, that God of His goodness grant them part of our good prayers and us part of their good pilgrimages. [Pg 210]

We shall also pray for all land tylland [under cultivation], that God for His goodness and for His grace and through our good prayers maintain them that they may be saved from all evil winds and wethers and from all dreadful storms, that God send us corn and cattle for to live upon to God's pleasure and the welfare of our souls.

We shall pray also for all women that be with child in this parish or any other, that God comfort them, and send the child Christendom, and the mother Purification of holy Church, and releasing of pain in her travailing.

We shall pray specially for them that this day gave bread to this Church for to be made holy bread of; for them that it begun and longest uphold, for them and for us and for all them that need hath of good prayers.

In worship of our lady Saint Mary and her v joys, every man and woman say in the honor of her v times *Ave Maria*.

Antiphona.—Ave, regina cælorum,
Mater regis angelorum;
O Maria flos virginum,
Velut rosa vel lilium,
Funde preces ad Filium
Pro salute fidelium.
V. Post partum virgo inviolata.
Gratiam tuam, etc.

Oremus.—We beseech thee, O Lord, pour Thy grace into our hearts, that we who have known Thy Incarnation by the message of an angel, by His Cross and Passion may come to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ye shall make a special prayer for your fathers' souls and for your mothers' souls, godfathers' souls and godmothers' souls, brothers' souls and sisters' souls, and for all your elders' souls, and for all the souls that you and I be bound to pray for, and specially for all the souls whose bones are buried in this church or in this churchyard or in any other holy place; and in especial for all the souls that bide the great mercy of Almighty God in the bitter pains of Purgatory, that God for His great mercy release them of their pain if it be His blessed will. And that our prayers may somewhat stand them in stead, every man and woman of your church help them with a *Pater noster* and an *Ave Maria*. [Pg 211]

Psalmus: De profundis.
Kyrie Eleyson, etc.
Pater noster ... et ne nos ...
Requiem eternam.
Credo vivere.
A porta inferi.
Dominus vobiscum. Et cum spiritu tuo.
Oremus.
Fidelium Deus omnium Conditor, etc.
Fidelium animæ per misericordiam Dei in pace requiescant. Amen.

One of the features connected with this part of the service, which must have had a striking effect, was the Bede Roll, the reading out the names of those who had recently died in the parish, and the commendation of them to the prayers of the congregation. There are examples of the payment of a fee for placing a name on the list, and of people leaving money to the priest for naming them from year to year on their anniversary, and of endowments for the maintenance of the Bede Roll.[207]

The Procession, or Litany, was also a very popular service; its petitions and responses, though in Latin, were intelligible enough to the people; and the procession of priest and clerks round the church with cross and censer, while the petitions were chanted by a single voice, *Sancte Katherine*; etc., *ora pro nobis*, and the responses sung in chorus, "*Ora, ora, ora pro nobis!*" made up a very picturesque and solemn service. It was probably usually said in the afternoon. A painful, but no doubt very attractive, addition was sometimes made to it, when a miserable penitent condemned to the penance preceded the procession in white sheet, bearing a taper. [Pg 212]

In churches in which there were one or more chantries the private masses would be said at the convenience of the cantarists, with this one regulation: that they might not on Sundays and festivals begin till after the gospel of the principal service. People might attend these chantry services if they pleased, and perhaps the relatives of persons commemorated usually or frequently did so; and, if said at a different hour from the principal service, they would practically add to the number of services, and meet the convenience of some of the people.

We shall see hereafter that chantry and special services were often provided in towns by the corporation, or one of the gilds, or by some group of persons, expressly to add to the number of services, first for the greater honour of Almighty God, and secondly to meet the wishes and circumstances of different people.

In most great churches, with the normal services, and the chantry services besides, services must have been going on all the morning long; sometimes the great celebration at the high altar, and, at the same time, chantry celebrations at a dozen altars besides in the surrounding chapels. [Pg 213]

CHAPTER XIV.

PREACHING AND TEACHING.

There is a chain of evidences that the rulers of the Church not only enjoined the diligent teaching of the people by their parish priests in sermon[208] and otherwise, but also gave the clergy the assistance of manuals of teaching and sermon helps; and, further, took pains at their visitations to ascertain that the duty was efficiently performed.

So early as the beginning of the eighth century, Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, published a poem in four hundred and fifty-eight Latin hexameters, “De Octo[209] Principalibus Vitiis.”

Ælfric’s address to the clergy (c. 1030) at the distribution of the chrism seems to have been written for his Bishop Wulfsine to deliver to a synodical assembly of the clergy of the Diocese of Sherborne. It is an instruction to the clergy on the duties of their office; dealing first minutely with their duty in baptism, unction, the eucharist, etc.; then it bids them to know by heart and explain to the people the Ten Commandments, and gives a brief explanation of each; then it goes on to explain the eight[210] capital vices. It is the first which has been preserved to us of a long series of synodal instructions.

PREACHING. FROM THE XIII. CENT. MS., EGERTON, p. 745, f. 46.

The Synod of Oxford, in 1223, enjoins the clergy “not to be dumb dogs, but with salutary bark to drive away the disease of spiritual wolves from the flock.” A canon of Alexander of Stavenby, Bishop of Coventry (1224-1240), requires all clergy to address to their people assembled on the Lord’s Day or other festival the following words:—the words constitute a rhetorical sermon on the seven deadly sins. Another canon gives directions as to the mode of receiving penitents, and dealing with souls. Grostete (1235-1254) gave directions to his clergy to preach on Sundays, and gave them the heads of their teaching. In Exeter, Bishop Quivil (1280-1292) drew up a similar book for the clergy, of which he required every parish to have a copy under penalty of a fine. Bishop Brentingham, of Exeter (1370-1395), issued a mandate against intruding priests who would say low masses in parish churches on Sundays and holy days, which parishioners attended instead of the *Magna Missa*, and so lost the benefit of the sermon: this assumes that a sermon is preached in all parish churches on Sundays and holy days. Other diocesan bishops adopted similar methods.

Archbishop Peckham, in the Constitutions of 1281, put forth a manual of teaching on the Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments, the Seven[211] Deadly Sins, the Seven Principal Virtues, and the Seven Sacraments, so fully and ably done that it continued to form a standard of teaching, and is constantly referred to in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It seems worth while to give it *in extenso* as an authentic record of the teaching of the Mediæval Church. It appears as Canon X. of the Provincial Synod of Lambeth, 1281, and begins with this preamble—

The ignorance of priests precipitates the people into the pit of error, and the foolishness or rudeness of clerks, who ought to instruct the minds of the faithful in the Catholic faith, sometimes tends rather to error than to doctrine. Also some blind preachers[212] do not always visit the places which most need the light of truth, as the prophet witnesses, who says, “The children seek for bread, and there is no one to break it to them;” and another prophet cries, “The poor and needy ask for water, and their tongue is parched.” For the remedy of such mischiefs we ordain that every priest who presides over a people do four times a year, that is, once in each quarter of the year, on one or more festival days, either by himself or by another, expound to the people in popular language without any fanciful subtlety, the 14 Articles of Faith, the 10 [Pg 217] Commandments of the Lord, the 2 Evangelical Precepts of Charity, the 7 Works of Mercy, the 7 Deadly Sins with their progeny, the 7 Principal Virtues, and the 7 Sacraments of Grace. And in order that no one may excuse himself from this on account of ignorance, though all ministers of the Church ought to know them, we have here with great brevity summed them up.

Of the Articles of Faith.—Seven of them concern the mystery of the Trinity; four of these belong to the essence of the Godhead, and the other three relate to His works. The first is the unity of the Divine Essence in three Persons of the Indivisible Trinity agreeably to this part of the Creed, “*I believe in one God.*” The second is to believe God the Father, begotten of none. The third is to believe the Son the only begotten, and God. The fourth is to believe the Holy Ghost to be God, neither begotten nor unbegotten, but proceeding both from the Father and the Son. The fifth article is to believe in the creation of Heaven and Earth (that is, of every visible and invisible creature) by the whole and undivided Trinity.

The sixth is the Sanctification of the Church by the Holy Ghost, and by the Sacraments of Grace, and by all those things in which the Christian Church communicates. By which is understood that the Church, with its Sacraments and discipline, is, through the Holy Ghost, sufficient for the salvation of every sinner; and that outside the Church there is no salvation. The seventh article is the consummation of the Church in eternal glory by a true resurrection of body and soul; and on the contrary is understood the eternal damnation of the lost.

Of the Seven Articles relating to the Humanity of Christ.—The first is His Incarnation, or His true assumption of human flesh of the Blessed Virgin, by the Holy Ghost. The second is the real birth of God Incarnate from the [Pg 218] immaculate Virgin. The third is the true passion of Christ and His death upon the Cross under Pontius Pilate. The fourth is the descent of Christ in the Spirit into hell, while His body remained in the grave, for the despoiling of Tartarus. The fifth is the true Resurrection of Christ. The sixth is His Ascension to heaven. And the seventh is the most confident expectation of His coming to judgment.

Of the Ten Commandments.—Of the ten commandments of the Old Testament three relate to God, and constitute the first table; the remaining seven concern our neighbour, and are called the Commandments of the Second Table. The First Commandment is,[213] *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me*; by which all idolatrous worship is forbidden; and by inference all lots and incantations and superstitions[214] of letters, and such-like figments are forbidden. In the Second, where it is said, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*, all heresy is principally condemned; and, in a secondary sense, all blasphemy, irreverent mention of the Name of God, and especially perjury. The Third Commandment, where it is said, *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day*, commands Christian worship, to which clergy and laity are alike bound. But we are to understand that the obligation of rest upon the Jewish Sabbath came to an end together with the other legal ceremonies; and that under the New Testament came in the practice of Divine worship on the Lord’s day and other holy days appointed by the authority of the Church, and the manner of keeping those days is to be governed by the laws of the Church, [Pg 219] and not by any Jewish usage.

The First Commandment of the Second Table is, *Honour thy Father and Mother*, in which we are explicitly commanded to honour our parents, both in temporal and in spiritual matters; but implicitly, and in a secondary sense, every man is by this commandment to be honoured according to his proper degree; not only our natural father and mother are intended, but our spiritual parents, the Bishop of the Diocese and the Priest of the Parish, may be said to be our fathers; and the Church is our Mother, who is the Mother of all the faithful. The Second precept in this division is, *Thou shalt not kill*; by which the unauthorized taking away any person’s life, either by consent, act, word, or encouragement, is explicitly forbidden, and implicitly every unrighteous injury to the person. They likewise who do not support the poor, they who

murder a man's reputation, are guilty of the breach of this Commandment; and so are all such as harass and distress the innocent. The Third Commandment says, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*. Adultery is explicitly condemned, and implicitly fornication, which is likewise explicitly forbidden in Deuteronomy xxiii., where it is said, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel." But, further, the command extends by way of reduction to all instances of impurity. The Fourth Commandment declares *Thou shall not steal*, which explicitly condemns the clandestine conveying away another man's property without his consent, implicitly it forbids taking what belongs to our neighbour either by fraud or violence. The Fifth Commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour*. This precept explicitly forbids false testimony to the damage of our neighbour; and in a secondary sense it disallows undue commendation in order to the promotion of an unworthy person. Lastly, under this command, all sort of lies, but especially [Pg 220] those which are injurious, are condemned. The Sixth Commandment is, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house*—i.e. to his injury. By this command we are implicitly forbidden to desire the *real* estate of our neighbour, and especially if he is a Catholic. The Seventh and last Commandment of the Table is, *Thou shalt not covet his wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his*, where the coveting of our neighbour's stock or *personal* estate is forbidden.

But to these Ten Commandments the Gospel superadds two, viz. *The Love of God and of our neighbour*. He loves God who obeys the aforesaid Commandments more out of love than out of fear of punishment; and every one ought to love his neighbour as himself; where the particle "*as*" does not signify equality but similarity. So that, for example, you may love your neighbour to the same extent as you love yourself, that is for good and not for evil; and in the same way that is spiritually and not carnally; and as much as yourself, in regard to time, that is in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness; as also as much as yourself in respect of degree, insomuch as you love each and every man more than riches; also insomuch as you love the soul of your neighbour, or his eternal salvation, more than your own earthly life, as you ought to put the life of your soul before the life of your body; also in the same kind as yourself, so that you succour all others in need as you wish to be helped in like necessity. All these things are meant when it is said "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Of the Seven Works of Mercy.—Six of the Seven Works of Mercy may be learned from St. Matthew's Gospel: *To feed the hungry; to give drink to the thirsty; to entertain the stranger; to clothe the naked; to visit the sick; to comfort those in prison*; the seventh is gathered from Tobit—*to bury the dead*.

The Seven Deadly or Capital Sins are Pride, Envy, Anger or Hatred, Sloth, [Pg 221] Avarice or Covetousness, Gluttony, Intemperance. Pride is the love of one's own superiority (*amor propriæ excellentiæ*), from whence spring boasting, ostentation, hypocrisy, schism (*sasinata*), and such like. Envy is hatred of another's good: whence come detraction, strife, complainings, dissension, perverse judgements, and such like. Anger is the desire of revenge, of doing hurt to any person, when it continues upon the mind it settles into hatred; whence proceed outrage in words and acts, quarrels, murders, and such like. Sloth (*accidia*)[215] is a strong indisposition for spiritual good, so that a man has no delight in God or in His praises; out of it come idleness, cowardice, despair, and the like. Avarice is an immoderate love of riches, either by unlawful gathering or unlawful hoarding; out of it spring fraud, theft, sacrilege, simony, and every sort of base gain. Gluttony is an immoderate love of gratifying the palate in food and drink, and it sins in many ways; first, in regard to time, when a man eats too early or too late or too often; second, in respect to quality, when he is too nice in the choice of his diet; third, in respect of quantity, when he eats and drinks too much, which is the most degrading form of gluttony; also in respect of avidity and voracity, and lastly, in too nice a preparation of food so as to excite the appetite; all which are contained in this verse—

"*Præ, propere, laute, nimis, ardenter, studiose*."

Lastly, as for Luxuria, it is not needful to explain it, for its infamy poisons the whole atmosphere.

The Seven Principal Virtues are Faith, Hope, and Charity, which, having God for their object, are called the Theological Virtues; and the others, Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, which relate to ourselves and our [Pg 222] neighbours. The action of Prudence is to make a proper choice; of Justice to do what is good and right; of Temperance not to be hampered by pleasures; Fortitude is not to desert our duty for any pain or hardship. These are called the seven cardinal or principal virtues, because from these seven many others are deduced; concerning which, since we work chiefly for the benefit of the

plainer sort of people, we shall at present add no more.

> There are Seven Sacraments of the Church, the power of administering which is committed to the clergy. Five of these Sacraments ought to be received by all Christians in general; that is, Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, the Holy Eucharist, and Extreme Unction, which last is only for one who seems to be in danger of death; it should be given, if it may be, before a man is so far spent as to lose the use of his reason; but if he happens to be seized by a frenzy, or suffer from any alienation of mind, this Sacrament ought nevertheless to be administered to him, provided he gave signs of a religious disposition before his mind was disturbed. Under such qualifications Extreme Unction is believed to be beneficial to the sick person provided he is predestinated (*predestinationis filius*), and either procures him a lucid interval or some spiritual advantage. The other two Sacraments are Order and Matrimony. The first belongs to the perfect, but the second in the time of the New Testament belongs to the imperfect only, and yet we believe that, by the virtue of the sacrament, it conveys grace, if it is contracted with a sincere mind.

Thoresby, Archbishop of York in 1357, commissioned John Graytrigg, a monk of York, to write in English verse an exposition of these six things: The Fourteen Points of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Seven Sacraments, the Seven Works of Mercy, the Seven [Pg 223] Virtues, the Seven Deadly Sins; and this he sent to all his priests, and bade them teach them often to their people, and urge them to teach their children; and to examine them as to their knowledge when they come to confession in Lent. At a synod held at Ely in 1364, priests were enjoined frequently to preach, to expound the Ten Commandments, etc., to study the sacred Scriptures, to see that children are taught prayers, and to examine adults when they come to confession as to their religious knowledge. When Arundel, in 1408, forbade preaching without a licence, he expressly excepted the parish priests, who were bound to instruct their people in simple language.

A provincial synod at York, under Archbishop Nevil, in 1465, orders systematic teaching quarterly in simple language on points which the canon elaborately sets forth.

There were numerous helps to preachers. Ælfric, towards the end of the Saxon period, freely translated forty homilies from Augustine, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, and other great ancient writers, which were put forth for the use of the clergy under the authority of Archbishop Siric; he afterwards added forty others of a more legendary character; and there are many other Saxon sermons still extant, printed by Wanley, Sharon Turner, Thorpe, the Early English Text Society, etc. Of a later period there are series of sermons by Grostete of Lincoln, FitzRalph of Armagh, and literally hundreds of other writers, some for all the [Pg 224] Sundays of the year, some for the great festivals only. A series of sermons for Sundays and feast days, by John Felton, Vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, Oxford, c. 1450, seems to have been popular, since many manuscripts of it remain. The “Liber Festivalis” of John Myrk, Canon of Lillieshall, was also popular; Caxton’s printed “Liber Festivalis” was founded upon it. The “Summa Predicantium” is a book of sermon notes for preachers; the “Alphabetum Exemplarium” is a collection of illustrations and anecdotes from which the preacher might cull examples.

The “Speculum Christiani,” by John Watton, in the fourteenth century, was intended, as is stated in the preface, to help the parish priests to carry out Peckham’s injunctions. A great part of it is in English, and it contains rhymed versions of the Commandments to help the memory. Several editions of it (one in 1480, at the cost of a London merchant) are among the earliest printed books. The “Flos Florum” was another book of the same class explaining the Lord’s Prayer, Virtues, and Vices, etc. There were also many private manuals instructing the clergy in all their duties: as the “Pars Oculi Sacerdotis” of W. Parker, about 1350 A.D.; and the revised edition of it, under the title of “The Pupilla Oculi” of Burgh, in 1385.

These series of authoritative instructions are open to the criticism that they are dry and formal, lacking evangelical tone and unction, manuals of theology are apt to be dry and [Pg 225] formal; the treatment of sins and virtues is perhaps pedantic and fanciful, but it proves a searching analysis of the human heart and conduct, and contains much which is striking and true.

But there was another class of English books, like “The Prick of Conscience” and other works of Richard the Hermit of Hampole[216] (died in 1349), and the “Speculum” of Archbishop St. Edmund Rich, in which we find a vein of pious meditation, intended in the first instance for the use of the clergy; but the pious thoughts of the clergy are not long in finding their way to their tongues, and so to the ears and hearts of their people. The religious poem of William of Massington, an advocate of the Court of York, “On the Works of God and the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc., and a number of short poems, which have been printed in various collections, give examples of the existence of the emotional element in the popular religion in strains of considerable poetical and religious merit. [Pg 226]

It is a very curious circumstance that many of these books are cast into a poetical mould—Dom Johan Graytrigg’s work is in the alliterative poetry of Saxon and early English

literature, and John Myrk's "Instructions" and the "Lay Folks' Mass-book" are in rhyme, no doubt with the twofold purpose of making them more attractive and more easily remembered.

A remarkable feature of the moral teaching of the Middle Ages was its minute analysis of sin. It divided sin into the Seven Deadly Sins: Pride, Envy, Anger, Sloth, Covetousness, Gluttony, Luxury; the list of them is sometimes slightly varied. Then it divided each sin into its various branches. It will be enough to quote from the "Argenbite of Inwit" the analysis of the first of them—Pride.

Pride has seven boughs: Untruth, Contempt, Presumption, Ambition, Vainglory, Hypocrisy, Wicked Dread.

Untruth has three twigs: Ingratitude, Foolishness, Apostasy.

Contempt is of three sorts: not praising others as they deserve; not giving reverence where one ought; not obeying those who are over us.

Presumption has six twigs: Singularity, Extravagance, and also Strife, Boasting, Scorn, Opposition.

Vainglory has three small twigs: God's gifts of Nature, Fortune, and Grace.

Hypocrisy is of three kinds: Foul, Foolish, Subtle.

The seventh bough of Pride is Wicked Fear and Shame. [Pg 227]

And so with the rest of the deadly sins.

Envy poisons the heart, mouth, and head.

Hatred has seven twigs: Chiding, Wrath, Hate, Strife, Vengeance, Murder, War.

Sloth means yielding to our natural disinclination to good and proneness to evil, and has six divisions: Disobedience, Impatience, Murmuring, Sorrow, Desire of Death, Despair.

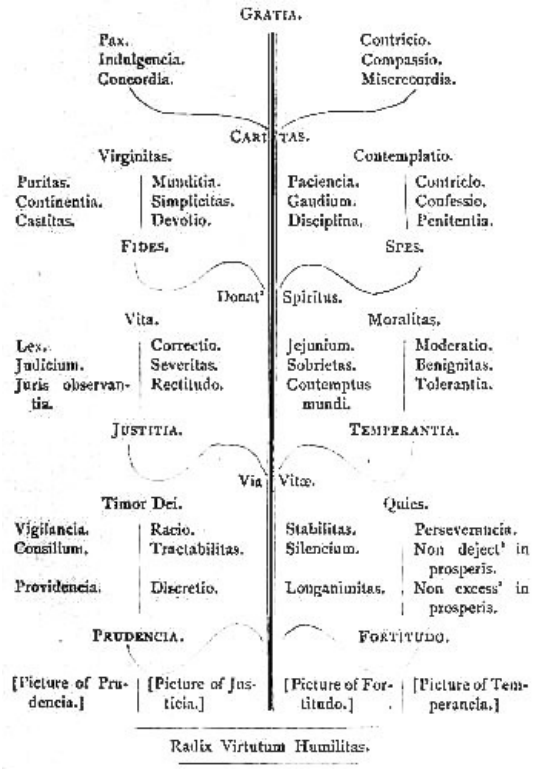
Avarice has ten divisions: Usury, Theft, Robbery, False Claim, Sacrilege, Simony, Fraud, Chaffer, Craft, Wicked Gains.

Gluttony has five kinds; *Lechery* fourteen. It is very pedantic in form; but there is a keen insight into human frailty, and there are many shrewd hits and pithy sayings, and it is lightened by anecdotes and illustrations. Men nowadays would not have the patience to read it; but if they did read and digest it, they might gain a great amount of self-knowledge.

Some similar treatises at the end of every deadly sin give its remedy, also minutely analyzed. [217] Other subjects are treated by the same method—the Seven Virtues, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, etc. It is all dry reading, but it gives the patient reader valuable knowledge of the attitude of men's minds in those days towards Christian faith and practice. An evidence of the popularity of these treatises is given by the fact that "The Parson's Tale" in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" is nothing more or less than such a treatise [Pg 228] on penitence, divided into three parts, viz. Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction; in the course of which the Seven Deadly Sins, with their remedies, are dealt with in the usual manner.

People bestowed a great deal of ingenuity in representing these systems of teaching by diagrams. A MS. Psalter of the thirteenth century (Arundel, 83) gives a number of them;[218] at f. 129 *verso* is the *Arbor Vitiorum*, a tree with seven principal branches, viz. the Seven Deadly Sins, and their subordinate boughs and twigs as above. At f. 120 is the *Arbor Virtutum*, treated in a similar way. At f. 130 the Seven Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the Seven Sacraments, the Seven Vices, and the Seven Virtues, are arranged in a device so as to give their relations to one another; and there are similar devices on f. 2 *verso*, and the two following pages. Such devices were sometimes painted on the walls of churches.

[Pg 229]



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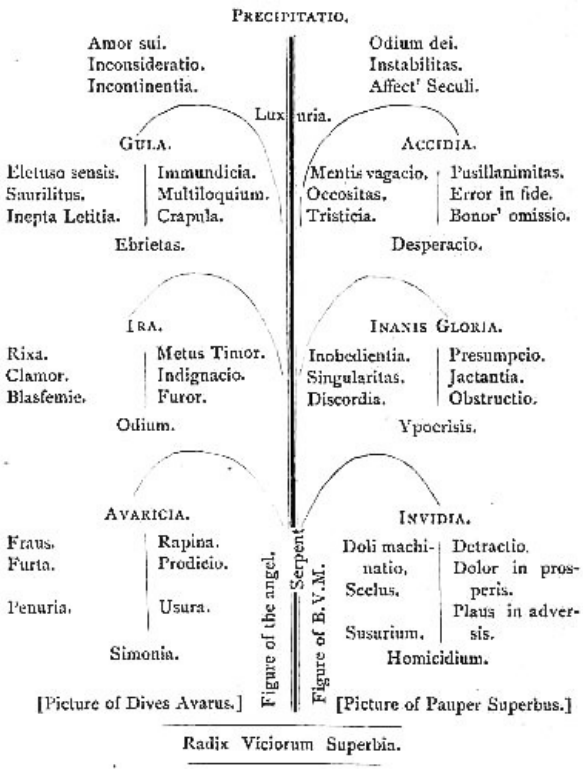
ARBOR VIRTVTVM.

[Pg 230]



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ARBOR VICIORVM.

[Pg 231]

The pictorial representation of type and antitype seems to have had an interest for them. So early as the seventh century, Benedict Biscop brought pictures from Gaul and Italy to adorn his monasteries on the Tyne, and among them were one pair of Isaac bearing the wood for the sacrifice, and our Lord carrying His cross; another pair the brazen serpent and our Lord upon the cross. In the King’s MS. 5 are a series of pictures arranged in three columns; in the middle a subject from the history of our Lord, and on each side two Old Testament types. The “Biblia Pauperum” of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries consisted of a similar arrangement of gospel histories, with Old Testament types.

CHAPTER XV.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARISH PRIESTS.

A flood of light is thrown upon the subject of a priest's duties in his parish by the handbooks which seem to have been as common in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as they are in the nineteenth; instructing, advising, exhorting the clergy as to their duties, and the best way of fulfilling them. The Early English Text Society has printed one of these entitled, "Instructions for Parish Priests," written by John Myrk, a canon of Lilleshall, in Shropshire, not the same man who wrote the "Liber Festivalis." The oldest MS. of it belongs to the first half of the fifteenth century. It will answer our purpose to give a rather complete analysis of the book, spelling some words in modern fashion, in order to make it more intelligible, without much altering the substance.

It begins:—

> Whenne the blynde ledeth the blynde,
> Into the dyche they fallen both.

BAPTISM BY AFFUSION.
FROM THE XV. CENT. MS. EGERTON, 2019 f. 135.

BAPTISM BY IMMERSION.
FROM THE XIV. CENT. MS., ROYAL 6 E. VI., f. 171.

So, our author says, ignorant priests lead their people into sin; therefore, if you are not a great clerk, you will do well to read this book, where you will find— [Pg 233]

> How thou schalt thy parische teche
> And what thou must thyself be.
> For lytel is worth thy prechynge,
> If thou be of evil lyvynge.

Which is certainly a very wholesome exordium.

Then he begins his instructions—

> Preste; thy self thou moste be chaste,
> And say thy service withouten haste,
> That mouthe and heart accord i fere,[219]
> If thou wilt that God thee hear.

And so he goes on: He must be true in heart and hand, eschew oaths, be mild to all, put away drunkenness, gluttony, pride, sloth, and envy. He must not frequent taverns, or make merchandise, or indulge in wrestling, shooting, hawking, hunting, dancing; wear cutted (slashed) clothes, or piked shoes; not frequent markets or fairs. He must wear proper clothes, must not wear basilard or baldrick, must keep his beard and crown shaven; be free of meat and drink to rich and poor; forsake women, avoid foolish jesting, despise the world, and cultivate virtue. We recognize that the author is giving a summary of all the canons on the subject of the life of the clergy.

Confession.
(From Chaucer's "Romaunt of the Rose," Harl. 4425, f. 143.)

He goes on to the priest's duties. He is not to let men go on in sin, but urge them to speedy confession lest they forget before Lent. He is to bid women with child to come to confession and holy communion, [Pg 234]

> For dread of peril that may befall
> In their travailing that come shall.

If a child is in danger of death, the midwife or the father or mother is to baptize it; and he is to teach people what is the proper form, "I folowe (baptize) thee, or, I christen thee, in the name of, etc." All children born within eight days of Easter or of Whitsunday, are to be brought to baptism at those seasons, unless they are in danger of death. He is to instruct godparents to teach their god-children the Our Father and Creed; and to bring them to be bishoped within their fifth year; but the sponsors at the baptism are not to hold the child at the confirming.[220] Relatives by spiritual ties as well as by blood, are not to marry, and he defines these spiritual relationships. Irregular marriages are cursed. Banns are to be asked on three holy days, and then the parties are to be openly wedded at the church door. He is to bid all who are of years of discretion to come to church to confession, and to receive communion on Easter Day all together:[221] [Pg 235]

> Teach them then with good intent
> To beleve in that sacrament
> What they receive in form of bread
> It is God's body that suffered dead[222]
> Upon the holy rood tree,
> To buy our sins and make us free.

Every Sunday a "holy loaf"[223] provided by the charity of some one of the laity was cut in pieces, and a piece given to all who came up to receive it: the authority for this practice was no doubt the primitive love-feast. But when it was not the custom for the laity to communicate, this was given as a sort of representation of and substitute for the consecrated bread, and it was attended by a good deal of superstition. A question in the "Lay Folks' Mass-book" seems to indicate that it was required that people should receive it and eat it, fasting, every Sunday— [Pg 236]

> Hast thou eaten any Sonday
> Withouten holy bred? Say yea or nay;

and a return by the vicar of Leominster of the sources of his income, seems to indicate that a payment for this holy bread was customary in some places (see p. 404).

He is to teach that, after receiving the Consecrated Bread at Easter, what is given them afterwards in the chalice is only wine and water to assist in the swallowing it completely:

> But teach them all to 'lieve sudde[224]

That it which is on the altar made
It is very God's blood
That He shed on the rood.

Teach the people when they go to church to leave behind idle speech and jests, and light behaviour, and say their paternoster and creed. Not to stand or lean against pillar or wall, but set themselves on their knees on the floor, and pray to God with meek heart to give them grace and mercy. When the gospel is read, they are to stand and bless Him as well as they can, and when *gloria tibi* is done, they are to kneel down again; and when the sacring-bell rings, they are to hold both hands up and say softly, without noise—

Jesu, Lord, welcome thou be, [Pg 237]
In forme of bred as I Thee see;
Jesu for thy holy name
Shield me to-day from sin and shame.
Shrift and housel, Lord, thou grant me bo[225]
Ere that I shall hennes[226] go,
And true contrycion of my sin
That I Lord never die therein.
And as thou wert of a may[227] y'bore,
Suffer me never to be forelore;
But when that I shall hennes wend
Graunt me thi blysse withouten ende. Amen.

Teche them thus or some othere thynge,
To say at the holy sakerynge.

[In the "Lay Folks' Mass-book" the following short verse is given to be said in this place—

Welcome, Lord, in form of bread,
For me thou suffered hard deed?
As thou didst bear the crown of thorn
Suffer me not to be forlorn.]

He is to teach them when they walk in the way, and see the priest bearing "God's body" to the sick, to kneel down, whether the way be fair or foul.[228] And then comes a gross bit of superstition which he fathers on St. Augustine:

So mickle good doth that syht,
As Saint Austen teacheth wryht,

that on that day the devout beholder shall have meat and drink, God will forgive idle oaths and words, and he need not fear sudden death nor loss of sight. Within the church and [Pg 238]
"seyntuary"[229] people are not to sing or cry; not to cast the axtre or stone, or play bull and bears in the churchyard. Courts and such-like contentions are not to be held in church. Teach them duly to pay their tithe—but, he breaks off jestingly, it is not necessary to teach a priest how to ask for his tithe. Witchcraft and usury are forbidden, and so is selling at too high a price.

Next he gives metrical paraphrases of the Lord's Prayer, Ave and Creed, with a brief explanation of the Creed, and a curious illustration of the doctrine of the Trinity:—

Water and ice and eke snowe,
Here be thre things as ye may see,
And yet the three all water be.

Then he gives a long instruction on the right administration of baptism, and on confirmation:—

Which in lewde men's menyng,
Is y-called the bishoping.

The bishop confirmeth and maketh sad[230]
That that the priest before hath made,[231]
Wherefore the name that is then y-spoke
Must stand firm as it were loke,[232]

which is an interesting allusion to the right of altering the Christian name at Confirmation.

Then comes a general sentence of excommunication[233] to be said two or three times a year when the parish is met together, with cross and candle and bell tolling. It declares that all [Pg 239]
persons are accursed who break the peace of the church, or rob it, or withhold tithes; all slanderers, fire raisers, thieves, heretics, usurers, etc., etc. Then the candle is to be thrown down, and the priest is to spit on the ground, and the bells to ring. This general sentence of excommunication is clearly the origin of the form of Commination still said on Ash Wednesday.

CONFIRMATION. FROM A PRINTED PONTIFICAL, A.D. 1520 (471, f. 2).

Then comes an instruction on the mode of hearing confessions, and some practical advice on the kind of penances to give, *e.g.* if the penitent does not know the Pater, Ave, and Creed, he is to have such a penance set as will make him learn them; and he is to be examined as to his belief.

Next, as part of the instruction in the art of confession, comes a practical exposition of the ten commandments one by one; and in the same way an exposition of the seven deadly sins and of the venial sins; and of the sins of the senses; in all which we recognize a digest of Archbishop Peckham's famous canon of instruction for preaching; then come counsels as to the remedies for the seven deadly sins. Then an instruction on the administration of Extreme Unction, with a kind of Office for the Visitation of the Sick.

When thou shalt to sick gone
A clean surplice cast thee on,
Take thy stole with thee right,
And pull thy hood over thy sight. [Pg 240]
Bear thy Host anont[234] thy breast
In a box that is honest.
Make thy clerk before thee gynge[235]
To bear light and bell ring.[236]

This is the prayer of the sick before the unction—

> My God, my God, my mercy and my refuge, Thee I desire, to Thee I flee, to Thee I hasten to come. Despise me not, placed in this tremendous crisis, be merciful to me in these my great necessities. I cannot redeem myself by my own works; but do Thou my God redeem me, and have mercy on me. I trust not in my merits, but I confide rather in Thy mercies, and I trust more in Thy mercies than I distrust my evil deeds. My faults, my great faults. Now I come to Thee because Thou failest none, I desire to depart and be with Thee. Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit, Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Amen. And grant to me, my God, that I may sleep and rest in peace, who in perfect Trinity livest and reignest God, world without end. Amen.

PARISH PRIEST TAKING THE LAST SACRAMENT TO THE SICK.
XIV. CENT. MS., 6 E. VI., f. 427 verso.

PARISH PRIEST ADMINISTERING LAST SACRAMENT.
XIV. CENT. MS., 6 E. VII., f. 70.

CHAPTER XVI.

POPULAR RELIGION.

In Saxon times, the Creed, Lord’s Prayer, and Ten Commandments were taught to the people in their own tongue, sometimes in metrical paraphrases, that they might the more easily be remembered, and every parent was required to teach them to his children.

A canon of the Synod of Clovesho, in 747, required the priest to explain everything in the Divine service to the people, and the Gospel for the day was read to them in the vernacular.

The poem of Cædmon, which paraphrased large portions of the Old Testament history, was not the only use of the native poetry for the purpose of popularizing the truths of religion; we call to mind how Aldhelm used to sit on the parapet of the bridge over which the country-people must needs pass into Malmesbury, and sing to them religious poems, to the [Pg 242] accompaniment of his harp. King Alfred translated the psalms, and there were various other versions of the psalms and other portions of Scripture.

Education was much more common among the laity of the Middle Ages than is sometimes supposed. The French books of piety and of romance in the thirteenth century presuppose people capable of reading them. Grostete's "Castle of Love" was a religious allegory, in which, under the ideas of chivalry, the fundamental articles of Christian belief are represented. By the middle of the fourteenth century, English had become a literary language, and works of all kinds were written in it. Wiclif did not translate the Bible from Latin into English for the clergy; they would rightly prefer to continue to read it in the Latin of the Vulgate; he wrote it for the laity, and we know that it was largely circulated among them. The poems of Lydgate and Gower, "Piers Plowman," and the Canterbury Tales, the numerous romances, and the religious tracts of Wiclif and Robert of Hampole, had numerous readers; and for those readers books of devotion were largely provided.

Robert de Brunne's "Handlyng of Synne," in 1303, was a translation of the French "Manuel des Pechiez" of the previous century. The "Meditacyuns of the Soper of oure Lorde Ihesu," in 1303, was a translation of the "Meditationes Vitæ Christi" of Cardinal Bonaventure.

"The Pricke of Conscience," by Richard Rolle, the Hermit of Hampole, and "The Ayenbite of [Pg 243] Inwit" (Remorse of Conscience), completed in 1340,[237] are translations of "Le Somme des Vices et des Vertus," composed in 1279. The "Parson's Tale" in Chaucer's "Canterbury Pilgrims," is in part a translation from the same book. The "Lay Folks' Mass-book," or manner of hearing mass, with rubrics and devotions for the people, and offices in English according to the Use of York, is an evidence that pains was taken to enable the people to enter intelligently into the Latin service. It was written in French by Dan Jeremy, Canon of Rouen, afterwards Archdeacon of Cleveland, in about the year 1170, and was translated into English towards the close of the thirteenth century.

The "Lay Folks' Mass-book" is well worth more space than we can afford it here, as a curious illustration of the popular religion. It explains the meaning of the service, and of the ritual, tells the worshipper when to stand and kneel, and puts private devotions into his mouth in rhyme, for their better remembrance. There are numerous MSS. of these books still existing, and when the art of printing was discovered, they were among the books early printed, so that we have reason to believe that they were in general demand and use among the laity.

We learn that it was the custom for the parish priest to vest at the altar—the old parish churches seldom had vestries:

> When the altar is all dight, [Pg 244]
> And the priest is washed right,
> Then he takes in both his hands
> A chesepull[238] cloth on the altar hangs,
> And comes aback a little down,
> And does it upon him all aboune.
> All men kneeling, but he stands,
> And holds to God up both his handes.

When the priest and clerks confess to one another, the worshipper is directed also to make his confession in a form given.

After the confession the people stand, and the priest begins the service; the worshipper is told to pray for him, and the hearers, and their friends, and for "peace and rest that lastes ay to Christian souls passed away," and to all men. Next is given a rhyming English version of the *Gloria in Excelsis*, to be said while the priest is saying it in Latin. The people kneel and say *Pater nosters* through the Collect and Epistle; when the priest crosses to the south corner of the altar to read the Gospel, then the people are to stand and make a cross, and take good heed, and say this prayer—

> In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost,
> One steadfast God of might most,
> Be God's word welcome to me,
> Joy and love, Lord, be to Thee.

Again at the end of the Gospel make another cross and kiss it. While the Mass (Nicene) Creed is being said, say the Apostles' Creed, as given in a rhymed version— [Pg 245]

> I trow[239] in God, father of might

That all has wrought,
Heaven and earth, day and night,
And all of nought, etc.

At the end is a very curious perversion of the clause of the Communion of Saints: *Communio Sanctorum* is translated as if it were *Concomitantia Sanctorum*—

And so I trow that housel is
Both flesh and blood.

After that comes the offertory; offer or not, as you please;[240] but in either case say the following prayer—

Jesu, that wast in Bethlem bore,
Three kings once kneeled Thee before,
And offered gold, myrrh, and incense;
Thou disdained not their presents,
But didst guide them all the three
Home again to their country.
So our offerings that we offer,
And our prayers that we proffer,
Take them, Lord, to Thy praise,
And be our help through all our days.

Then when the priest turns to the people and asks their prayers, kneel and pray for him. When the priest comes to the middle of the altar and says *sursum corda*, then lift up your heart and body, and praise God with the angels— [Pg 246]

Sweet Jesu grant me now this
That I may come to Thy bliss,
There with angels for to sing,
The sweet song of Thy loving,
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
God Grant that it be thus.

Kneel when the canon of the mass begins, and offer thanksgivings for talents of nature, right mind, grace in perils, etc.; pray for pardon, grace, strength for the future; make intercessions for church, king, nobility, kinsmen, friends, servants, for the afflicted, sick, captive, poor, banished, dispossessed; pray for God's ordering of the world, for good weather, that He will

The fruits of the earth make plenteous;
All Thou seest best ordain for us,
Such grace to us Thou send,
That in our last end,
When this world and we shall sever,
Bring us to joy that lasts for ever. Amen.

ADMINISTERING HOLY COMMUNION WITH HOUSEL CLOTH.
EARLY XIV. CENT. MS., ROYAL, 2 B VII., f. 260 v.

At the sacring bell do reverence to Jesus Christ's presence, holding up both hands, and

looking upon the elevation;[241] and if you have nothing better prepared to say, say this which follows—

Loved be Thou, king, [Pg 247]
And blessed be Thou, king,
  Of all thy giftes good;
And thanked be Thou, king,
Jesu, all my joying,
  That for me spilt Thy blood.
  And died upon the rood.
Thou give me grace to sing,
The song of thy loving.

Pater noster. Ave maria. Credo.

After the sacring, pray for the dead, that they may have part in this mass:—

When the priest the elevation has made
He will spread his arms on-brade,[242]
Then is the time to pray for the dead,
Father's soul, mother's soul, brother dear,
Sister's souls, sibmen, and other sere,[243]
That us good would, or us good did,
Or any kindness unto us kyd.
And to all in purgatory pine
This mass be mede and medicine;
To all Christian souls holy
Grant Thy grace and Thy mercy;
Forgive them all their trespass,
Loose their bonds and let them pass
From all pine and care,
Into the joy lasting evermore. Amen.

Listen for the priest to begin *Pater noster*, and be ready to answer at *temptationem*, *Sed libera nos a malo. Amen.* And then say the Lord's Prayer to yourself as here given—

Fader our, that is in heaven, [Pg 248]
Blessed be Thy name to neven.[244]
Come to us Thy kingdom.
In heaven and earth Thy will be done.
Our ilk-day bread grant us to-day,
And our misdeeds forgive us aye,
As we do them that trespass us
Right so have mercy upon us,
And lead us in no founding,
But shield us from all wicked thing. Amen.

At the *Pax* pray for peace and charity. Lastly, he is to pray for the grace of having heard the mass, making it a kind of spiritual communion—

Jesu my King, I pray to Thee,
Bow down thine ears of pity,
And hear my prayer in this place.
  * * * * *
We pray this mass us stand in stead
Of shrift and als[245] of housel bread.
And Jesu, for Thy woundes five,
Teach us the way of right-wise live. Amen.

After all is over, he is to utter a final thanksgiving:—

God be thanked of all his works,
God be thanked for priests and clerks,
God be thanked for ilk a man.
And I thank God all I can, etc.

Then there follows an example of the superstition with which sound doctrine was vitiated. Every step, this book teaches, that a man makes to attendance at mass is noted by the guardian angel, that day a man does not age nor become blind, he has God's pardon if he goes to confession, and if he die it avails him as the viaticum. [Pg 249]

The Primers were books for the private devotion of the laity. They began at an early period, and from the fourteenth century onward they were often wholly or in part translated into English. The latest of them put forth by the king's authority, in 1545, contained "the Kalendre, the king's highnesse Injunction, the Salutation of the Angel, the Crede or Articles of the Faith, the Ten Commandments, certain graces, the matyns, the evensong, the

complen, the seven [penitential] psalmes, the commendations, the psalmes of the passion, the passion of our Lorde, certeine godly prayers for sundry purposes."

The "Myrroure of our Ladye," written for the nuns of Sion, is a translation of their services into English, with an explanation of their meaning. It became a favourite book of devotion to the laity, and was printed at an early period. The writer explains that he has thought it necessary to translate only a few of the psalms, because they may be found in Hampole's Version, or in the English Bibles, a passing testimony to the accessibility of these books. The tone of the book may be indicated by one extract. "There is neither reading nor singing that may please God of itself, but after the disposition of the reader or singer, thereafter it pleaseth or displeaseth."

"Dives and Pauper" was another of the popular English books, written probably about the middle of the fifteenth century, and early printed. It is in the form of a dialogue between a [Pg 250] rich man and a poor man, in which the poor man occupies the place of teacher. It begins with an essay on Holy Poverty, and then goes on to an excursive exposition of the Ten Commandments; for example, under the first commandment, the author shows how imagery is lawful, and how images were ordained for three causes. 1. To stir men's minds to think on Christ and the saints. 2. To stir their affections; and 3. To be a book for the unlearned. He explains that "worship to God and the Lamb, done before images, should properly not be done to such images." "Christ is the cross that men creep to on Good Friday." "For this reason," he says, "be crosses by the way that when folk passing see the crosses they should think on Him that died on the cross, and worship Him above all thing." And, similarly, he gives the rationale of a number of practices.

The Anglo-Saxon poems attributed to Cædmon are said by the critics to be, in their present form, probably not of earlier date than the eleventh century. In any case, they are very remarkable productions of a school of native poetry; and we think it worth while to give some examples of them. The first is taken from the account of the Creation—

Here the eternal Lord, Head of Creation
In the beginning shaped the universe,
The sky upreared, and this fair spacious earth
By His strong might was stablished evermore.
As yet no verdure decked the new-born world;
The ocean far and wide in deepest night [Pg 251]
Concealed the universe. Then o'er the deep
Was swiftly borne on bright and radiant wing,
The spirit of the Lord. The mighty King
Bade Light come forth far o'er the spacious deep,
And instantly His high behest was done,
And holy Light shone brightly o'er the waste,
Fulfilling His command. In triumph then
He severed light from darkness, and to both
The Lord of Life gave names; and holy light
Firstborn of all created things, beauteous
And bright, above all creatures fair,
He called the Day ...
Then time past o'er the quivering face of earth,
And Even, first at God's command dispelled
The radiant Day, till onward rolled the dark
And murky cloud which God Himself called Night,
Chasing away the Even's twilight gleam.
* * * * * * *

Next we take the poet's conception of Satan and his fall—

Of old
The King eternal by His sovereign might
Ordained ten Angel tribes, of equal rank,
With beauty, power and wisdom richly dowered;
And in the host Angelic, whom, in love,
He moulded in His own similitude,
He evermore reposed a holy trust
To work His will in loving loyalty,
And added by His grace, celestial wit
And bliss unspeakable.

One of the host
Angelic He endowed with peerless might
And arch intelligence. To him alone

The Lord of Hosts gave undisputed sway
O’er all the Angel tribes, exalted high,
Above all Principalities and Powers, [Pg 252]
That next to God omnipotent he stood
O’er all created things, lone and supreme.
So heavenly fair and beauteous was his form,
Fashioned by God Himself, that by compare,
Less glorious spirits grew dim; e’en as the stars
In God’s fixed belt, pale in the glowing light
Of nine resplendent spheres.

Long had he reigned,
August Vicegerent of the Heavenly King,
But for presumptuous pride which filled the heart
With dire ingratitude and hostile thoughts
Against the eternal throne.
Nor was it hid from God’s omniscient eye
That this archangel, though beloved still,
Began to harbour dark presumptuous thoughts,
And in rebellion rise against his God
With words of pride and hate.

For thus he spake
Within his traitorous heart:

“No longer I,
With radiant form endowed and heavenly mien,
Will brook subjection to a tyrant God,
Or be His willing slave. Such power is mine,
Such goodly fellowship, I well believe
’Tis greater e’en than God’s own following.”
With many a word of bold defiance spake
The Angel of Presumption; for he hoped
In heaven to rear a more exalted throne
And stronger, than the seats he now possessed.
Then moved by traitorous guile he built in thought
Vast palaces within the northern realm,
And richer western plains of Paradise,
And evermore he dwelled in doubtful mood
Whether ’twere better in acknowledged war
To risk his high estate, or prostrate fall [Pg 253]
Mock-loyal as his God’s inferior.
* * * * * * *
When the All-Powerful in secret knew
The great presumption of His Angel-chief,
* * * * * * *
Heavenly Justice hurled him from his throne,
And cast him headlong down the burning gulf
Which leads to deepest hell.

For three long days
And three successive nights the apostate falls
Forgotten with his lone rebellious tribe.
* * * * * * *
Then Satan sorrowing spake—
“This straitened place,
O how unlike those heavenly seats where once
In heaven’s high kingdom we as princes reigned.
* * * * * * *
’Tis this most grieves
My anxious heart, that earthborn man should hold
My glorious seat and dwell in endless joy,
While we in Hell’s avenging horrors pine.
* * * * * * *
Here then lies
Our only hope of adequate revenge—
To ruin, if we may, this new-born man,
And on his race eternal woe entail.”
* * * * * * *

Next a brief fragment from the account of Satan’s invasion of Paradise—

Without delay the Apostate Angel donned
His glistening arms, and lightly on his head
His helmet bound, secured with many a clasp,

And started toward his fatal enterprise. [Pg 254]
High toward the fiery concave first he shot,
A spiry column, bright with lurid flame,
Showed where he took his flight. The gates of Hell
Were quickly left behind as lion-like
In strength, and desperate in fiendish mood
He dashed the fire aside.
* * * * * * *
Onward he took his way, and soon descried
Far off the trembling light of this fair world.
* * * * * * *
Ere long amid the shade
Of Eden's fair wide-spreading foliage
He saw the Parents of Mankind; the man
Whose comely form bespoke a wise design,
And by his side, radiant with guileless youth,
His God-created spouse. Above them spread
Two trees rich laden with immortal fruit.[246]

The parallelism with the "Paradise Lost" is, in many places, so striking that we should conclude that Milton knew the work of his predecessor by so many centuries, if we were not assured that the work was unknown in Milton's day.

The publications of the Early English Text Society have made known a considerable number of religious treatises, tracts, poems, and short pieces in the English language, which throw light upon the popular religion of the three centuries from the thirteenth to the fifteenth.

Legendary histories of saints and apocryphal stories indicate the general acceptance of the marvellous; addresses to the Blessed Virgin Mary, or by her to the soul, bear witness to the existence of a general veneration for the virgin mother, but the tone of them is more calm and chastened than the addresses in some of the popular Italian devotions; there are others which give sound teaching; and others which reveal the existence of a strain of profound and pathetic religious sentiment in the heart of the people. [Pg 255]

Here from a MS. of the fifteenth century[247] is a poem of six stanzas, every stanza ending with the line, "Why art thou froward since I am merciable?" It begins—

Upon a cross nailed I was for thee,
I suffered death to pay thy raunison;[248]
Forsake thy synne for the love of Me,
Be repentant, make plain confession.
To contrite hearts I give remission;
Be not despaired, for I am not vengeable;
'Gainst ghostly enemies, think on my Passion;
Why art thou froward since I am merciable?

Another fifteenth-century poem, whose theme is taken from Solomon's Song, the love of Christ for man's soul, concludes every eight-line stanza with the text, *Quia amore langueo*.[249] Here are two stanzas—

Upon this mount I found a tree,
Under this tree a man sitting;
From head to foot wounded was he.
His heart's blood I saw bleeding; [Pg 256]
A seemly man to be a king,
A gracious face to look unto;
I asked him how he had paining,[250]
He said *Quia amore langueo*.

I am true-love that false was never,
My sister, man's soul, I loved her thus,
Because I would not from her dissever
I left my kingdom glorious;
I provide for her a palace precious;
She fleeth, I follow, I sought her so.
I suffered the pain piteous,
Quia amore langueo.

I crowned her with bliss, and she me with scorn,
I led her to chamber, and she me to die;
I brought her to worship, and she me to scorn,
I did her reverence, and she me villainy, etc.

Another favourite theme was a pathetic "Complaint of Christ," in which He sets before man all that He has done for him, in creation, in providence, in redemption, and appeals against his unkindness. The refrain of every stanza is, "Why art thou to thy friend unkind?" Here is a stanza of it—

Man, I love thee! Whom lovest thou?
I am thy friend, why wilt thou feign?
I forgave, and thou Me slew;
Who hath de-parted our love in twain?
Turne to Me! Bethink thee how
Thou hast gone amiss! Come home again!
And thou shalt be as welcome now
As he that synne never did stain. [Pg 257]
Man! bethink thee what thou art;
From whence thou come, and whither thou move,
For though thou to-day be in health and quarte,[251]
To-morrow I may put thee adown.
I forgave, and thou sayest nay,
Why art thou to thy friend unkind?
I have bought thy love full dear,
Unkind! why forsakest thou mine?
I gave thee mine heart and blood in fere,
Unkind! why wilt thou not give Me thine?

[Pg 258]

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY.

The enforcement of celibacy upon the clergy was an important feature in the plan of the Hildebrandine reformers of the eleventh century. The idea which inspired the enthusiasm of the foremost Churchmen of the time was, no doubt, a grand one. It was to bring the national churches into practical co-operation by a world-wide ecclesiastical organization, and to place the spiritual authority of the whole Church in the hand of one man, in order to control the world-power of kings and princes, and check the manifold abuses which at that time especially threatened to corrupt and secularize the Church. The clergy were intended in the Hildebrandine scheme to be the Pope's local agents in the administration of this ecclesiastical monarchy; and in order to detach them from secular and local ties it was proposed to make the secular clergy a kind of Religious Order—an anticipation, in some respects, of the organization of the subsequent Orders of Friars.

[Pg 259]

We must do the authors of the scheme the justice to remember that they honestly believed that the celibate state—not the mere accident of being unmarried, but the chosen and vowed state—was a higher condition of life; and it was easy to apply St. Paul's advice to those who could accept it, to the special condition of the clergy:—"The unmarried (priest) careth for the things of the Lord, that (he) may be holy both in body and spirit, but the married (priest) careth for the things of the world." It was easy to draw a contrast between the parish priest with a wife and family, bound by a thousand ties to the ordinary interests and anxieties of the world, and the celibate priest, who wants nothing beyond the priest's chamber and his humble fare, and who gives his whole mind and soul to his daily devotions and his spiritual ministrations among his flock; his rusty cassock a uniform as honourable as the soldier's war-stained coat, his ascetic life ensuring the reverence which even the worldly-minded pay to those who despise worldly things.

To the fulfilment of this idea the great body of the secular clergy in Germany, Italy, and France, as well as England, offered for centuries a stubborn resistance. They stood on the irrefragable ground that the priests and Levites of the Old Dispensation were married men; that our Lord and His apostles gave no such commandment to the Church; that, as a matter of history, some of the apostles were married men; and that for ten centuries bishops and priests of the Church all over the world had married. It was obvious to reply to the supposed [Pg 260] advantages of a priesthood disentangled from worldly anxieties, that, on the contrary, it was desirable for the pastors in immediate habitual intercourse with the people to be men who had property and families, because then they could deal with men on the ground of common interests and sympathies; and that to impose compulsory celibacy on the secular clergy was a measure full of the gravest dangers.

The majority of the clergy probably were influenced by the broad common sense which pronounced the ultramontane idea to be unscriptural, transcendental, novel, and, therefore, questionable; and, lastly, a burden which no one had the right to impose upon the unwilling. Some of them tauntingly desired the pope to see if he could get the spirits from above to leave their stations and come and rule the Churches under his Holiness, since men were not good enough for him.

The attempt to introduce celibacy among the secular clergy had been begun in the latter part of the Saxon period. We have seen that kings made laws and bishops made canons against the married clergy. We cannot have better evidence than that of Ælfric's famous pastoral address, that the Saxon clergy generally had ignored these laws and canons, and that it had not been found practicable to enforce them. Ælfric declares that—

> The Four General Councils forbade all marriages to ministers of the altar, and especially to mass-priests [which is a misstatement], and that the canons command that no bishop nor priest shall have in his house any woman except [Pg 261] his mother or other person who is above suspicion. "This, to you priests," he says, "will seem grievous, because ye have your misdeeds in custom" [you are accustomed to married priests], "so that it seems to yourselves that ye have no sin in living in female intercourse as laymen do, and say that Peter the Apostle had a wife and children. So he and others had before their conversion, but then forsook their wives and all earthly things" [which is, to say the least, a doubtful assumption]. "Beloved," he goes on, "we cannot now forcibly compel you to chastity, but we admonish you nevertheless that ye observe chastity as Christ's ministers ought in good reputation to the pleasure of God."

Gregory VII., in the Fourth Lateran Council, in 1074, took a step in advance of previous legislation on the subject. He peremptorily forbade marriage to the clergy, pronounced sentence of excommunication against those who refused to put away their wives, and forbade the laity to be present at mass when they officiated.

In adopting this legislation in England, Lanfranc considerably modified it. In the Synod of Winchester, in 1076, it was decreed that no canon should be married; the married parochial clergy were not required to put away their wives, but those who were not married were forbidden to take any; and bishops were required not to ordain deacons or priests unless they declare that they have not wives. But this legislation seems to have been largely ignored, and the disobedience winked at.

In 1102, a national synod, held at Westminster, under Anselm of Canterbury and Gerard of [Pg 262] York, sought to draw the line more strictly. It enacted that no canon, and no one above the order of sub-deacon, might marry; required those who were married to put away their wives; forbade a married priest to say mass, and the people to hear him. It added another edict, to which we shall have to refer hereafter—that sons of priests were not to succeed to their fathers' benefices.

It was soon found that it was not possible to enforce these decrees, and the Pope was appealed to on the question. He was so convinced of the difficulty, that he dispensed with the canons, and in a letter (1107) to Anselm gave reasons for so doing, which contain valuable evidence of the condition of things. He founded the dispensation on the particular circumstances of the English Church, where, he observes, the greater and more valuable part of the clergy were the sons of priests, and therefore he gives Anselm a commission to promote such persons in the Church. He likewise empowers him to dispense with the canons in other cases where the untractableness of the English and the interest of religion should make it necessary. Anselm's canons were repeated by William of Canterbury and Thurstan of York in 1126 and 1127, but were met with a stubborn resistance.[252]

After a short time bishops and great dignitaries ceased to be married men, and sought to [Pg 263] enforce the canons on celibacy which they helped to make. Cathedral dignitaries also generally paid outward respect to the canons, but some of them had unacknowledged wives.[253]

In 1128, at a national synod held in London, the synod resigned the dealing with the [Pg 264] recalcitrant clergy into the king's hands. The king (Henry I.) disappointed the archbishops by abstaining from any attempt to enforce celibacy on the clergy, but he ingeniously took advantage of the opportunity to raise a revenue out of them by permitting the clergy to retain their wives on payment of a fee for the licence to do so. The king was said to have

raised a great sum of money by this device, which implies that a great number of the clergy were married and retained their wives. King John, on the publication of the Interdict, seized the wives of the clergy, and only released them on payment of heavy ransom.

Synod after synod continued to legislate against them.[254]

> In 1222, a synod held at Oxford, under Archbishop Stephen Langton, enacted that if beneficed men or men in sacred orders should presume to retain their partners publicly in their dwelling-houses (*hospitiis*), or should elsewhere have public access to them to the public scandal, they should be coerced by the withdrawal of their benefice; and that the clergy might not leave such partners (*i.e.* wives) anything in their wills. It also attacked the poor wives, enacting that if they did not leave their partners they should be excluded from the church and the sacraments; if that did not suffice, they should be stricken with the sword of excommunication; and, lastly, the secular arm should be invoked against them.[255]

> Archbishop Richard of Wethershead, in 1229 or 1230 repeated the decree that men of the order of sub-deacon and upwards who had married should put away their wives, though they were unwilling and refused to consent,[256] and if they persisted in having publicly a female partner, should, after a first, second, and third warning, be deprived of every benefice and office. [Pg 265]

> St. Edmund the Canonized Archbishop, in 1234 or 1235, enacted that if any clerics who had been suspended for incontinency should presume to continue to exercise their office they should be deprived of their benefices, and for their double fault *perpetuo damnentur*. He tries to make the rectors inform against the clerics in their parishes, threatening that if a case comes to his knowledge by common report before the rector has given in his accusation against his brother, the rector shall be taken to have known of it, and shall be punished as a partaker in the sin. Lastly, he decrees that prelates (archdeacons, officials, and rural deans) who presume to support such persons in their iniquity, especially for the offer of money or of any other temporal advantage, shall be subject to the same penalty.

> In 1237, Cardinal Otho came from Rome at the request of the king (Henry III.), unknown to the nobles, and summoned a national council at St. Paul's. It was understood that he was going to make strong decrees against the abuses of the clergy, and especially against the pluralists and the illegitimates, and feeling ran so high among the clergy that the legate obtained from the king an attendance of some nobles, and a guard of some armed knights and about two hundred soldiers, who were placed in ambush for his protection. The decree against the pluralists was so vehemently opposed that the cardinal postponed this question till the Pope could be appealed to.

> The canon against the married clergy declared that unless clerks, especially those in holy orders, who publicly keep concubines in their houses, or in those of others', dismiss them therefrom within a month, they shall be suspended from every office and benefice, and if they persist, shall be deprived. And "we strictly order that archbishops and bishops shall make diligent inquiries throughout all their deaneries, and that what we have decreed shall be observed." [Pg 266]

> The canon on sons of priests forbade the prelates from presuming henceforth under any pretext, or by any fraud, to appoint or admit any to benefices which their fathers held by any kind of title, either to the whole or to part, and that they who already hold such benefices shall be deprived.

> In 1265, Cardinal Othobon presided over a national council at London, which was of great authority, and was regarded subsequently as a rule of discipline for the English Church, in which the preceding legislation was again repeated.

> The Council of Reading, under Archbishop Peckham, in 1279, refers to the canon of Othobon *contra concubinarios*, and orders that archdeacons shall read it at their visitations and see that it is read by the rural deans at their chapters (the laity being excluded), and in case of neglect they shall fast on bread and water on the six week days (unless infirmity hinder them) until they have read or caused it to be read at the next chapter.

Were the laity excluded to screen the infirmities of their pastors, or because the expression of lay dissent would have encouraged the clergy in their contumacy? May we conjecture that, in spite of the urgent commands of the archbishop, the reading of the canon was often omitted, and that the archdeacons and rural deans excused themselves from the consequent penance under favour of the saving clause?[257] [Pg 267]

The legislation is itself a witness to the existence of the practices which it tries to suppress. We need no further proof that in the thirteenth century many of the clergy were married men, that in some cases they lived openly with their wives in their dwelling-houses, or, in other cases, they visited them openly in separate houses provided for them; that they

refused to give them up in spite of repeated synodical decrees; that clerics who were not themselves married countenanced their married brethren; that even the dignified officials whose business it was to take proceedings against them, hung back from doing so.

After the middle of the fourteenth century this subject disappears from the acts of the synods; not because the clergy had come universally to obey the former canons, but because the question had found a solution, which we proceed to describe. Celibacy was confessedly not a Divine ordinance, but an ecclesiastical regulation, and so long as the two evils were avoided (1) of the parochial benefices being overburdened by the demands of an avowed family; and (2) of the hereditary descent of benefices by the absence of lawful heirs; the [Pg 268] ecclesiastical authorities might be satisfied with the obedience of a large proportion of the clergy, and willing to connive at the solution of the question to which the rest resorted.

The solution was as follows: The secular cleric was not bound by any Divine ordinance to celibacy, and did not, like the monks, take any vow of celibacy on admission to Orders. It was only an ecclesiastical regulation; and he took leave to evade the canon. If he married, the marriage was not void in itself, it was only voidable if brought before the Ecclesiastical Court during the lifetime of the parties; but he had taken his precautions in view of that contingency; the marriage was irregularly performed in some particular, or performed in such circumstances that it was incapable of legal proof. It was something like the morganatic marriages of German princes, illegal, derogatory, not conferring on wife and children the status and rights of legal wife and children, but still not in fact, or in the estimation of society, immoral and disreputable.

It is notorious that in the fifteenth century there were many ecclesiastics, from the popes downwards, who had wives, but not living in their houses, and not presented to the world as wives,[258] and they had children who were presented to the world as nephews and nieces. [Pg 269] Warham, the last Archbishop of Canterbury before the Reformation, is said (by Erasmus[259]) to have had a wife who was not secluded from the knowledge and society of his friends; Cranmer certainly married his second wife, the niece of Osiander, before he was archbishop, and did not sever his ties with her after he became archbishop. And it is clear that these relations were not regarded as immoral and disgraceful; in fact, the common sense of mankind gives easy absolution for the breach of inequitable laws.[260]

But there is no doubt that the ambiguity of such relations, at the best, laid open those who entered into them to just censure, and must have lowered their own moral tone and that of those thus connected with them. Neither is it to be denied that enforced celibacy, and the loose notions encouraged by such connections as those here described, led to a certain amount of profligacy which admits of no excuse or palliation.

So the ultramontane policy at length won a victory—of a sort. It succeeded in preventing the clergy from having wives by conniving at their concubines; it left no legitimate sons of rectors to claim the heritage of their fathers' benefices, and gave dispensations to their [Pg 270] illegitimate sons; it established a celibate priesthood, with all the scandals and suspicions associated with it; it withdrew its clergy from the ordinary affairs of life, and at the same time from the leadership of the current practical life of the people. In a biting phrase of the time of Matthew Paris, "The pope deprived the clergy of sons, and the devil sent them nephews."

We have given a—perhaps disproportionately—long chapter to a not very agreeable subject; but it seemed desirable to take the pains necessary to put the matter in its proper light, and not to allow the Englishmen of the great period, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, to lie under the suspicion of being so ungodly that the clergy generally lived in open immorality, and the laity thought little the worse of them for it.

An entry in a MS. Book of Ecclesiastical Causes reveals the possible complications which might arise out of these marriages. Marriages of the clergy were not null and void, they were only voidable by proceedings which must be taken in the lifetime of the parties. So that it was always possible that the children of such a marriage might after their father's death claim as heirs to his estate, and might have the means of proving their parents' marriage; in which case they would inherit to the exclusion of those who had thought themselves the heirs. For example, Sir John de Sudley, knight, and Elizabeth, wife of Sir Baldwyn de Frevyle, knight, relatives and heirs of Peter, the uncle of the said Sir John, a sub-deacon, [Pg 271] alleged that marriage had been contracted by the said sub-deacon, to their exclusion from the heirship, and prayed that the marriage might be pronounced null, lest the children of the said sub-deacon should claim his heirship. Sir Peter de Montford seems to be the name of the sub-deacon aforesaid, and Margaret Furnivale that of his wife.[261]

Chaucer, in "The Miller's Tale," seems incidentally to show what was the popular view of the children of a cleric. The Miller, a Yeoman, a man of comparative wealth and consideration in his village, had married a parson's daughter:—

A wife he hadde commen of noble kin,
The parson of the town her father was.

Her “noble kin” points perhaps to the fact that the parson of the town was of the family of the lord of the manor. She had received the education of a lady—

She was yfostered in a nonnerie.

As to her personal character—

She was proud and pert as is a pie.

Next the poet puts upon his stage the daughter of this worthy pair—

A daughter hadden they betwixt them two;

and it is what he says about this young lady which proves most clearly that neither mother nor daughter suffered in the estimation of society from the condition of their birth: [Pg 272]

The parson of the town, for she was faire,
In purpose was to maken her his heire
Both of his catel and of his messuage,
And strange he made it of her marriage;
His purpose was for to bestow her hie
Into some worthie blood of ancestrie.

Geoffrey of Childewick, a knight, married Clarissa, the daughter of a country priest, but she was the sister of the famous John Mansell, the minister of Henry III.

A man was called priest’s son, not as a nickname, but as a surname recognized in formal legal documents, as in the “Pleas of the Crown,” c. 1220, Hugo Clark appeals *Paganus filius Sacerdotis* and others of having beaten him and broken his teeth, etc.[262]

The subject is rather fully illustrated in the MS. *Omne Bonum* (Royal 6 E. VI.) of the fourteenth century in the British Museum. At f. 295, under the title *Clericorum et mulierum cohabitatio*, is a quaint picture of a bishop parting a group of clergy from a group of women. At f. 296 *verso*, under the title *De clericis conjugatio*, is represented a group of clergy on the left, a group of women on the right, and a cradle containing a baby between the two groups; [Pg 273] the text is on the penalties against clerical marriages, but it calls the women *uxores*—wives. Again, in the second volume of the work (Royal 6 E. VII.), at f. 138, under the title *Filii Presbyterum*, the picture shows three priests on the left, and women on the right, with three children kneeling between them; the text is on the disabilities of sons of priests.

Another branch of the same subject is the determination of the rulers of the Church that the sons of clerics should not be allowed to succeed to their fathers’ benefices. The hereditary succession of the semi-secular Saxon monasteries afforded a venerable precedent for doing so. The tendency of the feudal system was to make all offices hereditary, and the practice was growing up of making church benefices hereditary, and treating them like lay fiefs; *e.g.* dividing them between two or more sons, as if they were an ordinary estate; demanding a fine from a new rector as the lord of the manor did from a new tenant; making the condition that the presentee should give up this or that ancient possession of the benefice, or should pay an annual pension to the patron. The end of this would have been that the benefices of the church would have become hereditary, impaired, and secularized.

How far the mischief had already gone is illustrated by two or three examples which we are able to quote.[263] In York, immediately after the Conquest, there was something very like a [Pg 274] succession to the archbishopric. The provostship of Hexham descended from father to son, all of them being priests. The Deans of Whalley and Kettelwell, ecclesiastics of great jurisdiction and influence, were married, and their offices descended from father to son for generations. In the episcopal registers we find from time to time sons succeeding their fathers well on in the thirteenth century, notwithstanding the canons and synods which prohibited it.

The great act of defence against this danger which threatened was the canon which forbade the son of a parson to succeed to his father’s benefice. The canon was re-enacted from time to time, but not without occasional instances of strenuous resistance. Thus, in 1235, Alexander, Bishop of Coventry, complained to Pope Gregory IX., that certain rectors, sons of priests, presumed to occupy their fathers’ benefices by force of arms; and in some cases where fit incumbents had been placed, the priest’s sons had threatened them with injury to members and life, so that they feared to dwell there; and he asks the pope’s protection.[264] The pope tells him to deprive them of all their benefices.[265]

Some of the results of the state of things above described appear very frequently in the bishops’ registers. Illegitimacy, we have seen, was one of the defects which stood in the way of a man’s ordination, and the son of a priest was regarded by the canons as illegitimate; but [Pg 275] the bishop could, if he pleased, give a dispensation which removed the barrier, and there are many records of such dispensations.[266] Sometimes the dispensation only admits the

grantee to take minor orders, sometimes “to take all the sacred orders, and to hold ecclesiastical benefices even with cure of souls.” In the Register of Bishop Quivil, of Exeter, 1282, is a record of a *Dispensatio super defectu natalium* granted to J. de Axemuthe, the defect being that he was *de presbytero genitus et soluta*. So, in the Exeter Register of Bishop Stapledon, J. de Hurbestone, clerk, in 1308, had a dispensation, being *de presbytero genitus et soluta*. *Soluta* means single woman, but in the eye of the canon law and of the bishop, the wife of a priest would be *soluta*, so that these may be cases not of immorality, but of married priests. In the Register of Montacute, Bishop of Ely, is a record of a dispensation (1338) to the son of Ada Bray, of Canterbury, *qui patre de presbytero genitus*, to be promoted to all minor orders.[267] In a great number of cases the nature of the illegitimacy is *soluto genitus et soluta*—born of a single man and single woman; it is very possible that a number of sons of the clergy may be included in this formal legal description also.

Sometimes a man, refused perhaps by his own bishop, went to Rome for a dispensation, and obtained it.[268] Sometimes the Papal Court gave a priest’s son license to be promoted to any dignity *short of a bishopric*.[269] [Pg 276]

If a man, being thus disqualified, neglected to obtain a proper dispensation, he might find the neglect a serious difficulty in after-life, or if he failed to have at hand the proof of his dispensation; thus, in 1234, it was objected to Thomas de Melsonby, prior of Durham, that he was the son of a rector of Melsonby, and born while his father was in holy orders.[270] Similarly on Feb. 20, 1308-9, Stapledon, bishop of Exeter, in the chapter-house of Launceston Priory, admonished the prior on pain of deprivation to exhibit, within two years, to himself or his successors, his “*Privilegium*” by virtue of which he retained the dignity, being illegitimate. He appeared within the term and satisfied the bishop, and was discharged.[271]

It appears that those who were thrust out on this ground were treated with some consideration. In 1126, Wm. de Ruley was deprived of the Church of Ruley, on the ground that he was the son of the last minister; but the archbishop assigned to him the tithes of a chapelry in the parish for his support during his life.[272] The mandate for the removal of Peter of Wivertorp from the Church of Wivertorp, for the same reason, concludes with the note, *salva pensione*, from which we infer that all incumbents removed for this cause were entitled to, or at least were usually granted, a pension. But Peter of Wivertorp did not rest content with his deprivation. He made friends at the Court of Rome, representing that his father was married when in minor orders, and that he himself had held the benefice for ten years; and obtained a letter from Pope Honorius interceding for him, that he should be allowed to retain Wivertorp till the archbishop gave him some other competent living.[273] [Pg 277]

The curt, formal entries in these musty records sometimes seem to give us a glimpse into men’s hearts and lives: John Curteys, Vicar of Hobeche, in his will, made in 1418, leaves all his lands in Holbeach and Quappelode, to William Curteys for life, on condition that he shall become a priest as soon as possible after obtaining his legitimation, to celebrate for the souls of his parents; the remainder for pious uses.[274] We venture to conjecture that John Curteys, the vicar, in view of his approaching end, was uneasy in his conscience about the uncanonical marriage of which William was the offspring; therefore he thus appeals to his son to obtain as rapidly as may be a dispensation, and ordination to the priesthood; and then to use continually during his future life his priestly office in praying for the souls of his erring parents. [Pg 278]

The author of “Piers Plowman’s Vision” includes these dispensations to priests’ sons, and sons of serfs, among the abuses of his time, in lines which are worth quoting—

> For should no clerk be crowned,[275] But if he come were
> Of franklins and freemen, And of folk wedded.
> Bondmen[276] and bastards, And beggars’ children,[276]
> These belong to labour, And lord’s children should serve
> Both God and good men As their degree askith.
> Some to sing masses, Others to sit and write,
> Reade and receive, What Reason ought to spend.
> And since bondmen’s bairns Have been made bishops,
> And bastard bairns Have been archdeacons,
> And cobblers and their sons For silver have been knights,
> And monks and monials, That mendicants should feed,[277]
> Have made their kin knights, And knights’ fees purchased,
> Popes and Patrons Poor gentle blood refuse,
> And take Simond’s son, Sanctuary to keep.
> Life holiness and love Have been long hence,
> And will, till it be weared out Or otherwise ychanged.

[Pg 279]

CHAPTER XVIII.

VISITATION ARTICLES AND RETURNS.

The visitation of the parishes by the Ordinary—the ecclesiastical person who exercised spiritual jurisdiction over them[278]—was an important feature of ecclesiastical administration.[279] We have seen that a canon of the famous Council of Clovesho, in 747, directed bishops to make an annual visitation of their dioceses. As time went on the duty, burdensome alike to the bishops and clergy, fell into disuse, and seems to have been resumed again in the twelfth century.

The Lateran Council of 1179 made a canon to check the costs of visitations: it decreed that an archbishop visiting churches should be content with forty or fifty horses; a bishop with twenty or thirty; an archdeacon with five or seven; and a dean was not to exceed two.[280] [Pg 280] The Pontificals contain the "Order of Visiting Parishes:"[281] the bishop is to be met by the clergy in procession outside the gates; Mass is to be said; the bishop is to tell the people the purpose of his coming, viz. (1) to absolve the souls of the departed; (2) to see how the Church is governed, the condition of its vestments, the lives of the clergy, etc.; (3) to inquire into the sins of the laity; (4) to take cognizance of matters which belong to the bishop; (5) to confirm children; also he is to preach a sermon on the sacraments, etc.[282]

From these visitations we obtain full and reliable information as to the personal character and conduct of the parish clergy and their fulfilment of their duties. Five or six of the parishioners, called *testes synodales*,[283] or questmen, were sworn to give, besides a return of the condition of the church and its furniture, a true answer to certain questions about their clergy, viz. the rector or vicar, the chaplains, and the clerk.

[Pg 281] Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln (c. 1232), issued a paper of twenty-nine questions to his clergy, which is perhaps the earliest of Visitation Articles ("Lincoln," p. 134, S.P.C.K.). Grostete issued Articles of Inquiry about 1250; and similar articles were issued by Roger Weseham, Bishop of Lichfield, in 1252. In the year 1253 these following inquiries were made "in each and every diocese of the whole kingdom of England" concerning the life and conversation of both clerks and laymen:—[284]

> 1, 2, 3, 4 are about sensual sins on the part of the laity. 5. Whether any laymen are drunkards, or habitually frequent taverns, or practise usury of any kind. 6. Receive the free land of any church to farm. 7. Or receive in their fee the tithes of any church. 8. Whether rents assigned to lights or other specified uses of the church are converted to the use of the rector or vicar. 9. Whether any layman is compelled to communicate and offer after mass on Easter Day.[285] 10. Whether any layman or other of whatever condition or reputation (*famæ*) *perierit conscio rectore vel vicario loci*. 11. Whether any layman is notably proud, or envious, or avaricious, or slothful, or malicious, or gluttonous, or luxurious [the seven deadly sins]. 12. Whether any layman causes markets, or plays or pleas (*placita peculiaria*) to be held in sacred places, and whether these things have been prohibited on the part of the bishop. 13. Whether any laymen have played at "Rams" (*elevaverint arietes*[286]), [Pg 282] or caused scotales to be held, or have contended for precedence with their banners in their visitation of the mother church. 14. Whether any layman or woman entertain as a guest the concubine of any man of whatever condition, and keep a bad house. 15. Whether any sick person has lacked any sacrament from negligence of the priest lawfully called. 16. Whether any layman or other of whatever condition have died intestate, or without partaking of the sacraments, by the negligence of the priest or rector. 17. Whether any churches remain to be dedicated, or any have been destroyed without licence from the bishop, since the Council of London. 18. Whether Jews dwell anywhere where they have not been used to dwell. 19. Whether any laymen have clandestinely contracted marriage in cases forbidden by law or

without banns. 20. Whether the laity insist upon (*sunt pertinaces ut stent*) standing in the chancel with the clergy. 21. Whether any layman causes Divine service to be celebrated in any chapel without licence from the bishop. 22. In what way lay servants and representatives of parsons, abbots, priors, prioresses, and other parsons and religious persons, behave in their granges, mansions, and possessions. 23. Let diligent inquiry be made concerning the taxation of every church, and how much the rector of every church has given to the subsidy of the Lord Pope. 24. Whether any rectors or vicars or priests are very illiterate (*enormiter illiterati*). 25. Whether the sacrament of the Eucharist is everywhere carried to the sick with due reverence, and is kept in a proper manner. 26. Whether any of the aforesaid or others in sacred orders are incontinent, and in what kind of incontinence. 27. Whether the incontinent have been corrected by the archdeacon of the place, and how often and in what manner. 28. Whether any convicted or confessing incontinence have bound themselves to resignation of their benefices or other canonical [Pg 283] punishment if they relapse, and whether any after so binding themselves have relapsed. 29. Whether any men beneficed or in sacred orders are married (*uxorati*). 30. Whether any clerics frequent the churches of nuns without reasonable cause. 31. Whether any of the clerks in holy orders keep (*tenent*) any woman related to him, or any concerning whom evil suspicions may arise. 32. Whether any are drunken, frequenters of taverns, or traders, or usurers, or fighters or wrestlers, or notorious for any vice. 33. Whether any are farmers, giving and receiving churches or vicarages to farm without the licence of the bishop. 34. Whether any are viscounts (high sheriffs) or secular judges, or hold bailywĩcks (stewardships) for laymen, for which office they are obliged to give account (*unde obligentur eisdem ad ratiocinia*). 35. Whether any rectors make a bargain with their annual priests (*cum sacerdotibus annuis*) that, besides the stipend received from the rector, they may receive annualia and tricennalia from others. 36. Whether any is guilty of simony, either in regard to ordination or preferment. 37. Whether any parish priest has not sufficient maintenance from the rector. 38. Whether any rector or vicar has built on a lay fee or cemetery out of the revenues of the Church, or has placed tithes in a lay fee. 39. Whether any carry weapons, or have not the tonsure, and fitting habit. 40. Whether any one has more than one cure of souls without dispensation. 41. Whether any rector or vicar is the son of the last incumbent. 42. Whether any priest extorts money for penance or other sacraments, or enjoins lucrative penances. 43. Whether deacons hear confessions or minister other sacraments committed to priests only. 44. Whether any rector or vicar does not reside on his benefice. 45. Whether any church has not clerks or one honest clerk according to the means of the church. 46. Whether the cemeteries are everywhere enclosed, and the churches becomingly built and adorned, and the [Pg 284] ornamenta and sacred vessels properly kept. 47. Whether any priest celebrates in sour wine (*aceto*). 48. Whether any beneficed men learn or teach secular laws.[287] 49. Whether cartings are done (*fiant cariagia*) on the Lord's days or festivals, and by whom. 50. Whether the canon of the mass is everywhere duly corrected. 51. Whether any layman or cleric keeps as a guest the concubine of a cleric, and where are there harbours of concubines. 52. Whether any priest celebrates twice a day except in the conceded cases, and except in his own church. 53. Whether any religious have appropriated to themselves any tithes, or churches, or such like, or any additional pension or portion has been given to religious, without the consent of the bishop of the place. 54. Whether any vicars make themselves rectors, or the converse. 55. Whether any illegitimates who have not a dispensation hold ecclesiastical benefices, or are in sacred orders. 56. Whether any act as rectors or vicars who have not been instituted by the bishop. 57. Whether the super altars are proper (*honesta*), and not used for grinding colours upon them. 58. Whether adulteries and public and notorious crimes of laymen are duly corrected by the archdeacon, and whether any one has celebrated marriage in a disallowed case. 59. Whether in every deanery there have been appointed penitentiaries[288] of rectors, vicars, and priests, and who they are. 60. What priests were ordained in Ireland or elsewhere outside this diocese, and whence did they come, and in what places have they ministered hitherto, and by whom are they licensed to celebrate. 61. Whether in every archdeaconry there are sufficient penitentiaries of the bishop (for cases reserved to the bishop?). 62. Concerning the life and proper conduct of archdeacons, deans, and clerics who minister in churches, and concerning the agents and servants [Pg 285] of parsons and others. 63. Whether any anchorite has been made without the assent of the bishop. 64. Whether any monks or religious dwell in their granges or possessions, and how the monks behave there in spiritual things, and what is their reputation. 65. Whether the dean and others have entered into a confederacy during the vacancy of the see to the prejudice of the incoming bishop. 66. Whether any archdeacons have received more for procuration than they ought to receive according to the new constitution. 67. Enquiry is to be made concerning executors of wills, whether they have acted well and faithfully in the performance of their executorship, and if concerning

the said executorship they have paid the computum to the bishop. 68. Whether markets are held by any one on the Lord's day.

The answers show that the *testes synodales* did not scruple to find fault when they had cause, and perhaps sometimes when they had not much cause. We gather a few of the returns from the diocese of Exeter at Bishop Stapledon's Visitation in 1301,[289] as examples —

Sidbury.—Walter the Vicar, *optime se habet in omnibus, bene predicans, et officium sácrum sacerdotale laudabiliter exercens. Similiter et Clerici honestè se gerunt.*

Branscombe.—Thomas the Vicar conducts himself well in all things, and preaches willingly (*libenter*), and diligently does all things which belong to the office of a priest.

The returns from many parishes are equally satisfactory. We take more interest, perhaps, in those in which the failings of the clergy are pointed out. Here are some of them— [Pg 286]

Culmstock.—William the Vicar is a man of good life and honest conversation, and his clerk likewise, and well instructs his parishioners. In the visitation of the sick and baptizing the children, and in all things which belong to his office, they know nothing to be found fault with in him, with the exception that he makes too little pause between the matins and mass on festival days.[290]

Colyton.—Sir Robert the Vicar is a good man (*probus homo*), and preaches to them so far as he knows (*quatenus novit*), but not *sufficienter*, as it seems to them. They say also that his predecessors were accustomed to call the friars to instruct them about their souls' salvation, but he does not care for them; and if by chance they come he does not receive them, nor give them entertainment (*viatica*); whereof they pray that he may be admonished. Item, all the chaplains and clerks of the church live *honestè et continentes*.[291]

At a later visitation, in 1330, the synodsmen of Colyton complain that their vicar had been struck with leprosy, but continued to come to communion with the parishioners at the risk of contaminating the whole flock, which was a scandal. They report that they used to have one [Pg 287] sufficient vicar, one fit parochial chaplain, one deacon, and two clerks serving in the said church of the alms of the parishioners, and that the vicar used to find that number, out of whom they have now only one chaplain and one clerk, and that the said vicar refuses to supply more. They complain that the vicar chooses his parish clerk at his own pleasure, and will not *manucipere pro eodem*. They say that the clerks of the church used by custom to ring the curfew, and at the elevation of the *corpus domini*.

They complain that John Prouz (lord of the manor of Gatcombe, in the parish) is not willing to contribute with the other parishioners to the church, nor to do other things which belong to him. They say that Sir Hugo Prouz, father of the said John, knight, deceased, left 10 marks sterling to the fabric of the church of Colyton, which the heirs refuse to pay.[292]

Colebrook.—Hugh de Coppelestone and other trustworthy men of the parish, lawfully requisitioned and examined, say that Sir William the Vicar preaches after his own fashion (*suo modo*); also he expounds to them the Gospels on the Lord's Days so far as he knows (*quatenus novit*); but concerning the Articles of the Faith, the Commandments of the Decalogue, and the mortal sins, he does not teach them much. And he does not say his matins with note on the more solemn days, and only celebrates on the week days every other [Pg 288] day. He is defamed of incontinency with Lucia de la Stubbe, a married woman (*conjugata*). All his houses, except the hall and chamber, which were in a good state at his coming, are now falling to pieces and threatening to come down, and could not be made good for a hundred shillings. Also his gate is so far from the hall, which he has lately lengthened, that one calling without is not heard in the hall, which is dangerous for the sick parishioners.[293]

St. Mary Church.—The parishioners have some complaints to make about business matters between themselves and the vicar, but finally testify that he preaches well and exercises his office laudably in all things when he is present; but that he is often absent, and stays at Moreton sometimes for fifteen days, sometimes for eight, so that they have not a chaplain, unless when Sir Walter, the chaplain of the archdeacon, is present, or some one can by chance be obtained from some other place.

Dawlash.—In Bishop Stapledon's Visitation, in 1301, the *synodales* say that the vicar, who has the reputation of being a good man, does not reside in person, but has in his place Sir Adam, a chaplain, who conducts himself *bene et honeste*, and teaches them excellently in spiritual matters. But Randulphus the chaplain has had his concubine for ten years or more, and, often corrected for it (*sæpius inde correptus*), remains incorrigible. The clerk of the [Pg 289] church is *continens et honestus*.

An important testimony to the estimation in which the clergy were generally held by their parishioners, is afforded by the fact that it was very usual for the people to seek their assistance in making their wills, and also to appoint them as executors, to see to the due carrying out of their testamentary arrangements.

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CHAPTER XIX.

PROVISION FOR OLD AGE.

We have followed our parish priest through various phases of his life and work; there remains one more—before that last one through which all priests and people must pass—on which the records throw a considerable amount of light. Parish priests grow old—sometimes old and infirm and incapable of fulfilling the duties of their position. What to do with them, in fairness to them and in fairness to the parishioners, is a problem which perplexes us at this moment. Then, as now, if the income of the benefice, or the private income of the incumbent, enabled him to obtain the help of a competent chaplain, that was accepted as on the whole the best solution. It permitted the old pastor to end his days among his people, and still to be the friend and counsellor of those who cared to seek him. The difficulty then, as now, is in the case of a benefice which is too poor both to give a competent maintenance to the old incumbent and to engage the services of a competent *locum tenens*. We find from not infrequent records of [Pg 291] such cases in the bishops' registers that, to begin with, the bishop sequestrated the benefice, usually appointing a neighbouring clergyman as sequestrator. Then, in the arrangement of matters, it seems to have been thought right always to leave the old incumbent to end his days among his own people and in his own house, with a sufficient maintenance out of the income of the benefice. On the other hand, in justice to the parish, a chaplain was appointed who took independent charge of the parish. It would seem that this coadjutor usually lived in the parsonage house, or part of it, not as the guest of the old incumbent, but rather as his host, except where the premises were formally divided into two tenements for the independent accommodation of both. It will be borne in mind that the celibate condition of the clergy would make the arrangement of such cases much more easy in those times than in these.

The unwillingness of an infirm vicar to be disturbed was met in the way illustrated by this individual case: In 1322 the patron of the parish of Letton, Herefordshire, complained to the bishop that the rector, Milo by name, had, from old age and ill health, been absent from his church during many years without licence of non-residence, though often admonished to reside. The bishop issued a commission, consisting of neighbouring incumbents, to inquire. They replied that Milo had not resided for ten years, that the services had been very badly [Pg 292] done by numerous chaplains, and the parishioners grossly neglected, and that the rectory house and buildings were falling into decay. A coadjutor was appointed by the bishop to assist him in the cure of his parish.[294]

Here are some illustrative cases of a more satisfactory kind. Philip de Harwodelme, Rector of Bigby—it is recorded in the Register of Bishop Quivil, of Exeter,[295] in 1286—being so cast down by disease and broken by old age as to feel himself entirely unequal to the care of the souls of the parishioners, had a retiring pension assigned to him of twenty marks, out of the great tithes of the parish. This is a very simple solution of the difficulty, since the pension, equal to £13, was an ample one, and, it is to be assumed, the benefice large enough to spare it.[296]

In 1309, William de Tres ... Vicar of Perran Zabulo, being very old and infirm, Bishop Stapledon grants a sequestration of the living to Sir Wm. de Mileborne, Rector of Lanhorne; and an arrangement is made by which Michael de Newroneck is appointed coadjutor to the

old vicar, and is to pay him two shillings a-week for his sustenance; and out of the rest of the benefice is to live himself and maintain hospitality, and pay all charges on the living.

In 1316, the bishop appointed Thomas de Dylington, Rector of Cumbfflorie, as coadjutor to the Rector of Lidiard St. Lawrence, who is blind, old, and broken in health; the appointment is made subject to revocation at the bishop's pleasure. [Pg 293]

In appointing a coadjutor to Sir Wm., Vicar of St. Colan, on account of his great infirmity, it is stated in Bishop Stapledon's Register that the coadjutor is to take charge of the goods, etc., of the vicarage. And so in the case of Sir Henry, Vicar of Constantine, a coadjutor is appointed by the same bishop, who is to take an inventory of the vicar's goods, and to have the vicar and his goods in his care, and to provide honourably for the vicar and his family.

In the Registers of Lichfield Diocese, we find the incumbents of Stoke-on-Terne, Uttoxeter, St. Peter's, Derby, etc., resigning on a pension secured by the oath of their successors; and chaplains assigned to the Vicar of Lapley, who is old and blind, and the Rector of Maxstoke, because he is infirm; and so in other dioceses.

The arrangement between the vicar and his successor does not always work quite smoothly. This seems to be the explanation of the action of Bishop Stapledon, of Exeter, who, in 1326, admonishes Barthol de More, Vicar of Kynstock by the resignation of John Mon, who is decrepit, to continual residence, and to take oath to maintain the said John as long as he lives. But soon after a more definite arrangement is made that "lest, in process of time, to the scandal of the clergy, the said John should be compelled miserably to beg, he shall receive a payment of six marks of silver, viz. 40*s.* at St. Michael, and 40*s.* at Easter."

Cases difficult to deal with sometimes occurred. Considering the prevalence of leprosy from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, it is not wonderful to find the vicar of a parish among the victims of the dreadful disease. We have met with one case in the preceding chapter of a Vicar of Colyton, in Exeter diocese, in 1330. We are not told what steps the bishop took in that case; but in a similar case at St. Neot's, in the same diocese, the vicar being struck with leprosy, Bishop Stapledon appointed Ralph de Roydene, chaplain, to be his coadjutor, and gave the vicar and the living into the custody of the coadjutor. The bishop orders that since the vicar cannot, without danger, have intercourse with the whole people as he has been accustomed, the vicar shall have the better chamber (*meliorem cameram*) with the houses adjoining it, except the hall, to live, and eat, and drink in; and that the entrance should be closed between the said chamber and the hall, and a new entrance made to the said chamber externally in a suitable place, by which the vicar, when need is, can have ingress and egress; and a *cloaca*, likewise, to the said chamber, in a fitting place. The said Sir Ralph shall pay to the said vicar every week for his maintenance in food, drink, and firing, and other small necessaries, 2*s.* sterling, and yearly on the feast of St. Michael, or thereabout, 20*s.* for his robe; also he shall keep in repair the houses of the said vicarage, both those which the vicar inhabits, and all the other buildings of the vicarage, and shall undertake and see after all other burdens belonging to the said vicarage.[297] [Pg 294]

There is a case in the Chichester Register in which the master and brethren of the college of the Holy Trinity, Arundel, petition the bishop to give a pension to Wm. Rateford, resigning the Vicarage of Kurdford, lest he come to beggary, to the scandal of the clergy. [Pg 295]

In another Chichester case, Thomas Bolle, Rector of Aldrington, Sussex, having resigned his living in 1402, applied to the bishop, Robert Rede, for leave to build a cell against the wall of the church, in which he might be shut up—as a recluse—for the rest of his life. The license was granted, and the Reclusorium remains to this day in the shape of a room 29 ft. by 25 ft., with ingress to the chapel of the Blessed Virgin on the north side of the church.[298]

In 1422, Spofford, Bishop of Hereford, instituted a vicar to the parish of Dilwyn, in the place of Walter Robins, to whom, as having discharged his duties in a laudable manner, a pension of 40*s.* is assigned, to prevent his falling into beggary, and so becoming a scandal to the Church. His pension is to begin fifteen days after his resignation, and to be paid quarterly. He is to have a chamber in the vicarage house on the ground floor (*bassam cameram*), with a fireplace in it, and near the entrance door (*hostium actuale*), with free ingress and egress, and power of redress in case of failure in punctuality of payment.[299]

In the adjoining parish of Webley, a vicar retiring in 1440 is to receive eight marks, a room on the ground floor, the use of the vicarage kitchen, well, and garden; and the incoming incumbent is to assure these benefits by oath. [Pg 296]

Beneficed clergymen had a freehold in their benefices, and therefore a legal claim for provision in old age, not so with unbeneficed men; but we meet with a few examples of kindly care for them. For example: In 1237 the Bishop of Durham obtained the papal licence to place certain clerks of his diocese who have become old, weak, and blind in a house together, and assign the tithe of his wills for their support;[300] Thomas Ricard, in 1433, leaves, "to John Wright, chaplain, because he is blind and poor, a mark per annum for life."[301]

William Malham, of Elslack, absentee rector—being a master in Chancery—of the parish of Marton, Yorks, in the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII., writes to his brother: "I will Sir W. Martindale be Parish Priest at Marton, and to have like wages as Sir W. Hodgson had, and Sir W. Hodgson to have six marks yearly, during his life, to tarry at Marton, and praye

for me and my mother's and father's sawles. They both to begin their service at midsomer next coming." This seems to be a kindly way of pensioning off an old parish chaplain.[302]

If the reader wishes to follow our parish priest to the grave, and join in his obsequies, he may turn to pp. 452 and 457, where he will find sufficient suggestions to enable him to reproduce the funeral and the funeral service, and the month's-mind and obit. The wills of priests sometimes give directions for their monuments; for example, in 1384, Michael Northburgh, Canon of Chichester, and Rector of Hampstap, willed to be buried in Chichester Cathedral, in a spot which he minutely describes: "A marble stone to be placed over my grave with a half statue like that of Mgr. William Blythe, with this inscription: **Hic jacet Michael Northborough, quondam Canonicus Ecclie Cicestren. et Rector Ecclie de Hampstap, cuius Aiē P'picietur Deus. Amen.** And the statue to hold a scroll in its hands with the words, **Miseremini mei, Miseremini mei, saltem bos Amici, quia Manus Domini tetigit me**."[303] [Pg 297]

William of Duffield, Chaplain of St. Martin's, in Coney Street, York (A.D. 1361), left 20*s.* to buy a gravestone for himself, and 3*s.* 4*d.* for workmanship and sculpturing a chalice thereon.[304]

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CHAPTER XX.

THE PARISH CLERK.

The parish clerk seems to have existed about as long as the parish priest, if we are right in assuming that the man of sober life whom the parish priest was required by the "canons of King Edgar" to bring with him to the diocesan synods (see p. 67) was the prototype of that useful official. At least, from a very early time every parish had its clerk to attend upon the priest in his office, and to perform a number of useful services on behalf of the parishioners. An Injunction of Bishop Grostete says, "In every church which hath sufficient means there shall be a deacon and sub-deacon, but in the rest at least a fitting and honest clerk to serve the priest in a comely habit."[305] A Canon of a Synod of Ely (1528) enjoins all parish clerks to serve their priests at high mass reverently and devoutly.

Coronation procession of Charles V. of France.
(From MS. of Froissart’s Chronicle.)

The general custom was for the incumbent to choose and appoint the clerk, and for the parishioners to pay him; but in some parishes the parishioners had a prescriptive right to choose; and there are indications that in some parishes it was the custom for the rector or vicar to pay him.[306] Having been duly chosen and appointed, the clerk was licensed by the Ordinary, and held his office as a freehold, being removable by the Ordinary, and by him only for misconduct. His duties were to attend on the parish priest, and assist in the services of the church; to ring the bell for services, prepare the altar, lead the people in the responses; precede the procession with holy water; precede the priest with bell and taper in going to visit the sick, and such-like things.

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Parish Clerk sprinkling Holy Water.
(Early 14th cent. MS. British Museum, Royal, 10 E. IV.)

One curious custom of his office was to go round the parish on Sundays and great festivals, and to enter the houses in order to asperse the people with holy water, sometimes, perhaps on some special festivals, it would be to cense them, for Absolon, the parish clerk in Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales” (Miller’s Tale)—

> Goth with a censer on the holy day,
> Censing the wives of the parish faste.

A MS. in the British Museum of early fourteenth century date (Royal, 10 E. IV.) contains a

story which turns on the adventures of a parish priest, as he goes through the parish on this errand. Our illustration, taken from f. 108 *verso*, shows how, after going into the kitchen to [Pg 301] sprinkle the cook, he then goes to the hall to sprinkle the lord and lady as they sit at dinner. In the Harl. MS., 2278, f. 76, is a picture of a parish clerk about to asperse the dead body of a child, the mother withdrawing the winding-sheet for the purpose.[307] It was from this duty that the parish clerk took the name of "Aquabajalus."

His stipend was made up of customary fees, especially for his services at marriages and burials, which differed in various parishes, and voluntary donations. A custom of this kind is good (says Lyndwode), that every master of a family on every Lord's day give the clerk bearing the holy water, somewhat according to the exigency of his condition; and that on Christmas Day he have of every house one loaf of bread, and a certain number of eggs at Easter, and in the autumn certain sheaves. Also that may be called a laudable custom where such clerk every quarter of the year receives something in certain money for his sustenance, which ought to be collected and levied in the whole parish.

A great number of the mediæval wills contain small bequests to the parish clerk, and to clerks attending the funeral of the testator.

A story told by Matthew Paris[308] makes us acquainted with the average income thus derived. "It happened that an agent of the pope met a jolly clerk of a village carrying water [Pg 302] in a little vessel with a sprinkler, and some bits of bread given him for having sprinkled some holy water, and to him the deceitful Roman thus addressed himself: 'How much does the profit yielded to you by this church amount to in a year?' To which the clerk, ignorant of the Roman's cunning, replied, 'To twenty shillings, I think.' Whereupon the agent demanded the percentage the pope had just demanded on all ecclesiastical benefices. And to pay that small sum the poor man was compelled to hold school for many days, and, by selling his books in the precincts, to drag on a half-starved life."

Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Constitutions of 1260, says—

> We have often heard from our elders that the benefices of holy water were originally instituted from a motive of charity, in order that one of their proper poor clerks might have exhibitions to the schools, and so advance in learning, that they might be fit for higher preferment.

He therefore desires that in churches which are not distant more than ten miles from the cities and castles of the province of Canterbury, the rectors and vicars should endeavour to find such clerks, and appoint them to the office. And if the parishioners withhold the customary alms to them, let them be urgently admonished, and, if need be, compelled to give them.

We are not surprised to find that parish clerks of this kind often kept the village schools.

> Peckham, Archbishop in 1280, ordered in the church of Bauquell and the [Pg 303] chapels annexed to it, that there should be *duos clericos scholasticos*, carefully chosen by the parishioners, from whose alms they would have to live, who should carry holy water round in the parish and chapels on Lord's days and festivals, and minister *in divinis officiis*, and on week days should keep school.[309] Alexander, Bishop of Coventry, 1237, ordered parish clerks who should be schoolmasters in country villages.[310]

The custom of putting young scholars into the office of parish clerk to help them to proceed to holy orders, explains some kindly bequests which we meet with in wills:

> Robert de Weston, Rector of Marum, 1389, leaves "to John Penne, my clerk, a missal of the new Use of Sarum, if he wishes to be a priest, otherwise I give him 20*s.* My servant Thomas Thornawe, 20*s.* The residue of my goods to be solde as quickly as possible, *communi pretio*, so that the purchasers may be bound to pray for my soul."[311]
>
> Giles de Gadlesmere, in 1337, left to Wm. Ockam, clerk, C*s.*, unless he be promoted before my death.[312]

The parish clerks of a town or neighbourhood sometimes formed themselves into a gild, as in London, Lincoln, etc.,[313] and it would seem that these gilds in some places entertained their neighbours, and no doubt augmented their own funds, by the exhibition of miracle [Pg 304] plays. The parish clerks of London used to exhibit, on the anniversary of their gild, on the green in the parish of St. James, Clerkenwell. In 1391, Stow says that they performed before the king and queen and the whole court for three days successively, and that, in 1409, they performed a play of the "Creation of the World," the representation of which occupied eight successive days.

Chaucer gives a portrait of a parish clerk in the Miller's Tale of his "Canterbury Pilgrims"—

> Now was there of that churche a parish clerke
> The which that was y-cleped Absolon.
> Crulle[314] was his here and as the gold it shon,
> And strouted[315] as a fanne large and brode;
> Ful streight and even lay his jolly shode.[316]

His rode[317] was red, his eyen grey as goos,
With Poules windowes carved on his shoos,
In hosen red he went ful fetisly[318]
Yclad he was ful smal and proprely
All in a kirtle of a light wajet[319]
Ful faire and thicke ben the pointès set.
And therupon he had a gay surplise
As white as is the blossome upon the rise.[320]
A mery child he was so God me save,
Well could he leten blod and clippe and shave
And make a charte of lond and a quitance.
In twenty manner could he trip and daunce
(After the schole of Oxenfordè tho)
And playen songès on a smal ribible[321] [Pg 305]
Therto he sang, sometime a loud quinible[321]
And as wel could he play on a giterne.[321]
In all the town n'as brewhouse ne taverne
That he ne visited with his solas,
Theras that any galliard tapstere was.
This Absolon that jolly was and gay
Goth with a censor on the holy day
Censing the wivès of the parish faste
And many a lovely loke he on hem caste.
* * * * * * *
Sometime to shew his lightness and maistrie
He plaieth Herod on a skaffold hie.

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CHAPTER XXI.

CUSTOMS.

It remains to mention a great variety of observances and customs, some of them superstitious, some innocent enough, many of them picturesque and poetical and giving colour and variety to the popular religious life. It would need another volume as large as this to do justice to the subject which we find ourselves compelled to deal with in a single chapter.

The right of Sanctuary, the immunity from violence even of the criminal who had put himself under the protection of present Deity, which was provided for in the Levitical cities of refuge, which attached to the temples of the gods of Greece and Rome, was, when the empire became Christian, readily accorded to churches and their precincts. We have had occasion to mention its existence in Saxon times;[322] it seems desirable to say that it continued to be an important feature in the life of the times of which we are now speaking. There were special sanctuaries—cities of refuge—with special privileges, as at Durham, [Pg 307]
Ripon, Hexham, Beverley, Battle, Beaulieu, Westminster, St. Martin's le Grand, the Savoy,

Whitefriars, and the Mint in London, and other places. Every church and every churchyard shared in the privilege, and it was no very unusual incident to find it made use of.

As an illustration of its efficacy, we may point to the story that after the battle of Tewkesbury, King Edward IV., with some of his knights, was about to enter the church, sword in hand, in pursuit of some of the defeated Lancastrians who had taken refuge there, when the priest met them at the door bearing the consecrated host, and refused them entrance till the king had promised pardon to several of the refugees. We frequently meet with examples of people in danger to life or liberty taking refuge in the nearest church.

The church was also a sanctuary for property. It was very usual to deposit money and valuables there for safe custody. We give some examples of it in a footnote.[323] Jews were not allowed to deposit their money and valuables in churches.

The churchyard also gave a certain protection.[324] Ordericus Vitalis relates that the villagers in time of war sometimes removed themselves and their goods thither, and built themselves huts within the precincts, and were left unmolested. From a canon of the Synod of Westminster, 1142, we learn that ploughs and other agricultural implements placed in the churchyard had certain immunities, probably freedom from seizure for debt. The canon decreed that the ploughs in the fields, with the husbandmen, should have the same immunity.[325] [Pg 308]

A similar privilege attached to the persons of bishops; Bishop St. Hugh of Lincoln meeting the sheriff and his men taking a man to execution, claimed the criminal, and carried him off. The Abbot of Battle on one occasion claimed and exercised the same episcopal privilege.

Pilgrimage was a popular act of devotion from Saxon times downwards, and afforded a relief to the stay-at-home habits of the people. The pilgrimage to the Holy Land was the most highly esteemed, after that, to the thresholds of the apostles at Rome, and to Compostella, and great numbers went thither. The most famous native pilgrimages were to St. Thomas of Canterbury and Our Lady of Walsingham, but every cathedral had its shrine, and many monasteries and many churches their relics. It would occupy pages even to give a list of the known places of pilgrimage in every county. Let it suffice to mention the shrines of St. Cuthbert at Durham, St. William at York, and little St. William at Norwich, St. Hugh at Lincoln, St. Edward Confessor at Westminster, St. Erkenwald at London, St. Wulstan at Worcester, St. Swithun at Winchester, St. Edmund at Bury, SS. Etheldreda and Withburga at Ely, St. Thomas at Hereford, St. Frideswide at Oxford, St. Werburgh at Chester, St. Wulfstan at Worcester, St. Wilfrid at Ripon, St. Richard at Chichester, St. Osmund at Salisbury, St. Paulinus at Rochester. There were famous roods, as that near the north door of St. Paul's, London, and the roods of Chester and Bromholme; and statues, as that of Our Lady of Wilsden, and of Bexley, and of other places. There were scores of sacred wells; that of St. Winifred at Holywell, near Chester, with its exquisite architectural enclosure and canopy, is still almost perfect, and still resorted to for its supposed healing virtues. [Pg 309]

Before a man went on any of the greater pilgrimages, he obtained a licence from his parish priest, and first went to church and received the Church's blessing on his pious enterprise, and her prayers for his good success and safe return, and was formally invested with his staff, scrip, and bottle (water-bottle). The office for blessing pilgrims may be found in the old service books. While he was away he was mentioned every Sunday, as we have seen, in the Bidding Prayer, in his parish church. On the road, and at the end of his journey, he found hospitals founded by pious people on purpose to entertain pilgrims, and on the exhibition of his formal licence he received kindly hospitality. At every great place of pilgrimage "signs" were sold to the pilgrims, the palm at Jerusalem, scallop shells at St. James of Compostella, and the like. In many places water, in which had been dipped one of the relics, was sold, to be used in case of sickness, enclosed in a leaden ampul, and was worn suspended by a cord from the neck. Fragments of the pilgrim roads may still be traced in narrow deep overgrown lanes on the hillsides between Guildford and Reigate, between Westerham and Seven Oaks, leading towards Canterbury, and in green lanes through Norfolk leading towards Walsingham. On his return the pilgrim went to church to return thanks, and hung up his signs over his bed as treasured mementoes of his adventurous journey. Sometimes the palmer's staff, or the scallop shells, were, on his death, hung on the church wall, as the knight's gauntlets, sword, and helmet were.[326] [Pg 310]

The whole body of the people had an opportunity of a short pilgrimage on the occasion of the annual procession of the parishes to the cathedral church, or if that were too far, to some other central church with special attractions, with banners waving and most likely music playing, there to meet the processions from other parishes, as has been already described at p. 121. [Pg 311]

Very frequently at the great Festivals there was some picturesque addition to the services in church; as the grotto and cradle at Christmas, the sprinkling of ashes on Ash Wednesday, the veiling of the rood during Lent, the procession bearing palms round the churchyard on

Palm Sunday, the creeping to the cross on Good Friday, the Easter sepulchre, on Whitsunday the white dresses of the baptizands, the blessing of the fields on Rogation days, the festival of the Dedication of the parish church which was held on its saint's day, and was a great day of social feasting. Every Sunday the procession (Litany) round the church, sometimes preceded by a miserable figure in white, bearing a taper, doing penance. At funerals there was a great display of mournful pageantry; and month's-minds, and obits, frequently occurring, added a feature to the service in which everybody took a personal interest; for the good people then, when the banns of a marriage were published, kindly responded with a "God speed them well"; and when the names of the departed were proclaimed, prayed "God rest their souls."

In the Middle Ages, all the services of the church, attended by the people, were celebrated by daylight, except, perhaps, the first evensong on the eves of saint days, and very early [Pg 312] celebrations, and then the attendants probably brought a taper or a coil of wax-light for themselves, so that there was no need of provision for the lighting up of the whole interior of churches, such as is customary in these days; but lights in churches were a conspicuous part of their furniture, and the provision of them was a source of general interest to the people.

First there were the altar lights. A law of Edmund directs that the priest shall not celebrate without a light; not for use, but as a symbol. At low mass one candle on the gospel side of the altar was sufficient, *e.g.* one was habitually used in Lincoln Cathedral at low mass. In poor churches, sometimes only one was used. Myrc, in his "Instructions to Parish Priests," says—

> Look that thy candle of wax it be,
> And set it so that thou it see,
> On the left half of thine altere,
> And look always that it burn clere.

In pictures of the celebration of the Eucharist in illuminated MSS., we sometimes find only one candle on the altar, *e.g.* in Nero E. II. (fourteenth cent.) *passim*. More usually in later times two wax candles were placed on the altar, which were understood to symbolize the presence in the sacrament of Christ the Light of the World, and their number to allude to the two natures in our Lord.

It was required that an oil-lamp should hang before the high altar, always alight, in honour of the reserved sacrament in its Pyx. It was an ancient custom to have a great ornamented [Pg 313] wax-light at Easter, called the Paschal Candle, in honour of the Resurrection of our Lord. Lights were placed on the rood-loft, and tapers were burned in front of the images of the saints, here and there in the church and its chapels. "The lighting of candles is not to dispel darkness, but to show that the saints are lightened by the light of heaven from God, as when they were alive, and the light of Faith, Grace, and Doctrine shone in them in this life." "The Church Light before the rood, the relics, or images of saints burneth to the honour of God."[327]

The number of these lights before saints was sometimes considerable. For example, the churchwardens' accounts of All Saints', Derby, for 1466-67, give entries with respect to the lights in that church, which tell us the number of images of saints, the number of tapers before each image, and the way in which they were provided:—

> St. Catherine's lights contained 20 serges, maintained by the collection of the Candle lighter.
>
> St. Nicholas' light contained 12 serges, maintained by the gathering of the Parish Clerk on St. Nicholas' night.
>
> Four other serges were burnt before St. Nicholas, which were provided by the Schoolmaster's gathering from his scholars, St. Nicholas being the patron saint of School boys.
>
> St. Eloy's (Elgius) light had 6 serges, maintained by the Gild of the Farriers.
>
> St. Clement's light had 5 serges, maintained by the Gild of Bakers.
>
> Our Lady's light contained 5 serges, maintained by the Shoemakers. [Pg 314]
>
> Before the Rood 5 serges were maintained by 5 several benefactors.
>
> Before the Mary of Pity 5 serges were maintained by the wife of Ralph Mayre.
>
> In the Lady Chapel before our Lady 3 serges, maintained by 3 several benefactors.
>
> In the same chapel before the Image of St. John Baptist several serges maintained by one benefactor.
>
> Before St. Christopher 5 serges by 5 individuals.

3 serges which Anc^{r} Geyr found, one before our Lady, another before St. Catherine, and the third before the Trinity Altar.

Before St. Edmund 2 serges by the gathering of the Clerk on St. Edmund's night, gathering as they do on St. Nicholas' night.[328]

Dr. Cox says that these lights were probably all lighted at high mass; but those of saints only on their saint days, and that only the altar-lamp was left alight all night.

At the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a temporary wooden chandelier, called a trindle, bearing many lights, was set up in church, and the attendants at the service brought tapers with them; the general illumination gave to the festival the name of Candle-Mass.

The popularity of these lights is shown in many ways—gilds maintained them, the public generally subscribed to them, and testators frequently left money to them.

A taper seems sometimes to have been symbolical of a person, as when the people who followed a procession carried them and presented them at the altar; when a nun to be professed and an anchoress to be enclosed, thus carried and offered them; when a penitent carried them; and, when in excommunication, "by bell, book, and candle," the candle was extinguished. Perhaps, in giving to the lights before the rood and the images of saints, there was some notion in the donors' minds that they were keeping themselves in the recollection of Christ and the saints. [Pg 315]

Besides these ritual lights, it was customary at a funeral to set up a wooden herse in church around the coffin, and to place two or more large wax candles, often called torches, about the herse. People often made provision in their wills for such lights, not only on the day of the funeral, but on the week-day, month's-mind, and yearly obit, and sometimes at a perpetual obit. Perhaps what was intended to be symbolized was that, though their bodies were buried in darkness, their souls were in the land of light.

The dramatic representation of Scripture subjects—the Three Kings at Christmas, the Passion of our Lord in Lent, and others at other times—was common in the cathedrals, monasteries, large towns, and perhaps villages. Bishop Poor, in his "Ancren Riewle," suggests that female recluses, who sometimes lived in a cell beside the church, may have to mention among other subjects of confession, "I went to the play in the churchyard; I looked on at the wrestling, or other foolish sports." The Passion play at Ober Ammergau has proved that such performances may be made dignified and devotional. [Pg 316]

The custom of using the churchyard for purposes of business and pleasure was very common and very persistent. As early as the fourth century St. Basil protested against the holding of markets in the precincts of churches, under pretext of making better provision for the festivals; but the custom held its own, and we have a catena of synodical declarations against holding secular pleas, markets and fairs, and indulging in sports, in church and churchyard, and a series of complaints by the synodsmen in their annual presentation to their bishops of the breach of the canons.

Cardinal Ottobon, at the Synod of London, 1268, made a constitution prohibiting this kind of use of the sacred building and its enclosure; and strictly enjoining all bishops and other prelates to cause it to be inviolably observed on pain of ecclesiastical censure; and here are a few examples of the way in which it was disregarded down to so late a period as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:

The parishioners of St. Michael le Belfry, York, in 1416, complain that a common market is held in their churchyard on Sundays and holidays.[329] In the explanation of the Second Commandment, c. xvi., in "Dives and Pauper," in allusion to the abuse, which adds a little to our information, "no markette sholde be holden by vytaylers or other chapmen on Sondaye in the churche or in the churchyarde or at the church gate ne in sentuary (churchyard) ne out." In another place (Sixth Commandment, c. i.) we learn that the chapmen and their families sometimes slept in the church or churchyard. [Pg 317]

One of the canons of the Synod of Exeter, 1287, strictly enjoins on parish priests that they publicly proclaim in their churches that no one presume to carry on combats, dances, or other improper sports in the churchyards, especially on the even and feasts of saints, or stage plays or farces (*ludos theatrales et ludebriorum spectacula*).[330] Yet in 1472, at Sallay, in Yorkshire, it is found necessary to make an order that no one use improper and prohibited sports within the churchyard, as, for example, *pilopedali vel manuale*, tutts and handball, or wrestling.

A custom which is still more opposed to our sense of propriety was that of holding church ales in the sacred building. A church ale was the old form of parish tea. It was connected with works of piety or charity, or of Christian fellowship, and in the eyes of the people of those times perhaps partook of the nature of the primitive love-feasts. They made a collection for the poor of the parish at a Whitsun Ale, started a young couple with a little sum by a Bride Ale, or got a man out of difficulties by a Bid Ale (from *biddan*, to pray or beg). So persistent was the custom, that in our latest English canons of 1603 it is thought necessary to prohibit any holding of feasts, banquets, suppers, or church ale drinkings in church.[331]

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CHAPTER XXII.

ABUSES.

Even a book like this, which professes to deal with the humbler details of parochial life, rather than with the greater matters of ecclesiastical history, would be defective if it failed to take some note of the administrative abuses against which all Europe complained for centuries, and tried in vain to get them amended in the three great Councils at Pisa, Constance, and Basle. We shall treat of them very briefly, and chiefly in their relation to our special subject.

It was soon found that the new relations of the Church of England to the patriarchal authority of the See of Rome, which had been a consequence of the Norman Conquest, had opened the door to a flood of evils which had not been foreseen. We can only enumerate them without going into their history.

The claim of the popes to present to all ecclesiastical benefices was opposed by the king with respect to the rights of the Crown to the nomination to bishoprics and abbacies, and on the part of the nobles and gentry with respect to their patronage; but by partial encroachments the popes did in fact, from time to time, nominate to many bishoprics, and dignities, and to a considerable number of parochial benefices. Curiously enough, the most important of these invasions of the rights of others are the most capable of extenuation. The kings, as we shall presently have occasion to say, at length used their power of practical nomination to bishoprics, not to give the Church the best Churchmen as bishops, but to pay for the services of their ministers of State with the rank and revenues of bishoprics. Their nomination at all was an infringement of the constitutional liberties of the Church, and their use of their power of practical nomination in this way was a grievous wrong. In the reigns of John and Henry III., when the popes took upon themselves to nominate to sees, they were careful to select Churchmen of learning and character, who contrasted favourably in the eyes of the nation with the king's nominees thus superseded. In the reign of Edward I., the king and the pope played into one another's hands, the king did not oppose the Papal nomination, but the pope readily nominated men whom the king recommended. Later kings successfully maintained their right of nomination against the popes, but the pious and feeble Henry VI. again yielded to papal encroachments.

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The *intrusion* by the pope *of foreigners*, chiefly Italians, into English benefices was a great practical grievance while it lasted, *i.e.* during part of the thirteenth and fourteenth

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centuries. Bishop Grostete estimated that the revenues of the alien clerks, whom Innocent IV. had planted in England, equalled seventy thousand marks, while the king's revenue was not more than a third of that sum. This abuse was so unpopular that it provoked a serious resistance. About 1230, a secret association, countenanced, it was said, by men of position, wrote to bishops and chapters, warning them not to encourage these encroachments, and to the monks, who farmed the benefices of the aliens, not to pay them their rent. The tithe barns of the alien rectors were plundered, and the contents sold or given to the poor, and some of the men themselves were seized and put to ransom. In the reign of Richard II. (1379), an Act of Parliament forbade any to farm the benefice of an alien, or to send money out of the realm for such farm, under the penalties of the Statute of Provisors. But the evil was checked by the Acts of Provisors (1350) and Premunire (1353), and these encroachments of the Roman See were extinguished by the end of the fourteenth century.

A great grievance inflicted by the Crown upon the Church was *the use of Church patronage* for the payment of the political, diplomatic, judicial, and other officers of the civil administration. The result was that a large number of the greatest offices of the Church were served by deputy; the details of diocesan work were done by suffragans, archdeacons [Pg 322] performed their duties by officials, rectors by parish chaplains. It was inevitable that the work should be imperfectly done; rank and wealth are attached to Church benefices in order to enhance the dignity and influence of the holders and their power of fulfilling the duties of their office, and a *locum tenens*, though he were intrinsically as able a man, can never fulfil the place or do the work of the real holder of the office.

It was Henry II. who adopted it as a normal practice, and not without protest. When this king asked Bishop St. Hugh of Lincoln for a prebend for one of his courtiers, the bishop replied: "Ecclesiastical benefices are not for courtiers, but for ecclesiastics. Those who hold them must serve not the palace or the treasury, but the altar. The king has wherewithal to compensate those who work for him and fight his battles. Let him allow those who serve the King of kings to enjoy their fitting remuneration, and not to be deprived of it." When King Richard, through the Archbishop of Canterbury, desired Bishop Hugh to send him a list of twelve of his canons to be employed in his affairs, Hugh replied that "he had often prohibited his clerks from intermeddling in secular affairs, and he certainly was not going to encourage such a thing now. It was quite enough to have archbishops forgetting their sacred calling." All the canons had not the courage of their bishop, or were ambitious of court appointments, for some of them went off to the king at Fontevrault without the [Pg 323] bishop's leave; but all were relieved from their difficulty by the king's death.[332]

A kindred evil was that of *pluralities*, since the holder of several benefices must needs put a *locum tenens* into all of them save one, with the disadvantages just mentioned. John Mansel, Henry III.'s chancellor, is said by Matthew Paris to have held the revenues of seven hundred benefices, amounting to four thousand marks.

The popes in the thirteenth century exerted their authority to put an end to the abuse, but met with a strenuous resistance. At the Council of London, 1237, under Otho, when the Canon against pluralists of the recent Lateran Council was proposed to be adopted, Walter de Cantilupe, Bishop of Worcester, warned the Legate that the attempt to impose it on the English clergy would be resisted by force by the young men who were bold and daring, and not without the approbation of some of their elders;[333] and the question was postponed. But the popes exercised pressure by refusing to confirm the elections to bishoprics of men who were pluralists, and the Archbishops[334] gave their authority to the cause of reform. In time the evil was lessened; there were fewer benefices held in plurality, and those who held them were required to obtain a dispensation, and to provide in the benefices on which they did not reside proper substitutes with a sufficient provision for themselves, and for the [Pg 324] hospitalities and charities of the benefices.

We have had occasion to make several allusions to the *farming of benefices*; this was another abuse which may require a few words of explanation. The incumbent for a definite annual payment put the emoluments of his benefice into the hands of another to make what he could out of it. The monks at one time were great farmers of benefices. The evil of it was that the farmer, having no responsibility towards or interest in the people, was tempted to be strict in exacting his dues, and deaf to claims of charity. For example, in 1532 the Convent of Merton granted a lease of the rectory of Kingston-on-Thames with all the profits and the presentation to the vicarage for twenty-one years.[335]

A danger connected with this farming of benefices for a long term of years, which is not apparent at first sight, is indicated in the following instance. In 1267, Bishop Richard of Gravesend made Dunstable Priory give up the Church of Lidlington; they had farmed it from an absentee rector, and on his death they seem to have assumed the rectorial rights.[336]

Among the greatest and most widespread abuses, was that of admitting to benefices men who were not qualified to fulfil the duties of the office. This was the case more or less with ecclesiastical benefices from bishoprics downwards; but it was specially the case with rectories. [Pg 325]

This abuse, of course, arose from the fact that in the majority of cases the patronage of the rectory was in the hands of the lord of the manor, the descendant, or at least the representative, of the original donor of the benefice, and was usually regarded as a natural provision for one of the younger sons of the family. It was, perhaps, not in theory so bad an arrangement as some people think it. In those feudal times the lord of the manor was the petty king of all the people, and if one of his sons had the personal qualifications, perhaps no other priest could fulfil the duties of rector of the parish with equal advantages. The relations of squire and parson in a country village are a little difficult, and a son of the ruling family could exercise an influence in the parish which a stranger could not; he could mediate between the lord and the people with greater influence on both sides than a stranger; and the people would generally pay a loyal regard to him which they would not to any other priest.

The great abuse was that so many of these rectors remained in minor orders, exercising perhaps a good influence, fulfilling the hospitalities and charities of their office, but leaving its spiritual duties to be performed by a parish chaplain. This did not seem so objectionable to them as it does to us, because they were under the influence of the feudal ideas, which tended to make all offices hereditary, and to consider that the holders of office did all that was required of them if they provided that the duties of the office were satisfactorily performed by subordinates. [Pg 326]

The law made a man who had received the lowest of the minor orders capable of holding a benefice;[337] the bishops, therefore, could not refuse the patron's nomination in such cases, and the bishops' registers contain records of the institution of young men, who were sometimes only acolytes, or even clerks; they had to do the best they could for the well-being of both the young rectors and their parishes, with some consideration for the rights of patrons and the opinion of the age. In very many cases the newly instituted rector received at once a licence of non-residence for a year, that he might study, generally, or in Oxford or Paris specifically. The leave of non-residence is sometimes extended to two or three years, or renewed from time to time. Sometimes it is stipulated that the rector shall take orders as sub-deacon within the year, or that he shall pass through all the orders up to priest's within the time of non-residence allowed. There is frequently further licence given to put the benefice to farm, with a stipulation for a donation to the poor of the parish, or the fabric of the church, or the like.[338]

William, the son of Gilbert FitzStephen, presented to the parish of Kentisbury, was refused by Bishop Stapledon on the ground that he was too illiterate for such a charge. The influence of powerful friends was brought to bear upon the bishop, and he conceded thus far —that the young man should go to school (*scolas grammaticales*), and if, after awhile, he could admit him with a good conscience, he would do so, and would not, in the mean time, take advantage of the law which made the nomination lapse to himself at the end of six months. But it does not appear in the Register that William FitzStephen was ever instituted; and the institution of John de Wyke, priest, in the following year, by the patron, indicates that the illiterate young man abandoned the idea of becoming Rector of Kentisbury, and perhaps did service, such as he was qualified to perform satisfactorily, under his father's banner in the field. Sometimes the bishop dealt with a case more peremptorily. Bishop Grostete refused a presentee whom he described as "a boy still in his Ovid." The same bishop refused to admit to a benefice a man presented by the Chancellor of York, on the ground that he was almost illiterate; and sends the young man's examination papers that the chancellor may judge for himself. He refused to institute W. de Grana on the presentation of W. Raleigh, the treasurer of Exeter, because of his youth and ignorance; but that Raleigh may not think him ungrateful, he promises to give his nominee a pension of ten marks a year till he gets a better benefice. In answer to a request of the Legate Otho to institute Thomas, a son of Earl Ferrers, to a benefice, he begs to be excused; but if the matter is pressed, he begs that a vicar may be appointed to the parish, and that Thomas may have some provision out of the living without cure of souls.[339] In 1530, Bishop Holbeach of Lincoln rejected a Canon of Ronton nominated to the Vicarage of Seighford as *indoctus et indignus*. Richard Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford (1283-1316), refused to institute a boy of sixteen, of the name of Baskerville, to the Vicarage of Weobley, on the presentation of the Prior and Canons of Llanthony, though pressed by a powerful relative of the boy. [Pg 327] [Pg 328]

> In 1283, in the time of Bishop Quivil of Exeter, Barthol le Seneschal, who had been presented to the Rectory of St. Erme, was found to be not in Holy Orders, and not old enough to be ordained; but both difficulties were evaded, for, though not at once instituted as rector, "the sequestration and custody of the church were committed to him," and so he was enabled to act as rector in the management of affairs, and to receive the income, and to appoint a vicar or chaplain to do the spiritual work of the parish.[340] [Pg 329]
>
> Robert de Umfrenville, clerk, was instituted in 1317 by Bishop Stapledon of Exeter, on the presentation of Henry de Umfrenville—very likely his father—to the rectory of Lapford; but the bishop required, under a penalty of a hundred

> shillings, that he should go to Grammar School, and should come to the bishop at least once a-year, that the bishop might know what progress he was making. The young man would seem not to have given himself to study, and, at the end of three years, to have found the position untenable, for he sent in his resignation by letter, dated June, 1320.
>
> In 1317, a rector of Bath and Wells diocese, on his institution, was bidden to keep a good chaplain to teach him, since he was but indifferently learned. As he was the presentee of the king, the bishop had special inducement to be lenient.[341]

But the refusals of the bishops to admit men in minor orders were very exceptional. A large proportion of the rectories were occupied by such men. The canons of the diocesan synods show that the ecclesiastical authorities were continually urging them to proceed to priest's orders; but the bishops had no power to compel them to do so;[342] and the parochial lists of incumbents bear witness that some of the rectories were occupied by men in minor orders in almost unbroken succession.

Another kindred evil was that of simple *absenteeism*, not because the rector was engaged in [Pg 330] other occupations elsewhere, or that he was a pluralist, and could not be everywhere, but simply because he preferred to be somewhere else than in his parish. He put his benefice to farm, appointed a parish chaplain, and departed. He needed a licence of non-residence, if absent for any lengthy period. We have glimpses of the reasons for which licences of non-residence were sometimes given. The commonest is for leisure to attend schools, which we shall have to speak of at length presently. Another reason is that the licensee may go on pilgrimage; for example, in 1225, Archbishop Gray gives a licence to Godfred, vicar of St. Felix, who has taken the cross, to put his benefice to farm for three years during his visit to the Holy Land. Bishop Grandisson of Exeter gives a licence of non-residence to Sir Ralph Kerneyke, Rector of St. Erme, till 2 February 1331-2, to visit the thresholds of St. James in Galicia and the Court of Rome, and then without any delay to return to his church. In 1329, Ady de Tavistock, Rector of St. Gerundus, Cornwall, had a licence to make a pilgrimage to Rome;[343] and similar cases occur in other bishops' registers. Frequently the absence is said to be granted at the request of so-and-so,[344] [Pg 331] very likely the patron of the parish, who thus confirms the reasons which the incumbent has alleged, and signifies his consent to his parson's absence. The patron had sometimes a personal reason for his action in the matter.[345] For example, Gerard Myghell (or Mychell), Rector of Theydon Garnon, Essex, in 1507 put his rectory to farm for three years to Sir William Hyll, chaplain, and Francis Hamden, esquire, in order to become tutor to John Hamden during his travels on the Continent of Europe. It appears that Francis Hamden was the squire of the parish, and John was his son, and probably Sir William Hyll, chaplain, was the priest who was to take charge of the parish during the rector's absence, which seems a very good choice of trustees. The rector lets to farm, all his church and parsonage with all manor of tithes, fruits, profits, rights, commodities, and emoluments, whatsoever, with all the lands, pastures, leases, for £8 a year; but he reserves all the whole "lochynge" [lodging] at the gate (of the churchyard), viz. a parlour with a chimney and a larder at the end of the said parlour, and two chambers over a study, and a wyddraughte [? drain], perhaps to lodge his old housekeeper in during his absence. There is still an ancient house in the churchyard which may possibly be the lodging here mentioned. There is a letter from the rector, from Rouen, relating how he and his pupil are getting on, and very naturally asking for supplies of money and clothing. [Pg 332]

We had occasion to deal with the subject of *slavery* in the Saxon period, concluding with the estimate of Sharon Turner,[346] that, of the population of England at the end of that time, as calculated from Domesday Book, three-quarters of the population of two millions were in a state of slavery.

We may introduce here the statement that, although the Church all along the ages used its influence in favour of the just treatment of the serf population, in the spirit of St. Paul; and encouraged manumission, and set the example; and freely gave dispensations to sons of serfs to enter into Holy Orders and hold church benefices; yet the status of serfage was suffered to continue among the tenants of the Church after it had almost disappeared elsewhere.[347]

We add a few notes on the subject in mediæval times. Here is one which tells us the value of a serf. Gregory, Abbot of Whalley, in 1309, sells his *nativus, cum tota sequela sua, et omnibus rebus suis habitis et habendis*, for 100*s.* sterling.[348]

In the Register of Walter Stapledon, Bishop of Exeter, is an entry under date 1315—

> Be it known to all present and future, that we, Walter, etc., have given and granted "Magistro de la Gale, clerico, Richardum de la Gale, filium Edwardi de la Gale, nativum nostrum, cum tota sequela sua et omnibus catallis suis," so [Pg 333] that neither we nor our successors may be able to make any claim for service from the said Richard.

It seems to be the case of granting to a clerk the freedom of a relative who was a *nativus*

(serf).

So late as 1536, the Registers of Chichester supply an example of manumission by Bishop Sherburne. The deed of manumission begins, as is usual in deeds of manumission of that time, with a quotation from the Institutes of Justinian, “Whereas at the beginning nature brought forth all men free, and afterwards the law of nations placed certain of them under the yoke of servitude; we believe that it is pious and meritorious towards God to manumit them, and restore them to the benefit of pristine liberty;” therefore the bishop emancipates Nicholas Holden, a “native and serf,” who for many years had served him on his manor of Woodmancote and elsewhere, from every chain, servitude, and servile condition by which he was bound to the bishop and his cathedral, and, so far as he can, to make him a free man.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CATHEDRAL.

In order to give a complete view of the position and work of the parochial clergy in town and country, it is necessary to indicate, however briefly, both their connection with the cathedral and their relations with the monasteries. In this chapter we attempt the former subject; the latter in a following chapter.

We must glance back at our history and recall the time when the cathedral was the mother church of the diocese, and the bishop and his clergy lived together as one family. Some of them remained always at head-quarters to keep up the Divine service with as full a choir as their circumstances permitted, and to carry on the schools, which formed so important a branch of their work of Christian civilization; while others were itinerating hither and thither through the diocese preaching the gospel to the people. Then, we remember, came the gradual organization of the parochial system, by which the great majority of the clergy were scattered over the diocese, each residing permanently in his own rectory-house, and ministering constantly to his own people.

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CONFESSION IN LENT.
LATE XV. CENT. MS., 25698, f. 9.

The bishop, however, still retained a strong staff about him at the cathedral, for the honour of the Divine service and for general diocesan work; and the old tradition of an ascetic common life would naturally be maintained there, when it was no longer practicable in the scattered rectories. This staff would need organization. One man would be put in general command during the absences of the bishop on his visitations of the diocese; another would be in permanent charge of the schools; another would have special charge of the services; another would be the treasurer of the bishop's common fund; and thus naturally arose the four dignities of all the old cathedrals—the dean, the chancellor, the precentor, and the treasurer. Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz, the great chancellor of Charles Martel, organized the clergy of his cathedral into a community, adapting the rule of St. Benedict (which was then being pressed upon all the monasteries) to the circumstances of a body of secular clergy. After the Norman Conquest some of our bishops attempted to introduce the same organization into England, at Exeter, and Wells, and, with some modifications, at York; but the innovation did not flourish here.

The development of a more settled constitution of our English cathedral bodies of secular canons took the course of giving the cathedral clergy a more independent corporate life. The first great step towards it was the division of the common property into two portions, one at [Pg 336] the disposal of the bishop, the other the endowment of the chapter. The property allotted to the canons was then subdivided, estates being attached to the four great dignities; and, lastly, distinct endowments, called prebends, were assigned to the individual members of the general corporate body; still retaining a common dean and chapter fund divisible annually among the canons, or some of them. The concession to the chapter of the privilege of electing its own dean, completed the work, and made the dean and chapter an independent ecclesiastical corporation. The chapter thus definitely constituted soon acquired new rights and privileges. Already in the eighth century they had obtained the right of being the bishop's council; then they gained the right, to the exclusion of the rest of the clergy, of electing the bishop; then, that of representing the bishop's authority during a vacancy. Lastly, the dean, originally intended to represent the bishop during his absence, asserted his independence of the bishop as ruler of the chapter; and it cost Grostete, Bishop of Lincoln, a long and bitter contest to establish his right to "visit" the chapter of his cathedral, a contest in which he said that he was contending for the dropped rights of all the bishops of England.

We have been speaking of the cathedrals which were served by bodies of secular clergy. But some of the cathedral bodies had adopted the Benedictine rule, and were monasteries in which the bishop occupied in some respects, the place of abbot, but the prior was the actual [Pg 337] ruler. These were Canterbury, Durham, Norwich, Rochester, Winchester, and Worcester, and the two post-Norman sees, one placed in the great Benedictine House of Ely, the other in the House of Austin Canons at Carlisle.

The bishops soon found it desirable to secure the services of one or more archdeacons to help them in maintaining an oversight of their scattered clergy; soon after the Conquest, the archdeacons had their courts of jurisdiction, in which most of the minor cases of

ecclesiastical discipline were dealt with.

The practical oversight of the parochial clergy was maintained partly by synods, partly by visitations. The bishop held an annual synod, to which all the clergy of the diocese were bound to come in person or by proxy. The bishop also went the round of his diocese at intervals, usually of three years. He could not visit every parish, but the clergy met him at several convenient centres, with some of their chief parishioners, and the synodsmen gave in written replies to a set of questions—with which we have already dealt—which constituted a very searching—not to say inquisitorial—scrutiny into the life and conduct not only of the clergy, but of the laity also.

> A Constitution of Archbishop Boniface, 1260, directed every bishop to have in his diocese one or two prisons for confining clerics flagitious in crime, or convicted by canonical censure, and "we decree that any cleric who shall be incorrigible in his wickedness and habituated to committing crime to such a degree that if he were a layman he would, according to the secular law, suffer the extreme penalty, such cleric shall be adjudged to perpetual imprisonment."

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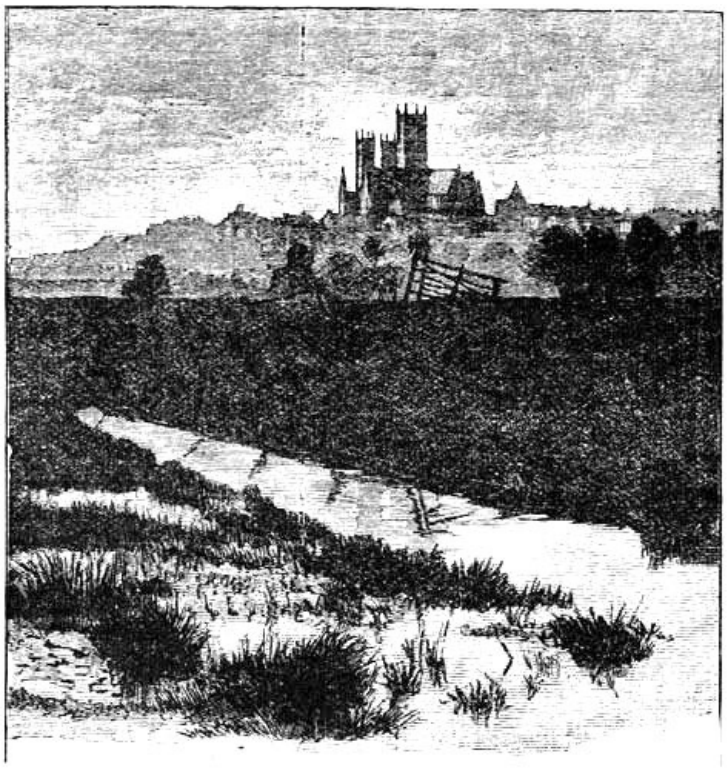
The archdeacons held their visitations, making inquiry specially into the state of the fabrics and furniture of the churches and parsonage houses; the rural deans also played a minor part in extending this oversight into every corner of the land.

After this general introduction, it will best serve our purpose of giving a popular idea of the part which a cathedral took in the religious life of the clergy and people, to select an individual example, and treat it a little more in detail.

When Remigius, anticipating the policy of the Council of London, transferred his see from Sidnacester (Stowe) to Lincoln, he found the king's new castle already occupying the south-west quarter of the area within the Roman walls of the old Colonia; and purchased the south-east quarter for the site of his new cathedral; a wide open space only separated the castle-gate from the humbler gate of the cathedral close. The old inhabitants, reinforced by the new military and ecclesiastical populations, found the northern half of the city too strait for them, and a new walled town sprang up at the foot of the hill, and soon stretched out a long, narrow suburb southward, along the high-road, defended by parallel dykes. The situation was a fine one. The long tableland to the north here falls steeply to the level of the river Witham, and overlooks another long level stretching southward. From the north, the [Pg 339] castle keep and the minster towers (when they were built) could be seen from every yard of the twelve miles of perfectly straight Roman road which ran northwards towards the Humber. Seen from the south, the view of the city was a glorious one. The new buildings of the castle and minster extended in a long line on the brow of the hill; an irregular line of steep street connected the old city with the new town at its feet; the river, enlarged and made navigable by the Romans, protected the approach from the south, and wound through low ground past the monastery of Bardney, and, in later days, the castle and collegiate church of Tatteshall, to the port of Boston at its embouchere. Durham only of English cathedrals occupies so advantageous a site, and, together with its palatine castle, presents as noble an architectural effect. The church grew century after century, after the manner of cathedrals. A portion of the west front of Remigius still remains surrounded by the later work of Alexander; St. Hugh of Avalon added the magnificent choir; Grostete added the central tower and the parts adjacent; and so at last the Church attained the magnificent proportions which still excite our admiration. The bishop's palace was built on a levelled space of the hillside south of the cathedral; the ruins of the "early English" halls and towers founded by St. Hugh, finished by Hugh of Wells, and the chapel added by Alnwick, still remain; and the pleasant hanging gardens above and below the buildings. The cathedral [Pg 340] close was inclosed[349] by a wall, and its entrances at the north-east, south-east, and west were defended by gates; the "exchequer gate" at the west had a gate-house with a large chamber in the upper story. The principal residentiary buildings of a monastery were grouped in a customary order round the cloister court; but the houses of the dignitaries of a cathedral were arranged as convenience suggested. The deanery[350] stands north, and the sub-deanery south of the church; on the east side of the close still remain two old stone houses with picturesque oriels, which were—and are—the official residences of the chancellor and the precentor; the chancery has a private chapel in it.

[Pg 341]



Lincoln, from the Fens.

In the fourteenth century it became the custom, for their greater convenience and better discipline, to incorporate the[351] vicars choral, and to place them in a court of their own. The vicar's court remains at Wells, Hereford, Chichester, and York. That at Wells, for fourteen priests, is a long inclosure with a row of seven small stone houses on each side, a chapel, with a library over it at the further end, and a hall over the entrance gate, from which there is a picturesque covered way over the public road into the north transept of the church, by which the vicars could go in comfort to their daily duties—like the pope's covered way from the Vatican to the Castle of St. Angelo. There are only some remains of the vicar's court at Lincoln, on the east side of the palace grounds, the old Roman wall dividing them. Every cathedral had a number of chantries, one of the very earliest was that to Bishop Hugh of Wells, in this cathedral. The Burghersh chantry, founded by Bartholomew Burghersh, had five priests, who, with the six choristers and their schoolmaster, formed a corporate body, [Pg 342] and all lived together in the chantry-house, which still remains in very perfect condition on the south side of the close. Among the interesting features of Lincoln, the treasurer had charge of a dispensary, which contained his stock of medicines; walls of an apartment in the cathedral are still surrounded by the niches.[352]

The chapter-house of a cathedral, served by seculars, was a very important feature. In monasteries it was always quadrangular, but in secular cathedrals, for some unknown reason, it was always polygonal.[353] It had always a central pillar, from which the groining spread on all sides, like the leaves of a palm-tree; externally it was covered with a tall conical roof. Here the dean and chapter met for the transaction of their capitular affairs, and here the bishop held his synods.

The *camera communis* (common room) of the canons intervened between the north transept and the chapter-house; over the vestibule was the office of the master of the works. Near by, north-east of the chapter-house, is a well, covered with a little stone octagonal building with conical roof. When we call to mind that there are wells within several cathedral churches—at York, in which King Edwin was baptized by Paulinus, at Winchester, and elsewhere—we are led to conjecture that the water of these wells may have been used for various ritual [Pg 343] purposes.

The date of the incorporation of the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln is 1086, and the bishop gave it statutes which seem to have been derived from Rouen.[354] The historian, Henry of Huntingdon, gives a charming description of the members of the original chapter, who were personally known to him, for he was the son of one of them.[355]

> "Ralph the Dean, a venerable priest. Rayner the Treasurer, full of religion, had prepared a tomb against the day of his death, and oft sate by it singing of psalms and praying long whiles, to use himself to his eternal home. Hugh the Chancellor, worthy of all memory, the mainstay and, as it were, the foundation of the Church. Osbert, Archdeacon of Bedford, afterward Chancellor, a man wholly sweet and loveable. William, a young Canon of great genius. Albin (my own tutor) and Albin's brothers, most honourable men, my dearest friends, men of profoundest science, brightest purity, utter innocence, and yet by God's inscrutable judgement they were smitten with leprosy; but death hath

made them clean. Nicolas, Archdeacon of Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Hertford—none more beautiful in person, in character beautiful no less, 'Stella Cleri,' so styled in his Epitaph [Henry's father]. Walter, prince of orators. Gislebert, elegant in prose, in verse, in dress. With many other honoured names with which I may not tax your patience."[356]

One of the reasons which Bishop Alnwick gave for assigning large salaries to the holders of stalls was the way in which they "devote themselves to the public service, in self-imposed tasks over and above their daily expositions and constant toils and numerous burdens."[357] [Pg 344]

With the help of the "Valor Ecclesiasticus" of Henry VIII., we are able to people the cathedral, and palace, and residentiary houses, and vicar's court, and chantries, with the men who lived and served there at the time of the Reformation, and even to pry into their account-books and tell their several incomes, to the third part of a farthing.

The Right Rev. John Longland,[358] who was the bishop in those troublous times, lived in St. Hugh's stately halls and towers on the sunny slope under the shelter of the minster; and to maintain his dignity, and household, and hospitalities, and various expenses, the annual value of "all the domains, manors, castles, parks, rectories, lands, tenements, and other temporal possessions," of this see was £Mccclxxviij, viij, vq', *i.e.* to say, £1378 8*s.* 5¼*d.*; and "all the spiritualities of the said Lord John" amounted, one year with another, to Diiij^{xx}iiij, viij, xjq', *i.e.* £584 8*s.* 11¼*d.*; making together an income of mdcccclxij, xvij, iiijob, or £1962 17*s.* 4½*d.*, equivalent in our money to about £23,554 8*s.* 6*d.*[359]

If the reader does not know what the "spiritualities" here mentioned are, he is not more ignorant than some great statesmen have been. For, on one occasion, the late Earl Russell asserted that the bishops received their spiritual authority from the Crown, on the ground that by one of the documents issued from a Crown office to a newly-elected bishop, restored the "spiritualities" as well as the "temporalities" to the new occupant of the see. The "Valor" tells us of what these spiritualities consisted: Portions and pensions from benefices, fees for procurations and synodals, institutions and inductions, faculties, probate of wills, and such-like. Temporalities, in short, are real property, and spiritualities are fees and perquisites. [Pg 345]

The dean and chapter had, as a common fund, the profits of twenty appropriate rectories; and from these and other sources they derived an annual income; for part of which they were only trustees, and had to pay out of it for the maintenance of the choristers, and the stipends of various chantry priests and others; leaving a balance of £Dvj xiij iiij ob'q di q', which means £506 13*s.* 4½*d.* ¼ and half ¼. This balance was divided among the six residentiary canons, making £83 11*s.* 1*d.* to each, with a remainder of ij ob' di'q', or 2½*d.* and half a farthing. The residentiary canons in question were the dignitaries, Mr. George Hennage, the Dean; James Mallet, the precentor; Christopher Massingberd, the chancellor; John Pryn, the sub-dean; and the others were, John Talbot[360] and Simon Green, *alias* Foderby. [Pg 346]

The dean and chapter were also trustees of a fabric fund derived from land and rents; out of which they had first to pay the stipends of several chantry priests, three and a chapel clerk serving the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and one each at the Welburn and Crosby Chantries; then they had to pay certain workmen constantly retained, a carpenter, "lathonius,"[361] plumber, glazier, smith, cleaner of brass vessels and candelabra, surveyor of the fabric, organist[362] at the mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and lastly the bailiff of lands and tenements. The balance after these payments was £575 7*s.* 2½*d.* ¼ and half ¼; and this balance was divided among the six residentiary canons aforesaid, giving £95 17*s.* 10½*d.* to each; it must be borne in mind that they were liable for occasional heavy expenditure on the repairs of fabric, which had to come out of their purses. Each dignity had its own special endowments; the separate estates of the deanery[363] produced an income of £196 10*s.* 8*d.*; of the precentory £8 2*s.* 4*d.*, of the chancery £54 1*s.* 5*d.*, of the treasury £10 13*s.* 4*d.*; of the sub-deanery £35 8*s.*

Then, again, every dignitary held a prebend of more or less value, which shall be set forth presently in a general statement. [Pg 347]

A little research reveals the fact that each of the dignitaries also held one or more parochial benefices; for example, Mr. George Hennage[364] was Master of the Collegiate Church of Tatteshall; he was also Rector of Gedney, Washingburghe, Howby, Benningworth, and Flyxburgh.

The precentor also held the Rectory of Longleddenham. The chancellor was also Vicar of Byker, Rector of Highkame, and Rector of Foletby. Mr. Pryn, the sub-dean, seems to have held nothing besides his dignity and his prebendal stall, except the Singing Schools (under the precentor). There were Prebendal Schools under the oversight of the prebendaries themselves, and others "which are maintained by local managers for the instruction of their parishioners in faith and letters."

It may seem a little invidious, perhaps, to add these several sums together and bring out the totals; but it is a part of the work which we have undertaken, and we do not feel at liberty to

decline it; it will, at least, remind us that we have in modern times made some economic changes in the administration of cathedral affairs; not altogether satisfactory ones, for, with the usual want of moderation in the minds of reformers, instead of judicious pruning, the cruel knife has left little beyond a bare stem. [Pg 348]

To sum up, then—

> Mr. George Hennage, the dean, had £196 10*s.* 8*d.* of his deanery; £83 11*s.* 1*d.* of the Dean and Chapter Fund; £95 17*s.* 10*d.* of the Fabric Fund; £42 7*s.* 4*d.* of his Prebend of Biggleswade;[365] £20 as Master of Tatteshall College;[366] £23 11*s.* as Rector of Gedney;[367] £27 3*s.* 4*d.* as Rector of Washingborough;[368] £22 8*s.* 5¼*d.* as Rector of Howby;[369] £23 8*s.* 6*d.* as Rector of Benningworth;[370] and £13 10*s.* as Rector of Flyxboro';[371] making a total of £548 8*s.* 3*d.*
>
> Mr. James Mallett, the precentor, had only £8 2*s.* 4*d.* of his precentory; £83 11*s.* 1*d.* his share of the Dean and Chapter Fund; £95 17*s.* 10*d.* of the Fabric Fund; he was Prebendary of Empyngham,[372] which brought him £35 6*s.* 5*d.*, and Rector of Longleddenham,[373] £29 12*s.* 8*d.* Total, £252 10*s.* 4*d.*
>
> Mr. Christopher Massingberd, the chancellor, had £54 1*s.* 5*d.* of his chancellorship; £83 11*s.* 1*d.* of the Dean and Chapter Fund; and £95 17*s.* 10*d.* of the Fabric Fund; as Vicar of Byker,[374] £15; as Rector of High Kame,[375] £19 16*s.* 2*d.*; as Rector of Foletby,[376] £21 2*s.* 8*d.* Total, £289 9*s.* 2*d.*
>
> The treasurership, vacant at that moment, was worth £10 13*s.* 4*d.*; with £83 11*s.* 1*d.* of the Dean and Chapter Fund, and £95 17*s.* 10*d.* of the Fabric Fund. Total, £190 2*s.* 3*d.*
>
> Mr. John Pryn, the sub-dean, had £35 8*s.* of his dignity; £83 11*s.* 1*d.* of the Dean and Chapter Fund; £95 17*s.* 10*d.* of the Fabric Fund; and of his Prebend of Keton,[377] £29 10*s.* 2*d.* Total, £244 7*s.* 1*d.* [Pg 349]

It must be borne in mind that these were great dignitaries of one of the greatest and wealthiest dioceses, and had to maintain a certain degree of state in their household and expenditure. Each dignitary had also to find at his own cost everything which belonged to his office; the precentor everything which belonged to Divine services, vestments, service books, etc. The chancellor had to maintain the divinity school of the cathedral—at one time a very famous one, the cathedral grammar school, and was responsible for all the schools in the city and county.

Should any reader have recognized among these dignitaries of Lincoln Cathedral the names of well-known families of the diocese, he must not be satisfied with a passing thought on the effect of family influence in the distribution of Church patronage, which may be true enough; he must add the reflection that in those times it was thought fitting not only to give the grandest architecture, the most costly material, and the best art to the material church, but also to dedicate the best blood of the people to its ministry; much as in old times the greatest and proudest nobles held domestic offices—dapifer and the like—at the court of the king, and no one who was not of gentle birth was thought worthy to attend him.

We shall entirely fail to understand the whole spirit and meaning of a mediæval cathedral if we have not fully grasped the idea that it was not intended to be merely a centre of busy diocesan work; the magnificent building and its sumptuous furniture, the numerous and complex organization of its staff of ministers richly endowed, were all directed to the honour and worship of Almighty God. It was the embodiment in this dispensation of the ideal of worship which God Himself sanctioned in the old dispensation, when His Temple at Jerusalem was "exceeding magnifical,"[378] and the high priest wore jewels of untold price on his mystic breastplate, and a whole tribe—a twelfth of the people—were set apart for the ministry, and the well-endowed priests came up in the turn of their twenty-four courses to the honour of officiating for a fortnight in a year before the Presence in the Holy of Holies. [Pg 350]

There were fifty-two prebendaries, whose canopied oak stalls form the most striking feature of the choir of the cathedral. A prebend was sometimes a manor, more frequently a rectory, rarely a sum of money, which formed an endowment for a canon.[379] For the most part the prebendaries were supposed to reside upon their prebends, to maintain Divine service, and a school, and hospitality there. Every prebendary was required to maintain a vicar choral at the cathedral; he himself came into residence for one week in the year, and during that week took the principal position in the cathedral services. On his Sunday of duty he was expected to entertain nineteen of the under officers at dinner, and to receive others at different meals during the week. The dean was required about thirty times a year to give an "honorificus pastus" to all the choir and vicars, "to make life and work more pleasant to them."[380] One fact is enough to show that the prebendaries of Lincoln were a very distinguished body of men:—of the fifty-two stalls, all but one—some of them more than once—has given a bishop to Lincoln, and from among them every English see has been filled, and many of them twice. [Pg 351]

One of the statutory duties of the prebendaries is very little known, and is so curious and interesting as to deserve mention here, even though it requires a few words of preface to make the spirit of it quite intelligible. Among other remarkable designs which entered into

pious minds in those mediæval communities was that of maintaining a ceaseless service of praise—*laus perennis*—or a daily recitation of the whole Psalter. The former was a conventual devotion, and was done in this way: there were always two priests before the altar, night and day, relieved at regular intervals, singing the Psalms. The latter was a cathedral devotion, where it was a rule that the dean and prebendaries as a body should say the whole Psalter every day to the glory of God. The same devotion was maintained at [Pg 352] Salisbury, Wells, and St. Paul's. The task was not a hard one, for the Psalter was divided among them; one prebend said the first, second, third, fourth Psalms, another the fifth, sixth, seventh, and so on; the 119th Psalm was divided between several of them; each made it a matter of conscience to say the Psalms allotted to him; and thus, from the time of Bishop St. Hugh, the prebendaries of Lincoln, wherever they were scattered, were brought together in spirit by this interesting observance, and said the whole Psalter daily to the glory of God. It will perhaps surprise some of our readers to learn that they keep up the observance to this day.[381]

> We shall not trouble the reader with more than a few notes on the value of the fifty-two prebends. Some of them were very valuable, *e.g.* Leighton Manor, Leighton Buzzard, Cropredy, and Sutton, each brought in to their fortunate holders £40, but the majority were between £5 and £10. There are several noticeable ones—the Prebend Sexaginta Solidorum, and the Prebend Centum Solidorum, and the Prebend Decem Librarum, *i.e.* the prebends of Sixty Shillings, a Hundred Shillings, and Ten Pounds. The custos of St. Peter's altar received for commons and wine[382] as a canon £20 a year.

Some of these prebends, as we have seen, were held by the dignitaries; some, as we shall presently see, by the archdeacons. Some of them afforded a comfortable maintenance alone. It is to be hoped that the holders of others—especially of one whose value is returned as [Pg 353] "nihil"—had other benefices to help out their incomes. They were not by any means all given to priests in the diocese. A prebend was a very comfortable benefice, which might be held by anybody, and they were given to all sorts of people; *e.g.* two of them seem to have been held by the Dean and Precentor of Chichester.[383]

To assist the bishop in the spiritual oversight of this vast diocese, which embraced 8 counties, and extended from the Humber to the Thames, the bishop had 8 archdeacons, whose incomes and the sources of them are reported in the "Valor."[384]

> The Archdeacon of Lincoln received for procurations, £171 17*s.* 10*d.*, for synodals at Pentecost, £29 14*s.* 3*d.*, and at Michaelmas, £16 14*s.* 3*d.*, and pensions, £5 17*s.*, making a total of £234 2*s.* 4*d.* But out of that he had to pay the Prebendary of Ten Pounds £10, and 50*s.* to the Prebendary of Carleton, to his Receiver-General £8 13*s.* 4*d.*, and 58*s.* to the three vergers of the Cathedral, leaving him a net income from this source of £179 19*s.* Archdeacon Richard Pate was also Prebendary of Sutton and Buckingham, from which he received £110 3*s.* 6*d.*; he was also Rector of Kybworth, which was worth £39 14*s.* 11*d.*; so that his total income was £329 17*s.* 5*d.*
>
> The Archdeaconry of Stow was worth £24 2*s.* 8½*d.*, and Archdeacon Darley does not appear to have held other preferment, at least in Lincoln Diocese.
>
> The Archdeaconry of Huntingdon was worth £57 4*s.* 2*d.*, and Archdeacon [Pg 354] Knight was also Prebendary of Farundon, worth £30 11*s.* 2*d.*
>
> The Archdeaconry of Bedford was worth £57 2*s.* 3*d.*, and Dr. Chamber the Archdeacon was Prebendary of Leighton Buzzard, worth £40, Rector of Leighton, worth £6 17*s.* 7¼*d.*, and of Bowden Magna, worth £53 8*s.* 10½*d.*
>
> The Archdeaconry of Leicester was worth £80 12*s.* 4*d.* Dr. Foxe[385] was the archdeacon.
>
> The Archdeaconry of Northampton was worth £107 7*s.* Gilbert Smith, the Archdeacon, was Prebendary of Leighton Bromeswold, worth £57 15*s.* 1*d.*[386]
>
> The Archdeaconry of Buckingham was worth £82 14*s.* 5*d.*, and Richard Leighton the archdeacon seems to have had no other preferment in the Diocese of Lincoln.
>
> The Archdeaconry of Oxford was worth £71 6*s.* Richard Coren, the archdeacon, held also the Prebendary of Welton Paynshall, worth £5 11*s.* 11*d.*

There were—or should have been—twenty-five *Vicars Choral*, who were paid a stipend, each by his own Prebendary, of £2. The Corporate Body of Vicars also had property which yielded a net annual income of £145 11*s.* 2*d.*, which divided between the twenty-five vicars gave to each £5 16*s.* 5*d.*, "leaving a remainder of 9*d.* to be divided into twenty-five parts;" and fifteen of them had chantries assigned to them.

At the time of the “Taxatio” there appears to have been only one chantry in the cathedral, for the soul of Bishop Hugh of Wells; by the time of the “Valor” the chantries had grown in number to thirty-six. [Pg 355]

> One vicar was cantarist of the Chantry of William Winchcome, which, after giving 20*s.* to the poor and other payments, was worth £6 5*s.* 4*d.* The same vicar received £2 for playing the organ at the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and also £1 6*s.* 8*d.* for playing at the Jesus Mass. Other vicars served the following chantries: of Hervey de Luda, worth 9*s.* 4*d.*; of Simon Barton, 9*s.*; of William Thornake, £4. 2*s.* 4*d.*; of Henry Benyngworth, 8*s.* 8*d.*; of Robert and John Lacy, 8*s.*; of William Hemyngburge and others, 8*s.*; of William FitzFulke, £4; of King Edward II., 12*s.*, and the same clerk filled the office of succentor, for which he received from the precentor 50*s.*, and 6*s.* 6*d.* for wines at the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and from the Chapter, 7*s.* 6*d.*; for wines at the end of the year *p’pastu chori*, 18*s.* 9*d.*; making £4 12*s.* 9*d.* The cantarist of Roger Benetson received £5 12*s.*; of Walter Stanreth, £4; of Oliver Sutton, 8*s.*; of Geoffrey Pollard and others, 9*s.* 4*d.*; of Gilbert Umfraville, £4 6*s.* 8*d.*, the same clerk occupied the office called Clerk of the Hospital, for which he received from the Prior and Convent of St. Katharine juxta Lincoln, 24*s.* 2*d.*; and from the Chapter for a gown, 9*s.*, and other sums amounting to £1 14*s.* 10*d.*; of Hugh of Wells, after paying for 2 vicar chaplains, and to the vicars of the second form, and to the servants of the Church, and in alms at the obit of the founder, received £6, the same clerk filled the office of sacrist, for which he received from the Treasurer and in perquisites, £6 17*s.* 6*d.* The 6 clerks who said the daily mass at the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary received each 13*s.* 5*d.* There were 4 vacancies in the body of vicars choral, and the 4 shares were divided among the remaining 21 vicars.
>
> Besides the chantries in the presentation of the dean and chapter, and divided by them among the vicars choral, there were other chantries, of which a separate account is given. Some of them with more than one chaplain. The chantry of Nicholas de Cantelupe had 2 cantarists, who received £19 10*s.* 2*d.* between them; that of Bishop Henry Lexington had 2 cantarists, each of whom received 8*s.* 8*d.*; 14 other chantries were worth various sums, from 8*s.* 4*d.* to £13. The chantry of Bartholomew Burghersh had 5 chaplains, who received £7 9*s.* 0½¼*d.* each, it also maintained 6 poor boys and their master at a cost of £12 7*s.* 4*d.* [Pg 356]

The choristers had a special fund in the trusteeship of the dean and chapter, out of which were entirely maintained twelve boys and the master who instructed them in singing, playing the organ, and grammar, at an annual cost of £34 13*s.* 5½*d.*

To these ministers of the church must be added a number of officials of another kind, the bailiffs, receivers, and auditors of the various properties; the inferior servants of the church; the constable of the close; the porters of the gates of the close; the searchers of the church or night watch, who had a timber chamber in the choir transept; and the domestic servants of the residents.

Let the reader, who has perhaps wandered through the empty cathedral to admire its wonderful proportions and beautiful architecture, and who has, while so doing, felt the moral chill of its emptiness, try to refurnish it with the shrines, chapels, and tombs, the loft for the nightly watchers of the shrine, the cell of the recluse priest, all inclosed within the vast ground plan and towering height of the main building, reminding us of the many mansions in the House of the Heavenly Father. Or let him place himself in imagination in the choir on the day on which the mediæval bishop was holding his synod. The stalls at the west end are occupied by the dean and the four dignitaries in their copes, who face eastward and overlook the whole assembly. The canopied stalls on the sides are filled by their prebendaries in surplice and furred cope; the vicars choral and the choristers are in their places in the subsellæ on each side; the long rows of benches in front of the stalls are filled by the clergy of the diocese, so many as can find room; the bishop in cope and mitre occupies his lofty canopied throne at the east end of the south line of stalls; the great nave beyond is crowded with the rest of the clergy and their synodsmen, and the citizens, and the people from the country round, attracted to the imposing spectacle. It is the whole people of a diocese stretching from the Humber to the Thames, which by representation has assembled in the mother church to listen to their bishop’s fatherly exhortations, and to join with him in a united service of worship of Almighty God. [Pg 357]

Let us adjourn to the chapter-house, which seems so empty and so useless to the modern visitor. See it filled now, with the bishop on the stone throne opposite the entrance, and the dignitaries of the cathedral and the archdeacons seated to right and left of him, and the whole area crowded with the clergy and synodsmen; it is the people of his diocese—the [Pg 358]

clergy in person, the laity by their representatives—come to report themselves to their bishop, to submit themselves to his jurisdiction, to receive his admonitions and counsels. The House of Lords is a rather depressing spectacle to the visitor who gazes on its empty grandeur; but see it filled on some great day, *e.g.* when the Sovereign opens Parliament in person, and it is not too grand for the meeting-place of the Sovereign and Peers of Britain and for the transaction of the business of an Empire. In the chapter-house it was the spiritual business of the King of kings which was transacted—business which concerned the eternal interests of those present; so the grand and beautiful building, with its soaring central pillar and its overshadowing groining, was not too grand for the spiritual significance of the multitude which its walls encircled.

So the broad lawns which surround the building were not left only to enable the spectator to obtain a good view of the building. Their use was seen on St. Hugh's Day, when the people of the town and villages came trooping in at every gate, with crosses and banners and painted wands, and needed space in which to arrange the long procession which wound slowly round the close and entered by the western door.

The magnitude and importance of the dioceses differed greatly, and so did the emoluments of the bishops and of the cathedral establishments. We have given Lincoln as an example of the greater dioceses; we may take the Diocese of the South Saxons, with its See at Chichester, as an example of the smaller. [Pg 359]

When the bishop-stool of the South Saxons was removed after the Norman Conquest from Selsey to Chichester, Earl Roger of Montgomery gave the south-west quarter of the city, including a portion of the old Roman walls which protected it, for a site for the cathedral. A nunnery with a church dedicated to St. Peter already existed on the site; the nuns were transferred elsewhere, and the church used as the germ of the cathedral church.[387] Bishop Stigand built a new church of timber, which was soon replaced. The able and energetic Bishop Ralph Luffa was the real founder of the present cathedral. His church was of the normal Norman plan, a cross church with a low central tower and two west towers, all of massive construction, plain almost to sternness. It was in the thirteenth century that, among other great additions to the church, the central tower was raised by the addition of another story; and not till the fifteenth century that the lofty and graceful spire was added which was the peculiar glory of Chichester.

The constitution of the cathedral was in the main the same as at Lincoln, the bishop, dean, precentor, chancellor, and treasurer, with twenty-eight prebendaries, twelve vicars choral, etc., and two archdeacons. [Pg 360]

The information given us in the "Taxatio" of the finances of the diocese in 1291 is scanty:—

> The temporalities[388] of the bishop were valued at £462 4*s.* 6¾*d.*
>
> The dean and chapter had estates, appropriate rectories, portions, pensions, etc., which brought in a clear income of £310 14*s.* 6½*d.*
>
> The dignities of the cathedral are given as follows:—
>
> The deanery with a prebend, £53 6*s.* 8*d.*
>
> The chantry, £53 6*s.* 8*d.*
>
> The chancellor with the Rectory of Chiddingly, £53 6*s.* 8*d.*
>
> The treasurer, *per se* £46 13*s.* 4*d.*
>
> Then came twenty-eight other prebends, ranging from £4 13*s.* 4*d.* to £40, making up the total income of the dignitaries and prebendaries to £706 13*s.* 4*d.*

When we turn to the "Valor" (vol. i. p. 293), we find fuller details of the condition of things at the end of the fifteenth century. "The annual value of all and singular, the houses, castles, domains, manors, lands, and tenements, and other temporal possessions whatsoever, and also of the tithes, oblations, pensions, portions, and other spiritual profits whatsoever, of the Reverend Father in Christ, Robert, Bishop of Chichester," amounted to spiritualities, £138 17*s.* 9*d.*; temporalities,[389] £589 10*s.* 2*d.*; or, after certain allowed deductions, to a clear total of £677 1*s.* 3*d.* [Pg 361]

The income of the dean and chapter has grown to £310 14*s.* 6½*d.*; we have no note of the way in which it was disposed of.

> The income of the dean, William Fleshmonger, was £58 9*s.* 4*d.* We have no reason to doubt that he was identical with the William Fleshmonger who was Rector of Selsey,[390] worth £11 3*s.* 4*d.*; with the Dr. William Fleshmonger who was Rector of Storyngton,[391] £18; and with the William Fleshmonger who was Rector of Hertfield,[392] £7. No doubt it was the dean who was the tenant by indenture for a term of years from Battle Abbey, at a rent of £15 6*s.* 8*d.*, of the Manor of Apultram[393] near Chichester, and in all probability he is

identical with the William Fleshmonger who held the Prebend of Carlton cum Dalby[394] of the Church of Lincoln.

The Dignity of the Precentory had endowment to the amount of £35 0*s.* 5½*d.*, and Charles William Horsey seems to have had no other preferment in Chichester Diocese. But among the Prebendaries of Lincoln there is also a William Horsey, Prebendary of Scamelsby,[395] who may very possibly have been identical with our Precentor.

The Dignity of Chancellor was endowed with a clear £27 7*s.*, and we find that Mr. George Croft was also Prebendary of Middleton,[396] worth £2 3*s.* 4*d.* There was also a George Croft, Rector of Wynford,[397] £21 12*s.* 10*d.*, in the diocese of Bath and Wells, who may have been our chancellor.

The treasurer, Hugho Rolfe, after paying two servants and other dues, had a clear £62 6*s.* 8*d.* from the dignity, and held besides the Prebend of Braklesham,[398] £11 17*s.* 3½*d.*, and apparently the vicarage of Henfield,[399] £16 9*s.* 9½*d.* [Pg 362]

The dignity of the Archdeaconry of Chichester was worth £38 3*s.* 4*d.*, and the Archdeacon John Worthial also held the Prebend of Huve Town,[400] £10; he seems also to have held the benefice of Sutton, £15 0*s.* 6*d.*;[401] but we hesitate to identify the venerable archdeacon with the William Worthiall who held the two Chantries of Eastangmering and Fyrring,[402] though no doubt his friends would often jestingly assure him that if he had half a dozen more sinecures he would still have been “worthy all.” The Archdeaconry of Lewes was worth £39 14*s.* 10*d.*, and Archdeacon More was also Prebendary of Coleworth,[403] £18 13*s.* 4*d.*, and is probably identical with the Edward More who was Vicar of Bexhill,[404] worth £23 10*s.* 2*d.* There were altogether thirty-one prebends ranging in value from £10 to £20; four of these were added by Bishop Sherborne a little before the Reformation, restricted to men of Winchester and New Colleges, who were required to serve in their own persons without deputies.

Residentiaries on first appointment to office were bound to attend every service without a single omission for a year, and in case of an omission to recommence their course.

There were twelve vicars choral who received £2 12*s.* 8*d.* each, and fourteen chantries which were served by the vicars choral, the profits of each ranging between £3 and £13. There were also eight choristers and four thuribulers.[405]

“Bishop Sherborne, just before the Reformation, having ruled magnificently, laid down his staff and mitre weary with the weight of ninety years and more, and left his statutes chained to his throne; begging the kindly thoughts of all sorts and conditions of men; with a bequest of crown soleil, and bread and good wine to be offered to the bishop at his ‘jocund coming’ on a visitation; ypocras and choice fruits for the crowned king and primate; wine to be drunk round the city cross for the young; ample doles for the aged; marriage portions out of the annual residue for poor girls; egg flip with milk and sugar, coloured with saffron, for the choristers; and a dinner to the chapter on his anniversary.”[406] [Pg 363]

There are some examples in England of that annexation of temporal rule to certain episcopal sees, of which the independent prince bishops of Germany are instances still more illustrious, and the Bishop of Rome the most remarkable. The *Bishops of Durham* were the temporal rulers of the district of country between the Tees and the Tyne, and almost independent of the king; while the men of “the bishopric,” as it was called in a special sense, were the servants of St. Cuthbert, and subject to none but Cuthbert’s successor. This privilege arose from a gift of the district to St. Cuthbert and his successors by King Guthred in the year 883. The *Bishops of Winchester* were anciently reputed to be Earls of Southampton, and possessed a certain temporal authority, the origin of which is not known to the writer. The *Bishop of Ely* was in ancient times supreme in the Isle, which was, if not a county palatine, at least a royal franchise, with courts and exclusive jurisdiction of its own; of which traces remain in the existing arrangements, in that it has no Lord-Lieutenant, and is in every way distinct from the rest of the county in which it is situated. It is reasonable to suppose that the bishop (created in 1108) derived this authority as the successor of the abbots, who received it as the representatives of Queen Etheldreda, the founder, in continuance of privileges conferred on the queen when King Tondbert gave the Isle to her in dower. [Pg 364]

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CHAPTER XXIV.

MONKS AND FRIARS.

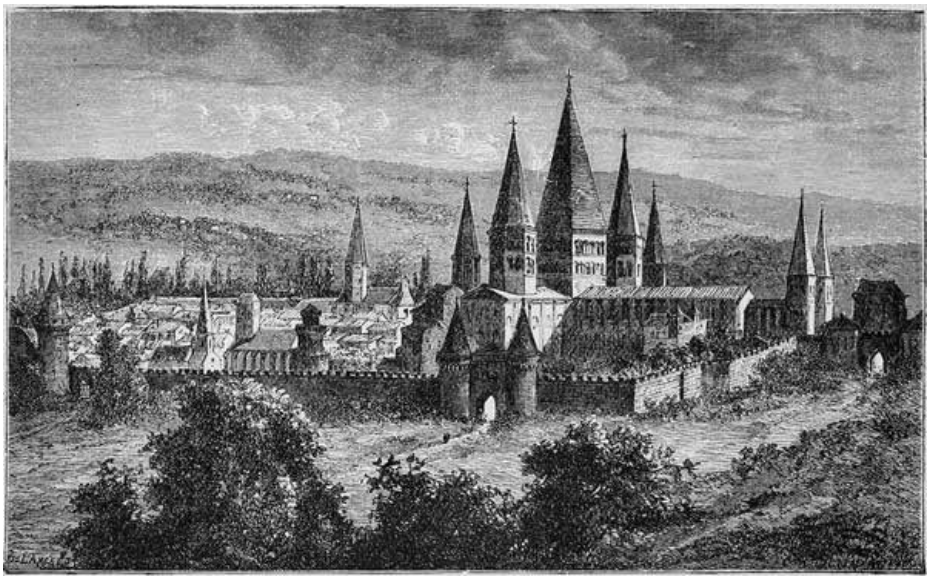
We have only to deal here with the relations of the religious houses with the clergy, and their influence upon the general religious life of clergy and people.

First of all, the monasteries kept before the minds both of parish priests and of their people the ideal of an unambitious, self-denying, studious, meditative, religious life. No doubt many of the monks and nuns fell short of their own ideal, and there were occasional scandals; we find notices in the registers of the bishops of their intervention in such cases. But the lives of the majority were sufficiently respectable to maintain the credit of the institution, and there were always some whose lives were exemplary. We may produce an evidence of the general feeling on the subject from the report of the commissioners of Henry VIII., who were sent to inquire into the state of the smaller monasteries, with a view to their suppression. The report stated that there were all sorts of [Pg 366] abuses and scandals in the smaller houses, and recommended that they should be suppressed, and that their inhabitants should be transferred to "the great solemn monasteries of this realm, wherein—thanks be to God—religion is right well kept and observed." As to their report against the smaller houses; they had been employed on purpose to make out a case against them, and the world has long since come to the conclusion that their adverse testimony is not to be believed.

If we are right in these enlightened days in thinking that fine public buildings for the housing of parliaments, municipal corporations, and the like civil institutions of the nation tend to give dignity to the national life; and that galleries of sculpture and painting, and museums of art, exercise an elevating influence on the popular mind; it can hardly be denied that the religious houses, with their stately groups of buildings, their sublime churches, and the numerous beautiful works of sculpture, painting, embroidery, and goldsmiths' work which they contained, must have had a similar influence upon the religious sentiment and the æsthetic education of the people. A mediæval town was greatly the richer, religiously and intellectually, for having a great monastery in its suburb. The half-dozen religious houses—great and small—in a rural county had a religious, civilizing, elevating influence over the whole country-side. Even their empty ruins have not lost all their influence. The stately relics of the Yorkshire abbeys give added interest and dignity to the great northern [Pg 367] county. What would the Isle of Ely be without the solemn grandeur of its cathedral church?

There is not enough left of any one of our own monasteries to enable the visitor to its mournful ruins to realize how each was a little town, protected by its walls and gate towers; with the roofs and chimneys of its numerous domestic buildings, and the trees of its gardens and orchards appearing over the walls; and the towers of its great church forming the centre of the architectural group, as it was the centre of the life of the inhabitants. We have, therefore, borrowed an illustration from Clugny, the parent and prototype of the houses of the Reformed Benedictine Orders.

The "Religious" and the upper classes of society were more in touch than at first sight appears. The great families kept up friendly relations[407] with the houses which their ancestors had founded, of which they were still the patrons, and from time to time benefactors. People of the upper classes, in travelling, usually sought hospitality at the [Pg 368] religious houses, and were entertained by the abbot, while their people were cared for in the guest house. The monks and nuns were largely taken from these classes.



Abbey of Cluny, as it was.

Throughout the Middle Ages the monks—especially the Benedictines—continued to cultivate learning, both secular and religious. The chroniclers of the greater monasteries were the only historians of the time, and their collections of books were the libraries of the nation. Some of the great monasteries served the purpose of the great public schools of modern times, and the nunneries especially were—as they are still in Continental countries—the schools of the daughters of the gentry. [Pg 369]

Long after they had ceased to be the pioneers leading the way in reducing the waste lands under cultivation, the monks continued to set an example to the lay gentry and landowners in enterprising scientific agriculture and horticulture; and in the refinement of domestic economy they were ages ahead of the rest of the community; they utilized streams for water power, for irrigation, and for sanitation; they sought out pure water for domestic use, and brought it long distances by conduits. The Church, regular and secular, was a liberal landlord. Not a few of its tenants, seated generation after generation on its manors, grew into knightly and noble families.

The monasteries exercised a most important direct influence upon the parochial clergy and their people owing to the fact that they were the patrons of a large proportion of the parishes; and nominated the vicars who were to teach and minister to the people of those parishes. In many cases where a monastery adjoined a town, the convent had the patronage of all the vicarages in the town in its hands; and their bias would lead them to appoint men of a “religious” tone of character. [Pg 370]

That the monks were not unpopular is proved by two facts. First, that the House of Commons only passed the first Act of Suppression of the smaller houses under the coercion of the king’s personal threats; and, secondly, that the suppression was so resented by the people that in several parts of the country the people rose in armed rebellion against it.

But we must be content to indicate thus briefly that the monastic institution in many ways exercised a powerful influence upon the national life and religion.

The Mendicant Orders require a more lengthened consideration, for they were founded as an auxiliary to the ancient diocesan and parochial institution, in direct pastoral ministrations to the people, and played an important part in the religious life of the nation.

In the thirteenth century—as again in our day—the increasing population had grown too great for the agricultural needs of the country, and the surplus population had flocked into the towns. The result then, as now, was overcrowding, the building of unhealthy houses in the suburbs, poverty, dirt, and disease; and, as a consequence, ignorance and irreligion. Leprosy, brought probably from the East by the returning Crusaders, had become permanent and widely spread among all ranks and classes.[408] At the same time a wave of wild opinions, political and religious, was sweeping across Europe which reached this island almost a century later under the name of Lollardism, and created disaffection in Church and State. [Pg 371]

The intellectual disorder excited the zeal of the Spanish canon, Dominic, who organized an order of preaching friars, to go about teaching the truth and contending against dangerous error. About the same time the heart of Francis, a citizen of Amalfi, was fired with compassion for the misery of the poor and sick, and he organized an order of brothers, whose duty it was to minister to suffering humanity. Both orders speedily became very popular, and spread over Europe. The Dominicans introduced themselves into England at

Oxford, in 1221, and were patronized by Archbishop Stephen Langton. The first Franciscans came three years afterwards to Canterbury; and both orders spread as rapidly here as in the other countries of Europe.

A Semi-choir of Franciscan Friars.
(Fourteenth century MS. in British Museum. Domitian, A. 17.)

The organization of both orders ran on the same lines. Each was an ecclesiastical army. Each had a general of the order residing in Rome, under the special protection and correction of one of the cardinals. Under the general was a provincial in each country into [Pg 372] which the order extended. The houses of the order in each country were gathered into groups, called by the Dominicans, “Visitations,” and by the Franciscans, “Custodies.” The English province of the Franciscans was divided into seven custodies or wardenships, each including eight or nine convents,[409] and comprising most of the great towns. The Dominicans had fifty-eight convents here; the Franciscans 75. The officers were all elected at a chapter, were required to resign at the ensuing chapter, and might be removed at any [Pg 373] time for insufficiency or misconduct.

The Carmelite Friars had their origin in the East, and were introduced into England by Sir John de Vesey, on his return from the Crusade in the early part of the thirteenth century. It had ultimately about five houses in England. The Austin Friars, founded about the middle of the century, had about forty-five houses here. These make up the four orders, Black, Grey, White, and Austin. All smaller foundations were suppressed or included in the Austins, by the Council of Lyons, in 1370.

The great difference between the monks and the friars was that the ideal of the monastic life was seclusion from the world for prayer and meditation with a view to the cultivation of one’s own soul; that of the friar’s life was devotion to active work. The great economical difference was that the monks were individually vowed to poverty, but as communities they were wealthy, while the friars were vowed to have no property individually or collectively, and to live of the alms of the people.

At first the friars were very successful in England, as elsewhere. Bishops like Stephen Langton and Grostete patronized them. Before long members of the mendicant orders became themselves bishops and archbishops. They sent their young men to the universities, and cultivated learning so successfully that they soon became the most famous teachers in the universities of Europe. Among the people generally they effected a great revival of [Pg 374] religion, which Sir J. Stephen compares with the revival in more modern times effected by the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield.

The friaries were always founded in, or in the suburbs of, the larger towns, for their mission was to the masses of the people. But they had a system of itineration, which seems to have divided the country into districts, and sent the friars two and two, visiting not only the villages but the houses of the gentry and farmers. This brought the friars into rivalry with the parish priests. In the towns the Dominicans often built a large church, planned so as to form an auditorium, and attracted large congregations by their popular preaching. The friars laid themselves out also for special services, which would attract the sluggish and popularize religion, such as miracle plays and the observance of special festivals. In the villages the itinerant friar preached in the church or churchyard, and heard the confessions

of those who chose to come to him; and there were many who preferred to confess their misdoings to a comparative stranger, who did not live among them, rather than to their parish priest.

So says Chaucer—

> He had power of confession,
> As said himself, more than a curate,
> For of his order he was licentiate.
> Full sweetly heard he confession,
> And pleasant was his absolution.
> He was an easy man to give penance [Pg 375]
> There as he wist to have a good pittance,
> For unto a poor order for to give
> Is sign that a man is well yshrive.
> "Prologue to the Canterbury Tales."

Both in town and country they offered the fraternity of their convent to benefactors, with its prayers for their good estate while living, and sought to have masses for the dead entrusted to them on the ground that a convent of friars would pray them out of purgatory ten times as soon as a single parish priest.

> "Thomas, Thomas, so might I ride or go,
> And by that lord that cleped is St. Ive,
> N'ere[410] thou our brother shouldest thou not thrive.
> In our chapter pray we day and night
> To Christ that he here send hele and might[411]
> Thy body for to welden hastilee."

The rustic roughly answers—

> "God wot, quoth he, I nothing thereof feel,
> So help me Christ as I in fewe years
> Have spended upon divers manner freres
> Full many a pound, yet fare I never the bet."
> "Ye sayn me thus how that I am your brother.
> Ye, certes, quod the friar, trusteth wee,
> I took our dame the letter under our sel."[412]
> Chaucer, "The Sompnour's Tale."

So "Piers Plowman" says—

> "I am Wrath, quod he, I was sum tyme a frere
> And the convent's gardyner for to graff impes
> On limitours and lesyngs I imped
> Till they bere leaves of low speech lordes to please,
> And sithen they blossomed abrode in bower to hear shrifts. [Pg 376]
> And now is fallen thereof a fruite, that folk have well liever
> Shewen ther shriftes to hem than shryve them to their parsons.
> And now parsons have percyved that freres part with them,
> These possessioners preache and deprave freres,
> And freres find them in default, as folk beareth witness."

Bonaventure, when General of the Franciscans, in a letter to one of his provincials, expresses great dissatisfaction with those of the brethren who, contrary to the rule of Francis, assault the clergy in their sermons before the laity, and only sow scandal, strife, and hatred, and with those who injure the parish priests by monopolizing to themselves the burial of the dead and the drawing up of wills, thereby making the whole Order detested by the clergy. But he complains of the injustice done by accusing the whole of what was the fault only of a few—"the scum floats on the surface, and is noticed by every one."[413] It was rather hard, perhaps, on the parish priest, that he should not only be obliged to submit to the intrusion of the friar, but should be expected to offer hospitality to the intruder, and make much of him, as a constitution of Archbishop Peckham desires him to do.[414]

It is the popular belief that the friars, after having in the first burst of their enthusiasm effected a great revival of religion, very soon departed from the principles of their founders, [Pg 377] became useless, if not mischievous, and fell into universal disfavour. There is no denying that the splendid enthusiasm of their first institution cooled down, and the wonderful revival of popular religion which it brought about seemed to die out; it is the inevitable course of all such revivals; but it left good perennial results behind.

The burgesses of the towns in which the friaries were situated seem to have regarded them as useful workers among the poor. In many of the towns the civic authorities consented to hold the site and buildings of the friaries in trust, in order to evade the rule which forbade the orders themselves to hold property. The friars continued to live, and their continuance depended upon the daily voluntary alms of the townspeople. The churches of the friars were favourite places for civic functions and miracle plays; the people sought burial in their precincts; and down to the very eve of their dissolution a great number of wills, both of clergy and laity, contain small bequests to the friars. Perhaps the most striking evidence in

their favour at the very end of their existence in England is that Edward IV. was a great patron of the Observants (the strictest section of the Franciscans); Henry VII. founded six convents of them; and Henry VIII. took one of them as his confessor. It is a fact which tells in their favour that they had not grown wealthy. When the dissolution came, the jackals of [Pg 378] Henry VIII. found nothing but the houses and their precincts, usually in a poor neighbourhood, and their churches. Their income is commonly returned at 20*s.* to 40*s.*, and the total value of the property, when the prior's house and the garden and orchard and the whole convent was let out on rent, was seldom over £10 a year.[415]

The truth seems to be that the friars continued to be the most popular preachers, and to carry on a steady work among the poor of the towns. But, strongly papal in sentiment, their constitution made them an organized propaganda of any ideas which the cardinal protectors and generals of the orders residing in Rome suggested to the provincials in the several nations, they to the wardens of the districts, they to the priors of the houses, they to their individual friars, and they through the streets of the city and the length and breadth of the land. It was, perhaps, their political opposition to Henry VIII. more than any other cause of offence or dereliction of duty, which provoked their overthrow.

The two chief faults of the system were the principle of mendicancy and the exemption from episcopal control. It is worth while to study the institution carefully, for something of the same kind—brotherhoods of educated and trained men, who are content to abandon the [Pg 379] world's ambitions, to live among the poor, to preach the gospel in a popular way, and to minister to the temporal sufferings of the people—is exactly what is wanted to produce a new revival among the masses of the people; and we need to ascertain the secrets of the friars' strength and of their weakness.

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CHAPTER XXV.

THE "TAXATIO" OF POPE NICHOLAS IV.

In the thirteenth century the popes assumed the right, as feudal lords over the Church, to demand from every church benefice a fine of its first year's income from every new incumbent, and an annual tax of one-tenth of its income. The Saxon kings had made the Church lands exempt from state imposts;[416] but now kings very naturally began to think that the necessities of the State had as good a claim as those of the pope; and there ensued a certain amount of friction. The popes, with very astute policy, reconciled the kings to the tax by sometimes ceding the proceeds of it to them. Thus in 1253, Pope Innocent IV. gave the tenths to King Henry III. for three years, which occasioned a taxation or valuation to be made in the following year, sometimes called the Norwich Taxation, sometimes Pope Innocent's Valor.

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Again, in 1288, Pope Nicholas IV. gave the tenths to King Edward I. for six years, towards an expedition to the Holy Land; that they might be fully collected a new taxation was made by the king's precept, which was begun in that year and finished in the province of Canterbury in 1291, and in the province of York in 1292.[417] This taxation continued to be the basis of all assessments upon the Church down to the time of the Reformation.

The survey takes each diocese by itself, each archdeaconry of the diocese, each rural deanery, and, finally, each benefice. Here is a specimen, selected because it is a deanery of which the writer has some personal knowledge.

Spiritualia Archidiaconatus Essexiæ. Decanatus de Berdestaple.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Ecclīā de Thurrok pva	5	6	8
Porc̄ō Rectoris de Westurrok ibidem	0	6	6
Ecclīā de Oresith	16	0	0
Porcio Cancellarii Sc̄ī Pauli Lond’ ibidem	6	0	0
Porcio Magr̄ī Johis de Sc̄ō Claro ibidem	2	0	0
Porcio Prioris de Pritelwell in North Beniflete	1	6	8
Porcio Abbīs̄ Westm. ibidem	0	13	4
Porcio Decani Sc̄ī Martini London’ ibm̄	0	10	0
Ecclīā de Westillebȳ	13	16	8
Ecclīā de Estillebȳ	14	13	4
Ecclīā de Hornyngdone	12	0	0
Vicar’ ejusdem	4	13	4
Porcio Abbīs̄ Colcestr’ ibidem	2	0	0
Porcio Prioris de Beremondes’ ibidem	1	13	4
Ecclīā de Mockyng	14	13	4
Porcio Abbisse de Berkyngg ibidem	2	0	0
Ecclīā de Stanford	16	0	0
Pensio Abbīs̄ de Bileye in Langedon	2	0	0
Ecclīā de Bulephen	13	6	8
Ecclīā de Coringham	8	0	0
Porcio Prioris de P’telewell in Wikford	2	13	4
Porcio ejusdem Prioris in Thunderle	1	4	0
Ecclīā de Bures	6	13	4
Ecclīā de Bourgsted	13	6	8
Ecclīā de Leyndon	13	6	8
Ecclīā de Fobbing	10	0	0
Ecclesia de Chaldewell	5	6	8
Ecclīā de Magna Bemfleth	6	13	0
Porcio Abbatis Colcestr’ in Ecclīā de Picher’ cu’ penc’ sua in eadem	1	6	8
Ecclīā Dontone	5	6	8
Pensio Prioris de Okebourn ibidem	2	13	4
Ecclīā de Burgsted pva	4	13	4
Ecclīā de Hoton	9	6	8
Penc’ Abbīs̄ de Bello ibidem	0	5	0
Ecclīā de Shenefeud	10	0	0
Ecclīā de Duddynggeherst	8	0	0
Ecclīā de Gingg Rad’i	6	13	4
Ecclīā de Ramesden Cray	5	6	8
Ecclīā de Ramesden Belhous	6	13	4
Ecclīā de Dounham	5	6	8
Ecclīā de Fangge	6	13	4

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Sm̄[a] £268 14*s.* 10*d.*

In the list of smaller benefices we find also belonging to this deanery—

Vicar’ de Tilleby magna	2	0	0
Ecclīā de Parva Benifleth	1	13	4
Ecclīā de Wykford	2	6	8
Ecclīā de Thunderle	1	10	0
Ecclīā de Thorndon magna	1	13	4

From the list of *temporalia* in the same deanery we find that the following—the Abbots of Coggeshall, Stratford, St. Osyth, Colchester, Battle, Westminster, Byleigh, the Abbess of Barking, the Priors of Thoby, Prittlewell, Okeburn, Bermondsey, Leigh, Buttele,[418] [Pg 383] Kereseye, the Chapter of St. Paul's, and the Chapter of St. Martin's, London, had income in land, rent, marsh, young of animals, mills, fallen wood, from the following places: Langedon, Thorndon magna, Bursted parva, Ging Rudulphi, Thorndon, Thorndon parva, Tillebery parva, Duddyngeherst, Stornyngdon, Donton, Doneham, Westlee, Horton, Wykford, Bournstead (Bursted) magna, Bulewephen, Fanga (Vange), Leydon, Mocrkyngge, Bowers, Benifleth parva, Chaldwell, Shenefeud, Piches [in a footnote Picheseye = Pitsey], Raumesden Cray, Rammesden Belhous, Felbingge, Thurrock parva, Thonderle, Bemfleth magna.

Every "Ecclesia" in the list gives the name of a parish, and where the word occurs it implies that the parish was a rectory. Where it is followed by *Vicaria ejusdem*—the vicarage of the same—it implies that the rectory had been appropriated to some religious house, which had founded a vicarage therein; in this particular deanery there is only one vicarage; but it is very possible, for anything which appears, that some of the Ecclesiæ may have been appropriated to a religious house, which was technically the rector possessing all spiritual and temporal rights in the church and parish, and serving the cure by one of its own members, or by a stipendiary priest.

Even where the benefice had not been appropriated to a religious house, it often happened that some "portion" of the profits of the benefice—*e.g.* of the tithe or of some part of the land—had been appropriated; or that a definite annual payment, "pension," had been [Pg 384] assigned out of the benefice. Thus, under "Ecclesia de Oresith," the rectory of Orsett, appears quite a list of "portions," viz. of the Chancellor of St. Paul's, of Mr. John of St. Clair, of the Prior of Prittlewell, of the Abbot of Westminster, of the Dean of St. Martin, London; the Abbot of Bileigh had a "pension" out of the rectory of Stanford, the Prior of Oakburn out of Dunton, the Abbot of Battle out of Hutton. There are two ways of explaining this. One is the way of the enemy of the religious houses, whose cynical explanation is that the monks had their spoon in everybody's porridge—the Rector of Orsett had half a dozen spoons clattering together in his dish. The other explanation is that of the friend of the religious houses: that they were held in such general admiration, that lords of manors and patrons of parochial benefices who could not do more, at least made small appropriations to them out of their patronage, in token of good will, and in order to secure a permanent interest in the friendship and prayers of the Religious. With these explanations of the list of benefices of the deanery of Barstaple, we leave it for the present, proposing to make it the text of further exposition hereafter.[419]

In studying this mediæval clergy-list, the first thought which occurs to every one is to count the parishes and ascertain the total. Allowing for difficulties which tend to a few omissions, or the counting of a few names over again, it may be depended upon that the number of [Pg 385] parishes was about 8085; that out of those which had been appropriated to religious bodies vicarages had been endowed in about 1487, the 457 chapels had probably some endowment, besides the chapels-of-ease, dependent on the incumbent of the parish. Adding the parish churches and chapels together, we get a total of 8542 endowed places of public worship and centres of pastoral care.[420]

	Ecclesiæ.	Vicarages founded in them.	Chapels.	Ecclesiæ not exceeding 10 marks.	Vicarages ditto.
Canterbury	221	58	15	47	28
Rochester	108	31	0	50	39
London	459	86	13	150	33
Lincoln	1738	353	76	467	279
Norwich	1165	80	17	354	35
Chichester	286	112	3	91	81
Exeter	529	139	49	344	158
Hereford	291	94	48	155	82
Sarum	493	104	50	222	80
Bath and Wells	262	42	19	113	29
Winton	338	53	41	84	34
Worcester	335	34	60	136	26
Coventry and Lichfield	382	28	27	154	27
Ely	135	37	3	15	35

St. David's	223	0	4	124	0
Llandaff	131	9	9	72	6
St. Asaph's	109	63	13	47	55
Bangor	34	0	1	26	1
York	625	113	4	93	61
Durham	117	43	4	15	25
Carlisle	94	25	1	2	14
	8085	1487	457	2711	1125
	457			1125	
	8542			3836	

[Pg 386] The next question which naturally excites interest is the incomes of the benefices, by which the services of the mediæval parish clergy were remunerated. The general idea is that the mediæval clergy were richly endowed. The truth which is revealed by the figures of this official document is that, when we take away the livings assigned by their patrons as the prebends of cathedrals, and those appropriated to religious houses, the benefices of the "working clergy," the rectors and vicars, were mostly of small value.

Before we go into a detailed examination of them, it is desirable to make two preliminary remarks. The first is as to the value of money at that period. The question will be more fully considered in the next chapter in connection with the new valuation which was made in the time of Henry VIII., but it will be convenient to anticipate here the estimate there accepted [Pg 387] that the purchasing power of money at the end of the thirteenth century was about twenty-four times as great as now, so that a pound was then equivalent to about £24 now. The other remark is in reply to the question which will naturally arise in every reader's mind: were not the benefices much undervalued? On the contrary, it was the object of pope and king to estimate them as highly as possible, so as to increase the amount of the tenth to be demanded from them. Every source of income was taken into the account; and the general complaint at the time was that they were overestimated.

Turning now to a little study of the value of the ordinary parochial benefices, the writer has shrunk from the laborious task of anything like a complete analysis; for a few general facts are sufficient for the present purpose. First of all, many of the benefices were so small that both pope and king[421] were ashamed to demand a tenth of their poor income; a limit of ten marks (= £6 13*s.* 4*d.*) was fixed, and all livings not over that sum were exempted. No wonder, when we reckon that the present value of a benefice of ten marks would be about £160 a year. But there were 2711 rectories and 1129 vicarages, making a total of 3840, nearly half the number of parochial benefices under the limit of ten marks.

[Pg 388] Looking at the better-endowed benefices: Canterbury was an exceptionally rich diocese; out of its 279 benefices, there are 82 of ten marks and under, only 80 above £20, and the richest living, a rare exception, is £133. In Rochester, with 139 benefices, 46 are less than ten marks, only 34 of £20 and upwards, and there are two "golden livings" of £60 each. In Exeter diocese, out of 668 benefices, there are 189 of ten marks and under, 15 of £20 and over, only one so large as £50. In Bath and Wells, out of 304 parishes, there are 124 under ten marks; three of £50 and over, and the highest is one of £60. In Carlisle, out of 24 parishes, there are 18 of ten marks and under; 42 of £20 and over; one of £90, and one of £120. The usual income of a vicarage was £5, a little more or less; there are very few of greater value, up to £8 and £10.

The conclusion is forced upon us by these official figures, that the mediæval parish clergy were scantily endowed; one would wonder how, in many cases, with such endowments, they could live, and maintain hospitality to travellers, and help their poor, if one did not call to mind that the majority of the clergy had not a wife and family to maintain; that the rectors were mostly of the families of the gentry, and many of the vicars probably of the middle class, and that—then, as now—the majority of the beneficed clergy probably had some resources of their own, and perhaps—then, as now—brought as much into the church of their own as they took out of it in their annual profits.

[Pg 389] A contemporary copy of the taxation of the Diocese of Exeter gives on the end page a summary of the tenths for the whole kingdom—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Sum of the tenth of the Province of Canterbury	16,258	18	4
Sum of the tenth of the Province of York	4,155	10	7
Sum total of both provinces	20,414	8	11
Which, multiplied by ten, will give the total value taxed	204,144	9	2

The Bishop of Oxford, "as the result of a painful calculation from the 'Taxatio,'" arrives at the following conclusion:—

Spirituals, £135,665; temporals, £74,978; total, £210,644; and the temporals of the bishops included in the total amount of temporals was £16,826.

Of the number of the clergy nearly a century later we have an exact official return. In the year 1377 a poll-tax was levied on the whole body of the clergy of England and Wales, excepting those of the counties Palatine of Durham and Chester, of twelve-pence on “every beneficed ecclesiastic, exempt and not exempt, privileged and not privileged, and all abbots, priors, abbesses, prioresses, monks, canons, canonesses, and other regulars of whatever order, sex, and condition, the four orders of mendicants alone excepted;” and fourpence on “every priest, deacon, sub-deacon, accolite, and those obtaining the first tonsure exceeding the age of fourteen years.”

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The total number of men given in the returns is 15,238 beneficed, and 13,943 unbeneficed. If we suppose the number in the excepted counties of Durham and Chester to have been in the same proportion, we should have a total for the whole of England (Wales is not included in the return) of about 15,800 beneficed, and 14,000 unbeneficed, and a total of about 29,800. From the same return we gather that the whole population of the country at that time was about 2,065,000.[422]

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CHAPTER XXVI.

THE “VALOR ECCLESIASTICUS” OF HENRY VIII.

It is convenient to take into consideration here another survey of the Church which was taken about two centuries later.

When Crown, Parliament, and Church, in the sixteenth century, determined to throw off the patriarchal supremacy of Rome, for which its monstrous pecuniary exactions in one shape and another was one prominent motive, the clergy no doubt fondly expected that they would get rid for ever of the burden of first-fruits and tenths, but found themselves grievously disappointed. One of the political motives of the king in the complex series of events which we sum up under the general name of the Reformation, was the diminution of the power and wealth of the Church. The property of the monasteries, which he confiscated, the manors of the sees, which he compelled the bishops to surrender, did not suffice him. A subservient Parliament, passing one Act in 1532 and another in 1534, put the first-fruits and tenths into his hands. It was a considerable addition to the royal revenue, and the king took measures to secure the full advantage of it. A commission was appointed to make a new survey of the income of the Church. The commissioners by themselves and their agents went carefully through every diocese, archdeaconry, rural deanery and parish, and required every person to state on oath what was the income which he derived from his benefice from every source. The returns were sent in by 1534.

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The result, so far as it concerns us here, was a return of the condition of the Church at the close of the mediæval period of great historical value. The returns are not given with the same fulness from every diocese, but where they are given fully they give not only the general return of the value of each benefice, but also the names of the clergy and in several dioceses a schedule of the sources of their income.[423]

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The first thing to which attention is naturally directed is the number of parishes, and a comparison with the number in the “Taxatio” two centuries before. The enumeration is not free from difficulties, but the figures given may be taken as approximately correct.

We make out that the totals are as follows:—Total number of parishes, 8838; of vicarages, 3307; of chapels, 536; of chantries, 1733.[424]

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Comparing these figures with those of the “Taxatio,” it will be seen that the total number of parishes had increased very little in the interval, though the population of the country had

increased from about 2,200,000 to about 4,350,000 souls.

This may be accounted for partly by the fact that the growth of population had caused the creation of few new centres of population, but only the increase of the populations of the existing centres. There were very few, if any, new towns or new parishes in the towns, but the old towns had grown larger; there were few new rural parishes, but the villages had a larger population; so that there was little increase in the number of parish priests, but each priest ministered to a larger flock; where new centres of population had sprung up, their wants were supplied by a chapel and its chaplain. The increase in the means of supplying the spiritual wants of the increased population had taken the form of the employment of Domestic Chaplains and Gild Chaplains, and the foundation of Chantries, which we shall have to deal with in subsequent chapters.

The next question to which we turn is the income of the Church as a whole, and of the parochial benefices in particular, and a comparison in this respect also between the "Taxatio" and the "Valor."

The ostentation of minute accuracy on the part of the taxers is almost ludicrous, the princely income of the Bishop of Lincoln is returned at £1962 17*s.* 4½*d.* In dividing a sum of money among the minor canons of that cathedral, the accountant points out that a farthing remained over, which was indivisible; and in dividing the gross income of the benefices by ten, it was constantly recorded that there was a remainder of so much, which was "undecimable." [Pg 396]

Very few new religious houses were founded after the thirteenth century; the cause was not so much that the Statute of Mortmain interposed a check to the free action of pious munificence, as that there was a general recognition that enough had been done in this direction. The two thousand chantries which had been founded in the two centuries probably did not average £5 a year income, and did not swell the general income by so much as £10,000 a year. The parochial benefices are seen, by actual comparison of the figures, to have increased in nominal amount of income, but the purchasing value of money had decreased, so that the real value of the benefices was probably somewhat less. The produce of the annual tenths would seem to indicate that the income of the Church had largely diminished, for whereas we have seen that by the "Taxatio" of 1291 it amounted to £20,000, we learn, from a letter of Henry VII., to the Bishop of Chichester, that it had fallen by that time to £10,000; the Bishop of Oxford[425] attributes this to the multiplication of exemptions, especially of livings under ten marks.

One valuable feature of the "Valor" is the schedules of incomings and outgoings of the livings, and the incidental notices contained in them, which give glimpses of the economy of the parishes. [Pg 397]

We give first one example, which is expressed in English, at full length, as a clue to the meaning of the more abbreviated form in which some others are given.

From the "Valor Ecclesiasticus," vol. vi. p. 2:—

> Compotus of Wm. Richardson "Vicegerent" of John Emott rector, of his benefice of Brancaster in 1535.
>
> First in glebe land, x acr', by the yearly value of vj.
>
> Item in wheté, xx cūbe [cumbes].
>
> Item in myxteleyn, xl cūbe.
>
> Item in barley, xx cūbe.
>
> Item in pes, fetches, and oots (pease, vetches, and oats), xvj cūbe.
>
> Item in woll, xvj ston.
>
> Item in lambs, l.
>
> Item y^{e} offering of iiij days, xxiiij*s.*
>
> Item in odyr offerings of other days, xx*s.*
>
> Item in lactage and p'vy (privy) tythes, xxxvj*s.*
>
> Item in hempe, hony, and waxe, iiij*s.*
>
> Item in pygyns, vj*s.* viij*d.*
>
> Item in gyse and chekyns, iij*s.* iiij*d.*
>
> Item in tythe piggs, iiij*s.*
>
> Item in eggys, iij*s.*
>
> Item in saffron, j li.
>
> Theys ben y^{e} pcells y^{e} wych y^{e} sayd John Emott pšūñ of Brancast' aske y^{e}

allowance of

	s.	*d.*
Fyrst in porcions to the monastȳ of Ramsey	xl	
Item to pšūñ of Bebdale	xxvj	viij
Item to sexton in y^{e} monastȳ aforsaid	xiij	iiij
Item in p̄ōx̄ys (proxies)	vij	vijob.
Item in sinage (elsewhere senage and synage, vol. v. 182, probably payment at synods)		ij

William Richardson Curat' there affirms the said rectory to be of the annual value altogether of:— [Pg 398]

				£	*s.*	*d.*
Galfūš Worle	Const'					
Gilbtūš Smyth		Parishioners	Affirm as above.	*xxix*	*ii*	*xiob.*
Ric Clerk				*xxvi*	*ii*	*xiob.*
Johīš Crane				xxviij	ix	vijob.

Here are some examples taken from various localities; first, a country rural deanery:—

Deanery of Pershore. Diocese of Worcester. ("Valor," iii. p. 263.)

Rectory of Kington, glebe, 3*s.* 4*d.*; private tithe at Easter, 10*s.*; oblations on the 4 principal feasts, 2*s.* 8*d.*; tithe of corn and hay, £6 13*s.* 4*d.*; various small tithes, 17*s.*; total, £8 6*s.* 4*d.*

R. of Broughton Hakett, tithe of corn and hay, £7 2*s.* 8*d.*; lambs and wool, 5*s.* 6*d.*; other tithe, 11*s.* 6*d.*; 4 days, 2*s.* 10*d.* (no pasch.); total, £8 2*s.* 6*d.*

Vicarage of Hymulton, glebe, 6*s.* 8*d.*; tithe of hay, etc., £2 6*s.* 0*d.*; Easter, 42*s.* 2*d.*; 4 days, 20*s.*; pension from prior of W., 53*s.* 4*d.*; total, £8 8*s.* 10*d.*

R. of Churchelenche, glebe, 32*s.* 4*d.*; tithe, £5 14*s.* 11*d.*; Easter, 33*s.* 11*d.*; 4 days, 13*s.* 6*d.*; total, £9 14*s.* 8*d.*

V. of Byshampton, glebe, 20*s.*; tithe, 54*s.*; pension, 40*s.*; Easter, 30*s.*; 4 days, 13*s.* 4*d.*; total, £7 17*s.* 4*d.*

R. of Segebarowe, glebe, 30*s.*; tithe, £15 11*s.* 6*d.*; Easter, 12*s.* 3½*d.*; 4 days, 6*s.* 3*d.*; total, £15 0*s.* 0½*d.*

R. of Grafton Flyford, glebe, 66*s.*; tithe, £16 14*s.* 5½*d.*; Easter, 21*s.* 5*d.*; 4 days, 7*s.* 7*d.*; total, £20 10*s.* 5½*d.*

Next to take a town—Droitwich.

Town of Wyche. ("Valor," vol. iii. p. 268.)

Rectory of Whitton in the town of Wyche, glebe, 14*s.* 1*d.*; tithe, 75*s.* 8*d.*; In libro compot pascal,[426] 8*s.* 8*d.*; 4 days, 4*s.*; total, £5 2*s.* 5*d.*

R. of St. Andrew in the town of Wyche, tithe, 19*s.* 6*d.*; Easter, 40*s.*; 4 days, 14*s.*; total, £3 13*s.* 6*d.* [Pg 399]

R. of St. Nicholas in the town of Wyche, tithe, 46*s.* 8*d.*; Easter, 33*s.* 4*d.*; 4 days, 10*s.*; total, £4 10*s.*

Vicarage of St. Peter in the town of Wyche, tithe, 75*s.*; Easter, 40*s.*; 4 days, etc., 1*s.*; £6 7*s.*

V. of Bromsgrove with chapel of Norton, in the town of Wyche, farm of a garden, 2*s.*; tithe, etc., £7 5*s.*; Easter, £12; 4 days, 40*s.*; mortuaries, 1*s.*; chapel tithe, £4; Easter, £16; total, £41 8*s.*

It is worth while to note the proportion which the offerings bear to the other sources of income, and to make a few notes upon them. We find the customary offerings at the four seasons and at Easter, as enjoined in Saxon times (see p. 71); only in some places, instead of the "oblationes quatuor festorum," we find that the times had been reduced to three, as in the rural deanery of Irchingfield, in the diocese of Hereford ("Valor," iii. p. 19), where we find "oblationes ibidem III bus temporibus anni usualibus"; or to two, as at Leeds, in the diocese of York, "oblationes duo' dierum ibid' consuet'." The Easter offering was the more important; it is spoken of in various ways, "Decima privata in Festo Paschæ," "Decimæ personaliæ vocatæ Lenten Booke," "Decimæ personaliæ voc' le Estre Booke," "In libro Paschali," "In Rotulo Paschali," "In Rotulo Quadragesimali,"[427] "Lent Decimæ," and "Oblationes in Pasch'."

In settling the vicarages these fees were usually assigned to the vicar, and in town parishes the appropriators often left the vicar very little besides to live upon. We give a few examples [Pg 400]

taken at random in illustration of these remarks:—

> The Vicarage of Leeds, a house and garden valued at 15*s.* 8*d.*; tithes of lambs and wool, £13; Lent tithes and oblations in Pasch', £26; oblations of two days *ibid' consuet'*, £4 10*s.*; oblations within the church, £4 6*s.* 8*d.*; oblations of a chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 3*s.* 4*d.*; total, £48 15*s.* 8*d.*[428]
>
> The Vicarage of Sheffield, a house and garden valued at 10*s.*; tithe of wool and lambs, 36*s.*; oblations, £6 18*s.*; Easter Book, £4; small tithe, 2*s.* 8*d.*; total, £13 6*s.* 8*d.*[429]
>
> The Vicarage of Huddersfield, house and garden, 3*s.* 4*d.*; tithes of wool, 60*s.*; of lambs, 64*s.*; oblations, £4 11*s.* 8*d.*; small and private tithe, £9 18*s.* 0½*d.*; total, £20 17*s.* 0½*d.*[430]
>
> The Church of Doncaster, at the end of the thirteenth century,[431] was a rectory, held in two medieties; but in the course of the following centuries both medieties had been appropriated to the Abbey of St. Mary at York, which appointed a vicar. The vicar had a house and garden, valued at 6*s.* 8*d.*, and an annual pension from St. Mary's, *in pecunia numerata*, of £33 6*s.* 8*d.*[432]
>
> The income of the three churches in Nottingham—[433]
>
> St. Mary. Mansion and glebe, 30*s.*; tithe of bread and ale, 26*s.* 8*d.*; tithe of wool and lambs, £4; tithe of geese, pigs, and fowls, 20*s.*; of fruits, 20*d.*; in Easter tithes, 60*s.* In the whole, £10 18*s.* 4*d.*
>
> St. Peter. Mansion, 6*s.* 8*d.*; personal tithes, £6 13*s.* 4*d.*; oblations, 26*s.* 8*d.*; tithe of bread and ale, 13*s.* 4*d.*; of fowls and eggs, 14*d.*; of pigs, 6*s.* 8*d.*; of chrisom cloths in *pannis crismalibus*,[434] 3*s.* 4*d.*; oblations on the feast of the Purification, 3*s.* In the whole, £9 14*s.* 2*d.* [Pg 401]
>
> St. Nicholas. Mansion and garden, 8*s.*; a house, 8*s.*; oblations, 13*s.* 4*d.*; Easter tithes, 36*s.*; tithe of bread and ale, 2*s.* 6*d.*; tithe of pigs, fowls, and geese, 6*s.*; of fruits, 3*s.* 7*d.*; tithe of flax and hemp, 3*s.*; eggs *et pannorum crismalium*, 3*s.* In the whole, £4.
>
> Bingham Rectory. Mansion and land, 48*s.*; three houses, 18*s.* 8*d.*; a pigeon-house, 13*s.* 4*d.*; oblations of the three days, 20*s.*; Easter tithes, 46*s.* 8*d.*; tithe of eggs, 3*s.*; pigs and geese, 20*s.*; fowls, 3*s.*; wool and lambs, 100*s.*; hay, 20*s.*; corn, £30; flax and hemp, 5*s.* In the whole, £44 19*s.* 4*d.*

Here follows a case in which the personal tithe, that is, the Easter offering, due from each principal parishioner, is set forth in detail:—

> Vicarage of Cowarne Magna gives Decimis psonalibus an^{it} videlīt̄ de Thoma Scull 6*s.*, Johñe ap Madoke 4*d.*, and four others at 4*d.* each; villat' de Locatt 8*s.* 7*d.*, Villat' de Hopton 6*s.* 2*d.*; Villat' de Bache 3*s.* 1½*d.* and five other villatæ, amounting to £10 1*s.* 5*d.*; oblations at the four accustomed times 14*s.* 8*d.*; Lez crysoms 12*d.* Candles offered in die Pur' Bte Marie; Denar' oblat' cum pane benedicta 2*s.* 6*d.*[435]
>
> The V. of Frome also mentions "lez crysoms" and offerings both at the Cross at Easter and on the other Paschal days. [Pg 402]
>
> R. of Estnor mentions "oblationes tam ad fontem benedict' 20*s.*," and ad crucem in die Parescheue 6*d.*, quam al' oblac̄ōn' accustumat' an^{ti} 13*s.* 4*d.* unacum le bede roll' 16*d.* and debit' pascalibz 23*s.* 4*d.*[436]
>
> The Rector of Streteford[437] was indebted oblac̄ionibus Ste Cosm̄e et Damiane, 40*s.* 5*d.* He probably had a relic of the Physician Saints in his church, and the people resorted to it for cure of maladies.

The compotus of the vicarage of Newark, Notts, is worth giving at full length:—

> The Vicar of Newark returns his income from "tiethe chekens, doves, gowse, piggs, apples, peares, worth a yere xl^{s} iij; offering daies, viz. All Saynts' Daie, Xr̄ēmas Daie, and the Sondaie nexte after the feaste of Mary Magdaleyn, iiij^{li} vi^{s}; personall tithes at Eastor, xxj^{li}; offerings at m'iages, purificac̄ōñs of women, buryalls, wi^{t} other casualties, iij^{li} iv^{s}.; total, £30 10*s.* Whereof to the archebushopp of Yorke for synage, xvij^{s} vi^{d}; to the archedeacon of Nottingham for procurac̄ons, xvij^{s} vi^{d}; for waxe spent in the sv̄ic̄ē time in the churche, xvj^{s} ix^{d}; for wyne the ole yere and at Eastor spent in the churche, xvij^{s} vi^{d}; for oyle spent in the lampe in the queyre day and night, ix^{s}; for breade and franckingsence, ij^{s} viij^{d}; for bell-strings, iiij^{d}, and for the stipend of thone of the parryshe preistes, v^{li}. Total, £21 5*s.* 1*d.*"[438]

Some special sources of income which occur here and there are worth notice:—

> The Vicar of Leominster has the herbage of the cemeteries of the church and chapels; the tithes of the bakers and taverners within the borough. Mass pennies and candle oblations, and oblations for the blessed bread on the Lord's days.[439]

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The case of Lenton, Notts, has also features of special interest. It was appropriated to the Prior of Lenton:—[440]

> Richard Matthew, vicar there. Is worth for his house there, and with an acre of land, by the year, 6*s.* 8*d.*; for Easter tithes, 54*s.*; for offerings on the three days, 12*s.*; for offerings at marriages, churchings, and burials, one year with another, 5*s.*; for oblations on Sundays, 1¼*d.*, amounting to 7*s.* 4*d.* a year; for a corrody of bread and ale at the Priory of Lenton, every week 1*s.* 6*d.*, amounting to 78*s.* a year; and every day for food from the cook of the said prior to the value of 1*d.*, amounting to 30*s.* 5*d.* a year; for tithe of wool and lambs, one year with another, 12*s.*; for pigs, geese, and fowls, 10*s.*; for tithe of flax and hemp, 3*s.*; for tithe of fruits, one year with another, 12*s.*; for grass and hay for one horse, found by the said prior, 3*s.* 4*d.* a year; in the whole £10 11*s.* 1¼*d.* Thence is paid annually to the said prior and his successors for a certain pension, 28*s.* 8*d.* And there remains £9 2*s.* 6¼*d.*

We began with a return from a curate in sole charge of the parish of an absentee rector. Here is the case of a non-resident rector who lets his benefice to farm:—

> Tunstall, Kent. The certificate of Sir Symon Jenyns, parson there, made by Symon Spacherst, his farmer:—
>
> First, the same Symon Spacherst payeth to the said parson yearly £8. Item paid to the priest for his wages, £6 13*s.* 4*d.*, making £14 13*s.* 4*d.* Whereof deducted for proxies[441] yearly 5*s.*, leaving clear annual value, £14 8*s.* 4*d.*

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We take up now the question which was postponed from the preceding chapter, of the value of money at various periods during the Middle Ages compared with its value in our times, and especially at the period of the "Taxatio," A.D. 1292, and at the period of the "Valor," A.D. 1534. The comparative value of a given income at the two periods depends upon two things: first, upon the purchasing power of a pound at the end of the thirteenth century, and again at the middle of the sixteenth century compared with the present day; and, second, upon the style of living at the several periods.

First, as to the comparative purchasing power, it is not an easy question to determine. The late Mr. Thorold Rogers has given an immense mass of data[442] for its determination, but he has not conferred upon students the advantage of a table of comparative values for certain dates. In default of this, we fall back upon other conclusions drawn from similar collections of materials. Hallam, in his "History of Europe," arrives at the conclusion that "we can hardly take a less multiple than about thirty for animal food, and eighteen or twenty for corn, in order to bring the prices of the thirteenth century to a level with those of the present day. Combining the two, and setting the comparative dearness of cloth against the cheapness of fuel and many other articles, we may perhaps consider any given sum under Henry III. and Edward I. as equivalent in general command over commodities to about twenty-four or twenty-five times its normal value at present;" and again, "In the time of Edward I., an income of £10 or £20 a year was reckoned a competent estate for a gentleman; at least the lord of a single manor would seldom have enjoyed more." The same writer says, "Sixteen will be a proper multiple, when we would bring the general standard value of money in the reign of Henry VI. to our present standard." Dean Milman, speaking of payments in 1344, says, without giving reason or quoting authority, "Multiply by fifteen to bring to present value."[443] Froude says, "A penny in terms of the labourer's necessities must have been equal in the reign of Henry VIII. to the present shilling;" and adopts "the relative estimate of twelve to one," as generally representing the comparative value of money at that period. The Rev. Dr. Cunningham, formerly professor of Economic Science, K.C.L., kindly replying to a question on the subject, says, "For 1535, I should say that a penny was worth at least a shilling in the present day. I could not give a guess of any value as to the change between 1291 and 1535. At the former date I fancy the values were estimates, and that the actual receipts were chiefly in kind." We have ventured to take, as approximate multiples, twelve times for the date of the "Taxatio" (A.D. 1291), and twenty-four times for the "Valor" (A.D. 1535).

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But the comparative position of the parochial clergy, as of all other classes of society, at these two periods, and at the present day, depends not only on the amount of money which they received yearly, and on the quantity of things which it would purchase, but also on the style of living at the periods compared. In those times the houses of the smaller gentry were rudely but substantially built of timber, and did not involve frequent repairs. A little carving on the roof timbers of the hall—the one living room—was a permanent decoration, which never needed renewing; a high table of oak, with a great chair for the master, boards and trestles for the other tables, benches to sit upon, and a few stools, were the sufficient furniture; a little tapestry on the walls, a few bankers (cushions on the benches), made quite a luxurious furnishing; and green rushes strewed upon the floor supplied the place of carpets. The furniture of the rest of the house was rude and substantial. Clothing, among all the middle classes, was durable, and was worn for years; one or two better garments, worn

only on great occasions, lasted for a lifetime. The whole mode of life of the middle classes was simple and homely to a degree which we can hardly believe. They were early to rise, and lived an outdoor life, the labouring men in field-work, the farmers not only overlooking the work, but putting their hands to it; the squires looking sharply after their own estates, and spending their leisure in field sports. The food was simple but abundant; air and exercise gave hearty appetites for homely fare, and early to bed saved light and firing. [Pg 407]

The result was that a much smaller income enabled a man to hold his position in society.[444] In 1253, Henry III. issued an edict that whoever had estates of £15 yearly value should be made knights.[445] In the second year of Henry V. (1415), an Act of Parliament fixed £20 a-year as the income which qualified a man to be a Justice of the Peace.

A country rector, therefore, could hold his position in relation to his farmers, and his squire, and his country neighbours, on an income which seems to us wonderfully small; and the vicar and parish chaplain with £5 a-year did not seem to his neighbours of any degree to be in a condition of degrading poverty.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

DOMESTIC CHAPELS.

The Byzantine emperors first set up a private chapel in their houses; kings followed their example, and the nobles followed the example of their kings; and there was a danger of the clergy of these chapels, supported by their lords, making themselves independent of the oversight of the bishops, and of the worship of the rich being separated from the worship of the poor.[446] In 692, the second Trullan Council decreed that no clergyman should perform the rite of baptism or celebrate the Eucharist in such a chapel without the bishop's permission. Gregory the Great gives licence for the consecration of an oratory which Firmilian, a notary, has built on his farm outside the city of Fermo, on condition that there shall not be a baptistery or *cardinalem presbyterum*, a titled parish priest.[447] The Council of Clermont, 535, decreed that on Sundays and festivals all should come to church, and not invite priests to their houses to say mass. [Pg 409]

Conisborough Castle.
10. The Chapel.

The great Saxon nobles had chapels in their houses and private chaplains. Their chaplains are sometimes named in their wills, *e.g.* Queen Ethelfleda, c. 972, leaves “4 hides of land to her reeve, 2 to her page, and 2 to each of her priests.” Lotgiva gives legacies “to Ailric my household priest, and to Ailric my page.”[448] Some of them Roger of Wendover accuses of hearing in bed the daily mass said by their chaplains.[449] With the Norman nobles the custom was universal; of the numerous castles of the Norman period which remain to us, we do not call to mind one which has not a chapel in the keep-tower. They differ in size, from an oratory contained within the thickness of the wall, as at Conisboro’ and at Brougham, to a church forming a prominent feature of the plan and elevation, as at the White Tower, London, and at Colchester.

The chapel in the White Tower is the largest of the series. It is situated on the principal (first) floor, and under it on the ground floor is a kind of crypt. It has a nave with aisles, and [Pg 410] a chancel with circular apse. Gundulph of Rochester, who was its architect, gave great importance to the chapel by projecting its round apse beyond the line of the east wall like a great semicircular bastion, the only break in the massive quadrangular plan. The keep of Colchester Castle, no doubt by the same architect, is exactly on the same plan, only that the chapel is without aisles.

In the keeps of Rochester, Newcastle, Hedingham, Middleham, and others, a commodious chapel, with handsome ornamentation of zigzag arch mouldings and vaulted roof, is contained in the annex to the keep, which defends the great stone stair leading to the principal floor. It is very probable that where the keep had only a small oratory there was always a larger chapel in the castle bailey[450] for the general inhabitants of the castle, for in later times we commonly find an oratory for the lord and another for the lady, and a chapel besides.

In the Edwardian castles, the chapel is a constant feature. Conway affords a good example; there it is on the south side of the outer court, and the chaplain’s room is in the adjoining tower. There are also, in the inner court adjoining the state apartments, two small elegant oratories, one called the king’s and the other the queen’s. There are other examples at Beaumaris, Kidwelly, etc. Usually a small vestry and a priest’s chamber communicate [Pg 411] directly with the chapel.

MARRIAGE OF COUNT WALERAN DE ST. POL WITH THE SISTER
OF RICHARD, KING OF ENGLAND.
ROYAL 14, E. IV., f. 30.

In the great houses of the nobles down to the end of the mediæval period, the chapel is as universal a feature as the hall or the great chamber.[451] The chapels at Ightham Mote, Kent; at Bodiam, Sussex; at the Vyne, Hampshire; and at Wolsey's Palace at Hampton Court, are fine examples. The still perfect chapel of Haddon Hall is in all respects like an ordinary village church, with font and pulpit. The College Chapels of Oxford and Cambridge, of Eton and Winchester, and of all the other mediæval colleges and schools, the chapels of the Episcopal Palaces at Winchester, Farnham, Lambeth, etc., are all normal examples of the architectural features and furniture of the domestic chapels, and their services are examples of the manners and customs of the chapel services of the greater mediæval houses.

The western end of the chapel is sometimes divided into two stories, both opening upon the sacrarium; the upper story was usually intended for the family, and the lower for the domestics. Sometimes the chapel on the principal floor has, besides its internal approaches, an external stone stair by which people from other parts of the house could enter the chapel without passing through the house, as at the fourteenth-century houses of Inceworth (?) and Earth, both in Cornwall.

The principal residence of a great noble needed a chapel of considerable size to [Pg 412]
accommodate the number of people, as numerous as the population of a country parish or a small town, who were gathered into the castle during the residence of its lord:—the lord's household of knights and squires, yeomen and pages; his lady's separate household of ladies, bower-women, and women in various kinds of service; the garrison of the castle, with its commanders of knightly degree, their squires, men-at-arms, yeomen, and grooms; the several staffs which looked after the various departments of the service, the chambers, kitchens, stables, kennels, and mews; besides a constant flow of visitors, with their complex trains of guards and attendants.

In England only the chief royal houses have maintained the mediæval dignity of their ecclesiastical domestic establishments. Windsor Castle, besides its oratory, has its noble chapel dedicated to St. George the Patron Saint of England,[452] and its establishment of dean and canons, singing men and boys, housed in a picturesque group of collegiate buildings arranged round several cloistered courts. The Tower of London, besides its chapel in the White Tower, has its church of St. Peter ad Vincula in the courtyard.

Many of the great nobles, who maintained a state little inferior to that of royalty, had their chapel establishment of proportionate dignity. In the opinion of that time, a man of great [Pg 413]
rank and estate owed it to the glory of God that the worship of his household should be offered with circumstances of solemn splendour; he owed it to the well-being of the numerous people who depended upon him; and to the still more numerous people of all estates, who looked to him for an example.

The Duke of Buckingham's house at Thornbury had a chaplain, eighteen clerks of the chapel, and nine boys.[453]

The household book of Henry Algernon, the fifth Earl of Northumberland, who was born in 1477, and died in 1527, gives us very full details of the organization of the chapel staff of a great nobleman, their duties, and their emoluments in money and kind. They consisted of a dean, who was to be a D.D., or LL.D., or B.D., and ten other priests, eleven gentlemen, and six children who composed the choir.[454] The secular duties which were assigned to some of [Pg 414 & 415]
them will perhaps be better understood by a reference to the past. The clergy had always been the advisers of the English kings and nobles in the ordinary affairs of life: the [Pg 416 & 417]
Archbishop of Canterbury was the king's official chief counsellor till long after the Norman

Conquest. Every ealdorman and great thane probably had a learned clerk in his house, not only as a chaplain, but as an adviser in general affairs. Henry II. organized his domestic religious establishment into a Department of State, and used Churchmen in the civil administration as ministers, ambassadors, and judges—there were none others so capable. The nobles were following on the same lines, when they made one chaplain steward, another secretary, and another tutor, in addition to their not burdensome duties in the maintenance of Divine worship. So the people resorted to their parish priest to advise them in their domestic difficulties and extraordinary matters of business, to arbitrate in their differences, and make their wills, for the simple natural reason of his wider knowledge of affairs, his greater experience of mankind, his disinterestedness, and, not least, his sacred character.

In the castles of less noble and wealthy persons it is not uncommon to find that there were several chaplains organized into a college of secular priests, as at Colchester, Exeter, Hastings, Pontefract, etc., and not infrequently endowed out of the rectories in the lord's gift. In some instances the lord of numerous estates endowed the chapel of his principal castle with the churches upon all his estates, as at Colchester, Clitheroe, etc. The intention probably was not so much to enrich the chaplain or form an endowment for the collegiate [Pg 418] staff of the chapel, as to make the castle chapel the mother church of the village churches on the surrounding estates; just as the seneschal of the castle was the superior officer of the bailiffs of the various manors; and so to concentrate the ecclesiastical administration of all the estates, as well as their civil administration, under the eye of the lord and his most trusted agents.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the lord gave the service of the castle chapel into the hands of some neighbouring monastery (probably of his own founding), as at Colchester to the Abbey of St. John, at Brecon to the Priory of Brecon. When Robert de Haia, in 1120, founded the Priory of Boxgrove, Sussex, he stipulated that he should choose one of the canons to officiate in the chapel of his neighbouring manor house of Holnaker. So Sir Ralph de Eccleshall, *temp.* Edward I., gave his mill, etc., to the monks of Beauchief, who covenanted in return to find him a priest for his chapel at Eccleshall. They stipulated, however, that in floods or snow they shall be excused from sending one of their canons to Eccleshall, but may say the due masses in their own church at Beauchief. So the chapel of the De Lovelot's castle at Sheffield was served by the canons of their Priory of Worksop.

The Collegiate Church of St. George within the royal castle of Windsor had, and still has, an establishment consisting of a dean, twelve canons, eight minor canons, eight vicars choral, and eight chorister boys.[455] The Chapel of Wallingford Castle[456] was served by a dean, [Pg 419] five prebendaries, and a deacon. Tickhill had four prebendaries;[457] three was a common number, as at Exeter, etc.; Pontefract had two. The chapel of Bridgenorth Castle had a college of secular priests, and in later times served as a parish church to the people of the borough. The castle chapels at Nottingham and Skipton were rectories. The Castle Chapel at Kirby Ravensworth had a chantry of two priests.

The chapels of Skipton, Tutbury, and Stafford Castles are called "free chapels." Of Skipton Castle Chapel certain liberties and duties of the parson or chaplain were written in two mass-books, one new, the other old, in one of which the earl granted that the said chaplain should have meat and drink sufficient within the hall of the lord of the castle for him and one garçon[458] with him. And if the lord be absent, and no house kept, he and his successors shall have for every ten weeks one quarter of wheat and vi*s.* viii*d.*; and vi*d.* in money and one robe or gown yerely at ye Nativity of o'r Lord, or xiii*s.* iv*d.* in monie. An inquisition of Edward III. adds as part of the endowment one *cameram fenestratam* (a chamber with a window) and pasture for viii oxen, vi cows, and two horses, and sufficient timber for repairing his house and chamber, and dry wood for firing. At the dissolution of chantries and [Pg 420] free chapels, it became a question whether this was not a parsonage.[459] In other cases, the chaplain had a definite endowment, which seems to have been calculated upon the not very large income of a parish chaplain. The four chaplains of Tickhill were endowed with £5 each; the chaplain of Nottingham Castle with £5; the chaplain at Pleshey Castle, Essex, with £5; [460] the chaplain at Denbeigh with £8, the foundation of the king; at Southampton with £10, payable by Royal Letters out of the customs of that port. Probably in many cases there was no endowment; the chapel was practically a "free chapel," and the emoluments such as were agreed upon between the patron and his nominee; these would naturally tend to become a customary payment and perquisites; the Skipton agreement gives an instance of what was probably customary: viz. a corrody for himself and a boy, and a small sum in money.

The priest of the Chapel of Skelton Castle, Yorkshire, was, at the time of the Suppression, only partly paid by Lady Conyers, 23*s.*; and his stipend was made up of payments from half a dozen other persons, from the 18*s.* of R. Robinson, down to the 3*s.* 10*d.* of John Gyll, making a total of £4 2*s.* 10*d.*[461]

The domestic chapels of the nobility and great men were always consecrated, and had a perpetual licence for Divine service.

Very probably, where there were several chaplains, they all served their lord in various [Pg 421] clerkly capacities. So Piers Plowman:—

> Somme serven the Kyng, and the silver tellen
> In chequer and chauncerie, challengen his dettes
> Of wardes, and of wardemotes, weyes and theyves;

And some serven as servants lordes and ladies,
And in stede of stewardes sitten and demen.

The domestic chaplain is frequently named in wills as a witness or an executor, and not infrequently as a legatee; *e.g.* Giles de Gadlesmere, knight, 1337, leaves to Wm. Ocham, clerk, 100 shillings, unless he be promoted before my death; Wm. de Ocham is one of the witnesses to the will.[462]

We find in the "Valor Eccl." a considerable number of chantries recorded as founded in the chapels of castles. There is doubt in some cases whether these were the ordinary endowments of the chaplain, made under the name of a Chantry, for reasons of legal convenience, or whether, in addition to the ordinary chaplain, a special endowment had been made for mortuary masses, and, if so, whether the ordinary chaplain was also the Cantarist and received the chantry endowment in addition to his normal stipend. The chaplain celebrating in the chapel of the Castle of Downhead received from the grant of King Stephen £5 a year, and chaplain for celebrating mass twice every week at Penhill, for the soul of the founder, £2 13*s.* 4*d.*[463] There were chantries in the chapels of the castles of [Pg 422] Chester, Sherifhoton, Pickering, Malton, Pontefract, Penrith, Sandall, Skelton, Whorleton, Kermerdenin in Wales, Durham, Barnard Castle, Tutbury, Stafford, Wilton, Norham, Alnwick, etc. The lord of Bridgenorth Castle arranged with the Dean and Canons of Windsor to supply a priest to celebrate three days a week for the founder and King John.

Any one might build an oratory in his house,[464] but Divine service, that is the Holy Communion, might not be celebrated in it without the bishop's permission. Towards the close of the thirteenth century, the lesser gentry began to include a chapel in the plan of their manor houses, and the custom seems to have become almost universal in the following centuries. We may take it as an indication of a growing desire to maintain the regular daily practice of religious worship in a seemly solemn way for their families and households.

In the valuable digest of the Exeter Registers, for which historical students are much indebted to Canon Hingeston-Randolph, the licences issued during the twenty-four years of Edmund Stafford's Episcopacy (1395-1419) are arranged under the family names of the persons to whom they were granted, and there are two hundred and seventy-two names. In many cases the licence extends to all their mansions and manors in the Diocese of Exeter; [Pg 423] which gives a rough estimate of about three hundred domestic chapels in the manor houses of the two counties of Devon and Cornwall; if we multiply that figure by twenty-six, we get a rough estimate of over seven thousand domestic chapels in England and Wales.

All these domestic chapels, except those of royal houses[465] and of some free chapels, were under the jurisdiction of the bishop, and a constant and perhaps jealous oversight was maintained lest they should detract from the general assembly of all the parishioners for united worship in the parish church, or interfere with the pastoral position and rights of the rectors of the parishes. People with interest at Rome sometimes obtain their licence direct from the pope. There is an example of the king's ambassador obtaining a batch of them in 1343, but they are granted with strict limitations.

Among the Constitutions of Archbishop Stratford, made at the Council of London (1342), is one which even restricts the power of the bishops to grant licences: it decrees that "all licences granted by the bishops for celebrating mass in places not consecrated other than to noble men and great men of the realm, and to persons living at a considerable distance from the church, or notoriously weak or infirm, shall be void." The decree goes on to say that [Pg 424] "whosoever, against the prohibition of the canon, shall celebrate mass in oratories, chapels, houses, or other places, not consecrated, without having obtained the licence of the diocesan, shall be suspended from the celebration of Divine service for the space of a month."[466]

> Robert Fitz Aer, the second of the name (c. 1190-1195), gave to the Convent of Haughmond certain lands on condition that they would have Divine service performed in his Chapel of Withyford three days a week, when he or his wife or their heirs were resident in the manor. All festivals were excluded from the agreement, and the parishioners were not to attend these services to the injury of the mother church.[467]

Here is an early example of the foundation of a domestic chapel under the guise of a chantry:—

> Sir G. de Breaute, in right of Joane his wife, had liberty given him by Robert Dean of St. Paul's, with the consent of Walter Niger, Vicar of Navestock, Essex, to found a chapel and chantry in his court at Navestock, provided he and his heirs maintained a chaplain at his own charge, sworn to preserve the liberty of the mother church, and to pay the vicar all the profits he should receive there, and admit none of the parishioners to confession or other offices there under pain of being suspended by the vicar. The founder also and the heirs of the said Joane his wife, and whoever else had the said chapel in his lordship, were also to be sworn to preserve the rights of the mother church [Pg 425] under like pain. In which chapel the chaplain was to administer the mass only with Bread and Holy Water, forbearing all other holy offices, saving that at Easter the founder and his wife and heirs, together with his free servants and

> guests, were to be admitted to the sacrament of the altar; but all his servants were to go to the mother church throughout the year.[468] And for this grant the founder and his wife and heirs were to give to the mother church two wax candles, each weighing a pound, to be offered, one at the Purification, the other at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, before vespers.[469]

Another similar example is the chapel at the Vyne, Hampshire.

> In the twelfth century, Robert, Dean of Sherburn, granted to William FitzAdam and his heirs to build a chapel in the parish of St. Andrew, Sherborne, for the use of himself, his wife, and his household. The said Robert to provide the chaplain, who shall eat at William's table, and receive a stipend for his services from Robert; saving the rights of the mother church; and William FitzAdam and his wife to attend worship, and receive communion at the parish church on Christmas, Easter, Purification, Whitsunday, and St. Andrew's Day.

The present chapel at the Vyne is a late perpendicular building, in a perfect state of repair; with its ancient screens and stalls. It has an anti-chapel over which was my lord's oratory; the two chambers for the chaplain on the south side have been converted into mortuary chapels of the time of Charles II.[470] [Pg 426]

From the time that the Bishop's Registers began, *i.e.* from the close of the thirteenth century, down to the time of the Reformation, they abound in entries of the granting of licences for oratories in private houses. They run in a customary form,[471] setting forth that the licence is given to a particular person by name, his wife and children, servants, and guests, to have Divine offices said in the oratory of his house of so-and-so; there is usually a clause that on Sundays and other festivals, they shall go to their parish church, there to hear the Divine service; and a further clause requiring that all fees and offerings shall be paid to the priest. A licence was not given once for all; very much to the contrary. Sometimes it was given during the pleasure of the bishop; sometimes for one year; for two years; for three years; renewable from time to time; sometimes for the period of the grantee's life. In the Episcopal Registers of Exeter, a number of licences are registered to the family of Bottreaux, which, when put together, give a glimpse of family history, and illustrate the principles on which the licences were granted. Licence to hold service in the chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, at Boswithguy (the oratories are frequently named under the invocation of some saint), appears in the second year of Bishop Stafford's Register, 1396, to Elizabeth Bottreaux; and is renewed in 1398. In 1399, a general licence is given to William, son of Sir William Bottreaux, Knight, and to Sir Ralph Bottreaux, Knight, and to John and Anna, children of the said Sir William. Again, in 1410, a general licence is given to William, "lord of Bottreaux," his wife, and their sons and daughters. We conjecture that this William died in the following year, and was succeeded by his son John, for again, in 1411, a licence is given to John Bottreaux, and Elizabeth his wife, for all their manors and mansions in the diocese.[472] [Pg 427]

Sometimes, perhaps it was when the manor house was at very inconvenient distance from the parish church, the licence was given "omissa clausula Volumus, etc.," *i.e.* without the restricting clause about Sundays and other festivals.

The Registry of Archbishop Walter Gray records grants in 1229 to Alberic de Percy, to have a chaplain to celebrate Divine offices in the chapel of Sutton so long as he lives; to Alexander de Vilers and his heirs to have Divine offices in his chapel of Newbottle for his family and guests for ever;[473] to Robert le Vavasour and his heirs, at his chapel of Hindishal; in 1254, to S. de Heddon and his heirs in the chapel of his court of Headdon.[474] [Pg 428]

In 1343, Thomas de Peckam obtained a bull from Pope Alexander, licensing him, since in winter he cannot get to his parish church because of the floods, that he may have Divine service in his chapel at Wyke.[475]

Temporary licences were sometimes granted in special cases of temporary sickness or chronic infirmity; Bishop Stapledon, in 1312, permits Dame Isabella de Fishacre to have Divine service at home, not only on week days but also on festivals when, through the inclemency of the weather or bodily infirmity, she cannot conveniently attend the parish church. In 1317, in consideration of Sir Peter Fishacre's impotency, he is allowed to have Divine service celebrated in his own chamber in his house of Lupton. In 1310, Oliver de Halap, who is broken with age, and has lost the sight of his eyes, *senio fractus et luminibus occulorum privatus*, is compassionately allowed by the same considerate bishop to have Divine service celebrated in his manor house of Hertleghe.

The custom of having a domestic chaplain extended, in the latter part of the period with which we have to do, not only to the majority of the country gentry, but to wealthy yeomen and well-to-do citizens. Mere country gentlemen sometimes maintained a considerable chapel establishment. Henry Machyn, in his diary,[476] says, in noticing the death, in 1552, of Sir Thomas Jarmyn, of Rushbrook Hall, that "he was the best housekeeper in the county of Suffolk, and kept a goodly chapel of singing men." [Pg 429]

Richard Burre, a wealthy yeoman and farmer of the parsonage of Souwntyng, in 1529, directs in his will that "Sir Robert Beckton," my chaplain, syng ffor my sowle by the space of ix. yers.[477]

When Alderman Monmouth took Tyndale into his house, and "did promys him x pounds sterling to praye for his father, mother, their soules and all christen soules,"[478] he clearly engaged that greatest of the translators of the Bible as his domestic chaplain. It was very natural, and no doubt usual, that special services for the deceased members of the family should be celebrated in the chapel of the house, and by the chaplain of the family. Not infrequently a chantry was founded in domestic chapels; *e.g.* "Thomas de Ross, lord of Hamelak and Belvoir, 1412, leaves 400^{li} for ten chaplains to say mass, etc., in his chapel of Belvoir for eight years."[479]

Some further examples of it will be found in the chapter on chantries and chantry-priests.

Mr. Christopher Pickering, in his will, dated 1542, leaves "to my sarvands John Dobson and Frances, xx*s.* a-piece, besydes ther wages; allso I give unto Sir James Edwarde, my sarvand," etc.[480] One of the witnesses to the will is "Sir James Edwarde, preste," so that the person whom Mr. Pickering describes as his servant seems to have been his domestic chaplain. Sir Thomas More says "every man has a priest to wait upon his wife;" so Nicholas Blackburn, a wealthy citizen of York, and twice Lord Mayor, leaves in 1431-2 a special bequest to his wife, "to find her a gentlewoman, and a priest, and a servant."[481] [Pg 430]

We have seen that the lord of the house usually selected his own chaplain, and made his own arrangements with him on the subject of remuneration, which most likely consisted of his lodging in the chaplain's chamber and his board at the lord's table, and a fixed sum of money, as at Skipton. But there were cases in which the chaplain was nominated by some outside authority, as the rector or vicar of the parish, as in the case of the Vyne, as if to lessen the likelihood of friction between the parish priest and the chaplain of the manor house.

The frequent occurrence of licences to solemnize the marriage of specified persons in the chapel of the bride's home shows that then, as now, a special licence was required for such occasions.

> 7 Sep., 1363. Licence for a marriage between Sir Andrew Lutterel, Knt., and Hawise Despencer, to be solemnized by Thos. Abbot of Bourne and the Vicar of Bourne, in the chapel of Lady Blanche Wake of Lidell, within her castle of Bourne.[482] [Pg 431]
>
> 4 Aug., 1417. Licence to Eliz. de Beaumont, for marriage between Wm. Lord Deyncourt and Elizabeth, daughter of the said Elizabeth, to be celebrated in the chapel of Beaumanoir, in the parish of Barowe.[483]
>
> 1457. Henry, son of Humphrey Duke of Buckingham, was licensed, by the Bishop of Lichfield, to be married in the chapel of Maxstoke Castle to his cousin Margaret, Countess of Richmond.[484]
>
> A licence to solemnize a marriage in the chapel of the manor house of Homesid House, Durham, was given in 1500, on account of bad weather and the infirmity of the parents of the bride.[485]

In the following case a license was not asked for, because the marriage was uncanonical:—

> In 1434, process was issued against Thomas Grene of Norton by Toucester, Knight, for clandestine marriage with Marnia Belers, *co'matre sue* (co-sponsors), in the private chapel within the house of Ric. Knyghtley at Ffarvesley, in the presence of Ric. Knyghtley and his son and other witnesses.[486]

The clergy[487] sometimes had a domestic chapel in their houses, but even they were carefully restricted as to the when, and where, and how they might celebrate the Divine service in them. [Pg 432]

> In the life of J. de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter, 1327, we read that in the earlier part of his career, while still Archdeacon of Nottingham, in 1326, he was sent as nuncio by the pope into France and England. He writes to the pope that he is so overwhelmed with business that he prays for leave for himself and his people to have mass said before daylight. The pope grants it, but desires that the permission be rarely used, because since the Son of God *qui candor est lucis æternæ* is immolated in the service of the mass, such a sacrament ought not to be celebrated in the darkness, but in the light.[488]
>
> In the register of Bishop Grandisson, in 1328, is the record of a licence, only "during pleasure," to the Rector of Southpole (?), for an oratory *infra mansum rectoriæ tuæ*.[489]
>
> 1404. Licence to the Rector of Wodemancote to have service in his house for

one year, on account of infirmity.[490]

These domestic chapels were thoroughly furnished with every usual ornament and appliance in a style of sumptuousness proportionate to the rank and means of the master of the house. From the Household Book of the Earl of Northumberland we gather that his chapel had three altars, and that my lord and my lady had each a closet, *i.e.* an oratory, in which were [Pg 433] other altars. The chapel was furnished with hangings, and had a pair of organs. The service books were so famous for their beauty that, on the earl's death, Cardinal Wolsey intimated his wish to have them. There is mention, too, of suits of vestments, and single vestments, copes and surplices, and altar cloths for the five altars. All these things were under the care of the yeoman of the vestry, and were carried about with the earl at his removals from one to another of his houses.

Catalogues of the furniture of the smaller domestic chapels are numerous in the inventories attached to ancient wills; two may be given here as examples—

> Lady Alice West, of Hinton Marcel, Hants, 1395, bequeaths to her son Thomas, "a pair of matins bookes and a pair of bedas," and to her daughter Iohane, a masse book and all the books that I have of Latin, English, and French, out-take the foresaid mattins books bequeathed to Thomas. Also all my vestments of my chappel with the towels belonging to the altar, and my tapites white and red paled,[491] and blue and red paled, with all my green tapites that belong to my chappel aforesaid, and with the frontals of the aforesaid altar, and with all the curtains and trussing coffers, and all other apparele that belong to my chapel. Also a chalice and paxbrede and holy-water pot with the sprinklers; two cruets, two chandeliers, two silver basins for the altar with scutcheons of my ancestors' arms, and a sacring bell, and all of silver. Also a table depainted of three (a triptych).[492]

In the inventories of the will of John Smith, Esq., of Blackmore, Essex, in 1543— [Pg 434]

> In the chapel chamber, a long setle joyned. In the chapel, one aulter of joyner's work. Item, a table with two leaves of the passion gilt [a panelled diptych]. Item, a long setle of wainscott. Item, a bell hanging over the chapel. Chapel stuff, copes and vestments three. Aulter fronts four, corporal case one, and dyvers peces of silk necessary for cusshyons v.

The altar vessels are not specially mentioned; they were probably included with the other silver, and the altar candlesticks among the "xiiiij latyn candlestics of dyvers sorts," mentioned elsewhere.

It is a very pleasant feature in the daily life of the manor house of mediæval England which is brought home to us by these studies of ancient domestic architecture and these dry extracts from Episcopal Registers. By the latter part of the fourteenth century it would seem that nearly every manor house had a chapel, and a resident chaplain. Divine services—Matins and mass before breakfast, and evensong before dinner—were said every day; and when the solemn worship of Almighty God held so conspicuous a place in the daily family life, it is not possible that it should not have exercised an influence upon the character and habits of the people; for the family and household really attended the service as a part of the routine of daily duty. There are numerous incidental allusions in the course of historical [Pg 435] narratives which prove it. Robert of Gloucester says of William the Conqueror—

> In church he was devout enow, for him none day abide
> That he heard not Mass and Matins, and Evensong and each tide.

The story that William Rufus, before he succeeded to the throne, was first attracted to William of Corboil by the rapidity with which he got through the mass, indicates that even that graceless prince submitted to the irksome restraint of the universal custom. And the stories about Hunting Masses, in which chaplains omitted everything but the essentials of the Divine service, afford the same sort of confirmation.[493]

The Romance of King Arthur is not often quoted as an historical authority, but romances are a picture of contemporary manners and customs, and may be so far depended upon; and this daily service in the castles and manor houses of the Middle Ages is one of the facts of the life of the time which is abundantly illustrated in them. Allusions such as the following are frequent: "And so they went home and unarmed them, and so to evensong and supper. And on the morrow they heard mass, and after went to dinner and to their counsel, and made many arguments what were best to do."[494]

And in the "Vision of Piers Plowman" we read (Passus v)—

> The king and his knights to the church wenten, [Pg 436]
> To hear matins and mass, and to the meat after.

The imagination rests with pleasure on the ordinary orderly life of a mediæval squire's manor house, sweetened by this domestic religion; on the kindly influence of a pious, sensible chaplain over the whole household, the adviser of the lord, the tutor of the children,

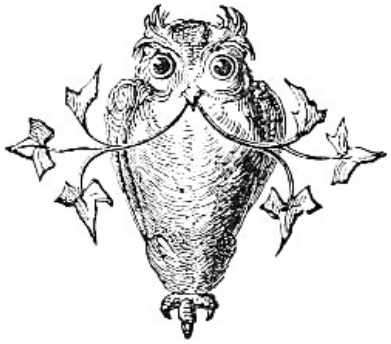
the monitor of the domestics. We linger upon the idea of the comfort of it to the widowed Lady Bottreaux, and to the infirm old Sir Peter Fishacre, and to poor old Oliver de Halap, “broken with age, and deprived of the sight of his eyes.”

We may add an illustrative note, which, though of later date, is true to the habits of this earlier period.

“For many years together I was seldom or never absent from Divine service (in church) at five o’clock in the morning in summer, and six o’clock in the winter.” And, again, “at Naworth, the house of Sir Charles Howard, afterwards Earl of Carlisle, there was a chaplain in the house, an excellent preacher, who had service twice every Sunday in the chapel, and daily prayers morning and evening, and was had in such veneration by all as if hee had been their tutelar angel” [which did not prevent him from making love to the eldest daughter of the house, and making mischief for the autobiographer].[495]

By the statute 21 Hen. VIII. c. 13, a limit was set to the number of domestic chaplains. An archbishop might have 8 chaplains; a duke, 6; marquis and earl, 5; viscount, 4; bishop, 6; chancellor, baron, and knight of the garter, 3; duchess, marchioness, countess, and baroness, being widows, 2; treasurer and controller of the king’s house, the king’s secretary, the dean of the chapel, the king’s almoner, the master of the rolls, 2; the chief justice of the king’s bench, and warden of the cinque ports, 1. Proviso, that the king’s chaplains may hold as many livings as the king shall give.

[Pg 437]



[Pg 438]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CHANTRY.

The characteristic feature of the Church work of the seventh century was the conversion of the Teutonic heathen people who had conquered the eastern half of England, and the foundation of a bishopric in every one of the heptarchic kingdoms; of the eighth century, the multiplication of monastic centres of evangelization; of that and the succeeding centuries the spread of the parochial system of a priest for each manor; of the twelfth century, the foundation of monasteries; of the thirteenth century, the foundation of vicarages in the appropriated parishes, and the institution of the new Order of friars; of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the foundation of chantries: during these two centuries about two thousand chantries were founded.

A chantry is a foundation for the maintenance of one or more priests, to offer up prayers for the soul of the founder, his family and ancestors, and usually of all Christian souls; and this was the motive of the founders of the majority of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

[Pg 439]

In the Religious Foundations of earlier times the condition of prayers for the donors was incidental. A man did not build a church for his *ville* or found a monastery on his estate, with the sole or principal view of securing perpetual prayers for himself; but in accordance with the religious views of those times when a man did found any pious work, from a great

monastery intended to be a nursery of saints to an almshouse for twelve poor people, he asked—he stipulated in the terms of his foundation deed—for the prayers of the members of his foundation. It would have looked like a want of proper religious feeling had he neglected to seek the benefit of their intercessory prayers. The desire for the prayers of the Church by those who could not found monasteries or build churches, found its satisfaction in benefactions to religious foundations, which secured for the donors the privileges of confraternity, and among these, the prayers of the community.[496] Every religious house had its catalogue of benefactors, or its list of confraters; and the grateful convent offered [Pg 440] prayers for their good estate while living and the repose of their souls after death.[497] At Durham there lay on the altar a book very richly covered with gold and silver containing the names of all the benefactors of the cathedral church collected out of ancient MSS. about the time of the Suppression.[498] But far more interesting is the "Catalogus Benefactorum" of the great monastery of St. Alban, preserved in the British Museum Library; in it the name of every benefactor is entered, with a note of his gift—of an estate, or house, or sum of money, or sacred vessel; and in many cases a picture of the donor and of his gift is given, the house being shown in the background of the picture, the flagon or purse of gold held in his hand. [Pg 441]

Error came in when a man founded a Divine service the sole object of which was to obtain prayers for himself; it was mitigated by the association of family, benefactors, and friends, and the usual addition of all faithful souls. After all, a saint of old was glad that his name should be enrolled in the diptych of his Church, and remembered in her prayers. But a saint would have been content to be included in the general sentence with which the roll concluded—"and all those whose names, O God, Thou knowest." We, at least, may be satisfied with the commemoration by our Church of "all those who have departed in Thy faith and fear," without being too ready to find fault with those whose eschatology differed somewhat from ours, and was less scriptural; but whose simple desire, after all, was for God's mercy on themselves, and who, in anxiety for themselves, did not forget "all faithful souls."

In some cases it is probable that the common human desire to be remembered after death took this shape; a chantry was a monument; and a monument of living men keeping a name in remembrance has very respectable countenance. This is the explanation of a good number of English titles of nobility, with grants of suitable estates to maintain the title. The Dukedoms of Marlborough and of Wellington, the Earldoms of St. Vincent and of Nelson, were intended by the sovereign who granted the titles, and the Parliaments which granted [Pg 442] the estates, to keep in memory those great men and their services to the country, and have well served their purpose. So, many a chantry kept the name of the founder fresh in the recollection of his descendants, and of the people of his neighbourhood, which would otherwise have been forgotten. The desire to have one's name kept alive on the lips of prayer was not an unworthy one.

But the two thousand chantries founded between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries were not all of this exclusively personal kind. Many included objects of general utility, which under the name of a chantry could be founded and endowed in a legal way, evading many legal difficulties. Some of the chantries were really chapels-of-ease for an outlying population; some were additions to the working clerical staff of a town; some were grammar schools, the chantry priest being really the schoolmaster.

Chantries began to be founded late in the thirteenth century. The "Taxatio" records only two: one of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln, who died 1225, the other at Hatherton, in the Archdeaconry of Coventry.[499] The number of them increased more and more, and the greater proportion were founded in the fifteenth century.[500] They were distributed very [Pg 443] unequally over the country. Some of the cathedrals served by canons had a considerable number, perhaps because founders of chantries who were great noblemen and ecclesiastics preferred to be commemorated in the mother church of their diocese. Thus, St. Paul's, London,[501] had 37; York, 3; Lichfield, 87; Lincoln, 36; Chichester, 12; Exeter, 11; Hereford, 11; Sarum, 11; none in Wells; none in Bath Abbey Church, but 18 in the adjoining college of Delamond Roy. The cathedrals served by monks seem not to have encouraged the founding of chantries; thus there are none in Durham, Ely, Norwich, Worcester, Winchester, and only, exceptionally, 4 in Canterbury, 2 in Rochester; 4 in the Church of Austin Canons, which was the Cathedral of Carlisle. They were numerous in the great town churches, founded by the wealthy citizens; there were over 180 in the city and suburbs of London; 42 in the city of York; 23 in Newcastle; 4 in the city of Lincoln; 10 in the city of Hereford; 13 in the town of Newark; 7 in Doncaster; 5 in Rotherham, etc. They were unequally distributed over the country parishes; in Norwich diocese, there are very few outside the towns; in Yorkshire they are very numerous; in Wales there are almost none.

We give at length the history of a chantry at Ipswich, as an illustration of these personal [Pg 444] chantries.

Edmund Daundy, merchant of Ipswich, in 1514, founded a perpetual chantry

for a chantry priest at the altar of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the parish church of St. Lawrence, in Ipswich, for the prosperous state of King Henry VIII. and Katharine his queen, of himself, Edmund Daundy, Thomas Wulcy (Cardinal Wolsey), clarke, dean of the cathedral church of Lincoln, and of Wm. Daundy, his son, for the term of their life, and for their souls after their decease; and also for the souls of Anne, his late wife, Robert Wulcy and Jane, his wife, father and mother of the same Thomas Wulcy, etc.

The presentation is to be in the hands of the wardens of the parish and six men nominated by the bailiffs, who shall elect and nominate a man to the Prior of Holy Trinity, who shall present him to the Ordinary for admittance; and if the parish priest refuse to induct him, he may induct himself. He is to take oath to keep the statutes of the foundation, perform the duties personally, not be absent for more than twenty days, except from infirmity, not take any other benefice, office, stipend, trental, nor yearly service, but the £11 6*s.* 8*d.*[502] granted by the founder; he shall abstain from all unlawful games and sports.

His duties are, to say twice in the week *dirge* and *commendations*, and once in the week mass of *requiem*, with the collect, *Almighty and Everlasting God, who governest both the quick and dead, etc.*, with its ... and post communion thereto pertaining; and each day the same priest, singing his mass, and going to the altar's end before he washes his hands at the lavatory, shall say this psalm, *De profundis*, with the collect *Fidelium*, etc., at the end whereof he [Pg 445] shall say, "May the soul of Edmund Daundy, founder of this chantry, and the souls of his parents and kinsfolk and benefactors, and all Christian souls, rest in peace and quietness. Amen."

Also the priest is to be present in the choir of the parish church of St. Lawrence, having on his surplice, at mattins, processions, mass, and evensong, singing the psalmodies with the other priests and clarks every Sunday and Doublefeast and other convenient times, in augmenting of the Divine service, except any lawful case do let him.

Further on, he orders that the names of the persons to be prayed for, viz. the king and queen, Edmund Daundy, Thomas Wulcy, and Wm. Daundy, among the quick during their lives, and also the names of Anne, Robert, and Jane among the dead, shall be written on a table, and the said table by the said priest shall be set openly upon the altar of St. Thomas the Martyr, etc., to the intent that every day the said priest, in his mass, shall pray for the prosperity of our said sovereign lord the king, and the said Edmund the founder, etc., etc.

He assigns for the residence of the priest his messuage lately built, with a garden and a certain lane, and all its appurtenances, lately built in the parish of St. Lawrence.

He has provided for the chantry a mass-book, two complete vestments, and a book called a Coucher; and he directs that the vestments, books, chalices, and other ornaments of the altar given, or to be given, by him or any other patron, after mass shall be properly put away in a chest and locked up.[503] He also wills that the priest shall deposit yearly 2*s.* 4*d.* in a box, with two keys, one to be kept by himself and the other by the churchwardens, for the maintenance [Pg 446] of the house, chantry, furniture, etc. Also, that every priest shall leave to his successor 40*s.*, for the costs and charges of his successor about his presentation, admission, institution, and induction.

He makes elaborate arrangements for his year-day, with the whole service ordained for the dead, for ever. The chantry priest is on that day to distribute to the parish priest of St. Lawrence ministering about the same anniversary, 12*s.*; to the twelve priests, masses and other divine services there doing, 6*s.*; to the parish clerk, 12*d.*; to the other six clerks there singing and serving God, 12*d.*, equally among them; to twelve children there singing and serving God, 12*d.*; to the sexton and ringing of the bells, 6*d.*; to twelve poor indigent persons of the said parish to pray for his soul and the souls above said, 2*s.*; and to the two bailiffs of Ipswich, 13*s.* 4*d.*—that is to say, to every one of them to offer at the said anniversary, 12*d.*, and to control the said anniversary, 6*s.* 8*d.*

"And because it is not in man but in God to foresee and provide all things, and oftentime it fortuneth that what in the beginning was thought to be profitable, afterwards is found not to be so," therefore he reserves to himself only the power to alter these statutes.[504]

The Pudsay Chantry at Bolton-by-Bowland, Yorkshire, was founded for a priest to pray for the soul of the founder, etc., and all Christian souls, and also to say mass at the manor house of Bolton when he shall be required by the said founder or his heirs.[505]

Frequently a chantry was endowed for more than one priest; that of the Black Prince in Canterbury Cathedral was for two priests, whose stipends at the end of the fifteenth century [Pg 447] amounted to £12 each. The endowment of the early Chantry of Hugh of Wells, at Lincoln, was held by the sacrist who, out of its £21 6*s.* 8*d.* a year, had to find two chaplains and to pay alms to the poor at the obit. The Burghersh Chantry, at Lincoln Cathedral, was for five chaplains and six boys who lived together in the chantry house in the Cathedral Close; the endowment, after paying for the maintenance and schooling of the boys, left £7 9*s.* a piece to each of the cantarists. There was a chantry of six priests at Harwood, Yorkshire. There were many others with two and three priests. Richard III. commenced the foundation of a chantry of a hundred chaplains in York Minster; six altars were erected, and the chantry house begun, when the king's death on Bosworth Field put an end to the magnificent design. [506] The foundation of his fortunate rival, though not so extravagant, was of regal splendour. Henry VII.'s chapel at Westminster is the sumptuous chantry chapel in which his monument, with its bronze effigy, protected by the bronze herse, still remain uninjured. The title deed of the endowment which he made for the perpetuation of his memory still remains in the form of a handsome volume, whose pages are adorned with miniature pictures, and the great seals are still attached to it, in their silver cases. First, he provided for three additional monks to say masses for him, who were to be called the king's chantry monks. On every anniversary, the greatest bell of the monastery was to be rung for an hour, and the [Pg 448] bells rung as at the most solemn anniversaries. A hundred wax tapers, each 12 lbs. in weight and 9 feet long, were to be set upon and about the herse, and there continually to burn during all the time of the service of the *Placebo*, the *Dirge*, with lessons, lauds, and mass of *Requiem*, and all the orations, observances, and ceremonies belonging thereto. Also 24 new torches were to be held about the herse all the time of the service. Twenty pounds were to be given in alms, viz. 25 marks among the blind, lame, impotent, and most needy people, 2*d.* to each man and woman, and 1*d.* to each child so far as it will go; and 5 marks to be given to the 13 bedesmen and 3 bedeswomen provided in the said monastery (of whom one was to be a priest, and all under the government of a monk), 12*d.* to each. A weekly obit was to be held, at which the bells were to be rung; and alms given to the 13 bedesmen and 2 bedeswomen and 124 others, 1*d.* to each. Thirty tapers were to burn at the weekly obit, to be renewed when they had burnt down to 5 feet long; to burn also during high mass and first and latter evensong, and at every principal feast; and at the coming of the king and queen for the time being into the Church of the said monastery, and of any of royal blood, dukes, and earls. Four of the torches to be held about the herse at weekly obits, to be renewed when wasted to 7 feet long. Four tapers, one at each side and one at each end, were to burn perpetually night and day, besides the 100 aforesaid, to be renewed when wasted to 6 feet.

[Pg 449]

Abbot, monks, and bedesmen of Westminster Abbey.

Every year, on some day before the anniversary, the abstract of the grant was to be read in the chapter house, and the Chief Justice or King's Attorney or Recorder of London to be present, and to receive 20*s.* for the attendance, and after the reading to go straight to the herse and say certain psalms. The woodcut, taken from one of the illuminations of this title deed, represents the abbot and several monks and the bedesmen above mentioned.

Parochial benefices were sometimes appropriated to the maintenance of chantries; in some cases what was done amounted to this: that the parish church was converted into a chantry

for the lord of the manor and his family. Thus, in 1319, Sir John de Trejagu, Knt., founded a chantry for four chaplains in the Church of St. Michael Penkvil for prayers for himself and family. The proposal was approved by the bishop, who made the church collegiate, and the chief of the four clergymen who were to serve it an archpriest, with the care of the parishioners.

So, in 1334, Eresby Church was appropriated to the Chantry Chapel of Spillesby by the bishop, on the petition of Sir Rob. de Willughby, Knt., and a master and twelve chaplains of the chantry were founded there by Sir John de W. and Lady Johan his wife.[507] In 1395, Elizabeth de Willughby, Consort of Sir Robert, lord of Eresby, left her body to be buried in the above chantry, and bequeathed to the chantry a crucifix of gold in which is a piece of the cross of our Lord, and set with two rubies and two emeralds, with a circle of pearls on the head, to remain there for ever without being alienated.[508] [Pg 450]

Isabel, widow of Sir Fulke de Penbridge (1410), purchased the advowson of Tonge Church, Shropshire, from Shrewsbury Abbey, rebuilt the church in its present beauty, and endowed it with £50, to support a warden, five chaplains, and thirteen old men. The chaplains were not to take other preferment. If any of the poor men were sick or bedridden, they were to be visited three times a week by one of the chaplains. If any stranger dined in hall, the chaplain who introduced him was to pay for his dinner, 3*s.* if at the high table, 1*s.* 4*d.* if at the low. [509]

Sometimes a man founded more than one chantry, perhaps, in churches on his several estates; thus, Ralph Basset, of Drayton, Knight, in 1389 leaves £200 to found two chantries, "one in St. Mary's Chapel in Olney Churchyard, and one in the new chapel built by me at Colston Basset."[510] Sir William de Molynes, Knight, in 4 Richard II., leaves bequests "to every chaplain of my three chantries."[511] [Pg 451]

The founder of a chantry usually kept the right to nominate the cantarist in his own family. Thus, the founder of a chantry of three priests, who were to dwell together in a house vulgarly called Muston, in the parish of Leverton and Leake, left the right of presentation to her daughters.[512] Sometimes the presentation was left to the parish priest, as at Edmonton;[513] sometimes it was even vested in the parishioners, as at Harlow.[513]

Chantries continued to be founded up to the very eve of their general destruction: *e.g.* one at Bishopstone Church, Hereford, in 1532; in Lugwardine Church, in 1541; and in Welsh Newton, in a doubtful way, as late as 1547.[514]

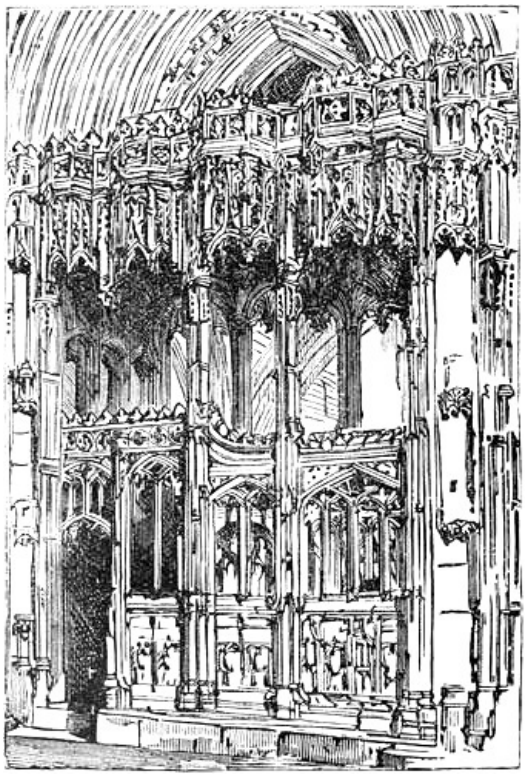
It may be worth while to say that the clergy were as much given to making arrangements for posthumous prayers for themselves and their families as the laity. A large proportion of the chantry chapels in cathedrals were founded for themselves by bishops. One of the earliest is that of Bishop Hugh of Wells, of Lincoln in A.D. 1235; Bishop Stavenby of Lichfield, who died 1238, set the example there; and so in other cathedrals. There is a pleasing touch of sentiment in Bishop Weseham's foundation of a chantry in Lichfield Cathedral for himself and his friend, Bishop Grostete of Lincoln, of which cathedral he had himself been dean before his promotion to the episcopate.[515] [Pg 452]

Not many parish priests founded chantries, because they were seldom rich enough to undertake anything so costly; but the numerous instances in their wills of provision made for trentals, month's minds, and obits, attest their belief and feeling on the subject.[516] There is a quaint touch of professional experience in the condition of the bequest of John Cotes, Canon of Lincoln in 1433, to the resident canons, vicars, chaplains, poor clerks, and choristers attending his funeral, "and present at the whole office, not to those going like vagabonds through the middle of the church at the time of the said office."[517] [Pg 453]

The majority of the chantries were founded at an existing altar of a cathedral, monastic, or parish church; but chantry chapels were specially provided for many of these services, and were the occasion of the introduction of a great deal of architectural variety and interest in existing churches. In the cathedrals, little chapels were screened off in various places. A very favourite locality for the burial of a bishop was between the great pillars of the nave or choir; the space between the pillars was converted into a little chapel by stone screens which enclosed the tomb and altar, and left space for a priest to minister and an acolyte to serve, while those attending the service stood or knelt outside, and could see or hear through the open-work of the screen. Without going further than Winchester Cathedral, we shall find illustrations of varieties of plan and elevation of these chantry chapels.

Those of Wykeham and Edyngdon on the south side of the nave have the space between two pillars screened off with elaborate tabernacle work of stone, and are groined above. Those of Fox and Gardiner are on the south and north sides of the choir; each has a small chamber

adjoining the chapel. Those of Cardinal Beaufort and Waynflete are on the south and north sides of the retro-choir. On each side of the Lady Chapel is a space enclosed for a chantry chapel by wooden screens; that on the south (to Bishop Langton) has benches round the three sides, panelled at the back and canopied by a tester, for people attending the service. [Pg 454]

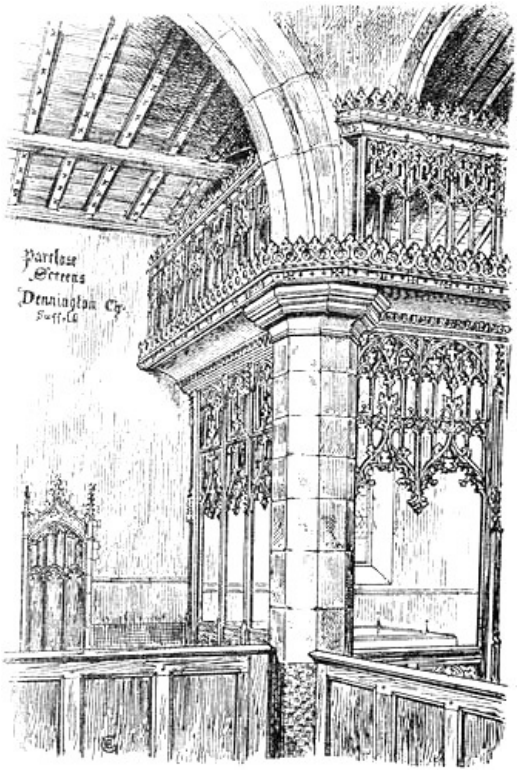


Tewkesbury Abbey.
The Warwick Chantry Chapel.

Cuckfield Church, Sussex—before restoration.

In a parish church, the place provided for a memorial service was sometimes a chapel added to the choir of the church and opening into it, but partitioned by stone, or, more frequently, wooden screens; these chapels were sometimes architecturally beautiful, and added to the spaciousness and dignity of the church. But often, instead of being an addition to the spaciousness of the church, they were a practical infringement upon its space; for the most frequent provision for a chantry was made by screening off the east end of an aisle, either of the chancel or nave. There were rare examples of the chantry chapel being a detached building in the churchyard. At Winchester there is an example both of a chantry at the side of the College chapel and also of another, with a priest’s chamber over it,[518] in the middle [Pg 455] [Pg 456]

of the cloister court.



Screen of Chantry Chapel, Dennington, Suffolk.

It seems desirable to repeat here that some of the domestic chapels were founded as chantry chapels, or had a chantry subsequently founded within them; as the domestic chapel at the Vyne, Hants. There were two chantries in the chapel of Pontefract Castle; one in the chapel of the manor house at Topcliff, Yorkshire, and at Cransford, Dorset, and in the Bishop of Durham's manor house at Darlington. Very probably the service in a domestic chapel always included some commemoration of the departed members of the family. [Pg 457]

It was only well-to-do people who could afford to found and endow a perpetual chantry; there were many less costly ways in which men showed their solicitude for their own well-being, and their affection for their belongings, by making such provision for mortuary prayers and masses as their means allowed. Sometimes provision is made for a chantry to last for a limited number of years. Thus—

> John Cotes, of Tevelby, Canon of Lincoln in 1433, left for a chaplain to sing every day for twenty years, "to have £4 13*s.* 4*d.* per ann., and 3*s.* 4*d.* for wine, wax, and candles, and to engage in no other duty, spiritual or temporal, under pain of my anathema."
>
> Robert Astbroke, of Chepyng Wycombe, 1533, leaves money for "a priest to sing for my soul in Wicomb Church, at Ihus altar for x years, and I desire that there be no prieste admytted to the said servys but that can sing at least his playn song substancyally."[519]
>
> Thomas Booth, in Eccles Church in Lancashire, leaves 100 marks to two chaplains for ten years in two chapels—five marks a year each.[520] [Pg 458]
>
> Robert Johnson,[520] Alderman of York, leaves, "to the exhibition of an honest prest to synge at the alter of Our Lady daily by the space of vij yeres xxxv$^{li.}$ And I will that what prest that shall serve it every day, when that he hath saide masse, shall stand affore my grave [which was 'affore the mydste of the alter'] in his albe, and ther to say the psalme of *De Profundis*, with the collettes, and then caste holy water upon my grave."[521]

So, we have bequests of money to provide one or two chaplains for two years; still more frequently one or two chaplains for one year; frequently for a trental of masses, and an obit, that is for masses for thirty days after death, and after that a mass on the anniversary of death; most frequently of all, for mass on the first, third, seventh, and thirtieth day, and on the years' day.[522] In most cases there was a sum left for wax tapers and other funeral expenses, and for a donation to every clerk, or layman, attending the funeral mass and the obit. In the case of the poorest, the parish priest said a mass for the dead, and committed

the body, with the proper prayers, to the grave.[523]

VIGILIÆ MORTUORUM.
XV. CENT. MS., EGERTON, 1070, f. 54 v.

Ralph Lord Cromwell, making his will in 1457, desired that his body should be buried in Tattershall Church, which he had rebuilt and made Collegiate,[524] and that three thousand masses should be said for his soul. [Pg 459]

> John Prestecote, 1411-1412 [seems to be a clergyman], leaves stock to churchwardens of several parishes to maintain his anniversary for ever, and anniversaries of others; leaves his best silver-covered cup to the Prioress of Polslo Convent, to remain in that house for ever, and be called by his name "Prestcote" in his memory.[525]
>
> 1503. Agnes Walworth leaves to the Church of St. Peter a cup of silver gilt, and to be prayed for in the Bead Roll for one whole year.[526]
>
> 1508. Wm. Harcote leaves his body to be buried in St. Peter's Churchyard, and money to purchase a cross, according to the cross of St. Nicholas in the churchyard, to stand over his grave.[527]
>
> 1509. Wm. Plesyngton orders his body to be buried in St. Peter's Churchyard; a barrel of beer, with bread,[528] to be given in the church at his cost to the poor of the parish; Sir Jeffrey, his ghostly father, to say a trental of masses for his soul in St. Peter's Church, and to be paid 5*s.*[529]

Here are some curiosities on the subject—

> Dame Eliz. Bourchier, in 1499, leaves "*xx marcs for a yearly obit*, at St. Dunstan's in the East, if the parson and parishioners will have it; if not, at some other church; and each of her servants, men and women, dwelling with her at the *time of death, to have a convenient black gown* to pray for her soul."[530] [Pg 460]
>
> In 1452, Thomas of Beckington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, consecrated a tomb which he had made for himself, and said mass, in full pontificals, for his own soul, for the souls of his parents, and all the faithful departed, in the presence of a vast congregation.[531]
>
> The Commonalty of Oxford was required to found an anniversary for the souls of the clerks and others, about forty in number, killed in a Town and Gown riot on St. Scholastica's Day, 1354, and to make an offering, to be distributed 1*d.* to each of forty poor scholars, and the rest to St. Mary's Church. It was continued down to the Reformation.[532]
>
> Roger Wylkynson, of Swyneshead, yeoman, 1499, leaves to his godson his principal messuage and lands, "to him and his heirs in tail, they keeping my

anniversary in Swyneshed Church."[533]

Thomas Normanton, of Tynwell, 1533, leaves his lands to his eldest son Richard in tail, "he and his heirs to keep my anniversary in Ketton Church for ever."[534] The "for ever" lasted sixteen years.

John Toynton, of Lincoln, chaplain, 1431, directs his anniversary to be kept ten years for the following alms:—"In the offering at mass, 6*d.*; in the tolling of the bells to the clerks, 2*d.*; in candles at the mass, 2*d.*; in bread at the dirge, 1*s.* 4*d.*; six chaplains saying dirge and mass, 12*d.*—that is, to each 2*d.*; to poor and needy, 7*d.*; to the parochial chaplain saying my name in his roll on Sundays at [Pg 461] prayers, 4*d.*; to the chantry priest, Robert Dalderby, of Lincoln [chaplain], a new vestment of ruby satin, with golden letters upon it, and a new vestment of Borde to Alexander the chaplain, for masses."[535]

Robert Appulby of Lincoln leaves a bequest to the Guild of Clerks at Lincoln that his name may be recited among the names of the departed, and the antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater*.[536]

We gather with some certainty the amount of remuneration which was usually given to a chantry priest for his services. John Coates, we have seen, in 1433, directs that a chaplain shall say mass for him every day for twenty years, and shall have four pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence per annum, besides three shillings and fourpence for wine and wax candles, and shall engage in no other service, spiritual or temporal, on pain of his anathema. [537]

Richard de Croxton, 1383, leaves £50 for masses for ten years; this would be at the rate of £5 a year. Thomas de Roos, lord of Hamlak and Belvoir, in 1412, leaves £400 for ten chaplains to say mass in his chapel of Belvoir, for eight years, which, again, amounts to £5 a year to each. J. de Haddon, Canon of Lincoln, 1374, leaves £21 for two chaplains for two years. Beatrix Hanlay, 1389, leaves 20 marks and a silver cup to Thornton Abbey for masses, and £30 of silver to six priests to celebrate for a year. So that it is abundantly evident that £5 a year was the usual stipend for a chantry priest. Elizabeth Davy, 1412, leaves cc$^{l.}$ for masses, which is to be kept in some secret place in Lincoln Cathedral, and distributed annually to the chaplains.

Nicholas Sturgeon, priest in 1454, bequeaths to the Church of St. Andrew, [Pg 462] Asperton, Herefordshire, a vestment of black for priest, deacon, and sub-deacon of the price of £10 or within; his exequies and obit day to be kept solemnly there during the term of seven years, for the expenses of which he bequeaths 46*s.*, that is, for every year 6*s.* 4*d.*

Here is a very curious example of a nun being paid to say prayers for people living and dead: John of Leek, Rector of Houghton, 1459, leaves—

to Isabella Chawelton, sister of St. Katharine's, Lincoln, 40*s.* to pray for the soul of her sister Grace, and my soul.[538]

When we refer to the returns of the "Valor," we are confirmed in the conclusion that £5 was the normal stipend of a chantry priest; but a few, through the liberality of the endowment, received more, like the two chaplains of the Black Prince's chantry with their £12 a year; and many received less, as may be seen in the volumes of the "Valor" *passim*.

William Rayne (of Coltisbroke, 1535), leaves to his nephew, if he shall be ordained "a priest, to have £5 a year to sing for me for five years, except he be at my wyf's bording and bedding, and if he soo be, then four marks a yere."[539]

So that a priest's board and lodging was worth £5 - 4 × 13*s.* 4*d.* = £2 13*s.* 4*d.* The lodging with the widow would be consistent with the idea that a chantry priest or annueller was a kind of chaplain to the family. This conjecture is supported by the statute of 36 Ed. III., c. 8, which, in consequence of the dearth of parish priests after the Black Plague, desired to [Pg 463] lessen the number engaged in mortuary services; it forbade any layman to pay a priest more than 5 marks, and if retained to abide at his table, that was to be reckoned as equal to 40*s.* [540] As part of the same policy, a constitution of Archbishop Islop, in 1362, fixed the stipend of a chantry priest at 5 marks.[541]

Archbishop Islip, 1362,[542] says, "We are certainly informed by common fame and experience that modern priests, through covetousness and love of ease, not content with reasonable salaries, demand excessive pay for their labours, and receive it; and do so despise labour and study that they wholly refuse as parish priests to serve in churches or chapels, or to attend the cure of souls, though fitting salaries are offered them, and prefer to live in a leisurely manner by celebrating annuals for the quick and dead; and so parish churches and chapels remain unofficiated, destitute of parochial chaplains, and even proper curates, to the grievous danger of souls; whereupon he goes on to decree that all unbeneficed chaplains fitted for cure of souls shall be required to put aside any private obsequies, and officiate wherever the ordinary shall appoint them, and at six marks of annual stipend, while priests without cure of souls shall be content with five marks." [Pg 464]

These services for the dead made work for a considerable number of clerics. Sometimes, no doubt, the parish priest celebrated the month's mind and the obit, and perhaps the trental also; but when a competent provision had been made for the purpose it is probable that it was usual to employ a distinct person to fulfil the stipulated services. The beneficed clergy are indeed accused of sometimes running away from their own poor benefices to take engagements of this sort. "Piers Ploughman" says:—

> Parsons and parish preistes pleyned hem to the bisshope,
> That hire parishes weren povere sith the pestilence tyme,[543]
> To have a licence and leve at London to dwelle,
> And syngen ther for symonie, for silver is swete.

Chaucer says of his poor parson—

> He sett not his benefice to hire,
> And lefte his sheep accombred in the mire,
> And ran unto London unto Sainte Poules,[544]
> To seeken him a chanterie for souls,
> Or with a Brotherhode to be withold,
> But dwelt at home and kepte well his fold.

But that some poor parsons did so, and that their bishops allowed it, we have the evidence of the Episcopal Registers.[545]

One result of these occasional engagements for a month, or a year, or a few years, was that a considerable number of priests made a precarious living in this easy way, and in many cases were not very useful members of society or very respectable members of the clerical body.[546] [Pg 465]

Chaucer has introduced into his "Shipman's Tale" one of these priests "living in a leisurely manner by celebrating annuals for the quick and dead":—

> In London was a priest, an annueller,
> That therein dwelled hadde many a year,
> Which was so pleasant and so serviceable
> Unto the wife thereas he was at table,
> That she would suffer him no thing to pay
> For board ne lodging, went he never so gay
> And spending silver had he ryht ynoil.[547]

The ordinary chantry priest was under no canonical obligation to help the parish priest in his general duties; but in some cases the foundation deed of the chantry required that the cantarist should assist at Divine worship on Sundays and festivals for the greater honour of the service; and in some cases the priest is expressly required by his foundation deed to help the vicar in the cure of souls, as in the parish churches of Helmsley, Middleton, etc. [Pg 466]

> Our Lady's chantry priest in Rothwell Church (1494), to celebrate mass daily in chantry and other Divine service, and be in the high quire all festival days at mattins, mass, and evensong; and to help to minister sacraments in the parish.
>
> Margaret Blade, widow, endowed the chantry of our Lady in Kildewick Parish, in 1505, for a priest to help Divine service in the quire, to help the curate in time of necessity, and also to sing mass of our Lady on Saturday and Sunday, "if he have convenient help."[548]

Sometimes the chantry priest was required to say Divine service at an unusual hour for the convenience of portions of the people; thus, at St. Agnes, York, the chantry service had been between eleven and twelve, unusually late, and was altered by the advice of the parishioners to an equally abnormal early hour, viz. between four and five in the morning, as well for their accommodation as for travelling people, who desired to hear mass before setting out on their journey.[549] Many churches had such an early service, called the "Morrow Mass."

> If thou have eny wey to wende,
> I rede thou here a masse to ende,
> In the morennynge if thou may,
> Thou shalt not leose of thi travayle,
> Not half a foote of wey.[550]

Some of the chantry chapels were practically chapels-of-ease at a distance from the parish church. For parishes having once been established, the rights of the patrons, incumbents, parishioners, and others interested were so safely secured by the law that it was difficult for any one to make an alteration in the existing arrangements. Even down to the passing of the general Church Building Acts in the present century, a private Act of Parliament was necessary to legalize the subdivision of a parish. When the growth of new groups of population at a distance from the parish church made it desirable to provide the means of Divine worship and pastoral oversight there, if the incumbent desired to make the provision, he could do it by building chapels, and supplying them with chaplains at his own cost, and under his own control. If a lay proprietor desired to make the provision for the people about him, he could do it by getting the bishop's leave to found a chantry, and the king's licence to [Pg 467]

endow it notwithstanding the Mortmain Act. Accordingly, a number of chapels were founded, which were technically chantry chapels, but really chapels-of-ease for an outlying population; *e.g.* the chantries at Brentwood, in the parish of Southweald; Billericay, in the parish of Great Burstead; Foulness island, in the parish of Wakering; in the street of Great Dunmow, half a mile from the parish church, all in Essex; of Woodstock; of Quarrindon, in the parish of Barrow; of St. Giles, in the parish of Stretton, both in Notts, were all built at a distance of a mile or more from their parish churches. At Macclesfield, the Savage Chantry, [Pg 468] founded by the Archbishop of York of that name, who died 1506, was a chapel-of-ease two miles distant from the parish church. There were a considerable number of these outlying chantries in the extensive parishes of Yorkshire, at distances of from half a mile to two or three miles from the parish church, and in some cases divided from the parish church by waters liable to be flooded; in some parishes there were two or three such chantries; as two at Topcliff, two in Sherifholm, two in Strenshall, two in Wath, three in Northallerton, besides a chapel seven miles off served by the vicar's chaplain; one in each of the parishes of Helmsley, Kirby Misperton, Malton, etc.

In some of these chapels there was no endowment for a priest, or it was insufficient, and the inhabitants of the villages taxed themselves voluntarily to make up a stipend; thus, at Ayton, the rate of payment was for a husbandman (? tenant farmer) 8*d.*, a cottager with land 4*d.*, a cottager without land 2*d.* a quarter.

Here is another similar case which presents us with quite a picture:—In 1472, the people of Haxby complain to the archdeacon that "they inhabit so unreasonable fer from ther parisch chirche that the substance [majority] of the said inhabitauntes for impotenseye and feblenes, farrenes of the long way, and also for grete abundance of waters and perlouse passages at small brigges for people in age and unweldye, bethurn these and ther nex parische chirche, they may not come with ese or in seasonable tyme at their saide parishe chirche, as Cristen peple should, and as they wold, so they pray for leave and help for a chaplain of their [Pg 469] own."[551]

A grammar school was often provided for a parish under the convenient conditions of a chantry; the schoolmaster being a priest, it was no great addition to his duties to require him to add to his mass prayer for his founders; it was very natural that the boys who profited by the foundation should also be required to join in the commemoration services for their benefactor.[552]

We quote the whole scheme of the foundation at Blackburn as an example of its kind.

> In 1514, fifth year of Henry VIII., Thomas, Earl of Derby, and the parishioners of Blackburn, each contributed lands, etc., to be held by certain trustees for the foundation of a chantry in the church there, in the chapel of our blessed Lady, in the south aisle there. The chantry priest was to be "an honest seculer prest, and no reguler, sufficiently lerned in gramer and playn song, y^{f} any such can be gotten, that shall kepe continually a fre gramer schole, and maintaine and kepe the one syde of the quire, as one man may, in his surplice, every holiday throughout the year." And if no secular priest can be found that is able and sufficiently "lerned in gramer and plain song," then they were to find "an able secular priest, who is expert, and can sing both pricke song and plain song, and hath a sight in descant, who shall teach a free song school in Blackburn." In all his masses he was to pray for the good estate of the then Earl and Lady of Derby, and their ancestors, and all benefactors to the chantry, quick or dead, and for all Christian souls. And every Sunday and [Pg 470] holiday in the year, after his mass, he was to turn him to the people, and exhort them to prayer for all the said persons, and to say "the salme *De profundis*, with a *Paternoster* and an *Ave Maria*, with special suffrages after, and funeral collect, as well for the quick as for the dead. And every Saturday and holiday he shall sing the masse of Our Lady to note, and every quarter day he and his scholars shall sing a solemn dirge for the souls aforesaid. And if the chantry priest shall take any money or profit to say any trental, or otherwise to pray for souls other than those specified in the present foundation, he shall give half the profit towards the reparation or ornament of the said chantry; and if he shall make default in any of his duties, he shall pay 4*d.* for each such default, to be bestowed on the reparation and ornamentation of the chantry." In summer he was to say his masses at 8 a.m., and in winter at 10 a.m.[553]
>
> So, in 1468, Richard Hammerton endowed a chantry in the chapel of Our Lady and St. Anne, in the church of Long Preston, co. York, "that the incumbent should pray for the soul of the founder, help to perform divine service in the choir in time of necessity, teach a grammar and song school to the children of the parish, make a special obit yearly for the soul of the founder, distribute at the same time six shillings to the poor in bread, and make a sermon by himself or deputy once a year."[554]
>
> There were four chantries in Burnley Church, and belonging to the Townley

Chantry a *parva aula*, on the west side of the churchyard,[555] occupied as a grammar school till 1695, when another was erected in a more convenient situation.[556]

At Giggleswick, in Yorkshire, and at Tutthill, in the same county, the rood chantry priest was required to be "sufficiently seen" in plain song and grammar, and therefore, no doubt, was intended to teach them.[557] [Pg 471]

The gild priest of the Jesus Gild, Prittlewell, Essex, celebrated daily at the altar of St. Mary, in the parish church, and had also charge of the education of the youth of the parish.

Skipton Grammar School was founded in 1548. The appointment vested in the vicar and churchwardens, for the time being. The master was to teach certain Latin authors, to attend in the choir of the parish church on all Sundays and festivals, and when service is performed by prick song, unless hindered by some reasonable excuse; to celebrate before seven in the morning on such days, and three other days in the week; to be vested in a surplice, and sing or read as shall seem meet to the vicar.[558]

In 1529 an act passed forbidding any one after Michaelmas to receive any stipend for singing masses for the dead; some of the patrons proceeded to seize upon the chantry lands and furniture. Another act on the accession of Ed. VI., put all the colleges, chantries, free chapels, and other miscellaneous "endowments for superstitious uses" into the hands of the king, and commissioners were appointed to search them out and take possession of them. Some few of the chapels which had served outlying populations continued to exist and serve their purpose, the endowments were ruthlessly confiscated, but the inhabitants purchased the building of the crown or the grantee, and subscribed among themselves to provide a scanty stipend for a curate.[559]

Many of the grammar schools which were suppressed were refounded and endowed as King Edward VI. Grammar Schools. [Pg 472]

The Returns of the Commissioners are in the Record Office, and there is an index to them arranged under counties. The Harleian MS., 605, in the British Museum, is also a catalogue of gilds and chantries.

Here follow some notes, from these sources, of curious endowments—

Fernditch and at Ordell, Beds., for "a Lamp and a Drinking" in the church.

Emberton, Bucks., "for a Drinking."

Great Horkesley, Essex; Cranfield and Steventon, Beds.; for "a Drink for the Poor."

Uppingham, Rutland, for "a Drinking on Rogation Day."

Wynge, Bucks., "for Bride Ale, Child Ale, Marriages, and Dirges, with lawful games."

Coventry, "for a preacher."

Townley, Suffolk, for "a Lamp and watching the Sepulchre."

Hempstead, Essex, "for discharging the Tax of the poor who may not have to dispend yearly above 40*s.*"

"For the Bead Roll," at Barford, Beds., Chulgrave, Polloxhill, Richmond, Sondon, Wichhampstead, Eston, Dorlaston.

"For finding a Conduit," at St. Mary Aldermary.

"For repairing Roads and Bridges," in several places.

"For the Poor," in several places.

At Hendry and at Wingfield, Suffolk, "for setting out Soldiers."

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CHAPTER XXIX.

GILDS.

The voluntary societies or fraternities called “gilds,” which were numerous all over Christian Europe in the Middle Ages, were established for mutual help and comfort in the various exigencies of life—in sickness, old age, poverty (if not the result of misconduct), in wrongful imprisonment, in losses by fire, water, or shipwreck.[560] So far it was a benefit club. But the gild had always a religious [Pg 474] basis. It usually put itself under the name and protection of the Holy Trinity or of some saint. Once a year, at least, it took measures to have a special service held on its behalf in church, which all the members attended, habited in the livery of the gild; thence it proceeded to its hall or meeting-place for the annual business meeting; and afterwards held its annual feast. The mutual help and comfort embraced the spiritual side of life, and included mutual prayers for the living and the dead. Especially, the gild made much of the burial of its members, which was conducted with great solemnity; all the members were bound to attend the funeral; and provision was made for the continual offering of masses for the welfare of the living, and the repose of their departed brothers and sisters.[561]

The trade gilds had for their chief aim the regulation and protection of their particular [Pg 475] trade; their laws included the regulation of freemen, apprentices, etc.; the quality, etc., of their goods; and constituted a trade monopoly. But the trade gild always embraced the usual social and religious features above mentioned.

The great trade gilds were often powerful and wealthy corporations; their members made bequests to them of lands and tenements; they used their commercial talent and ready money in making purchases of other property which added to their corporate wealth. They built handsome gild halls as the visible manifestation of their importance; all the members wore gowns of the same material, colour, and fashion; their officers, masters, and wardens were distinguished by great silver-gilt maces borne before them, and by chains and badges round their shoulders; they took pride in the splendour of their pageantry in the public processions and functions. They prided themselves also on the value of their plate, mostly gifts from their own members, or gifts from great persons; on the sumptuousness of their hospitality; and also on the useful institutions which they maintained—hospitals, schools, almshouses; on their gifts to the poor; and on their liberal contributions on great occasions [Pg 476] of public need. Some of them had their own chapel, or at least constant special services in church, conducted by their own chaplain or chaplains.

> Some of the gilds were organizations not so much for mutual benefit or the regulation of trade as for the foundation and conduct of enterprises for the benefit of the whole community; for promoting the glory of God, and increasing the number of services and the means of grace, for the population of the town; for founding a hospital or grammar school; for building and repairing bridges and highways, and the like.
>
> The Gild at Ludlow had seven chaplains, and maintained also two deacons and four choristers to sing divine service in the parish church. It supported a grammar school, an almshouse for thirty-two poor people, and bestowed liberal gifts on the poor.
>
> The Kalendar Gild of Bristol dated from before the Norman Conquest. In answer to inquiries made in 1387, the gild stated that in the twelfth century it had founded a school for Jews and others, to be brought up in Christianity, under the care of the said fraternity, which school it still maintained.[562]
>
> At York there was a Gild of the Lord’s Prayer. It arose in this way: at some date unknown, but before the year 1387, a Miracle Play of the Lord’s Prayer had been performed in York, in which all manner of vices and sins were held up to scorn, and the virtues held up to praise. The play met with so great favour that a gild was founded for the purpose of keeping up the annual [Pg 477] performance of the play. The gild had the usual charitable and religious features; but, besides, the members were bound to illustrate in their lives the scorn of vice and the praise of virtue, which were the objects of the play, and to shun company and business which were unworthy. The gild maintained a candelabrum of seven lights to hang in York Minster, to be lighted on all Sundays and feast days, in token of the seven supplications of the Lord’s Prayer, to the honour and glory of Almighty God, the Maker of that Prayer.

And they maintained a tablet, showing the whole meaning and use of the Lord's Prayer, hanging against a pillar of the minster, near the aforesaid candelabrum. Whenever the play was performed in York, the gild were to ride with the players through the principal streets, clad in one suit, and to keep order during the play.

The Corpus Christi Gild at York seems to have been founded by some of the clergy specially for the purpose of organizing a great annual function in honour of the Eucharist. On the day from which the gild took its name, a great procession was made through the streets of the city, headed by priests in surplices, and the six masters of the gild bearing white wands; the craft gilds of the city followed, exhibiting pageants. In 1415, ninety-six crafts took part in the procession, of which fifty-four exhibited pageants of subjects from the Bible, and ten carried torches. A great folio volume, now in the British Museum, contains the roll of its brethren and sisters, of all ranks, about 14,850 in number. The two gilds of St. Christopher and St. George, York, had a "Guylde Hall," and maintained and repaired certain stone bridges and highways, and gave relief to certain poor people, but "had no spiritual promotion whereby the King should have firstfruits and tenths."[563] The Earl and Countess of Northumberland were brother and sister of this gild, and their annual payment to it was 6*s.* 8*d.* each, and 6*s.* 8*d.* more for their livery. [564]

[Pg 478]

St. George's Gild at Norwich, founded in 1385, in close connection with the corporation of the city, was another famous gild, numbering thousands of brethren and sisters, among them some of the East Anglian nobility. They had a stately equestrian procession, with pageants, on St. George's Day.

Chaucer has not overlooked this feature of the social life of his period. Among the "Canterbury Pilgrims"—

> An Haberdasher and a Carpenter,
> A Webber, a Dyer, and a Tapeser,
> Were all yclothed in o liverie
> Of a solempne, and grete fraternity.

In 1404 the Gild of the Holy Trinity was established in Worcester by Henry IV. The chantry which had been founded in the reign of Edward III. was slightly altered from its original purpose; a perpetual chantry of three monks was appointed to sing masses for the soul of Henry, while the priest of the original foundation was required to assist the parson and curator of the parish church, "because it doth abound in houseling people," as well as to sing mass at his own altar.[565]

The bailiffs and commonalty of Birmingham in 1392, on the basis of a chantry originally founded in the time of Henry II., founded the Gild of the Holy Cross, with chaplains to celebrate Divine service in the Church of St. Martin, for the town contained two thousand houseling people; to keep in repair two great stone bridges and divers foul and dangerous ways; to maintain almshouses for twelve poor persons, and other charities. It built a great public hall, which was called indifferently the Town Hall or the Gild Hall.[566]

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We find in the "Calendar of Chantries," etc., and also in the "Valor Ecclesiasticus," a number of endowed "services," under the same kind of saintly designation as the chantries, *e.g.* our Lady's Service, St. Anne's, St. Catherine's, St. John's, the Rood, Trinity, etc.; sometimes, also, like some of the chantries, they are recorded under a surname, which it seems probable was that of the founder, as *e.g.* at Bristol, William's Service, Foster's, Pollard's, Jones's, Henry's, Forthey's.

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The payment for these services seems usually to have come through the hands of a warden or of feoffees, and we suppose that they were usually maintained by a gild or fraternity.

At Our Lady's altar in Rotherham Church, "divers well-disposed persons" founded a chaplaincy to sing "mass of Our Lady every Saturday at eight o'clock." The Rood Chantry in Skipton Church was founded for a priest to say mass "every day when he is disposed" (does not that mean when he is not, as we say, indisposed, *i.e.* when he is not hindered by sickness?), "at six in summer and seven in winter, for the purpose that as well the inhabitants of the town as Kendal men and strangers should hear the same."

The mayor and his brethren at Pontefract provided a chaplain to survey the amending of the highways, and to say the "morrow mass," which was over by 5 a.m. Also a chaplain of Our Lady to say mass at 8 a.m., and another in the chantry of Our Lady in St. Giles's Chapel-of-ease there, to sing mass daily "for the ease of the inhabitants." There was also a "Rushworth chaplain" at St. Thomas's Chantry, in the parish church.

In Wakefield Church the parishioners ordained a "morrow mass" at 5 a.m. for all servants and labourers in the parish.

There was a strong likeness between chantries and services; but while the chief object of a chantry was to obtain prayers for the departed, and it was only incidentally that it supplied additional opportunities of Divine worship, the service seems to have been intended specially to maintain an additional and probably a grander public service for the glory of God and the help of the spiritual life of the inhabitants of a parish or town, while prayers for the founders and benefactors were only a minor incident of the foundation. Here are a few notes on the stipends of the chaplains, the hire of chapels for the services, etc. [Pg 481]

In the "Calendar of Chantries," etc., there are recorded 107 services, of which 64 are in Gloucestershire, 12 in Herefordshire, 7 in Chester, 5 in Yorkshire, 4 in Shropshire, 3 in Derbyshire, 2 in Staffordshire, and 2 in Somerset, 1 each in Dorset, Durham, Essex, and Wilts, and 4 in Wales. There are a few entries of "Stipendiaries of our Lady," who were probably priests serving "Services of our Lady."

There was a service in the parish church of St. Ellen, Worcester; the chaplain "*exercens*" the "*servicium*" of the Blessed Virgin there received by the hands of the wardens of the said "*servicium*," 45*s.*, and he received 75*s.* more from the benevolence and charity of the parishioners there. In the same church was a Service of St. Katharine, for "*exercens*" which the chaplain received from the wardens a clear stipend of £5 1*s.* 11½*d.*[567]

The Vicar of Cirencester received payments from the Feoffees of the service of the Name of Jesus for the use of a chapel, £6; from the wardens of the service of St. Christopher, for the use of a chapel, £6 0*s.* 5*d.*; from the Feoffees of the Fraternity of St. Katharine, 9*s.* 9*d.*; and from the Feoffees of the Fraternity of St. John Baptist, 17*s.* We have already seen in the chapter on Chantries,[568] that in villages the people sometimes provided services for themselves, which might be classed with these.

In the fifteenth century every market town had one or more gilds,[569] not necessarily with the costly adjuncts of a hall for their meetings, and a chaplain and services of their own in church, but each with its charities, and social customs, and always with its annual service and festival. Even in many villages and rural parishes a gild helped to draw neighbours together into friendly association, organized their charities, and stimulated their village festivities. Even the humblest of them had its little fund, formed by the annual subscriptions of the members, and perhaps a little "stock"[570] of a few cows or sheep fed on the common pasture, the profit of which swelled the common fund of the gild, out of which they helped a member in a strait, and gave alms to their poor. They made much of the funerals of their departed members, following them in a long procession. The humblest had a few cooking utensils, and pots, and pans, and pewter dishes and plates[571] for their convivial meetings, and perhaps a mazer with a silver rim as the loving cup, out of which they drank to one another's health and prosperity; and on their annual feast day the vicar said a special mass for them, and preached them a sermon. [Pg 482] [Pg 483]

The suppression of all these gilds on the pretext of their prayers for their deceased members, and the confiscation of their property (except in London, whose great Trading Gilds were too powerful to be meddled with), was the very meanest and most inexcusable of the plunderings which threw discredit upon the Reformation.

We have some general reflections to make on these three chapters on Domestic Chaplains, Chantries, and Gilds.

The appropriation of so many parochial benefices to the religious houses in the twelfth century had greatly reduced the provision for the parochial clergy on whom the burden of the parochial care of the people rested. The institution during the thirteenth century of vicars in the appropriated parishes, with perpetuity of tenure, fixed endowment, and responsibility to the bishop, had done something to alleviate the evil. The institution of the orders of friars in the same thirteenth century had effected a great revival of religion; and when the work of the new order had settled down to its normal level it still supplied a valuable auxiliary of religion among the lower classes of the population. By the end of the thirteenth century things had settled down. Very few new monasteries were founded after the twelfth century; very few friaries after the thirteenth century. [Pg 484]

Of the rural benefices many were in the hands of rectors in minor orders who employed chaplains at such stipends as they could agree with them to accept. Many in the hands of absentee and pluralist rectors were similarly served by parish chaplains. The remainder were served by vicars whose endowments we have seen were small. The natural result of such a state of things must have been that a great proportion of the rural parishes were taught and tended by vicars and parish chaplains who might be good men, doing their duty to the best of their ability, but not always men of the breeding and learning which would make them very suitable pastors for the country gentry and their families. It seems probable that, in the fashion which sprung up among the country gentry at the close of the thirteenth century, and continued through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, of founding chantries, and entertaining domestic chaplains, the gentry were seeking to provide for themselves and their families additional and sometimes more acceptable spiritual teachers and guides. A wealthy lord sometimes met the difficulty by converting the parish church into a collegiate church, with a considerable clerical staff adequately endowed. [Pg 485]

In the ancient towns, we have seen the parishes were small and their endowments miserable. In the more modern towns, which had grown into great towns, with the general increase of the population and its tendency then, as now, to gravitate into the towns, the one vicar of the one parish church was often quite unable to cope with the spiritual needs of a large and difficult flock; and the townspeople themselves sometimes made better provision for their own spiritual needs. The gilds, which provided two or three or half a dozen chaplains with singing boys to conduct service in the parish church, were clearly providing for a more dignified service for the honour of God than the vicar and his clerk could offer; the *Servicia* called by the name of this and that saint, seem to have been intended to multiply the number of services for the greater convenience of the people. The gild chaplains would certainly be expected to undertake special personal ministrations—without infringing on the legal rights of the vicar—to the brothers and sisters of their gild. It is very interesting to see that the people thus set themselves to supplement the deficiencies of the ecclesiastical organization, by providing for their own spiritual needs. It reminds us of the way in which, in more modern times, earnest people supplied the deficiencies in the supply of their spiritual cravings by holding “prophecyings” in the time of Elizabeth, and by the foundation of lectureships in the parish churches in the time of the Georges.

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CHAPTER XXX.

THE MEDIÆVAL TOWNS.

A typical mediæval town must have been wonderfully picturesque. As the traveller came in sight of it at a little distance its grey embattled walls, rising sheer out of the surrounding green meadows, were diversified in elevation and sky-line by projecting wall towers; and numerous spires and towers of churches appeared over the walls.[572]

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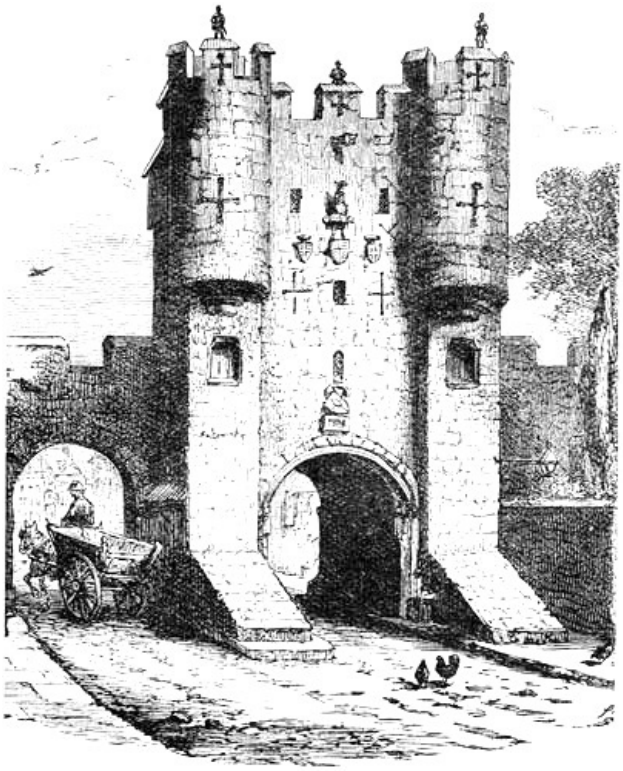
As he rode nearer, the great gate tower, with its outwork the barbican, formed a picturesque architectural group, and spoke of the strength of the defences of the town and the security of its inhabitants. He entered over sounding drawbridge, through the echoing vault of the gate; and so into narrow streets of gabled timber houses, with overhanging upper stories, interlacing beams, and quaint carvings and finials; past frequent churches, hospitals, gild-halls; to the cross in the middle of the market-place.

[Pg 488]



Micklegate Bar, York.

The people he saw in the streets were in picturesque costumes of all colours and fashions: a cavalcade of a knight, in flashing armour, with a squire carrying his helm and spear and two or three yeomen in buff-coats and helmets behind him; a monk in his flowing black benedictine robe; a couple of Franciscan Friars in their grey gowns rope-girdled; a parish priest or cantarist returning from his service; the citizens in dress which indicated their quality—some in their burgess gowns, others in the livery of their gild; the shopmen at their open booths at work at their craft and soliciting the passers-by, “What d’ye lack? What d’ye lack? Buy, buy, buy, buy!” In the central market-place the traveller found crowds of the country-people grouped round the market cross with their panniers of country produce, and the housekeepers of the town busily cheapening their goods.

When we apply ourselves to the consideration of the ecclesiastical history of the towns, we have to bear in mind their various origins. Nearly all the towns which the Romans left when they evacuated the Province of Britain were stormed and sacked by the Teutonic invaders, and left ruined and empty. But as the Saxon settlers grew in numbers, wealth, and civilization, the force of circumstances must have led to the reoccupation of a number of these towns; for some were at the natural harbours, some at convenient points on the lines of internal traffic; and so new towns of timber houses arose within the old Roman walls. [Pg 489] Other towns of later origin grew up about the chief residence of a Saxon king, or, later still, of a Norman noble; or about a cathedral or great monastery; later still, at the convenient centre of the trade of a fertile district, or where natural advantages encouraged the growth of a manufacture.

The parochial history of the towns is very obscure. The facts point to the conclusion that the origin of parishes here was the same as in the country. There the lord of an estate built a church and provided a maintenance for a priest to minister to his family and dependents; and the priest’s spiritual authority was conterminous with the area of his patron’s civil jurisdiction; *i.e.* the estates were the parishes. The ancient towns, it is found, were frequently divided between several principal proprietors, who had rights of jurisdiction over their own land and the people living on it. The facts seem to indicate that the lords of these sokes, or peculiar jurisdictions, usually—like a country thane in his manor—built a church, and provided a maintenance for a priest to minister to his own family and people; and that these sokes became the parishes of the town.

The great landowners of Saxon or Norman times very frequently had a residence in the chief town of the county in which their principal estates were situated; a custom which continued so long that it is not yet forgotten how the great county families used to have their houses in their county town. But the residence of a great Saxon or Norman lord was the home of a [Pg 490] numerous household, and the lord’s dignity required that he should have a chapel and a priest of his own. This perhaps is the explanation of the fact that there were numerous chapels in many of the oldest towns.

In borough towns the community of burgesses, it is probable, usually made provision for the

religious wants of that part of the population which was not in any of the peculiar jurisdictions above mentioned, or within the walls of the residences of the nobles; and we find groups of burgesses, and individual burgesses, possessing a church, in the sense of having the rights and responsibilities of patrons. The result of this origin of town parishes was that many of the older towns had a number of parish churches which seems to us out of all proportion to the number of their population; it was never a question of how many churches were needed for a town of such-and-such a population; the question was how many lords there were who felt bound, in their own opinion and that of the time, to provide for Divine worship and pastoral care for their own people.[573]

A few actual examples will illustrate these general observations.

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Norwich, at the end of the Saxon period, was one of the greatest towns in the kingdom, containing 1320 burgesses. The king, Archbishop Stigand in private property, and Earl Harold were the principal lords. The king's burgesses had two churches in the burgh and one-sixth of a third church; the earl's tenants had the Church of All Saints; and Stigand had two churches, St. Michael's and St. Martin's. The burgesses held fifteen churches; and twelve burgesses held Holy Trinity Church (the Conqueror afterwards gave it to the Bishop of the Diocese); the Abbot of St. Edmund had a house and the mediety of the Church of St. Lawrence. The Church of SS. Simon and Jude was held successively by Aylmer, the last Saxon bishop, and by Herbert, the first Norman bishop, and by Bishop William, who came after him, and must therefore have belonged to the see. The Domesday Survey also enters forty-three chapels as belonging to the burgesses at the time of the Survey, of the existence of which, in King Edward's time, there is no mention; and yet Norwich had suffered much in the political changes of the time, the number of its burgesses being reduced to half their number in the time of King Edward.

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It seems clear that each owner of a separate jurisdiction or soke, king, earl, Stigand, bishop, and abbot, had a church for his own people; that the burgesses as a community had provided fifteen other churches in the town, that another church was held by a group of twelve burgesses, associated, perhaps, in a gild, and making provision for their own spiritual needs. There were, thus, at least twenty-five churches in Saxon times; in the Conqueror's time Domesday Book enumerates fifty-four churches and chapels; at the end of the thirteenth century, the "Taxatio" records forty-five; and just before the Reformation, the "Valor" names the cathedral, the collegiate church of St. Mary in the Fields, the two hospitals of St. Giles, Tombland, the rectory of SS. Edward, Julian, and Clement, thirty-seven vicarages, and one free chapel of St. Katharine.[574]

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Of the parochial history of London very little is known. At the end of the Saxon period the Church of St. Paul seems to have been surrounded by a few chapels under the jurisdiction of the Cathedral body, and served by Chaplains. St. Peter, Cornhill, seems to have been the church of the bishop's soke. A number of churches seem to have been built in the twelfth century by owners of property, of whom several were priests:—"There can be little doubt that St. Martin Orgars, and St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, were built by Orgar, a wealthy alderman; and that St. John Zachary, St. Andrew Hubbard, St. Katharine Colman, St. Benet Fink, St. Lawrence Pountney, and other names affixed to churches, commemorate founders, builders, or restorers, chiefly of the early part of the twelfth century. In the time of Henry I., the chapter assigned a parish to the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Milk Street, of which one Geoffrey, a priest, was the owner, and his son Bartholomew his successor."

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NORWICH, FROM G. BRAUN'S URBIUM PRAECIPUARUM

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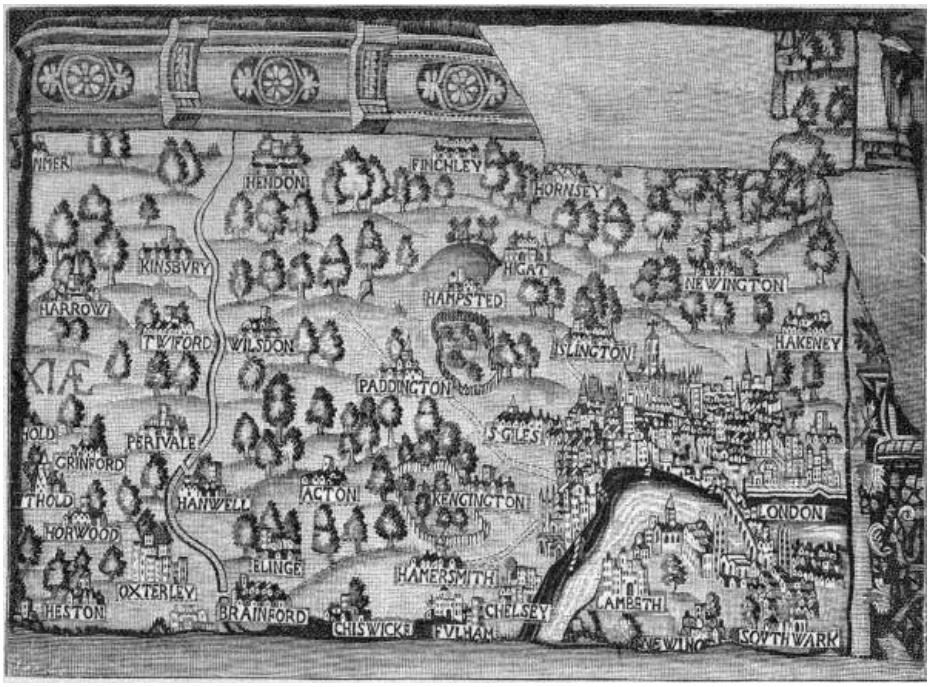

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Environs of London, reproduced from a fragmentary tapestry map executed at Weston, Warwickshire, circ. 1570.

"Many of those parish churches were of very modest dimensions, some of them only chapels to the great house by whose lord they were built. The steeple and chancel of All Hallows the Less stood over the gateway of Cold Harbour, the parish being, in fact, the estate of the Pountney family, and divided by them from All Hallows the Great. St. Mary Cole Church was over the gateway of the hospital of St. Thomas of Acon in Cheap. St. Mildred Poultry, and St. John, were both built on arches over the Wallbrook."[575]

Of several other churches the founders are known: the canons of St. Martin built St. Leonard and St. Vedast; the Grey Friars of Newgate Street built St. Ewen and St. Nicholas; Robert the son of Ralph the son of Herluin built St. Michael le Querne; Alfune, the friend of Rahere, founder of St. Bartholomew's, built St. Giles, and Aelmund the priest, with his son Hugh, gave it to St. Paul's.

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There are indications of the subdivision of parishes, probably as a consequence of the subdivision of properties by inheritance or sale. Thus St. Mary Aldermary seems to have been the original church of a parish which was afterwards subdivided, the original dedication being retained in the new churches, but with some distinctive affix, as St. Mary le Bow, St. Mary Abchurch, St. Mary Woolnoth, St. Mary Woolchurch, St. Mary Bothaw, St. Mary Colechurch, St. Mary Aldermanbury, and St. Mary Staining; All Hallows the Great and the Less already mentioned; St. Nicholas Olave, and St. Nicholas Cole Abbey; St. Katharine Colman, and St. Katharine Cree.

There is a church dedicated to St. Botolph at each of four of the city gates: Aldersgate, Bishopsgate, Aldgate, and Billingsgate.

Wm. FitzStephen, in his biography of Becket, states that, in his time, London possessed 13 conventual, and 126 parish churches.

Fabyan's "Chronicle," A.D. 1516, gives the sum of the parish churches within London as 113; houses of religion and others being not parish churches, 27; in Westminster and other places around the city, including Southwark, without the walls, 28; the sum of all the Divine houses within the city and without, 168.

Lastly, we get valuable suggestions as to the source of the incomes of the town clergy. In London, the parochial clergy had no tithe and glebe land; their incomes were derived from customary payments, called donations, which had been paid time out of mind from the houses and shops in proportion to their rent. In consequence of some disputes, they were inquired into and confirmed by Bishop Roger, about A.D. 1230, and amounted to about 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound of the rent. The clergy received, besides, fees for services on many occasions; what these were we learn from some proceedings in the Star Chamber in 1534—

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> For *Weddings*: Laid on the book, 8*d.*; three tapers, 3*d.*; and the whole offering at mass. If married before high mass, 20*d.*, or 40*d.*, or 60*d.*, or more. For a certificate when the man dwelt in another parish, 12*d.*, or 20*d.*, or 40*d.*, according to ability.

For *Burials*: 12*d.* or more, and every priest in the church, 8*d.* or more, or they do not sing him to his burial. At every month's mind, year's mind, or obit, the curate has 8*d.* or 12*d.*, all the wax tapers and wax branches used at the funeral; for privy tithes, 20*d.*, or 40*d.*, or 5*s.*, or 20*s.*, or 40*s.*, or more. To the high altar as much for personal tithe. If buried out of his parish, the corpse must first be presented in his own church with dirge and mass. For burial in the chancel or high quire, 10*s.* to 40*s.*, or more.

For *Churchings*: For every Sunday when the woman lieth in for saying a gospel, 1*d.* or 2*d.*; at purification the taper, 1*d.*, with the chrisome, and the whole offering by all the women at mass, 2*d.*

Beadroll: If any will have his friends prayed for in the beadroll, the curate hath by year 4*d.*, or 8*d.*, or more.

At Easter: Of men's wives, children, and apprentices, for their communion at Easter, for every head, 2*d.*

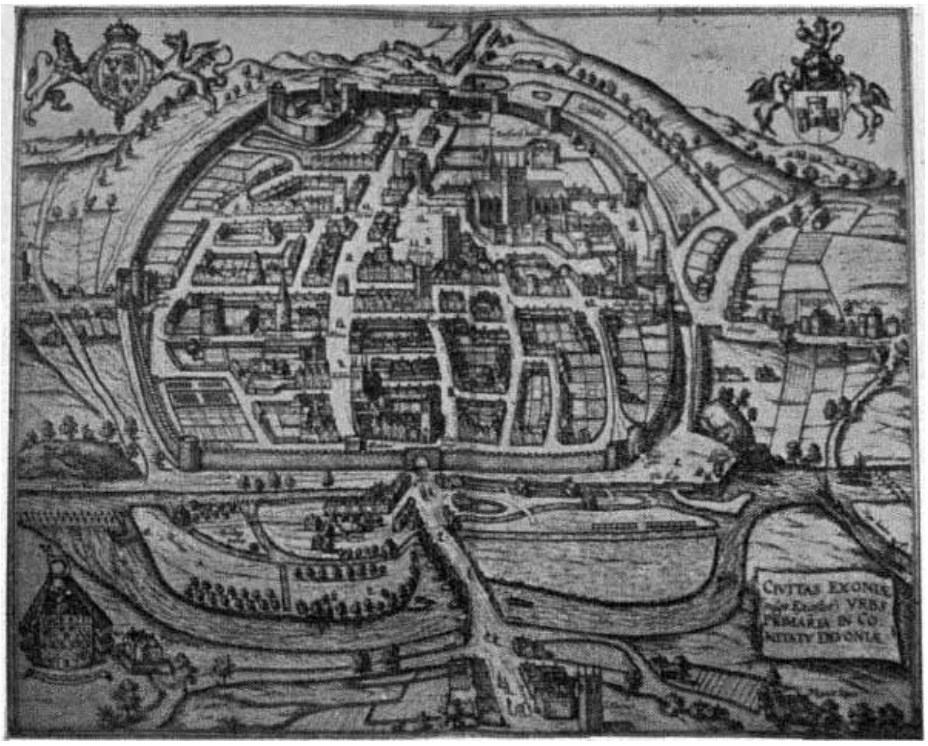
Tithes of Servants' Wages: The tenth part and for their housel at Easter, 1*d.* At all principal feasts divers offer, some wax, some money, which comes to the parson's use.

Where a Saint's image stands without the quire to which a Brotherhood belongeth, the wardens of the brotherhood compound some for 3*s.* 4*d.*, 5*s.*, 6*s.* 8*d.*, or more, per annum, to have the Brotherhood kept in the Church (see p. 482). [Pg 497]

The lords reduced the tithes on houses to 2*s.* 9*d.* in the pound, but confirmed the above customary fees and payments.[576]

The ancient city of Exeter became the see of the Devonshire Bishopric in 1049-50, when Bishop Leofric moved thither from Crediton; and seems at the time of the Norman Conquest to have had its cathedral church and a number of chapels. A religious foundation of Gytha was granted by the Conqueror to Battle Abbey; it received additional endowments, and grew into a considerable priory, still receiving its priors from the parent house, and paying a pension to it. A second small alien Priory of St. James was founded without the walls. The Castle Chapel was a detached building with nave and aisle, and was served by three prebends with no dean or head, and the patronage was attached to the Barony of Okehampton. The bishops had an almshouse perhaps from the days of Leofric; in 1170 a citizen founded a hospital of St. Alexius; and the two were in 1225 merged in the hospital of St. John by the East Gate. A leper hospital was founded outside the South Gate, and its inmates were forbidden to enter the city. A convent of Franciscans was founded between 1220 and 1240, and a convent of Dominicans about the same time.

In the early part of the thirteenth century there seems to have been some arrangement of the parochial organization of the city. For in the reign of King John, we learn from the will of Peter de Paterna and Isabel his wife, who bequeathed 1*d.* to each of them, that there were twenty-eight chapels in the city of Exeter. In the year 1222 there was a settlement of the parish churches which were fixed at the number of 19.[577] The names of all these parish churches are found in the list of chapels previously existing, and some of the chapels are not included among the parish churches.[578] [Pg 498]



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EXETER, FROM G. BRAUN'S URBIUM PRAECIPUARUM MUNDI THEATRUM, LIB. 5, pl. 1. A.D. 1573.

BRISTOL affords us an example of a town whose ecclesiastical organization grew with the gradual increase of the town, in a way which can be more or less clearly made out. Bristol was a member of the Royal Manor of Barton. At an early date, probably in Heptarchic times, a town grew up on the peninsula between the river Avon and its tributary the Frome; the existence of silver pennies of Ethelred the Unready, which were coined here, shows that it was at that time a burgh with the usual privilege of a mint. The reader will remember that it was the principal seaport of the western coast, and the principal emporium of the slave-trade in Saxon men, women, and children until Bishop Wulstan succeeded with difficulty in suppressing the nefarious traffic. [Pg 499]

The Church of St. Peter is said by tradition to have been the earliest church in Bristol; and there are reasons for thinking that it actually was the church provided by the Crown as lord of the manor for the use of its tenants there. The dedication of St. Werburg indicates that this church was also of Saxon date. The burgh was divided by two main streets, crossing at right angles in the middle of the town; the churches of St. Ewan, All Saints, and Holy Trinity (or Christ Church), stand in the angles made by the Carfax, and their parishes meet at this point, as though there had been a considerable addition to the population of the burgh, and the cross roads had been made, the parishes marked out, and the three churches built simultaneously.

The Conquest was followed by an age of church-building in Bristol; the Bishop of Coutances built a castle with a chapel, outside the town on the east; new Norman lords rebuilt some of the parish churches. The new church of St. Mary le Port was built by William, Earl of Gloucester, before 1176. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, founded a Benedictine Priory outside the town, on the north. A little later Robert Fitz-Harding founded a Convent of Augustinian Canons on the other side of the River Frome, west of the town. A small nunnery was founded in 1173 by Eva, wife of W. Fitz-Harding, who became the first abbess. The first part of the thirteenth century was a time of great religious activity, and now and henceforth the work was done not by royal and noble founders, but by the zeal of the people themselves. A Dominican Friary[579] was founded in 1230, just outside the suburb east of the castle; the Carmelites were planted in "the fairest of the houses of the friars" (Leland), where Colston's Hall now stands; the Franciscans in the suburb beyond the Frome on the north-west; and there was a hospital of Bonhommes, now the mayor's chapel. [Pg 500]

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BRISTOL, FROM G. BRAUN'S URBIUM PRAECIPUARUM TOTIUS MUNDI, LIB. III, pl. 2. A.D. 1573.

In course of time some of these foundations attracted groups of people about them, whose houses grew into suburbs of the town. One suburb grew up around the castle on the south-east, and the spiritual wants of its people were supplied by the building among them of the new church of SS. Philip and James.[580] Another group of people settled about the priory, on the north, and attended service in the nave of the priory church, until at length the monks separated off the nave from the choir, and abandoned it to the people as their parish church, which still exists. The Austin Canons attracted still another group who formed a suburb on the south-west; and after a while the canons built the Church of St. Augustine the Less for their tenants.[581]

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In the reign of Henry III. the townspeople enlarged their limits by enclosing a tract on the south within a new wall. The new space was gradually filled with streets of houses, and St. Stephen's Church seems to have been built for the use of this new quarter.

Bristol Cathedral.

Bristol grew not only by the enlargement of its own borders, but by the annexation of

adjoining districts, which already had their own civil jurisdictions and ecclesiastical organizations. On the other side of the Avon were two districts which had been growing in population and commercial importance. One of these was the estate which Robert, Earl of Gloucester, had given in 1145 to the Knights of the Temple; its parish church was dedicated to the Holy Cross; and there was a house of Austin Friars within the parish. Adjoining the Temple Fee lay the Manor of Redcliff, in Bedminster, belonging to the Fitz-Hardings, with its chapel of St. Thomas, first mentioned in 1232. By the end of the twelfth century Bristol had, after a sort, spread itself over both Temple and Redcliffe, and a charter of 1188 included them in the privileges granted to Bristol. In 1240 a stone bridge was built which connected the two sides of the river; and a new wall and ditch from one angle of the river to the other (see the plan) enclosed the two districts on the southern side, and bound them by a series of fortifications, continuous with those of the northern side, into one great town. The necessary legal measures incorporated the groups into one borough. [Pg 502]

The Bristol merchants were wealthy and magnificent. The great merchant Canynges rebuilt the greater part of the noble Church of St. Mary Redcliffe; others adorned the town, and added to its religious opportunities by founding chapels for special services; others built hospitals and almshouses; others founded chantries in various churches. Thus the vill of the Saxon kings, with its one church, grew at last into the great city which at the time of the Reformation possessed the list of ecclesiastical foundations named below with references to the plan.[582] [Pg 503]

York may well be taken as a typical cathedral town. The high altar of the great Minster Church stood directly over the well in which Edwin the first Christian King of the Northumbrians and his thanes were baptized. The first Norman archbishop rebuilt the church and reorganized its chapter with a dean, precentor, chancellor, and treasurer, 36 prebendaries, and 36 vicars choral. By the end of the fifteenth century the chantries numbered about 60; and 36 chantry priests were incorporated into a community, and lived in St. William’s College, which was originally the prebendal house of the Prior of Hexham.

The Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary was founded near the cathedral between 1080 and 1090, and there were two other Benedictine foundations in the city early in the twelfth century, the Priory of Holy Trinity in Micklegate, and the little nunnery of Clementhorpe, and also the Premonstratensian House of St. Andrew. [Pg 504]

York Minster—south-west view.

St. Leonard’s Hospital was a grand foundation by Athelstan, after his great northern victory in 936, to enable the cathedral clergy to relieve the needy and maintain hospitality. In 1280 it had an income of nearly £11,000 (perhaps equal to £200,000 of modern money), and had in its infirmary 229 men and women, and in its orphanage 23 boys. In 1293 it gave away every week at the gate 232 loaves and 256 herrings; it distributed every Sunday 33 dinners and 14 gallons of beer, and 8 dinners for lepers, and to every prisoner in the castle (at that time 310) a small loaf. It maintained 26 obits in commemoration of benefactors. [Pg 505]

Another hospital, St. Mary Magdalene, was founded by the Dean of York, 1330, for a master,

two chaplains, and six infirm or aged priests. There was a hospital for lepers at St. Nicholas, on the Hull Road. All the guilds had small almshouses attached. At the gate of every religious house a daily distribution of gifts to the poor was made. There were many beggars, who were put under charge of four headmen.

It was the principal and most populous city of the north, and in 1377 its population was about 11,000. In the reign of Henry V. there were forty-one parish churches, none of any considerable size, and a large number of chapels. The number of its clergy, regular and secular, was not less than 500.[583]

At the end of the mediæval period we learn from the "Valor" that few of the incumbents of the parishes of the city of York had any income besides personal tithes (*i.e.* the Easter dues), and the oblations of the "three days" then customary, and casual oblations; out of which some of them had to pay pensions to the Convent of St. Mary.

> *E.g.* the Rector of St. Michael by Ouse Bridge had personal tithe £10, and casual oblations 20*s.* = £11; out of which he had to pay a pension to St. Mary's Abbey of 36*s.*, for synodals to the archbishop 5*s.* 4*d.*, to the archdeacon for procuration 6*s.* 8*d.*, leaving him net £8 12*s.* The Rector of St. Cross, Fossgate, had personal tithe in Lent time £7 8*s.*, casual oblations 6*s.* 8*d.*, oblations on the two days customary there, 22*s.*—total £8 16*s.* 8*d.*, out of which he had to pay 20*s.* to St. Mary's Abbey, 3*s.* 6*d.* synodals, and 6*s.* 8*d.* procuration, leaving clear income of £7 6*s.* 6*d.*

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Ipswich in King Edward's time had 538 burgesses; the Church of Holy Trinity, two dedicated to St. Mary, and the Churches of St. Michael, St. Botolph, St. Lawrence, St. Peter, and St. Stephen are mentioned in Domesday; three of these belonged to priests, and others were in lay patronage; Culling, a burgess, had one of the St. Maries; Lefflet, a freewoman, had St. Lawrence; Roger de Ramis held a church dedicated to St. George, with four burgesses and six wasted mansions; Aluric, the son of Rolf, a burgess (and also a vavasor, holding lands in Suffolk), had the Church of St. Julian; five burgesses belonged to the Church of St. Peter; Walter the Deacon held five houses and three waste mansions.[584]

> In the "Taxatio" the following is the value of the benefices:—Caldwell, £4 13*s.* 4*d.*; St. Clement, £6 13*s.* 4*d.*; St. Margaret, £4 13*s.* 4*d.*; St. Mary at the Tower, £3 6*s.* 8*d.*; St. Lawrence, £3 6*s.* 8*d.*; St. Mary Hulme, £1; St. Nichl. (Michael?), £1 10*s.*; St. Peter, £4; Stoke, £10. The Priory had at the Reformation an income of £88 6*s.* 9*d.*; St. Ellen was worth £8 13*s.* 7*d.*; St. Stephen, £4 12*s.* 8*d.*; Stoke, £12; St. Matthew, £5; the Daundy chantry[585] in St. Lawrence worth £6 10*s.* 8*d.*

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In 1177 a convent of Austin Canons was founded in the Church of Holy Trinity, and shortly afterwards another convent of the same order in the Church of St. Peter; and in course of time all the parishes of the town, except Stoke, which was on the other side of the river, were appropriated to one or other of these two convents. Only one new parish church of St. Matthew sprang up between the Conquest and the Reformation. A Convent of Dominican Friars was founded here in 1270, and gained so much acceptance among the better classes that most of the great people of the town were buried in its cemetery. The Franciscan Friars were established here in 1297.[586] There were also three leper hospitals in the town, and an almshouse, and one chantry in the Church of St. Lawrence.[587]

In not a few cases a great abbey was the origin of the existence of a town. Peterborough, St. Edmund's Bury, and St. Alban's, carry the fact in their names; and there are many others, as Burton, Wenlock, etc., etc. The abbey employed labourers and artificers, who settled in a convenient site under its shadow. If near a high-road, there was a frequent coming and going of travellers of various ranks, who halted for the night, and perhaps remained for a day or two. The abbey would be sure to obtain for its rising town the grant of a weekly market and annual fair. The abbey was the landlord of the ground on which the town was gradually growing; and a wise abbot would encourage the settlement of people in his burgh, build houses, make roads, maintain bridges, build churches, and provide schools.

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Then there came a time when the citizens of the towns of England sought to obtain release from feudal claims and jurisdictions, and the right of self-government; the kings encouraged the rising municipalities, seeing in them allies for the Crown against the nobles, and gave them charters freely; and the citizens in many cases bought out the manorial rights of private owners. But bishops and monasteries, while not unwilling to give their tenants the right of association into gilds for the regulation of their trades, were unwilling to resign the rights and jurisdiction which they had exercised from the beginning in their lordship. We add two or three illustrations of the ecclesiastical life of towns founded by bishops and abbots.

The Benedictine Abbey of Burton was founded by Ulfric Spot, Earl of Mercia, about 1002, and endowed with so many manors that it was as great as a barony. Abbot Bernard (1160-1175) built a church for the use of the people who had settled outside the abbey. Abbot Nicholas, who died in 1187, founded Burton Burgh, and built the first street there. Abbot

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Melburne, who died in 1210, enlarged the town from the great bridge of Burton (over the Trent), to the new bridge (over the Dove) towards Horninglowe, and gave the citizens a charter, and established a fair and market. Abbot Lawrence (1228-1260), in a time of fire and flood, took no rent from the people. Abbot John, of Stafford, who died 1280, made the Burgh from Bradwaie to Berele Crosse, built the Monks' Bridge over the Dove, and made (*seldas in foro*) shops in the market-place. Abbot Bernard built the great bridge of thirty-six arches over the Trent, with a chapel at one end of it. It was one of the longest bridges in England—five hundred and fifteen yards long.[588] And during a great famine in 1286, Abbot Thomas Pakington found the people employment and wages in building a new quarter from Cattestrete through the middle of Siwarmore to Hikanelstrete; and built a Chapel of St. Modwen adjoining the abbey, which, after the Reformation, became the parish church. In the time of Abbot William Matthew, who died 1430, the high town was paved with a gutter in the middle, and the *novus vicus* in front of the abbey gates.

The provision which the abbey made for the tenants of its burgh were the parish church and the Chapel of St. Modwen; and these seem to have been always served from the monastery; for, in the "Valor" there seems to be no Vicar of Burton, but the convent received from the parish church, in tithes and oblations, £32[589] a year, and from offerings at the Chapel of St. Modwenne, 40*s.* [Pg 510]

The "Valor" speaks of a suburb appropriated to the serfs of the abbey, "Vicus Nativorum."

Abbey Gateway, Bury St Edmund's.

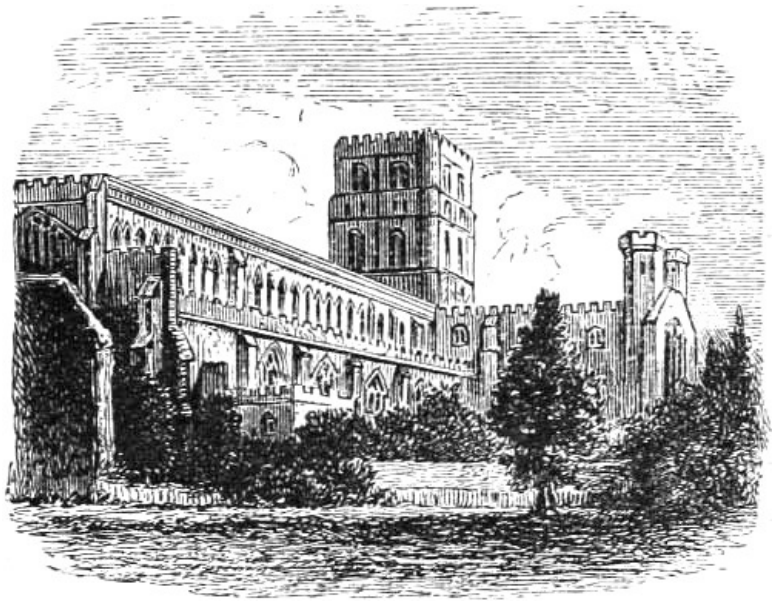
The church and religious house which King Sigebert of the East Angles built at Bedericsworth was of little importance till the royal martyr, St. Edmund, was buried there; and a great monastery was built by Canute on the spot in honour of the royal saint of East Anglia. In its most flourishing time the monastery is said to have had 80 Benedictine monks, 15 chaplains of the abbot and chief officials, 111 servants, and 40 priests of chapels, chantries, and monastic appendages in the town. The town which gradually grew up beside the abbey came to be known as the Bury of St. Edmund. Its principal streets are straight and at right angles with one another like a town planned and built by the proprietor of the whole site. The abbey buildings had swallowed up the original Saxon church, and the people attended service in the nave of the abbey church, till Abbot Anselm, wishing, it is said, to be rid of the townspeople out of the abbey church, built the Church of St. James for them in 1125. Soon after a second Church of St. Mary was built by the sacrist at the south-west corner of the abbey cemetery. The abbey appointed the parish priests, and built a college for the parochial clergy. It derived from its rectorial rights at the time of the Reformation, as given in the "Valor," from St. Mary's £16 10*s.* 9½*d.*, and from St. James's £18. [Pg 511]

As the monastery had created the town, so it ruled it without opposition till the desire for civil liberties which stirred the minds of the people led some of the younger townsmen to unite themselves under colour of a gild, the Gild of Bachelors, or young men, to endeavour

to obtain municipal rights for the town. In 1264 they closed the town gates against an official of the abbey, and engaged in riotous proceedings, when the abbot appealed to the Crown. The more prudent burghers got frightened, and suppressed the Bachelors' Gild. They kept up, however, a chronic quarrel, which culminated in open rebellion; in 1327 the townspeople broke into the abbey, and compelled the abbot to concede the liberties they sought. But the king strengthened the armed force at the command of the abbot, and the townsmen were obliged five years after to renounce their claim, and sue for pardon. [Pg 512]

It will be observed that where a great monastery was the lord of the town there was no possibility of a rival monastery, and the monks did not welcome the friars into their neighbourhood.[590] The abbot supplied hospitals and such-like things as they were needed; here, at St. Edmund's, there were four hospitals at its four gates, founded by different abbots, for the entertainment of poor pilgrims. During a vacancy in the abbacy here some Franciscans took the opportunity to establish themselves in a house in the north part of the town; but the new abbot got rid of them in the peremptory way in which a landlord gets rid of a contumacious tenant—he pulled the house down over their heads. The friars appealed to Rome; the pope directed the archbishop, and the archbishop sent his commissaries, to conduct them into a new habitation in the west quarter of the town; but the monks drove out both the Episcopal Commissaries and their clients. The king sent down the chief justice to give them possession of a new site, but the monks did not submit to the chief justice, and made good their opposition. At length a compromise was arrived at, and the friars were allowed to settle "outside the Four Crosses," which marked the Liberties of St. Edmund for a mile in every direction.[591] [Pg 513]

Offa, the great King of the Mercians, in the eighth century, is said to have "discovered" the relics of St. Alban, the Proto-Martyr of Britain, and built a monastery to contain them on the site of the martyrdom. A population gathered around the monastery. The founding of St. Alban's Town is ascribed to Usinus, the sixth abbot, in the tenth century. He is said to have built three parish churches for the people: St. Michael's, St. Peter's, and St. Stephen's, on the north, south, and west sides of the abbey, and established a market for them. From Domesday it appears that the town was then part of the possessions of the abbey, and was held by the abbey in demesne.



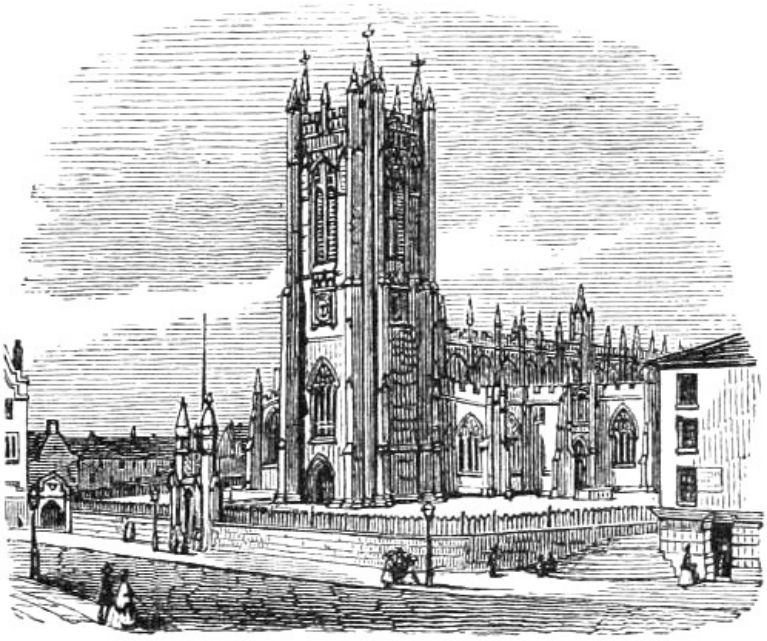
St. Albans.

Early in the fourteenth century, the inhabitants tried to relieve themselves from this hereditary jurisdiction, and wrested from Abbot Eversden (1308-1326) the right to elect two of their number to represent them in Parliament; but a little later Abbot Richard of Wallingford (1326-1334) successfully disputed his predecessor's concessions. [Pg 514]

Lastly, we have the case of the towns which grew up from small towns to great ones, in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In this case the town often was, and continued to be, a manor, the lord exercising the old feudal jurisdiction and maintaining his manorial rights; the affairs of the people being regulated by the manorial courts. In these cases there was usually only one parish church, and we have to see the way in which, as the town grew, additional provision was made for the increasing population. One method was by

the conversion of the parish church into a collegiate foundation with a staff of three or four clergymen, and choir men and boys, for the maintenance of a dignified service—this was usually done by some one pious benefactor, as at Manchester, Wingham, and Wye.[592] Another method was for the parishioners to provide the vicar with a staff of chaplains, and to endow special services, as at Sheffield and Newark. Each of these methods may be illustrated by a brief history of the examples named.

Domesday Survey records the existence of two churches in Manchester of which it is probable that one, St. Mary's, was the parish church of the town; and the other, St. Michael's, a dependent church at Ashton-under-Lyne. In the fourteenth century it was one of [Pg 515] the most wealthy and populous towns in the county of Lancaster; and since the priest of the place is sometimes called the Dean of Manchester, it was perhaps the head of an extensive deanery. Its church was of timber, as that of Marston, in Cheshire, is to this day.



Manchester Cathedral.

Thomas la Ware, second son of Roger Lord la Ware, was rector in 1398, when by the death of his elder brother he succeeded to the Barony of la Ware, which included the manor. Desiring to make better provision for the inhabitants of the town, he obtained a licence from King Henry V., in 1421, to convert the parish church into a collegiate church, with a warden and so many fellows as should seem good to the body of feoffees who held the advowson and to the founder. All the powers ecclesiastical and civil having given their consent, the churchwardens and parishioners, including various influential knights, esquires, and gentlemen, were called together by the tolling of the church bell, and then and there expressed their full consent by petition to the bishop. The staff was composed of a warden, eight fellows, four clerks, and six choristers; the bishop gave them a body of statutes which occupy a large space in his extant register; and Lord la Ware built a college for their [Pg 516] residence adjoining the church. The first warden, John Huntingdon, began the erection of a new and larger church.

The college was confiscated by Edward VI. and turned into a vicarage, but re-established by Queen Mary. Queen Elizabeth renewed the charter of foundation for a warden and four fellows, two chaplains, four laymen, and four children skilled in music. Charles I. again renewed it. In 1847, the diocese of Manchester was created, and the collegiate foundation afforded a suitable cathedral church with a dean and four canons already endowed.

As another example of the way in which a single benefactor sometimes made extra provision for the spiritual wants of a town, we take the case of the little town of Rotherham, in Yorkshire. It had a church at the time of the Conquest. In subsequent times, two great families, the Vescis and Tillis, shared the manor and the church between them.

At the time of the "Taxatio" (1291) the rectory had been divided into moieties; one moiety had been appropriated to the Abbot of Clairvaux, who received £16 13*s.* 4*d.* from it, besides a stipend of £5, which he paid to the vicar of that moiety; Sir Roger was the rector of the other moiety, who received £21 13*s.* 4*d.*, and he also was represented by a vicar; moreover, the prior of Lewes had a pension of £1 6*s.* 8*d.* out of the rectory.[593] The earlier church gave place, in the reign of Edward IV., to a more spacious and handsome building, but its [Pg 517] clerical staff still consisted of two vicars and several chantry priests.

The Archbishop of York, for the last twenty years of the fifteenth century, was known by the name of Thomas of Rotherham. His family name was Scott, but having been born at Rotherham, he took the name of his native place, as we have seen was the custom of Churchmen in the Middle Ages. Before his death, he adopted another good custom of the time, by raising for himself a memorial in his native place, and conferring a benefit upon it in the shape of a perpetual foundation. His will is still in existence, and the following particulars are chiefly taken from it. He was, he says, born of people of the yeoman class in the town of Rotherham, and baptized in the parish church, "in the sacred fountain flowing from the side of Jesus. O that I loved this Name as I ought and would!" So, lest he should seem ungratefully forgetful of these things, he founded a perpetual college in the Name of Jesus in the said town. This was to take the place of an earlier foundation of the twenty-second year of Edward IV., in which he had received his own education under a teacher of grammar so skilful that other of his scholars as well as he had been enabled to rise to higher fortunes. His first purpose was to establish a learned teacher of grammar there for all time, [Pg 518] who should teach gratis all who came to him. Then, having seen how the chantry priests of the town lived, some in one place, some in another, with the laity, to the scandal of one and the ruin of the others,[594] he determined to erect a college where the first should teach grammar, and the others might live and lodge. Thirdly, since he had observed that there are many parishioners attending the church, and that many rustic people of the neighbourhood flock to it that they may the better love the Christian religion, he establishes a second perpetual fellow to teach singing gratis, and to have for his food and clothing £6 13*s.* 4*d.*; and six chorister boys, that they may celebrate the Divine office there more honourably, and each of them to have 40*s.* a year for food and clothing. Fourthly, since there are many very intelligent youths who do not all wish to attain the clerical dignity, but are adapted for mechanical arts and other occupations, he provides a third Socius, who shall teach the arts of writing and reckoning gratis. But since the arts of writing, music, and grammar are subordinate, and servants of the Divine law and the gospel, he ordains that there shall be a theologian placed above the three fellows in the rule and government of the house, with the name of provost, who shall be a B.D. at least, and shall be required to preach the word of God through the whole of the founder's province of York; he is to have for food and clothing [Pg 519] £13 6*s.* 8*d.* "Thus I have incorporated in my college one provost, three fellows, and six choristers, that where I have offended God in His ten commandments, these ten may pray for me." As to the chantry priests, he gave them their chambers in the college; they were to dine at the college-table, paying for their food, but having the services of the cook, washerwoman, and barber gratis. The provost and fellows were to attend Divine service on festivals in the parish church in their surplices; at other times in the college chapel; and to celebrate his obit. There were five chantry priests living in the college at the time when the foundation, by which good Thomas of Rotherham made a monument for himself, and conferred a great benefit on his native town, was dissolved and swept away at the Reformation.

The neighbouring town of Sheffield will afford an example of the way in which the inhabitants of a town sometimes made extra spiritual provision for themselves. At the Conquest, all this part of Yorkshire was a wild and thinly-peopled region. The Countess Judith, niece of the Conqueror, and wife of Waltheof, placed a colony of monks from Fontenelle near Havre, at Ecclesfield near Sheffield. The whole district of Hallamshire descended from the countess to William de Lovelot, who had his principal castle at Sheffield, and no doubt was the founder of the church here. Subsequently he founded a Priory of Austin Canons at Worksop, and among other property gave to them the church and one-third [Pg 520] of the tithe of Sheffield.[595]

The canons always presented to the vicarage of Sheffield one of their number, who was not thereby cut off from the convent; for one of them, Upton, was recalled from Sheffield to be the prior of the house at Worksop.

In the latter part of the fifteenth century we learn that there were endowments for a Light or Gild of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and for a Chantry or Service of St. Catherine, in the church.

In 1498, William Hine left certain tenements in trust for the four church greves or church masters to receive the rents, and thereof "to pay yearly to the priest of St. Catherine singing mass in the said church, 7*s.* at Whitsuntide for the better support and augmentation of the service thereof called St. Catherine's Service, the church maisters to have 12*d.* for attending at his obit." If the conditions of the will were not fulfilled, the feoffees were to pay the profits to the burgesses for the repair of bridges, causeways, and highways within a mile of the town. The history of the matter is a little obscure, but it appears that the inhabitants of the town had by voluntary contributions supplied the vicar with stipends for three chaplains to assist him in ministering to the town and the scattered hamlets; that about fourteen years before the Statute of Chantries, *i.e.* in the year 1533, the Guardians of the endowed chantry [Pg 521] began to contribute £17 a year towards the maintenance of these three chaplains in sums of £7, £5, and £5. The Commissioners of Chantries returned it as "a service or perpetual stipend of three priests in the church there," and it was confiscated with other chantries. On the accession of Queen Mary, at the petition of the men of Sheffield, the charity was refounded and put into the hands of twelve church burgesses to hold the property of the

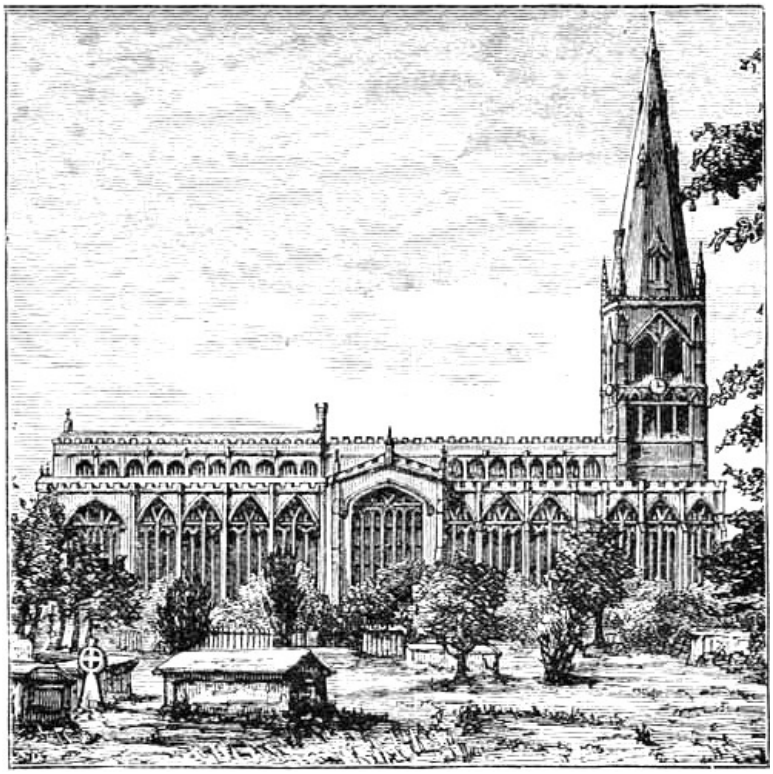
ancient endowment and devote it to the support of three chaplains to assist the vicar as well in the visitation of the people as in Divine service and the other sacraments in church, and to apply the surplus to the repair of bridges and ways.[596]

We find, then, that in a town which was all one parish with one great church, though the person in charge of the souls of the people was only a solitary vicar with a small income, there were often really a considerable number of clergy grouped around him, and that the services of the Church were better maintained than we should perhaps have expected. On a Sunday morning there would be several celebrations of Holy Communion at different hours in the chantry chapels, and some, if not all the priests of the chantries and special services [Pg 522] were bound to be in choir at matins, high mass, and evensong, and take part in the service. Nearly every such town would have its grammar school, taught by a Clerk in Holy Orders; and we may be tolerably sure that the school would furnish choristers for choral matins and evensong. We have learnt that the lay people were solicitous for the honour of Divine service in their parish church, and may be sure that the vicar had little difficulty in obtaining funds for the purchase of "a pair of organs" and the stipend of an organist, and for all other expenses of Divine worship. On week-days the vicar would provide at least daily mass, matins and evensong, and the chantries and special services would supply other masses.

In the pastoral care of the people, too, the vicar of a great parish was not left single-handed. Probably (as has been already said) each chantry priest, and, still more, each priest of a gild or service had a group of persons—the relatives of their founder, or brothers and sisters of their fraternity—who looked to them for spiritual ministrations; but besides these, the vicar sometimes had chaplains who were assistant-curates. The calendar of chantries, etc., refers to a number of endowments for "stipendiaries," of which some are named in conjunction with chantries and gilds as if they were cantarists, but others in conjunction with parishes as if they were simply parish chaplains.

Let us take Newark as our last example.

Leofric, the great Earl of Mercia, and Godiva his wife, gave this manor to the monastery of [Pg 523] Stow. Remigius, the first Norman Bishop of Lincoln, held it in demesne; and then, according to Domesday, it had ten churches and eight priests; the churches and priests were probably in the place itself and in the sixteen sokes under its jurisdiction, the names of which we recognize in the names of the neighbouring villages for some miles round on the left bank of the Trent. Alexander, the next bishop, built a castle[597] here on the bank of the Trent; and the town seems to have grown up into importance, owing partly to its situation on the Fossway and the Trent, and partly to the protection and fostering care of the bishops. When [Pg 524] Henry II. founded the Priory (of Sempringham nuns) of St. Katherine, near Lincoln, he endowed it, among other properties, with the Church of Newark. A convent of Austin Friars was planted here and another of Observants (Franciscans), and the Knights of the Temple had a preceptory here.



Newark Church, Nottinghamshire.

The town, as one of the halting-places of the funeral progress of Queen Eleanor, was

ornamented with one of the crosses with which the king marked every step of that great pageant.

To come to more recent times, and to the particulars with which we are most concerned, the borough was one parish[598] under the care of a vicar; and its parish church,[599] rebuilt in the reign of Henry VI., is a very large and noble structure, with its chancel screen and carved stalls, and some fine carving, still remaining uninjured. We have already had occasion to give the particulars of the income of the vicar,[600] which amounted at the time of the "Valor" to £21, and of the outgoings, which included a stipend of £5 for a chaplain, [601] we have to add here the services and priests which helped to complete the religious arrangements of the town.

The Calendar of Chantries, etc., so often quoted, gives the following list of them—

> St. Nicholas' Chantry, a chantry at the altar of St. James; Sawcendine's Chantry; "Morrow Mass" Chantry; St. Catherine's Chantry; Corpus Christi Chantry, founded by Fleming;[602] Corpus Christi Chantry, founded by Isabell Caldwell; Newark Chantry; Trinity Chantry; All Saints' Chantry; Foster's Chantry; Trinity Gild[603] Chantry; Trinity Chantry, founded by John Leeke.

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There are thirteen chantries in all. One we note was for a "Morrow Mass," *i.e.* a very early celebration of Holy Communion; the rest would be arranged at various hours. The Trinity Gild was the great gild of the town, which here, as in many other towns, supplied, to some extent, the place of a municipal corporation.

Some solidarity was given to this group of cantarists by the fact that they lived together in a mansion which a benefactor had provided for them. The internal economy of the mansion would require some regulation which would not improbably be borrowed from the rules which were customary in a college of priest-vicars, or chantry house of several priests. The rules for the chantry priests lodging in Archbishop Rotherham's College,[604] and those for the chapel at Kingston-on-Thames,[605] will indicate their general character.

Thomas Magnus, Archdeacon of the East Riding of York, a native of the town just before the Reformation (1532), founded at the north-west point of the churchyard a free school for a priest sufficiently learned to teach grammar, who was to be paid £10; together with a song school for a priest[606] sufficiently learned to teach plain song and play the organ, who was to have £8; and six children to be taught music, and to play upon the organs, who were to have 26*s.* 8*d.* each. The founder also founded an obit of 40*s.*, and 40*s.* to be given to the alderman [of the Holy Trinity Gild] for the time being.

[Pg 526]

The cathedral-like choir of the church would then be well filled on Sundays and holy days by the vicar and his chaplain and the thirteen cantarists and the children of the song school, and the Divine service honourably rendered, and the long nave would doubtless be filled with the devout people. The whole clerical staff of the town consisted of the vicar, his chaplain and clerk, the brethren of the two friaries, perhaps a dozen in each, the thirteen cantarists in their chantry house: nearly forty men, besides the military monks in the preceptory.

Besides monks and friars, rectors and vicars, cantarists, and chaplains of various kinds, there was still another kind of religious persons to be found in many towns, viz. Recluses. The first recluses were enclosed in the Egyptian deserts in a narrow cell; but in process of time a churchyard was taken to be a sufficiently solitary place, and the cell sometimes consisted of two or more fairly comfortable rooms built against the chancel wall of the church. There lived an old hermit or priest, or a religious woman, supported partly by an endowment, partly by the offerings and bequests of the people. Their picturesque asceticism attracted the interest and veneration of impressible people, who would consult them in the affairs of their souls, and no doubt in their social difficulties also, and receive more or less good council according to the character of the recluse.[607]

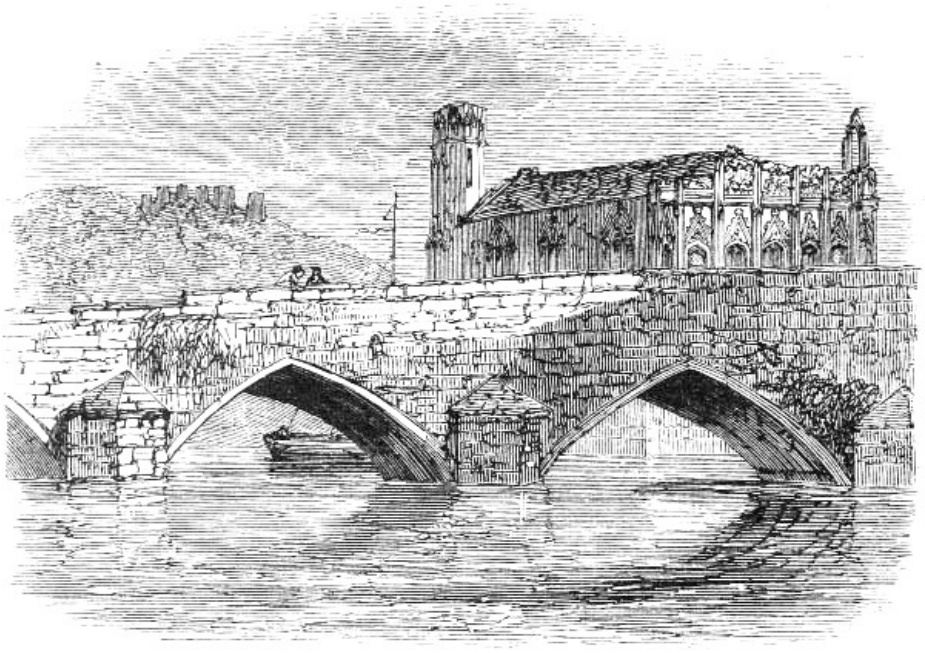
[Pg 527]

Bridge-Chapels.

There is still another feature wanting to complete (in many cases) this survey of the ecclesiastical aspect of a mediæval town. A good hard road through a wild boggy tract, or a raised causeway across the often flooded valley in which the town was situated, or a stone bridge in place of a dangerous ford or inconvenient ferry, conferred a very real benefit upon the whole community, from the king in his royal progresses through the country to the peasantry who brought their produce to the weekly market. Men wisely included road-making and bridge-building among meritorious acts of charity, and the calendar of chantries, etc., contains a number of endowments which were given or bequeathed for these purposes. Very frequently the pious builder of a bridge added a religious foundation to it in the shape of a little chapel; sometimes the chapel was built at one end of the bridge; more commonly, perhaps, the central pier on one side of the bridge was enlarged, and the chapel picturesquely erected upon it. The chapel was endowed with a stipend for a perpetual chantry priest to say prayers there for the family of the bridge-builder, and for all Christian

[Pg 528]

people; and no doubt the founder hoped for himself the prayers of all the Christian people who used his bridge. Those of us who, lounging about the churches of other countries as sight-seers, have seen the market women come in, set down their baskets on the floor, and kneel down for a few moments for silent prayer, will easily understand the practical religious uses of these bridge-chapels. [Pg 529]



Bridge and Chapel, Wakefield.

Perhaps the chapel built on the new stone London Bridge of 1176 was one of the earliest and the most important of them. It was built over a crypt on the central pier on the eastern side of the bridge, and dedicated to St. Thomas the Martyr, who had been canonized three years before. It had a master and fraternity, and several chantries were founded in it. Bideford Bridge, one of the longest at that time in the kingdom, was built in 1350, on the initiative of the parish priest, Sir R. Gurney, who had a vision of an angel showing him where to build. The lord of the manor, Sir Theodore Granville, Knight, gave the undertaking his countenance and aid; Grandisson, the Bishop of Exeter, gave his licence to collect money backed by the promise of indulgences, and the bridge was made with its 23 arches, 177 yards long. In later times, the estates of the Bridge Gild were under the management of a warden and brethren, who not only kept the bridge in repair, but also built a hall for their meetings and a school beside it, founded charities, gave dinners, and kept to that end—Charles Kingsley in “Westward Ho!” is our authority for saying it—the best stocked cellar in all Devon. There is a good example of a bridge-chapel still remaining on the centre pier of Rotherham bridge, and another at Wakefield, served by two chaplains. We have remains or notes of others: two at Nottingham, one, *super altem pontem*, dedicated to St. James, the other, *ad finem pontis*, dedicated to St. Mary; at Newcastle, dedicated to St. Thomas; at Camelford, dedicated to St. Thomas, built by the burgesses of the town; at Exeter, founded by the mayor and bailiffs of the city; at Stamford, dedicated to St. Thomas; at Elvet, dedicated to St. James; two at York, St. Anne’s on Fossbridge and St. William’s on Ouse bridge; Burton, at one end of the long bridge over the Trent; at Doncaster, where the bridge had a stone gateway with a chapel of “Our Lady” beside it at one end, and a stone cross beside the entrance to the bridge at the other end; and at many other places, as Durham, Manchester, Rochester, Bidenham, Totton, Gronethe, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary; at Sheffield, Darfield, etc. Sometimes a hospital for the entertainment of poor travellers was built at the end of a bridge, as at Burton and at Nottingham;[608] at Brandford there was a chapel-house and hospital *juxta pontem*.[609] [Pg 530]

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CHAPTER XXXI.

DISCIPLINE.

The average Englishman of the present day has hardly an idea of what is meant by ecclesiastical discipline, and is quite ignorant of the large part which it played in the practical religious life of people in ancient times. Yet its principles are laid down in the New Testament; the right and duty of the Church to hear and determine causes between Christian men is contained in our Lord's command, "If thy brother trespass against thee ... tell it to the Church; and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican" (Matt. xviii. 17). The general recognition and exercise of this jurisdiction is alluded to in the apostolic writings (1 Cor. vi. 4; x. 32); and St. Paul gives several actual examples of its enforcement (1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20). The Church in all times and places has maintained this power of spiritual discipline to be one of its fundamental principles.

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The special jurisdiction which the decree of William the Conqueror gave to the Ecclesiastical Courts over ecclesiastical persons, and over lay persons in ecclesiastical cases, was perhaps an encroachment upon the province of the civil law, but the spiritual jurisdiction involved in our Lord's Command is independent of the sanction of the civil magistrate.

This spiritual discipline is an important aid to the power of the civil magistrate in the Christian community. Where the magistrate's power stops, that of the pastorate steps in. The magistrate can only take cognizance of crimes, and punish a man for offences against another; the Church takes cognizance of sins, and deals with a man *pro salute animæ*. If the sin has not caused scandal, the penance inflicted may be of a private nature; but if it has caused scandal, the punishment is public, "that others may learn not to offend."

The penitential system in the Saxon Church, as we learn it from the penitential known by the name of Archbishop Theodore, was a very elaborate system, classifying sins and assigning penalties to them; it was confirmed in some particulars by the ecclesiastical enactments of kings. In greater matters the case came before the sheriff and bishop at the Shiremote or Hundredmote, and the sentence was enforced by the same power which executed the civil sentences of the same court. In the Ecclesiastical Courts after the Norman Conquest, the bishop, and in some matters the archdeacons under his authority, tried the cause, and in case of resistance to the sentence applied for a royal writ to be sent to the sheriff to enforce it. In most cases the knowledge that the Bishop's Court had the civil power at its back was enough to lead men to submit to its authority. In the last resort the spiritual authority had the sentence of excommunication to fall back upon.[610]

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The discipline of the clergy was specially in the hands of the bishop and his archdeacons, who dealt with moral offences and ecclesiastical irregularities in their courts. The famous Constitutions of Otho (1237), followed up by those of Archbishop Stephen Langton, enacted, that in every rural deanery one rector should be appointed to hear the confessions of the clergy. Archbishop Peckham, in 1281, complains that it had not been done, and renews the ordinance. This was not to prevent the clergy from going to other penitentiaries appointed by the bishop.

Archbishop Greenfield of York (1310) issued an injunction, engrossed by a public notary, ordering a certain Ralph de Grave, Canon of Worksop, who had proved contumacious, to betake himself within three days to the monastery of Bridlington, and there to do penance for his rebellious behaviour.[611]

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Among Grostete's letters is one to a cleric, in which he rebukes his luxurious and licentious life, and tells him roundly that he is "a blot on the clergy, a shame to theologians, a delight to the enemies of religion, a derision and song and story to the vulgar."[612]

> Robert Coton, for a sermon preached at Atcham, near Shrewsbury, containing heretical teaching, was sentenced to carry a faggot in procession round the cathedral, and afterwards round Atcham Church.[613]
>
> Robert Segefeld, chaplain, in 1455, confessing immorality, is sentenced to public penance in his chapel and in the cathedral, and to pay 6*s.* 8*d.* to St. Cuthbert's shrine. This penance consisted in walking barefoot, in linen vestments (*pannis lineis*), carrying a candle before the procession, on a

Sunday.[614]

Thomas Ferby, December 7, 1456, prayed to be released from the excommunication he had incurred for procuring the celebration of a clandestine marriage in St. Paul's Cray Church. As a penance, he was ordered to visit the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury on Easter Day, and there offer a wax taper of one pound weight. The like offering was to be made to St. Blaize at Bromley and in Chislehurst Church. In addition, he was to allow exhibitions to two scholars at Oxford for two years. Ferby afterwards came to an understanding with his diocesan, and was dismissed from the suit. In the next February, John, chaplain of Paul's Cray, doubtless the priest who had officiated on the occasion, swore before the bishop, in the cathedral, not to offend again, and was absolved.[615] He redeemed his penance by taking an oath to pay a mark at Lady Day in that and the two ensuing years.[616]

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SIX KNIGHTS DOING PENANCE AT THE SHRINE OF ST. EDMUND.
XV. CENT. MS., 2278 f., 108 v., HARL.

The bishops had to deal, not only with the moral offences of the clergy, but also with the occasional crimes committed by members of this privileged class. Degradation from Orders, and imprisonment with penitential discipline, seems to have been the usual mode of punishment. We have seen that a Constitution of Archbishop Boniface, 1260, directed every bishop to have in his diocese one or two prisons for confining clerics flagitious in crime, or convicted by canonical censure, and that any cleric committing a crime such that if he were a layman he would, according to the secular law, suffer the extreme penalty, should be adjudged to perpetual imprisonment.

This spiritual power was strong enough to cope with the most powerful offenders. We all remember how Henry II., able and powerful king as he was, submitted to discipline at the hands of the monks of Canterbury Cathedral, before the shrine of St. Thomas.

The turbulent Fulke de Breauté, in the reign of Henry III., had plundered St. Alban's Abbey and taken some refugees out of its sanctuary. Being warned by the saint in a dream, he offered himself at the monastery to suffer penance; and there despoiled of his clothes, with his knights similarly stripped, bearing in hand a rod, "which is vulgarly called baleis," and confessing his fault, he received the discipline from each of the brothers on his naked flesh.[617] He refused, however, to make restitution.

When Thomas of Cantilupe was Bishop of Hereford (1275-1283), Lord Clifford plundered his cattle and ill-treated his tenants. When summoned by the bishop to make amends for his misconduct, he offered to do so by a money payment; but the bishop compelled him to walk barefoot as a penitent to the altar, while the bishop himself inflicted chastisement upon him as he walked.[618]

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John Langton, Bishop of Chichester, c. 1314, excommunicated Earl Warren for adultery. The earl came to Chichester and endeavoured to seize the bishop; but Langton and his servants not only repelled the attack, but captured the earl and his retinue and put them all in prison.

The accompanying plate is from Lydgate's "Life of Edmund VI." (Harl. 2278, f. 108 and f. 108 v.). Preceding it is a picture of five knights issuing from the gate of the abbey laden with plunder, and keeping the monks at bay at the sword's point; next this picture of the knights stripped to their drawers, making their submission to the abbot and his clerks at the shrine of the saint. Between the two pictures the story is told thus:

Knightes of yoe of malice and ravyne,
Agen the fredom of Edmund ful confiable,

Habergowned and in platis fyne,
Entered his court, took hors out yf his stable,
With swerdes drawe to shewe hemself vengable,
Lyst any man wolde make resistence,
Hadde forth the pray beytort violence.

But sodenly thus with hem it stood,
Or they passyd the boũdes of the gate,
Travayled with furye and echon was wood,
Repented, after offered up mayl and plate,
Confessed, assoiled, in cronycle set the date,
Ever after off hool affeccion, [Pg 537]
Hadde to the martyr gret devocion.

We must bear in mind that these were the days when civil penalties included the stocks and the pillory and whipping through the streets at a cart's tail.

In 1344, a sheriff's officer, who slew a rector, resisting the attempt to arrest him, was, with his followers, condemned to walk, stripped to their breeches, like the knights at St. Edmund's, round the principal churches of the district, and to be whipped at the door of each church.[619] And such instances might be indefinitely multiplied.

About 1284, Archbishop Peckham made a provincial visitation, in which he exercised severe discipline on both clergy and laity. For example, in Lichfield Diocese, the bishop being a foreigner and non-resident, the archbishop sent a public summons to him to reside, on penalty of deprivation, telling him that since he could not preach to his people, he was the rather bound to reside among them, and to spend his revenue in hospitality and relieving the poor. In Chichester Diocese, he inflicted upon one John Ham, a priest, convicted of immorality, a three years' penance of fasting, prayers, and pilgrimage, during which time the profits of his living were sequestrated to the poor. In Wilts, being informed that Sir Osborn Gyfford had carried off two nuns from the Monastery of Wilton, he proceeded to excommunication against him, and only consented to remit the censure on these conditions: that he should be stripped to the waist on three Sundays in Wilton Parish Church and beaten with rods; the discipline to be publicly repeated both in the market-place and parish church of Shaftesbury; should fast for three months, and go on a three years' [Pg 538] pilgrimage to Jerusalem; should not wear a sword, or appear in the habit of a gentleman.

Grostete, Bishop of Lincoln, instituted an inquiry into the morals of the laity as well as clergy in his diocese, but the king, Henry III., interposed, and obliged him to desist.

But to come to a different class of offenders, and to various kinds of misdoing. It will be enough to select a few examples.

1253. Hugo de Berewyk found surety of ten marks to behave properly to his wife, and he was sentenced, for "that he had long been excommunicate, that without shoes or girdle or [sword ?] he should receive the discipline in the porch of the Church of Gysele, before the whole procession, once on the day of the Holy Trinity, a second time on the day of St. John Baptist, and the third time on the day of SS. Peter and Paul."[620]

When Bishop Ralph, of Bath and Wells, in 1348, visited Ilchester, the people of the place made a riot, attacked the bishop and his people, and shut them up in the church for some hours, till they were rescued by the well-affected. The riot was punished by excommunication of the offenders, and interdict of the Church. One of the ringleaders, Roger Warmville, was tried at Taunton by the Commissary, and sentenced to penance. He was to walk on three several occasions, bareheaded and barefoot, round Ilchester Church, in front of the procession made on Sundays and feast days, holding a candle, which he was to present at the altar during mass, while a chaplain declared his sin to the congregation in the vulgar tongue. Moreover, he was to be flogged thrice on market days at Ilchester, Wells, Bath, Glastonbury, and Somerton; he was to [Pg 539] pay a fine of £20, and make a pilgrimage to Canterbury in honour of St. Thomas the Martyr.[621]

In 1474, a case of homicide between the Lamberts and the Knolls, by the award of Wm. Blackburn, Canon of Bolton, it was awarded and ordained that Thomas, Henry, Richard, Stephen and Thomas Knoll of Floder, "come to the parish church of Preston, and there in tyme of service, kneling on their knees, loose gerded, ask God forgivenes of ye dethe of Henrie Lambert, and ask forgivenes of his fader John Lambert, and pay xl marks to ye behofe of Jo. Lambert and his children, unto Ric. Pilkinton, Esq., on the awter of St. Nicholas, in the parish church of Skypton."[622]

All kinds of offences were dealt with by similar penalties. Richard Ram confessing that he had not paid the tithe of his corn to his rector of Cliffe, in 1363, was sentenced to carry a sheaf of corn on his shoulder to the altar of Cliffe Church, and there to offer it and the value of the tithe withheld.[623]

Among the cases recorded in the "Proceedings of the Courts of Durham," p. 26, we find, in a case of immorality, the man sentenced to receive four "fustigations" round the church, and the woman two.

For non-attendance at church on Sundays, we have already quoted several cases (p. 201).

In 1480, nine parishioners of Halling and Snodland[624] were summoned to the court for playing tennis on Thursday in Whitsun-week in time of matins and mass. They pleaded guilty, and took an oath to perform whatever penance the bishop might impose. The sentence was that those of Snodland should walk barefoot after the procession on the following Sunday, each carrying a taper worth a halfpenny, which they should offer at the Holy Cross. The Halling men were to do the like, with this difference, that they were each to offer two tapers at the high altar and two at the altar of St. John. [Pg 540]

William Bek, of Cooling, was cited into the court of John Alcock (1476-1486), Bishop of Rochester, in consequence of having been detected by his wife and neighbours in eating meat on Fridays and other fasts. Bek confessed his guilt, though he doubted if he had offended in Lent, but pleaded that he was not responsible for his actions, since his mind had been so much disturbed for three years that he only knew Sunday because his wife on that day offered him the consecrated bread. The plea did not avail. It was ordered that as a penance he should be thrice whipped round Cooling Church, before the procession, clad in a white cloth, with bare head and feet, and carrying a taper of the value of one penny. Further, that on Friday he should be whipped in Rochester market in like manner, and should offer a taper at the shrine of St. William.[625]

Margaret Reed, in 1469, is brought before the Court for using ill language to Martha Howkett, in that she told her she was a "horse godmother and waterwitch." So, in 1560, Wm. Lee is reported to have said to Bayle, who was reported to be a deacon at Durham, "Methenketh ye goeth not lyk a man of the church, but lyk a ruffing." To whom the said Bayle answered, "What hast thou to do with my apparell or my going? Thou art a slave and a knave to find fault with me."[626]

There are many other instances of defamation, at p. 90, etc. Here is an example of a little later date than our period, which shows exactly what was the way of making amends for the offence of defamation:—

A confession to be made by Charles Shawe for slandering Bar. Mitforth in St. Nicoles Church, in lynen apparell, after the reading of the third chapter of St. James' Epistle— [Pg 541]

"Beloved neighbours, I am now comen hither to shewe myself sory for slannderinge one Bartram Midforde, namely in that I called him openly 'beggerly harlot and cutthrote,' saying that he 'was a covitous snowge, and such as he by Godd's worde aught to be weded out of the Coomenwelthe.' I acknowledge that thus to slannder my Xtian brother is an heynouse offence, first towardes God, who hathe straightly forbydden it in his holy lawes, accountyng it to be a kind of murderinge my neighbour, and threatninge to punyshe it with hell fire and the losse of the kyngdome of heavene. Also the Queen's lawes, against which I have stubbornely stande, doth grevously punyshe all slannderers, backbiters, and sowers of discorde, debate, hatred, and disquietnes, to the shame of the offenders and feare of others. Agayne, my unruly tongue, if it were not punished, it wolde not only set mo of you on fire, but also it wolde bolden others to do the like. Wherefore, as I am now called back frome myne inordinate doinges by this correction, with my coste and shame, so I beseche yow all to be witnesses with me that I am sory frome the verrey bottome of my harte for this and my other like offences against God, the Quene's majestie, and the said Bertram Mydforde; promysinge before God and you here present, that I fully intende to amende my outerageous tonge and wilfull behaviour, as maye please Almightie God, satisfye the Quene's lawes, and towrne to yur good example and myne owne sowle's health; for the obteyninge and performinge thereof I humbly beseche yow all, with me and for me, to pray unto God as our Saviour Jesus Xt. himself, beinge on earth, taught us, sayinge 'Our Father,' etc. A.D. 1570."[627]

A suit was begun in 1458 against John Andrew of Cobham and Margery Allyn, late of Shorne, for having clandestinely married while a matrimonial cause was pending between her and Richard Coke. They were sentenced, December 20, to be whipped "after the manner of penitents" once in Rochester market [Pg 542]

> and thrice round their parish church. Walter Crepehogg, who had promoted the marriage, was thought the worst offender, for besides *six* whippings he was condemned to carry a torch worth 6*s.* 8*d.* to the altar of the cathedral, and to make a similar offering to St. Blaize at Bromley.[628]

Occasionally a contumacious person resisted the sentence. For example—

> In 1315, Lady Plokenet [Plucknet] directed by will that she should be buried in Sherborne Church. Her son, Sir Alan, probably to save expense, buried her "in a less dignified place." The bishop sent him orders by the Rector of Dowlish Wake, who was the Rural Dean of Crewkerne, to obey his mother's request. Falling into a rage at this, the knight rushed on the dean, caught him by the throat, and choaked him by twisting his hood, and even caused him to bleed. The dean got away, and fled. At Haslebury, however, Sir Alan and his men caught him, and there the knight made him eat the bishop's letter, and chew and swallow the wax seals. For this he was excommunicated, but made due submission.[629]

In the "Proceedings of the Durham Court" we read that— [Pg 543]

> John Doffenby, being a person excommunicate, did come into Mitfourth Church in tyme of service, and being admonished to depart thrice, would not, but gave evil language, saying that he cared not for the commissary and his laws, nor for the curate, and bade them come who durst and carry him out of the church; whereupon the curate was driven to leave off service at the gospel. It does not appear what was the end of the case.
>
> Agnes Hebburne, 1454, having been sentenced to do penance in *pannis lineis*, impudently pleaded that she had not a fit smock, and was not able to buy one; whereupon the judge ordered her to do her penance in a "tunica habens unam vestem vocatur le napron."

There are some pictorial illustrations of the subject in the illuminated MSS. The scourging of Henry II. before the shrine of Becket is often portrayed. In the Omne Bonum (Royal, 6 Ed. VI., f. 218 v.) is a very curious picture of a priest giving the discipline to a penitent kneeling before him;[630] and at f. 443 (6 E. VII.), a man scourging himself on the bare back in his bedroom. In a Pontifical printed at Venice, 1520, f. 155, penitents in their shirts are kneeling [Pg 544] before the bishop; a man kneeling to a priest who lays the rod of absolution on his shoulder, at 203 v., and Reconciliation of Penitents at the end of Lent, f. 177.

There are two sides to most questions, and what a man will say upon any question depends upon his point of view. What we are told of clergy and laity of those ages by courts of discipline which dealt exclusively with their peccadilloes, and by the satirists whose motive was the scourging of the peccators, gives us one side of the subject. Nobody took the trouble to tell the obvious, uninteresting story of the ruck of parsons of respectable character who were doing their daily round of duty, Sunday and workaday, fairly well, except Chaucer, and he—great student of human life and manners that he was—while scourging with a whip of scorpions the faults of monks and friars, and pardoners and "sompnours," completes his gallery of ecclesiastical characters with the loveliest portrait of the typical parish priest.

The inquisitorial meddling of the courts of spiritual discipline, their pecuniary exactions and shameful penances, were by no means the least of the abuses which made men cry out for a reformation.

In connection with this system of discipline was the custom of pronouncing a general sentence of excommunication in church several times a year which is mentioned by John Myrc (p. 238). We may add here that it was not at all uncommon to try to bring an unknown thief to make restitution by the threat of a sentence of excommunication; thus Bishop [Pg 545] Thomas, in 1376, at the request of Philip de Nevile, directs all the clergy to give notice that some persons unknown have knowingly detained a very valuable hawk, and they are to restore it within ten days on pain of the greater excommunication.[631] Two years afterwards (1378), the same bishop excommunicates certain persons who have stolen some "merlions" from his forest of Wesdale, and destroyed their nests.[632] On the other hand, the old Saxon system of purgation of oath still continued, *e.g.* in 1458, William Godthank, accused of theft, appeared in Gnosall Church, Lichfield, with eight of his neighbours, and standing before the altar he swore that he was innocent, and his neighbours that they believed him, whereupon the bishop threatened excommunication against any one who should in future slander him.[633]

Archbishop Peckham's third constitution at Reading (1279) orders the General Excommunications to be explained to the people on the Sundays after every Rural Chapter, and the archdeacons to see that it is done.[634]

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CHAPTER XXXII.

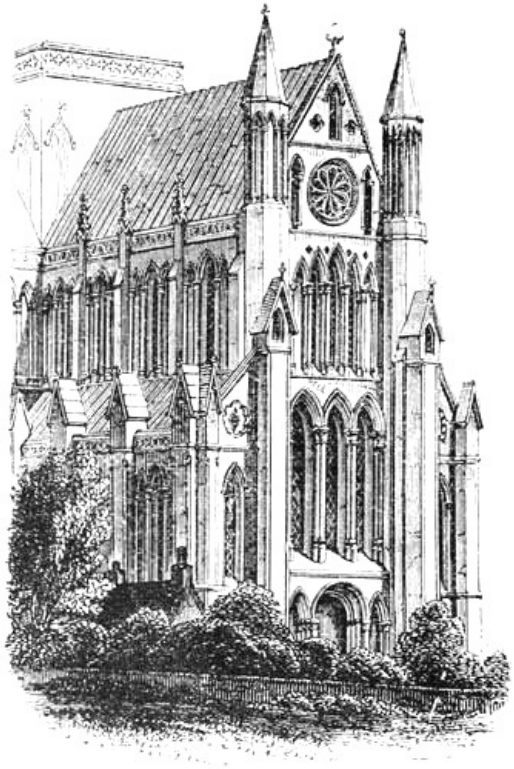
RELIGIOUS OPINIONS.

The subject of the religious condition of the parish priests and their people in the Middle Ages—their belief and life—brings us into a polemical atmosphere. There are some admirers of those times who look upon them as “the Ages of Faith;” there are others who think that in those times of false doctrines and manifold superstitions priests and people were generally degraded and vicious.

The truth lies somewhere between the two. We do not propose to enter into polemical discussion. Our business, as it seems to us, is to try to put ourselves into the midst of the people, to enter into their minds, to study their lives, and to represent as fairly as we can what manner of men priests and people were, what they believed, and how they lived.

We seem to see on the whole that there were two “schools of thought” in the Middle Ages. One consisted of learned men of a speculative turn of mind, who explained and developed [Pg 547] ancient doctrines and practices into new and erroneous meanings; followed by a crowd of devout people who adopted their views, and sometimes degraded philosophical speculations and pious opinions, which they hardly understood, into gross misapprehensions and superstitions. On the other hand, there were people of competent learning, who read the Scriptures and the ancient Fathers, and in substance adhered to their teaching; and with them remained a crowd of people whose Christian common sense kept them fairly free of extravagances. We must be careful in judging people who have been brought up in a faulty system. We must not take for granted that everybody believed in every error and in the conclusions logically involved in it, or approved of every superstitious custom. On the contrary, the soul, like the stomach, seems to discriminate what it lives on, and to have a power of assimilating what is good, and rejecting more or less what is noxious. Why should we doubt that God watches over His people, and helps the ignorant, well-intentioned Christian man unconsciously to refuse the evil and choose the good?

If we look at the general character of the centuries we have been studying, there is no denying that there was a great deal which was good in them. The people in the twelfth century had a great zeal for religion of an ascetic type, and amidst the violence and oppression of the times there was a great deal of religious feeling of an exalted character, [Pg 548] and many a saintly life. It was the great age of the Latin hymns.



Early English architecture.
North-west transept of Beverley Minster.

In the thirteenth century, the enthusiasm for the ascetic life had cooled down, having been to some extent disappointed; the monks were not so highly thought of, and the more sober type of religion represented by the bishop and secular clergy came to the front. It was a great century of intense vitality; the spirit of freedom was moving the middle classes of the people, and the Church was in hearty sympathy with them. It was the age of organization of civil institutions. Very few monasteries were built, but every cathedral was enlarged, and churches were rebuilt; there was never so active an architectural period. The new religious [Pg 549] spirit of the age showed itself in that rare event, the introduction of a new style of architecture, bold engineering skill in its construction, with pointed arches soaring heavenwards, ornamentations of acanthus leaves just unfolding in the vigour of the spring-time of a new year.

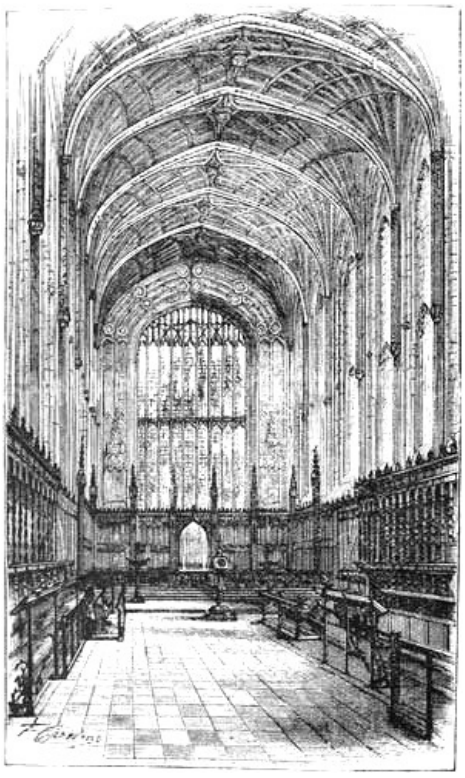
In the fourteenth century, the history of the Lollard movement is enough to show the strong religious feeling of the people and its tendency towards sounder views of religion. The saying that, “Where you saw three people talking together, two of them were Lollards,” was said by a Lollard, and may be an exaggeration; but there is no question that (while some went to extremes, as always in an age of great intellectual movement and strong feeling) the mass of the people was leavened by what there was—and there was much—that was true in the new ideas.[635]

It has been suggested by ingenious critics that Chaucer, being connected by marriage and sympathy with the leader of the party which favoured the opinion of the school of Wiclif, his famous description of “a poure parson of a town” is only the ideal of what a parish priest ought to be according to the view of that school. It may be maintained, on the other hand, that Chaucer’s sketches of the clergy of all orders are conceived in a spirit of genial satire; [Pg 550] and that if the parish priests had been generally worldly-minded and negligent of their duties, unclerical in attire and weapons, attendants on field-sports and haunters of taverns, the great artist would have put a man of that type among his inimitable gallery of contemporary character sketches. We have no fear of being mistaken when we take it that his “poure parson of a town” (which does not necessarily mean a town but quite possibly a village rector[636]) had many prototypes among the parochial clergy of the fourteenth century.

A good man there was of religioun,
That was a poure parson of a toun;
But riche was of holy thought and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Christe’s Gospel treweley would preche.
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversity ful patient;
And such he was y proved often sithes,
Ful loth were he to cursen for his tithes,
But rather would he given, out of doubte,

Unto his poure parishens about,
Of his offering, and eke of his substance.
He could in litel thing have suffisance.
Wide was his parish, and houses fer asunder,
But he ne left nought, for no rain ne thunder,
In siknesse and in mischief to visite
The farthest in his parish much and lite,
Upon his fete, and in his hand a staff. [Pg 551]
This noble example to his sheep he gaf,
That first he wrought and afterward he taught
Out of the gospel he the wordes caught,
And this figure he added yet thereto,
That if gold ruste what should iron do,
For if a priest be foul on whom we trust,
No wonder is a leude man to rust;
And shame it is if that a priest take kepe,
To see a filthy shepherd and clene shepe.
Well ought a priest example for to give
By his clenenesse how his shepe shulde live.
He sette not his benefice to hire,
And left his shepe accumbered in the mire,
And ran unto London unto Saint Poule's
To seeken him a chanterie for souls,
Or with a brotherhede to be withold,
But dwelt at home and kepte well his fold,
So that the wolfe made him not miscarry.
He was a shepherd and no mercenarie,
And though he holy were and virtuous,
He was to sinful men not despitous,
Ne of his speche dangerous ne digne,[637]
But in his teaching discrete and benigne.
To drawen folk to heaven with fairenesse
By good ensample was his businesse.
But if it were any persone obstinat,
What so he were of highe or low estate,
Him wolde he snibben[638] sharply for the nones.
A better priest I trow nowhere non is.
He waited after no pomp ne reverence,
Ne maked him no spiced[639] conscience,
But Christes love and His apostles twelve,
He taught, but first he followed it himselve.

[Pg 552]

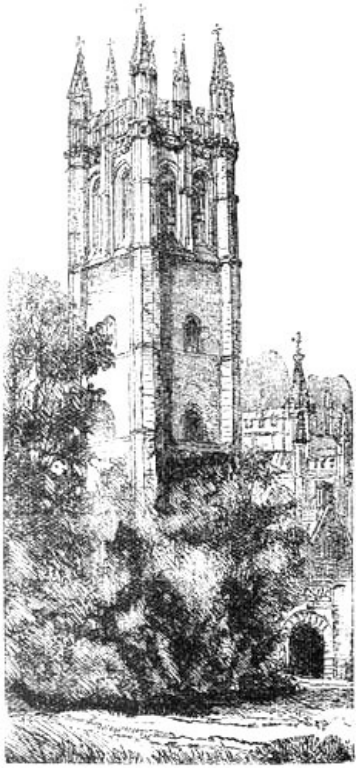


King's College Chapel, Cambridge, 15th century.

The fifteenth century is generally believed to have been especially religiously dead. There [Pg 553]

are two ways of looking at it; we may talk, not without some reason, of the stagnation of the fag end of mediævalism, of the wealth and worldliness and neglect of the prelates, of the superstition of the people, and so forth; but one fact, which still exists all over the country, is enough by itself to work instant conviction that there is another side to the question—the church building of the century. Our forefathers in the fifteenth century had enough of life and originality to develop here in England a new variety of Gothic art distinctly different from the development of the art on the Continent of Europe; a reaction against the luxuriant beauty of the Decorated; with a masculine strength in its lines, and a practical modification of plan and elevation so as to obtain spacious, lofty interiors. Take its grand towers as a measure of its artistic power; call to mind the use of painted windows as the great means of coloured decoration; study the elaboration and richness of the roofs and chancel screens of Norfolk and Devon. Calculate the immense quantity of church architecture and art executed in the fifteenth century, not only in monasteries and cathedrals, but in parish churches; think of the magnificent parish churches of Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, and Somerset, and of the rising towns in Yorkshire and Lancashire. Remember that they were not commissioned and paid for by the parochial clergy, for we have shown that they had nothing to spare; not by the nobility, for they were half ruined by the Wars of the Roses; but by the large minds of the rising middle class, and out of the wealth which trade and commerce brought them.

[Pg 554]



Magdalen College, Oxford,
15th century.

[Pg 555]

St. Michael’s, Coventry, 15th century.

This one piece of evidence is enough to prove the existence of vigorous religious faith among the people. At the same time, kings and prelates were founding colleges and schools, *e.g.* Winchester and Eton, New and King's. Country gentlemen were founding chantries and supplying themselves with domestic chaplains, and the traders of the towns were founding gilds and services in order to obtain for themselves and those belonging to them additional means of grace and closer pastoral care. It is not possible to believe in the face of such facts that there was not a great deal of very earnest religion in the fifteenth century. Abuses and false doctrines and superstitions there were in abundance, but the religious spirit of the [Pg 556] fifteenth century was already striving earnestly for reform, and accumulating that force of public opinion which broke out in the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and compelled Rome itself, after frustrating the Councils of Constance and Basle, to make the reforms of the Council of Trent.

Contrast this with the three centuries which followed; with the cessation of all building of new churches and the neglect of the old ones, and the shameful condition of the services in many of them; with the absence of the extension of Church machinery to meet the needs of the increasing population; and it will be hard to believe that there was not much more of religious earnestness in the fifteenth century than in those which followed it. The *Italian relation of England*[640] says of the people of the later part of this century: "They all attend mass every day, and say many paternosters in public, the women carrying long rosaries in their hands, and any who can read taking the office of Our Lady with them, and, with some companion, reciting it in the church verse by verse in a low voice, after the manner of the religious. They always hear mass on Sunday in their parish church, and give liberal alms because they may not offer less than a piece of money whereof fourteen are equal to a gold ducat, nor do they omit any form incumbent upon good Christians."

[Pg 557]

APPENDIX I.

The history of the parish of Whalley in Lancashire affords an interesting illustration of the growth of parochial organization. The original parish was a vast tract of wild hilly country, fifty miles long, covering two hundred superficial miles, in the north-west corner of Lancashire, chiefly forest and moor, with fertile pastures in the broad valleys of the Ribble, the Hodder, the Calder, and their tributaries. The Saxon rectors were also lords of the manor; they were married men, and the rectory, together with the manor, descended from father to son. These facts suggest that the lord of the manor, in early days after the Conversion, turned his house into a semi-secular monastery such as those we have described (p. 35), retaining the headship of it for himself, and handing it down to his heirs; and that in course of time, instead of developing into a monastery of a stricter kind, it changed into the parochial type of rectory. From the earliest known time, and throughout the Saxon period, however, the reverend lords of the manor rejoiced in the title of dean, the Bishop of Worcester having committed to them large ecclesiastical jurisdiction over this [Pg 558] remote and inaccessible corner of his diocese.

After the Conquest, the lordship of this part of the country, including the Manor of Whalley, was given to Henry de Lacy, who laid claim to the advowson of the benefice of Whalley; but for a time the difficulty was got over by De Lacy presenting the hereditary claimant, De Lacy thus establishing a precedent of right of presentation, the hereditary claimant treating it as nothing more than a certificate that he was the rightful heir.

The names of the deans for several generations are given in a "Description of Blackburnshire," which was probably written by J. Lindlay, Abbot of Whalley (A.D. 1342-1377); they are Spartlingus, Lewlphus, Cutwulph, Cudwolphus, Henry the Elder, Robert, Henry the Younger, William, Geoffry the Elder, Geoffry the Younger, and Roger.

The decree of the Lateran Council in 1215 prohibited these hereditary successions to benefices, and Roger, the last dean, resigned the benefice and surrendered the advowson to the De Lacys, and "settled at the Ville of Tunlay as the progenitor of a flourishing family yet subsisting after a lapse of six centuries, legitimate descendants of the Deans of Whalley and Lords of Blackburnshire."[641] Thereupon De Lacy presented Peter de Cestria to the rectory, [642] and during his incumbency (in 1284) appropriated the rectory to the Monastery of Stanlaw.

Before this date—how long before is not known—there were already in the parish seven chapels of old foundation. Three of them—Clitherhow, Calne, and Burnley—are named in a [Pg 559] charter of the time of Henry I.; a fourth—Elvethan—is named in a charter of the time of Richard I.; the rest are not named till the grant of the advowson of H. de Lacy in 1284. The probability is that the first three or four had, from time to time, been founded by the old Saxon deans, in the villages which sprang up in their extensive manor; the remainder, perhaps, at a later period between the Conquest and the last quarter of the thirteenth century. They were all endowed with glebe land of about thirty-five acres each.

At the next vacancy, the convent of Stanlaw entered upon its enjoyment of the Rectory of Whalley. How they served it is not known. In old times there is evidence that the dean had at least a chaplain and clerk to aid him in his duties. Probably the convent retained the staff of assistant clergy, whatever it might be, and added another in place of the rector.

In 1296 the abbot and convent of Stanlaw, with the leave of their founder, H. de Lacy, and with the sanction of Pope Nicholas IV., removed their house to the more healthy site afforded by their new estate at Whalley. Two years after, in 1298, Walter Langton, Bishop of Lichfield, ordained the foundation of a perpetual vicarage with a manse, thirty acres of meadow and corn land, with rights of pasturage, etc., and the altarage of the mother church and its seven chapels.

Thirty-two years afterwards, on the petition of the abbot and convent, who represented the necessities of the house (it was in that year that the foundation of the abbey church was laid) and the immoderate endowment of the vicarage, Roger, Bishop of Lichfield, reduced the endowment of the vicarage to a manse and yard within the abbey close, with a pittance, [Pg 560] for which he was to pay 13*s.* 4*d.* a year, hay and oats for his horse, the glebe lands of the chapels, and fifty-six marks in money, for which he was to bear the burden of the chapels, find a priest for each chapel, bread and wine for the Holy Communion, etc. The fourth vicar, William de Wolf, was required, before his presentation, to bind himself by oath never to procure an augmentation of the endowment.

So things continued till the death of the fifth vicar, John of Topcliffe, brother of the abbot, when the abbot and convent presented one of themselves to the vicarage, and so added its endowment to the revenues of the house.

The next matter of interest in the history of the parish is the beginning of new foundations to supply the spiritual needs of new centres of population. Padiham was founded in 30 Henry VI.; Whitewell, Holme, and Marsden between the reigns of Henry VI. and Henry VII.; then Newchurch in Rossendale, 3 Henry VIII.; Goodshaw, 32 Henry VIII.; Newchurch in Pendle, 35 Henry VIII.; Accrington was taken out of Alvetham in 1577; and lastly, Bacup in Rossendale was founded in 1788.

To complete the story: at the dissolution of the monasteries the Abbot of Whalley was hanged on a charge of treason. The king made a compulsory exchange of the great tithes of the parish of Whalley, on which he seized as part of the abbey property, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, for some of the lands which belonged to the Kentish see. Archbishop Juxon augmented the living by surrendering to it, on the renewal of a lease which brought it within his power, the whole Easter roll and surplice fees, on condition that the curates of the [Pg 561] chapels should receive the house, and pay to the vicar in different proportions £42, which, with £38 hitherto paid, would augment the vicarage to £80. Archbishop Sancroft, on a subsequent renewal (1685), with the fine purchased lands to provide stipends for the curates of the chapels-of-ease hitherto unprovided for.

The record of an inquisition in the time of the Commonwealth into this and neighbouring churches survives, and gives an interesting account of the parish and its chapelries. In every case the account ends with the statement that the inhabitants desire to be made a parish.

APPENDIX II.

[Pg 562]

We have in the case of two Rural Deaneries, by way of sample, tabulated the benefices as entered in the “Taxatio” and the “Valor” with one another and with the modern Clergy List; with a few notes upon them.

DIOCESE OF LONDON.—DEANERY OF BERDESTAPLE.

From Domesday Book.	“Taxatio” of Pope Nicholas IV., 1292 A.D., p. 21.				“Valor Ecclesiasticus” of Hen. VIII., 1534 A.D., I 448.				Clergy List, 1895 A.D.	
		£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*		£
The Manor and Church	Ecclīā de Thurrok pva	5	6	8	Thurrock Parva R	3	15	0	Thurrock East	400

belonged to the See of London.											(or Little)	
						Thurrock Grays V per earm Epi Lond. dal' 6 Apr., 1582	5	0	8	Thurrock West, with Purfleet	170
										Grays Thurrock	175
Ditto.	"	Oresith (cum Vicar)	16	0	0	Orsett R	29	4	8	Orsett	500
						Chantry	6	13	4		
Cedd the Apostle of the East Saxons founded one of his centres of evangelization here, A.D. 653. In the time of Edward the Confessor it was divided into West T. held by Aluric, a priest and freeman, and East T. held by Tedric, a freeman.	"	Westillebȳ	13	16	4	Westilbury R	20	0	0	Tilbury West	480
						Free chapel of a hermit	1	6	8		
						Chantry	10	0	0		
	"	Estillebȳ	14	13	4	Estilbury V	12	17	0	Tilbury East	160
						Free Chapel which W. Pace lately held	3	0	0		
						Another Free Chapel which Wm More lately held	1	11	0		
In Saxon times these were one parish.	"	Hornyngdone	12	0	0	Esthornden R	9	14	0	Horndon East	435
Time of the Confessor "a certain deacon had here 30 acres and ¼ of a church."		Vicar ejusdem	4	13	4	Free chapel	0	5	0		
						Westhorndon R	14	13	4	Horndon West, with Ingrave[643]	380
This church belonged to Barking nunnery.						Horndon super Montem V	14	6	8	Horndon-on-the-Hill	250
From Saxon times belonged to Barking nunnery.	"	Mockyng	14	13	4	Mocking V	10	0	0	Mucking	172
Probably had a church in Saxon times. Afterwards Wm. de Septem Moles gave his manor with a free chapel to Waltham Abbey.	"	Stanford	16	0	0	Standeford le hope R	12	19	8	Stanford-le-Hope	600
						Free Chapel	2	0	0		
							7	18	0		
						Chantry					
In Saxon	"	Bulephen	13	6	8	Bulfanne R	23	0	0	Bulphan	345

times the manor and church belonged to Barking N.										
After the Conquest this parish belonged to B. of London.	"	Coringham[644]	8	0	0	Corringham R	22	3	8	Corringham	560
	"	Bures	6	13	4	Boures Gifford R	25	0	0	Bowers Gifford	406
	"	Bourgsted[645]	13	6	8	Burstede magna V	17	6	8	Burstead, Great	190
						Chantry	7	0	0	Billericay	320
The manor and church in the time of the Confessor belonged to Earl Godwin, after the Conquest to the See of London.	"	Burgsted parva[646]	4	13	4	Burstede Parva R	11	10	4	Little Burstead	270
	"	Leyndon	13	6	8	Laindon R with chapel of Bartilsdon annexed	35	6	8	Laindon with Basildon	500
Manor and church given at the Conquest to the See of London.						Free Chapel	3	6	8		
						Chantry	6	0	4		
						Langdon R[647]	10	3	8	Laindon Hills	224
	"	Fobbing	10	0	0	Fobbing R	21	0	0	Fobbing	534
	"	Chaldewell	5	6	8	Chadwell R	17	13	4	Chadwell	220
Originally one parish: by the time of Ed. Confessor a large manor in S. Benfleet with church belonged to Barking Abbey; a large manor in N. Benfleet with church belonged to Earl Harold.	"	Magna Benafleth	6	13	4	South Benflete V	16	5	4	South Benfleet	180
	"	Benefleth parva[648]	0	0	0					North Benfleet	430
Time of E. Confessor principal part belonged to a priest. Wm. gave it to the Albini family, founders of Bec Abbey. They gave this manor to Okeburn, Wilts., a cell of Bec.	"	Dontone	5	6	8	Donton R	14	12	8	Dunton Waylett	320
After the	"	Hoton	9	16	8	Hutton R	8	0	0	Hutton	230

Conquest, King Wm. gave this manor and church to Battle Abbey.	"	Schenefeud	10	0	0	Shenfield R	14	18	4	Shenfield	390
At the Conquest, known as Ramsden, subsequently divided into 2 manors and parishes, distinguished by names of their owners.	"	Duddyngeherst	8	0	0	Duddinghurst R	10	3	8	Doddinghurst	420
	"	Gingg Rad'i	6	13	4	Ingraffe R	7	13	5		
	"	Ramesden Cray	5	6	8	Ramsden Cranes R	19	12	0	Ramsden Crays	380
	"	Ramsden Belhous	6	13	4	Ramsden Belhous R	14	0	0	Stock-Harward with Ramsden Belhous	400
						Free chapel[649]	3	0	0		
	"	Dounham	5	6	8	Downeham R	12	2	8	Downham	340
	"	Fangge (or Fanga)	6	13	4	Fange R	14	0	4	Vange	141
	"	Novendon[650]	0	0	0	Novingdon R	10	13	4	Nevendon	150
	"	Thunderle[650]	0	0	0	Thundersley R	14	13	4	Thundersley	400
	"	Wykfore[650]	0	0	0	Wykeford R	13	13	4	Wickford	310
	"	Piches[650]	0	0	0	Pittesey R	10	13	4	Pitsea	300

DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY. DEANERY OF BRIGG.

"Taxatio" of Pope Nicholas IV., 1292 A.D.[651]	£	s.	d.	"Valor Ecclesiasticus," of Hen. VIII., 1534 A.D. [652]	£	s.	d.	Clergy List, 1895 A.D.	£
Ecclesia de Wyngham p. portione Prepositi et Vicarii	40	0	0	Wyngham cum Capellis de Asshe, Godwynston Nonyngton et Wymyngweld appr' Prepositoet Canonicis de Wyngham				Wingham	162
Portio Capellæ de Esse [Ash] cum Capella [of Overland] eidem annexa	60	0	0					Ash (Chapel of Overland ruined)	260
								Godenstone	200
Portio de Godewynstone	46	13	4	Master Edmund de Cranmere[653] p'vost hath in the Church of Wyngham	45	6	8	Nonington	280
								Womenswold	160
Portio Capellæ de Nonynton cum Capella de Wymelingwelde eidem annexa	53	6	8	Profits of the Chapel of Overland	20	0	0		
[Note.—Wingham was a tract of country part of the possessions				Deduct for parish priest he is bound to keep there	9	0	0		

of the See of Canterbury from the earliest Saxon times. No doubt the churches and chapels here mentioned had been built by successive archbishops. Archbishop Kilwardby, 1273 A.D., designed to found a College of secular priests in the Church of Wingham, but, being interrupted by death, his successor Peckham carried out the design. He made the Vicar also the Provost; made the chapelries (except Overland) distinct parishes, appointed Vicarages in them, and gave the parishes as prebends to the 5 Canons, and appointed 2 priests, 2 deacons, 2 sub-deacons, and a sexton to the service of the church. At subsequent periods 2 chantries were founded in Ash Church, one valued in the “Valor” at £14 13*s.* 4*d.*, out of which a life pension of £5 was paid to the late cantarist, and the other at £7 6*s.* 8*d.*]				And for the sexton of Wyngham	3	0	0				
				And for life pension to the late provost, Mr. Wm. Warham[654]	22	0	0	31	6	3	
				The 5 canons gross receipts from the tithes of Ashe with the chapels of Rusheborough, Nunnington, Goodneston, and Wymengewelde	143	7	7½				
				The deductions including salaries of 5 priests to serve the 5 chapels at about £6 each, and for two priests doing service in Wyngham Church £6 11*s.* 8*d.* each, for 2 quiristers each 13*s.* 4*d.*, for sexton’s daily service in church £4 6*s.* 8*d.*, and for divers obits £51 5*s.* 4*d.*	59	0	12½	84	5	11	
Ecclīā de Sturmine cum penc’ (40*s.* to the Prior of Leeds)	12	13	4	Stormouth				18	19	10	Stourmouth	300
Ecclīā de Preston (appr’ to St. Augustine, Cant.)	20	0	0	Preston appr’ to St. Augustine, Cant.				0	0	0	Preston	000

	Vicar ejusdem	4	15	4	The Vicar has	9	15	0	Vicarage	150
	Ecclīā de Eylinston	10	0	0	(Not mentioned in “Valor,” or by Hasted.)					[Pg 565]
	Ecclīā de Adesham cum capella	53	6	8	Asham with chapel of Staple annexed	28	12	0	Adisham	450
					The priest at Staple has	6	13	4	Staple	450
	Ecclīā de Chilindene	5	6	8	Chelynden	4	18	8	Chillenden	120
	Ecclīā de Lyvingesburn[655]	10	0	0	Bekesborne[655]	5	13	8	Bekesborne	150
	Ecclīā de Wytham	33	6	8	Wikham breux	29	11	6	Wickhambreux	603
	Vicarius ejusdem	5	6	8						
	Ecclīā de Littleburne (appr’ to St. Aug., Cant.)	20	0	0	Lytelbourne (appr’ to St. Augustine, Cant.)				Littlebourn	250
					The Vicar has	8	0	0		
	Ecclīā de Pat’kes burne (appr’ to thePrior of Merton)	33	6	8	Patryksborne with the chapel of Brigge (appr’ to Merton)	11	7	4	Patrixbourn	350
					The priest of the chapel has	2	13	4		
	Ecclīā de Kinggeston	12	0	0	Kyngston	16	0	0	Kingston	350
	Ecclīā de Bisshopes burne cum capella	33	6	8	Bysshoppysborne with Church of Barham annexed	35	19	9	Bishopsburne	500
					Stipend to the priest of Barham	8	0	0	Barham	650
	Ecclīā de Pecham	20	0	0	Petham (appr’ to St. Osyth Priory)	0	0	0		
	Vicarius ejusdem	4	6	8	The Vicar has	8	0	1		
	Ecclīā de Waltham	11	6	8	Waltham (appr’ to St. Gregory, Cant.)	0	0	0	Waltham with Petham	575
					The Vicar has	7	15	4		
	Ecclīā de Elmestede cum penc’ (20 marks to Mr. Solomon de Burn for his life)	16	0	0	Elmeston	6	7	7	Elmstone	180
	Ecclīā de Chertham	26	13	4	Chartham with the chapel of Horton	41	5	10	Chartham	550
					Salary of priest at Horton	1	6	8		
	Ecclīā de Chileham	40	0	0	Chelham with the chapel of Molayshe (appr’ to Abbess of Sion)	0	0	0	Chilham	700
	Vicarius ejusdem	6	13	4	Vicar has	5	3	4	Molash	90
					Salary of priest at chapel	6	13	4		
	Ecclīā de Magna Hardres cum capella	26	13	4	Grete Hardres with Chapel of Stelling annexed	19	13	0	Upper Hardres with Stelling	400
					Deduction for life pension to late parson (£6 13*s.* 4*d.*)	0	0	0		
	Ecclīā de	11	16	8	Crundale with pension to Prior	11	10	8	Crundale	320

Croyndale cum penc' (25*s.* to Prior of Leeds)				of Leeds, 35*s.*						
Ecclīā de Brok	6	13	4	Broke	7	7	0			
Ecclīā de Wy (appr' to Battle Abbey)	43	6	8	Church of Wye (appr' to the monks of Battle)	0	0	0			
Vicarius ejusdem	10	13	4	College of Wye Richard Walker Vicar and Master of the College	0	0	0			
[NOTE.—I, Kempe Archbp. of York, founded the College of secular priests in the Church of Wye, 1447 A.D.][656]				Total receipts of the College, £125 15*s.* 4½*d.*	93	2	0½	Wye Vicarage	270	[Pg 566]
				Deductions. Among them for 3 priests, clerks, quiristers, scole master and other ministers, £68; to the Provost, £13 6*s.* 8*d.*; to poor people, £3 6*s.* 8*d.*; founder's obit, £3 3*s.* 4*d.*; etc., £32 13*s.* 4*d.*						
Ecclīā de Bocton Allulphi	40	0	0	Bocton Aluph (appr' to College of Wye)	0	0	0			
				The Vicar has	5	16	10			
Ecclīā de Godm̃sham cum capella	53	6	8	Godmersham cum capella de Chullok (appr' to Xt. Ch., Cant.)	0	0	0	Godmersham	160	
				Vicar, £16 0*s.* 12*d.*; deduct for priest to serve chapel, £6 13*s.* 4*d.*	9	7	8	Challock	250	
				Ikham	25	11	8	Ickham	803	
Ecclīā de Itham	30	0	0	Stodmarsshe (appr' to hospital for poor priests, Cant.)	0	0	0	Stodmarsh	135	

APPENDIX III.

[Pg 567]

The illustrations which we have been able to give of our subject from the pictures in Mediæval MSS. are only a handful selected out of a very great number. It may be useful to some students to have references to the MSS. in the British Museum, where other illustrations of special interest may be found.

The most useful for illustrations of ecclesiastical rites, and incidentally for the vestments of all orders of the clergy, and for *instrumenta*, are the Pontificals; *e.g.*—

The Pontifical of Landulph of Milan, 9th century, engraved in D'Agincourt's *L'Art par ses monuments*; Painting, Plates XXXVII. and XXXVIII.

Tiberius B. VIII. contains two MSS. One English, of the end of the 12th or beginning of the 13th century.

The other French, date, A.D. 1365.

Egerton 931. French, of the Diocese of Sens, date, 1346-1378.

Lansdown 451. English of Diocese of Exeter, 14th century.

Egerton 1067. French, 15th century.

Add. MS. 14805. German, 15th century.

Add. 19898. French, late 15th century.

An early printed Pontifical, 471, f. 2, with engravings, Venice, A.D. 1520. There are other editions printed in other countries, but with the same engravings.

BAPTISM.—*By affusion.*—16 G. VI. f. 128, 14th century. Egerton 745, f. 1, early 14th century. Egerton 2019, f. 135, late 15th century. [Pg 568]

With aspersion.—10 E. VI. f. 230*b*, early 14th century. (Adult in temporary font, bishop sprinkling with aspersoir.)

By immersion.—10 E. IV. f. 125, early 14th century. 16 G. VI. f. 128, 14th century. 6 E. VI. f. 171, and f. 318*b*, 14th century. Harl. 2278, f. 76, 15th century. Add. 29704, f. 18, close of 14th century. Nero A. IV. f. 81*b*, 14th century. Lansdown 451, f. 225*b*, 15th century. 20 C. VII. 190*b*, 14th century. 16 G. VI. f. 14.

Confirmation.—6 E. VI. f. 372, 14th century. Egerton 1067, f. 12, late 15th century. Printed Pontifical 471, f. 2, page 2, A.D. 1520.

Marriage.—Nero E. II. f. 115 and f. 217, 14th century. Harl. 2278, f. 462. 6 E. VI. 257, and f. 375 and f. 414*b*, 14th century. 10 E. VI. f. 229*b* and f. 313, 14th century. 14 E. IV. f. 30 and f. 275, 15th century. Harl. 4379, f. 6, 14th century. 16 G. VI. f. xx., 14th century. 20 C. VII. f. 10, 14th century. Nero E. II. f. 115, 14th century. Printed Sarum Primer, A.D. 1531, Paris. G. 12136, in Kalendar, June.

Preaching.—Egerton 745, f. 46, 14th century. Add. 29433, f. 16, early 15th century. Add. 17280, f. 55, late 15th century. 6 E. VII. f. 75*b*, 14th century. 14 E. III. f. 9*b*, early 14th century.

Confession.—6 E. VII. f. 500, 14th century. Add. 25698, f. 9, Flemish, c. A.D. 1492. Arundel 83, f. 12, 14th century. Egerton 2019, f. 135, c. A.D. 1450. 6 E. VI. f. 357, and f. 369*b*, and f. 414*b*, 14th century. Add. 18851, f. 69*b*, end of 15th century. 6 E. VII. f. 506*b*, 14th century.

Printed Pontifical 471, f. 2, p. 177, and p. 203*b*, A.D. 1523. *To a Friar*, Royal, 16 G. VI. f. 159, etc. Egerton 2019, f. 135, 15th century. *Of Clergy*, Royal, 6 E. VII. [Pg 569]

Penance.—16 G. VI. f. 421, 14th century. Arundel 83, f. 12, 14th century. 6 E. VII. f. 443, 14th century.

Printed Pontifical 471, f. 2, p. 155, A.D. 1520.

Celebration of Mass.—10 E. IV. f. 211, *with housel cloth*, 14th century; and 2 B. VII. f. 260*b*, late 13th century. 16 G. VI. f. 130 and f. 139, 14th century. Nero E. II. f. 129*b*, 14th century. Egerton 2125, f. 143, late 15th century. Royal 14 E. III. f. 17, early 14th century. Royal 6 E. VI. f. 24*b*.

Add. 25698, f. 2, c. A.D. 1492. Add. 29704, f. 7 (*elevation*), and 16997, f. 144, 15th century. Plut. 279, f. 12, 15th century. Add. 16997, f. 145, French, 15th century. Add. 15813, f. 155, Italian, A.D. 1525. Egerton 931, f. 78*b* (1346-78).

With only one candle on altar, Nero E. II. f. 202, etc., 14th century.

Processions.—16 G. VI. f. 30, f. 350, and f. 351. Nero E. II. f. 36, f. 73, 14th century. 10 E. IV. f. 231*b*, 14th century. P. La Croix, La Vie Militaire, etc., plate 257.

Visitation of the Sick.—6 E. VI. f. 427*b*, 14th century. 6 E. VII. f. 70, 14th century. Add. 25698, f. 5, Flemish, c. A.D. 1492. Egerton 2019, f. 142, late 15th century. 20 C. VII. f. 78*b*, 14th century. Lansdown 451, f. 234, early 15th century. Printed Sarum Primer, A.D. 1531, in Kalendar, December, and at f. 102*b*.

Funeral Ceremonies.—*Enshrouding the corpse.*—Egerton, 2019, f. 142, 15th century. *In church.*—16 G. VI. f. 412, A.D. 1270. 2 B. VII. f. 222, f. 300, and f. 315, c. A.D. 1260. Sloane 346, f. 22*b*, 14th century. Add. 16997, f. 119*b*, and f. 171*b*, 15th century. 16 G. VI. f. 315, 14th century. Nero E. III. f. 131, 15th century. Nero E. II. f. 200*b*, 14th century. *At the church door.*—Add. 10294, f. 72 and f. 89, 14th century. *Being carried into church.*—Add. 12228, f. 8, early 14th century. *Funeral procession.*—20 C. VII. f. 40*b* and f. 200, 14th century. Egerton 1070, f. 54*b*, c. A.D. 1480. Add. 15813, f. 263, A.D. 1525. 6 E. VI. f. 481, 14th century. Add. 10294, f. 86 and f. 88, early 14th century. *Commendatio defunctorum.*—Egerton 2125, f. 117*b*, late 14th century. Egerton 1070, f. 54*b*, A.D. 1480. 14 E. IV. f. 208*b*. 20 C. VII. f. 10, 14th century. Printed Sarum Psalter, A.D. 1531, f. 98. See also Norwich Vol. of the Archæological Institute, p. 105. *Burial.*—Claudius B. IV. f. 11, f. 18, f. 44, f. 72, f. 74, and f. 85, 11th century. Egerton 2125, f. 18, early 16th century. Egerton 2019, f. 135, c. A.D. 1450. *Aspersing coffin.*—16 G. VI. f. 315, 14th century; and Harl. 2278, f. 22*b*, 15th century. *Tomb of a king.*—20 C. VII. f. 40*b*, 14th century. Nero E. II. f. 72*b*, 14th century. *Tomb with lamp over it.*—Egerton Plut. 745, f. 62*b*, 14th century. *Sword and horn over tomb.*—16 G. VI. f. 180*b*, 14th century. [Pg 570] [Pg 571]

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THE END.

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Footnotes:

[1] We gather from FitzHerbert "On Surveyinge," chap. xl. (1470 to 1538, A.D.) that this condition of things continued general to the end of the sixteenth century.

[2] Grimm, Stallybras's ed., i. 90.

[3] Thorpe, "Ancient Laws," etc., 201.

[4] "Burnt Njal."

[5] We know very little of the religion of these Teutonic tribes before their conversion, or of its usages. Mr. Kemble had “no hesitation in asserting” that their religion was the same as that of the Scandinavians; he thought that the Mark and system of land occupation which had existed long before in their native seats was introduced in its entirety into their new settlements, and that every Mark had its *fanum*, *delubrum* or *sacellum*; and, further, that the priests attached to these heathen churches had lands—perhaps freewill offerings, too—for their support. Under these circumstances, he argues that nothing could be more natural than the establishment of a baptismal church in every Mark which adopted Christianity and the transference of the old endowments to the new priesthood (“The Saxons in England,” ii. 423).

[6] See a list of them at p. 63.

[7] 27th of the Council of London, 1102 A.D.

[8] Coifi asked, *Quis aras et fana idolorum cum septis quibus erant circumdata primus profanare debet ... pergebat ad idola ... mox appropinquabat ad fanum....* In King Alfred’s Anglo-Saxon version of Bede, *aras* is represented by wigbed, *fana* by heargas, *idolorum* by deofolgild, a *septis* in one place by hegum (hedges), and in the other by getymbro. Getymbro may mean a construction of any material, but probably here of timber (“Eccl. Hist.,” ii. c. 13).

[9] There is another notice of the existence of temples among the East Saxons, in the narrative of Bishop Jaruman’s work of reclaiming the half of those people under the rule of the sub-king Sighere, when they had relapsed to their old superstitions as the result of the great plague of 664 A.D. Bede says that the people “began to restore the temples that had been abandoned, and to adore idols”; but Jaruman “restored them to the way of righteousness; so that, either forsaking or destroying the temples and altars which they had erected, they reopened the churches.” At first sight, the narrative gives the idea of a number of temples, and a number of churches scattered over the country; but, on consideration, we call to mind that the East Saxons had been converted by Cedd only ten or twelve years before (653), and that we do not read of his building more than two churches, one at Tilbury on the Thames, the other at Bradwell, at the mouth of the Blackwater, which was probably outside the district in question; and the temples spoken of may not have been more numerous than the churches mentioned in the same vague terms; or Bede may have had in mind the open-air places of worship of the old religion and the prayer stations at which the Christian missionaries used to assemble their converts (“Eccl. Hist.,” iii. c. 30).

[10] Professor Skeat, in letters to the present writer.

[11] Anglo-Saxon nom. *hearh*; dat. *hearge*; pl. nom. *heargas*. Many English words are formed on “dative” types.

[12] In Icelandic, *hörgr* = “a heathen place of worship, an altar of stone erected on a high place, or a sacrificial cairn built in the open air, and without images.”

[13] Whitaker’s “Craven,” p. 500.

[14] Saint Lewinna is said to have suffered *martyrdom* for her faith at the hands of the heathen South Saxon, during the time of Archbishop Theodore. “Acta Sanct.,” July 24, p. 608, and “Sussex Archeol. Coll.,” vol. i. p. 45.

[15] Some stories of the introduction of Christianity among others of the rude northern peoples are well worth giving as an illustration, in likenesses, and in contrasts, of our own story, and especially because they give a quantity of details which will supply the paucity of such details in our own histories. They are later in time, but they belong to a similar phase of manners.

When Harold Klak, King of Jutland, who had received baptism on a visit to the Court of Louis le Debonaire (A.D. 820), returned home and destroyed the native shrines, proscribed the sacrifices, and abolished the priesthood, his people resented it, and drove him into exile.

Hacon of Norway had been baptized at the Court of our King Athelstan. At first he sent for a bishop and priests from England; a few of his intimate companions received baptism, and two or three churches were built in the district more immediately subject to him. Then at the Froste Thing, the winter assembly of the whole people, the king proposed to them to accept baptism. One of the bonders replied, in the name of his fellow-chiefs, “The ancient faith which our fathers and forefathers held from the oldest times, though we are not so brave men as our ancestors, has served us to the present time. If you intend to take the matter up with a high hand, and try to force us, we bonders,” he said, “have resolved among ourselves to part with you, and take some other chief, under whom we may freely and safely enjoy the faith which suits our inclinations.” The following winter four of the bonders bound themselves by oath to force the king to sacrifice to the gods, and to root out Christianity from Norway. The churches were burnt, and the priests stoned, and when the king came to the Yule Thing, he consented to taste the horseflesh of the sacrifice, and drink to the gods.

When Olaf Tryggveson gained the throne of Norway, having been baptized in England, he began by destroying the temples in his own territory, and declared that he would make all Norway Christian or die. The crisis came at the Midsummer Althing, held at Mære, where

was an ancient temple; and thither all the great chiefs and bonders, and the whole strength of the heathen party, assembled. At a preliminary meeting of the bonders, Olaf proposed to them to adopt the Christian religion; they demanded, on the other hand, that he should offer sacrifice to the gods. He consented to go with them to the temple, and entered it with a great number of his own adherents; and when the sacrifice began the king suddenly struck down the image of Thor with his gold inlaid axe so that it rolled down at his feet; at this signal his men struck down the rest of the images from their seats, and then came forth and again demanded that the people should abandon their belief in gods who were so powerless. The people surrendered, and "took baptism." Subsequently, Olaf Haraldson (1015), learning that the old sacrifices were still secretly offered at Mære, and other places, surprised a party at Mære, who were engaged in the forbidden worship, put their leader to death, and confiscated the property of the rest. Then Olaf went to the uplands, and summoned a Thing. Gudbrand, a powerful chief of the district, sent a message-token summoning the peasants far and wide to come to the Thing, and resist the king's demand to abandon their ancient faith. Gudbrand had a temple on his own land, in which was an image of Thor, made up of wood, of great size, hollow within, covered without with ornaments of gold and silver. At the first meeting, Sigurd the Bishop, arrayed in his robes, with his mitre on his head, and his staff in his hand, preached to the assembly about the true faith and the wonderful works of God. When he had finished, one of the bonders said: "Many things are told us by this horned man, with a staff in his hand, crooked at the top like a ram's horn; since your God, you say, is so powerful, tell him to make it clear sunshine to-morrow, and we will meet you here again, and do one of two things—either agree with you about this matter, or fight you." Accordingly, on the morrow, before sunrise, the assembly came together again to the Thing-field, Olaf and his followers on one side, and Gudbrand and his men bringing with them into the field the great image of Thor, glittering with gold and silver, to which the heathen party did obeisance. Olaf had given instructions beforehand to one of his chiefs, Kolbein the Strong, who usually carried besides his sword a great club. "Dale Gudbrand," said the king, "thinks to frighten us with his god, who cannot even move without being carried. You say that our God is invisible, turn your eyes to the east, and behold his splendour," (for the sun was just rising above the horizon). And when they all turned to look, Kolbein the Strong acted upon his instructions; he struck the idol with his war-club with such force that it broke in pieces, and a number of mice ran out of it among the crowd. Olaf taunted them with the helplessness of such a god; and Gudbrand admitted the force of the argument. "Our god will not help us, so we will believe on the God thou believest in." He and all present were baptized, and received the teachers whom King Olaf and Bishop Sigurd set over them, and Gudbrand himself built a church in the valley.

There was a great temple at Upsala, with idols of Thor, Woden, and Frigga, which was afterwards converted into a church (see Snorre Sturlusun's "Heimskringla," translated by S. Lang, with notes by R. B. Anderson, vol. i. pp. 103-105, 110, and vol. iv. p. 40).

Temples and sacrifices seem to imply the existence of priests; but it is remarkable that, in the collisions between Hakon and the Olafs and the heathenism of Norway, there is no mention of a single priest.

[16] Bede, "Eccles. Hist.," ii. 14.

[17] Ibid., ii. 16.

[18] Bede, iii. 3.

[19] Ibid., iii. 5.

[20] Ibid., iii. 14.

[21] Ibid., v. 6. There are other indications that travellers sometimes took tents on their journeys through the thinly inhabited country.

[22] Pertz, ii. 334.

[23] Bede, iii. 26.

[24] Bede, iv. 27.

[25] In the life of St. Willibald, we read that "it was the ancient custom of the Saxon nation, on the estates of some of their nobles and great men, to erect not a church, but the sign of the Holy Cross, dedicated to God, beautifully and honourably adorned, and exalted on high for the common use of daily prayer" (Acta SS. Ord. Benedict, sect. iii., part 2). So it was a custom with "St. Kentigern to erect a cross in any place where he had converted the people, and where he had been staying for a time" ("Vita Kentigerni," by Joscelin, the Monk of Furness). Adalbert, a Gallic bishop, in the time of St. Boniface, preached in fields and at wells, and set up little crosses and oratories in various places.

[26] The church at Bradfield-on-Avon, recently discovered, unaltered and uninjured, was probably the church of one of these monasteries.

[27] Of the early monasteries of the East Saxons, the East Anglians, the South Saxons, and of the Dioceses of Rochester and Hereford, little is known.

[28] "Historical Church Atlas," E. McClure.

[29] Secular monasteries are alluded to in the fifth canon of Clovesho (A.D. 747), and eighth canon of Calchythe (816). A canon of Clovesho (803) forbad laymen to be abbots.

[30] Bishop of Oxford, "Const. Hist.," i. 251.

[31] The Bishop of Oxford, however, says, "Occasional traces of Ecclesiastical assemblies of single kingdoms occur, but they are scarcely distinguishable from the separate Witenagemots" ("Const. Hist.," i. 264).

[32] The 123rd of the novels.

[33] Labbe and Cossart Councils, 9. 119.

[34] Letters of Gregory the Great, lib. xii. ep. xi. (Migne 77, p. 1226).

[35] Another capitulary, dated 832, ordained that if there were an unendowed church it should be endowed with a manse and two villani by the freemen who frequented it, and if they refuse it shall be pulled down.

[36] When Willibrord, a Northumbrian educated at Ripon, was evangelizing Frankish Frisia, 692, etc., Alcuin records that he founded not only monasteries but encouraged the foundation of parish churches. Alcuin, "Opera II.," tom. 101, p. 834. Migne.

[37] Bede, iii. 17.

[38] Ibid., v. 4, 5.

[39] At the same time, to encourage commerce, a merchant who had made three voyages in his own ship was entitled to the rank of Thane.

[40] The Bishop of Oxford and earlier authorities are of opinion that the "burg geat settl" means the right of jurisdiction over tenants. Sharon Turner conjectures that the place in the king's hall means a seat in the Witenagemot.

[41] Thorpe, "Ancient Laws," i. 367.

[42] S.P.C.K., "Roch. Dioc. Hist.," p. 25.

[43] Ellis's "Introduction to Domesday Book."

[44] Parishes with two rectors continued not infrequently throughout the Middle Ages; there are some even to the present day. The way in which the parochial duties were divided is indicated by two examples given in Whitaker's "Craven" (p. 504). Linton has two rectors, who take the service in alternate weeks; they have their stalls on either side of the choir, and parsonage houses nearly adjoining one another. So at Bonsal each rector has his own stall and pulpit.

Sometimes each mediety had its own church. The churches of Willingale Spain and Willingale Doe, in Essex, are in the same churchyard. At Pakefield, Suffolk, there is a double church, each with its choir and nave and altar, divided only by an open arcade.

[45] Bôt = compensation.

[46] This is the earliest notice (in England at least) of the ancient custom of having a confirmation god-parent, different from the baptismal sponsors. There are other notices of it in the canons of Edgar (see p. 69) and the twenty-second of the laws of Canute; and in many canons of English Mediæval Diocesan Councils. Queen Elizabeth and Edward VI. were each baptized and confirmed at the same time, and, according to primitive custom, each had three baptismal sponsors and one confirmation god-parent. It is still enjoined by the third rubric at the end of the Church Catechism and by the twenty-ninth of the canons of 1603.

[47] *i.e.* be scourged.

[48] So it is usually stated, but the date and place of the council are very questionable.

[49] Zachary's letters to the English inhabitants of Britain were in Latin and English. The documents are not on record, but we are told that they were read at the Council; in them he "familiariter admonebat et veraciter conveniebat et postremo amabiliter exorabat," and to those who despise these modes of address he "anathematis sententiam procul dubio properandam insinuabat."

[50] This prayer is as follows: "O Lord, we beseech Thee, of Thy great mercy, grant that the soul of (such a person) may be secured in a state of peace and repose, and that he may be admitted with the rest of Thy saints into the region of light and happiness."

[51] Among the "Canons of Edgar," the following occurs:—"A powerful man may satisfy a sentence of seven years' fasting in three days. Let him lay aside his weapons and ornaments, and go barefoot and live hard, etc., and take to him twelve men to fast three days on bread, water, and green herbs, and get wherever he can 7 times 120 men, who shall fast for him three days, then will be fasted as many fasts as there are days in seven years."

[52] Thorpe, i. 227.

[53] It is not known by whose authority the ecclesiastical regulations which are entitled the

canons of Edgar were drawn up, but they appear to be of this date.

[54] That it might be seen that they were complete and in good order, just as the laity came to the Hundred mote or Wapentake with their weapons. For list of them see Ælfric's Pastoral, 44.

[55] To keep a copy of the constitutions made at the synod.

[56] The time was subsequently shortened to seven days.

[57] Probably spots of ground accounted sacred.

[58] In the "vulgar tongue."

[59] The priests had a small consecrated slab of stone which they used on missionary journeys and at other times.

[60] The Legatine Council of Cealchythe (787, 5 c.) explains this by saying he must not celebrate with naked thighs. (See Exodus xxviii. 42.)

[61] For hours of service see Thorpe, "Ancient Laws," etc., ii. 359.

[62] By laws of Alfred and Guthrum, if a priest misdirect people about a festival or fast he shall pay 30*s.*

[63] Meaning obscure.

[64] The chief distinction between nuns and mynchens appears to have consisted in the superior age and strictness of life of the former (Thorpe, "Ancient Laws").

[65] The laws of Canute say ½*d.* worth of wax for every hide on Easter Eve, All Saints, and Purification.

[66] Allusions to the Danish incursions.

[67] Fifth law of Ine.

[68] Law 16.

[69] Law 17.

[70] Mr. Kemble, as we have seen, is of opinion that the people in those days of heathendom had a temple in every township, and that the priesthood were endowed with lands as well as offerings, but we do not find sufficient evidence of this.

[71] The monks of Jumieges, in the seventh century, fitted out vessels and sailed great distances to redeem slaves. St. Eligius spent large sums in redeeming them—20, 50, 100 at a time. Christian missionaries bought slaves, and trained them as Christians.

[72] "Diplomatarium Anglicanum."

[73] "Collier," i. 241. The Cathedral Churches of the Continent were universally served by Canons.

[74] Bishop of Oxford's "Select Charters," p. 73.

[75] Robert d'Oyley, a powerful Norman noble, repaired the ruinous parochial churches in and out of Oxford in the reign of William I. (Brewer, "Endowment, etc., of the Church of England," p. 74). Corsuen built a number of houses and two churches on a piece of land granted to him in the suburb of Lincoln. (? St. Mary le Wigford, and St. Peter at Gowts.)

[76] Eyton's "Shropshire" mentions several cases in that county.

[77] Bohn's edition of "Eccl. Hist, of Ordericus Vitalis," i. 10.

[78] Nearly all the village churches of the Craven district of Yorkshire were built in the time of Henry I., and many of them enlarged in the time of Henry VIII. (Whitaker's "Craven").

[79] Orderic, iv. xxiv.

[80] It was stopped by Innocent III. in a decretal letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, c. 1200.

[81] See Sir H. Ellis's "Introduction to Domesday," i. 324, 325.

[82] The Church of Gisburn, Yorkshire, was given to the Nunnery of Stainfield, Lincolnshire, by a Percy. For fifty years the nuns simply presented to the rectory like any other patron; then in 1226 Archbishop Walter Gray assigned them *ad proprios usus*, half a carucate of the glebe land, and the tithe of corn in various places named, but without endowing a vicarage, and the convent presented six more rectors under those conditions; it was not until 1341 that a vicarage was ordained. (Whitaker's "Craven," p. 45).

[83] This Council also forbade a vicar to hold more than one parish.

[84] Where the religious house was situated in or near the parish church, special arrangements were not infrequently made. At Tortington, near Arundel, Sussex, was a small

house of Austin canons which existed before the time of King John. The vicar of the parish had a corrody in the house, consisting of a right to board and lodging for himself and a serving boy. At Sybeton, Suffolk, the vicar and curate had their lodging and food in the religious house ("Valor," iii. 442). At Taunton, in 1308, the Priory supplied the vicar with allowances of bread and ale, and hay and corn, and two shillings a year for the shoeing of his horse ("Bath and Wells," p. 121, S.P.C.K.). See also Lenton, p. 404.

[85] One of the constitutions of Archbishop Stratford (1333) requires religious appropriators of churches to give a benefaction to the poor yearly, according to the judgment of the bishop, on pain of sequestration.

[86] Newcourt's "Repertorium," ii. 310. Upon making an appropriation an annual pension was usually reserved to the bishop and his successors, payable by the body benefited, for a recompense of the profits which the bishops would otherwise have received (Sir R. Phillimore, "Ecclesiastical Law").

[87] *i.e.*, which had obtained from the Court of Rome exemption from the Bishop's ordinary jurisdiction.

[88] According to Matthew Paris, "the bishops of England at that time designed to recover from the monasteries all the appropriated churches. Grostete of Lincoln took steps to carry out the design in his diocese, but the monks appealed to Rome and defeated the bishop" (Matthew Paris, Bohn's ed., ii. pp. 325, 326, 401, 420).

[89] Gray's "Register," p. 113. Surtees Society.

[90] Ibid., p. 112.

[91] Gray's "Register," p. 113. Surtees Society.

[92] Extracts from Lincoln Registers. Harl. MS. 6950, p. 1250.

[93] Bronscombe's "Register," p. 253.

[94] Ibid., p. 330.

[95] Ibid., p. 334.

[96] "Bath and Wells," p. 122, S.P.C.K.

[97] Long Preston, in Craven, is mentioned in "Domesday." In the reign of Stephen it was granted by Wm. de Amundeville to the church and canons of Embsay. In 1303, Archbishop Corbridge ordained that the church should be served by a fit vicar and his ministers. In 1307 there was another "taxation," a third in 1322, and a fourth in 1455 (Whitaker, "Craven," p. 145).

[98] In the Episcopal Register of Lincoln, under date 25th April, 1511, William, Abbot of Oseney, was admitted to the Vicarage of St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford, on the presentation of the Abbot and Convent of the same.

[99] "Lichfield," p. 138, S.P.C.K.

[100] It was this which made a rectory so much like a small monastery in its constitution, that rectories were often called minsters, and monasteries often merged into rectories.

[101] Hopesay and Hopton, originally probably chapels parochial of Clun, were of the nature of free chapels, *i.e.* not at the disposal of the baroness or of the rector, but only of the lord of the fee (Eyton's "Shropshire," ix. 258).

[102] Eyton's "Shropshire," viii. 149.

[103] The two chapels of Rilston and Coniston—(Coniston chapel is very early Norman, or still earlier, with triangular windows)—in the parish of Burnsal, co. York, as late as the beginning of this century had had no chaplains or separate endowment, but were still served in the primitive mode by the Rector of Burnsal; both have cylindrical fonts of high antiquity, and therefore must always have had the sacramentalia. Chapels with these rights were always presentable, and served by chaplains who took an oath of obedience to the rector, and were not removable at pleasure; whereas mere chapels-of-ease were served by stipendiaries removable, or by the parish priest himself (Whitaker's "Craven," p. 528).

[104] The probable explanation is that the lord of the ville of Billingley had made some arrangement with the mother church for the payment of half his tithe to his own chapel; the small payments from the other chapels were acknowledgments of subjection.

[105] The original deed is in possession of Mr. G. Morris, of Shrewsbury. "Know all men, both now and hereafter, on the day of the dedication of the cemetery of Eston that I, Robert, son of Aher, gave to God and to the chapel of the same vill of Eston one virgate of land, containing sixty acres, and all tithe of my demesne of the same vill, and one mansion, for the health of my soul and of all my predecessors and successors. And that my gift may be free and quit of all reclaim by me or my heirs and may ever remain firm and stable I have fortified it with this present writing, and with the impression of my seal.—There being witnesses Robert, Bishop of Hereford, Reinald, Prior of Wenlock, Peter the archdeacon, and

many others" (Eyton's "Shropshire," i. p. 207).

[106] See p. 90.

[107] There were more monasteries founded in the reign of Stephen than in any other period of similar duration.

[108] A. Heales, "History of Kingston-upon-Thames."

[109] Archbishop Gray's "Register," p. 168.

[110] Ibid., p. 211.

[111] Archbishop Gray's "Register," p. 45.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Eyton's "Shropshire," v. 28.

[114] Whitaker's "History of Whalley," p. 223.

[115] Whitaker's "History of Whalley," pp. 223-225.

[116] The great Law-book of the Mediæval Church.

[117] The king is supposed to visit his own chapels and hospitals by the Lord High Chancellor.

[118] Sir R. Phillimore.

[119] In the college at Tonge, any one of the five chaplains bringing a guest to dinner was to pay for him 3*d.* if at the high table, and ¼*d.* if at the low (S.P.C.K., "Lichfield," p. 161).

[120] A. Heales, "History of the Free Chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, Kingston-on-Thames."

[121] Pages 20 and 82.

[122] Page 68.

[123] When Winfrid, afterwards St. Boniface, showed a strong precocious vocation for the religious life, his father, who seems to have been the principal person of his town, forthwith sent him—at six or seven years of age—to a religious house at Exeter, to be educated for the Church.

[124] Men who had any serious personal blemish, or any defect in respect to birth, learning, or morals, were excluded by canon from ordination (Constitutions of Otho, 1237). Illegitimacy and servile origin were both defects of birth.

[125] Thorold Rogers, "Agriculture and Prices in England," vol. ii. pp. 613, 615, 616.

[126] "Eccl. Proceedings of Courts of Durham," Surtees Society, p. 5.

[127] John Knox said, "Every scholar is something added to the riches of the Commonwealth."

[128] See the quotation in its entirety on p. 278.

[129] Cobbler.

[130] "The Babees Book," Early English Text Society, p. 401.

Of Archbishops of Canterbury, the parentage of William of Corbeuil is not known; the inference is that it was humble. Thomas Becket was the son of a London citizen; Richard, of humble parents; Baldwin, of humble parents at Exeter; Richard Grant, parentage unknown; Edmund Rich, son of a merchant at Abingdon; Richard Kilwardby, a Dominican friar of unknown parentage; Robert Winchelsey, probably of humble birth; Walter Reynolds, the son of a baker at Windsor; Chichele, a shepherd-boy, picked up and educated by William of Wykham; Cranmer's people were small squires in Notts. And so in other sees. Ralph Flambard, Bishop of Durham, the great Justiciar of Henry I., was the son of a poor Norman priest; Thomas of Rotherham, Archbishop of York, was of obscure parentage; Richard of Wych, the saintly Bishop of Chichester, was the son of a decayed farmer at Droitwich, and for several years worked on the land like a labourer; the famous Grostete was of a poor family at Stradbroke, Suffolk; Thomas of Beckington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, is said to have been the son of a weaver; John of Sheppey was taken up and educated by Hamo, Bishop of Rochester, and succeeded his benefactor in the see.

[131] By 9 Ed. II. c. 8, clerks in the king's service were declared not bound to residence on their benefice.

[132] The custom might sometimes be misleading. Thus, a priest in the diocese of Bath and Wells with the high-sounding name of Richard de Burgh, was a villein of the bishop who had given him freedom and holy orders.

[133] See notice of the college founded by Archbishop Thomas of Rotherham, p. 517.

[134] The universal ignorance of the Greek language at that time made the great works of

the Eastern Church a sealed book to the scholars of the West.

[135] At the Council of Trent, nearly three hundred years after his death, the “Summa” was placed on the secretary’s desk beside the Holy Scriptures, as containing the orthodox solution of all theological questions.

[136] Wesley published an edition of it.

[137] Peter Lombard’s “Text-book.”

[138] “Norfolk Archæology,” vol. iv. p. 342.

[139] “Lincoln,” p. 194. S.P.C.K.

[140] “The York Pontifical,” p. 370. Surtees Society.

[141] In the Diocese of York, in 1344-5, there were ordained—

Acolytes	421			
Sub-deacons	204,	of whom	71	were regulars.
Deacons	326	"	96	"
Priests	271	"	44	"
	1222		211	

In 1510-11, there were—

Acolytes	298,	of whom	17	were regulars.
Sub-deacons	296	"	51	"
Deacons	248	"	41	"
Priests	265	"	173	"
	1107		282	

In the first year of the episcopate of Bishop Stapledon of Exeter, viz. from December 21, 1308, to September 20, 1309, there were ordained 539 to the first tonsure, 438 acolytes, 104 sub-deacons, 177 deacons, 169 priests.

In the year from March 22, 1314, to December 20, 1315, there were ordained 75 to the first tonsure, 71 acolytes, 44 sub-deacons, 50 deacons, 66 priests.

[142] “In 1281 the Pope dispensed an acolyte, whose left little finger had been shortened while a child by an unskilful surgeon, to hold a benefice notwithstanding the defect” (“Calendar of Papal Registers,” 1491). “Jacob Lowe and Sampson Meverall, base born, and Godfrey Ely, blind of one eye, were dispensed by the Pope for ordination” (“Register of Smyth, Bishop of Lichfield,” p. 175).

[143] “Lichfield,” p. 129. S.P.C.K. See additional examples in the chapter on Abuses.

[144]

> Now hath each rich a rule
> To eaten by themselve,
> In a privy parlour
> For poor man sake,
> Or in a chamber with a chimney;
> And leave the chief hall,
> That was made for meals
> Men to eaten in.
>
> The “Vision of Piers Ploughman.”

[145] Of which there is a description and drawing in the Records of the Archæological Society of that county, vol. ii. p. 251.

[146] In those days the rooms of a house were not massed compactly together under one roof; the hall was the primitive house, and additions to it were effected by annexing distinct buildings, each of which was called a house.

[147] Newcourt’s “Repertorium,” ii. p. 350.

[148] “Transactions of the Essex Archæological Society,” vol. ii. part ii. (New Series), p. 141.

[149] Alfred Heales, “Kingston-on-Thames,” p. 17.

[150] Newcourt’s “Repertorium,” ii. p. 103.

[151] Newcourt’s “Repertorium,” ii. 281.

[152] Ibid., ii. 284.

[153] “Hist. of England,” i. p. 41.

[154] A lawsuit gives us a glimpse of John of Bishopstone, the rector of Cliffe, at Hoo, going to church on the Sunday before Christmas, 1363, accompanied by his chaplains, clerks, and household, as if they all lived together (S.P.C.K., "Rochester," p. 188).

[155] Newcourt's "Repertorium," ii. 97.

[156] Newcourt's "Repertorium," ii. 46.

[157] Ibid., ii. 309.

[158] A statute of 3 Ed. I., A.D. 1275, says, "Abbeys have been overcharged by the resort of great men and others; none shall come to eat or lodge in any house of religion of any others' foundation than his own; this does not intend that the grace of hospitality be withdrawn from such as need."

[159] See Matthew Paris under 1240 A.D., "to receive guests, rich and poor, and show hospitality to laity and clergy according to their means, as the custom of the place requires."

[160] In the returns of a survey of the estates of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter in 1300 both the manor houses and the rectory houses are included, and their similarity is evident: "Culmstock Manor. There is a hall in the Manor, and a soler within the hall and a chamber, a kitchen without *furnum and turella* (stove and small turret for smoke and ventilation), and a dove house; there wants a granary. Utpottery. There is in the farmhouse a sufficient hall and chamber, a new grange, and other sufficient houses, 1330. Vicar of Colyton, Richard Brondiche, is a leper. Colyton *Domus Sanctuarii* (house in the churchyard). There is there a competent hall with a chamber and chimney, a competent kitchen, without *turella*, however; two granges; the other houses are sufficient; the gardens are eaten up with age and badly kept. Branscombe Manor. There is a hall with two chambers and garderobes good and sufficient; a new kitchen with a good *turella*; all the other houses in good condition" ("Register of Bishop Grandisson," part i. p. 572).

[161] Clive, in the diocese of Worcester, was appropriated to Worcester Priory; formerly the rector lived in the *Aula Personæ*. In the middle of the thirteenth century the rectory house was let to a tenant. The vicar lived in one of several houses in the village which belonged to the benefice; there were two chaplains, one of whom lived in another of these houses, and the second in a soler ("Register of Worcester Priory" (Camden Society), p. lxxxi.).

[162] "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages," p. 133.

[163] "Essex Archæol. Transactions," vol. vi. part iii.

[164] Hingeston-Randolph's "Register of Bishop Grandisson," pp. 349, 356.

[165] Lyndewode, "Provinciale." Compare the 74th of the Canons of 1603.

[166] "Grostete's Letters" (Rolls Series), p. 49.

[167] "York Fabric Rolls" (Surtees Society), p. 243.

[168] For picture of the basilard and purse see Royal MS., 6 Ed. VI., f. 478, p. 492, etc.

[169] Catalogus omnium qui admissi pet'runt in fraternitatis beneficium Monasterii Sti. Albani, cum picturis eorum et compendiosis narrationibus. (British Mus., Nero D., vii.)

[170] These, with the descriptions, are taken from "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages," by the present writer.

[171] A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 57.

[172] Ibid., p. 130.

[173] The record of a suit in the Ecclesiastical Court of Durham gives us a curious little illustrative anecdote of a quarrel in the Rectory of Walsingham, in the year 1370. The bishop, the archdeacon, and their attendants were passing the night there, probably after a Visitation. The record tells us in full detail how, after the Bishop had gone out of the hall of the rectory into the chamber, the family remaining in the hall, Nicholas de Skelton uttered threats against John of Auckland, the servant of the archdeacon, viz. that he would break his head. One of the archdeacon's people intervened, when the angry Nicholas threatened to break his head also. The archdeacon seems to have then interfered, when a servant of Nicholas, offering to strike the archdeacon with a hawking staff, the archdeacon drew his *cultellum*; the servant broke it in two with his staff; the archdeacon hurled the half which he held, and it killed another of the company who happened to interpose. The archdeacon was summoned before the Court to answer for the homicide.

[174] Quoted from "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages," p. 248, by the present writer.

[175] Cushion for the back and seat of the bench.

[176] "Wills and Inventories" (Surtees Society), p. 54.

[177] "Testamenta Ebor.," i. p. 371.

[178] “Testamenta Ebor.,” i. p. 385.

[179] “Testamenta Ebor.,” i. p. 82.

[180] York: “Wills and Inventories,” p. 117.

[181] “Essex Archæol. Transactions,” vol. vi. part ii. (New Series), p. 123.

[182] Holinshed’s “Description of Britain,” p. 233.

[183] Johnson’s “Canons,” etc., ii. 365.

[184] Stapledon’s “Register,” p. 182.

[185] H. Randolph, p. 378.

[186] Lyndewode, “Provinciale,” p. 35.

[187] Archbishop Gray’s “Register,” p. 217.

[188] Laid on tombs, or hung on the walls as ornaments. See Matthew Paris, under 1256 (v. 574, Rolls ed.).

[189] See woodcut, p. 165.

[190] “Antiquary,” 1897, pp. 279, 298.

[191] For explanation of the meaning of the vestments in the “Book of Ceremonies,” 1539, see Mackenzie Walcott, “Parish Churches before the Reformation.”

[192] It is to be regretted that in the revived use of copes, as seen, for example, on the steps at the west end of St. Paul’s, on the day of the Queen’s Jubilee procession, the designers have taken the unwieldy and ungraceful fifteenth and sixteenth century garment as their pattern; it is shaped like a cone, it does not fit the shoulders, it imprisons the arms, its corners overlap in front, while its hood sticks up at the back of the head.

[193] Humbert de Romain, General of the Dominicans in the thirteenth century, says that “the great and the poor seldom visited the churches.” Neander’s “Church History,” vii. 439 (Bohn). The great, as we shall see in Chapter XXVII., had their domestic chapels.

[194] T. Belson and J. Fowler, c. 1570, were sentenced to do penance in church for working on a Sunday (“Ecclesiastical Proceedings of the Courts of Durham” (Surtees Society), p. 105). Again, c. 1450, several persons accused of working on Sundays and saints’ days were sentenced to precede the procession as penitents, to receive two “fustigations,” and to abstain from so offending in future under a penalty of 6*s.* 8*d.* (pp. 28-30). In 1451, Isabella Hunter and Katherine Pykering were sentenced, for washing linen on the festival of St. Mary Magdalene, to receive two fustigations *cum manipulo lini* (p. 30).

Francis Gray was admonished to come to church on Sunday under penalty of 4*d.*, and on the festivals under penalty of 2*d.*, to be applied to the fabric of the church of Durham (p. 27).

The same year Thomas Kirkham and Thomas Hunter, accused of mowing a certain meadow on the festival of St. Oswald and receiving payment for it, were sentenced to precede the procession, carrying in hand a bottle of hay, to receive four fustigations, and not to offend again under penalty of 10*s.* (p. 32).

[195] Lyndwode says, “It maybe gathered that mass was always preceded by matins or primes” (iii. 23).

[196] This was the normal hour in the time of Gregory of Tours and of Gregory the Great.

[197] Bishop Poore, in his “Rule for Anchoresses,” advises them not to be communicated oftener than twelve times a year. The Lateran Council of 1215 ordered that every one should communicate at least once a year at Easter, and should confess at least once a year before Easter.

[198] Common.

[199] From Whitaker’s text of “Piers Ploughman’s Vision,” part ii. p. 529.

[200] Ibid. i. 104.

[201] Early English Text Society.

[202] In the presentation of the churchwardens of Ricall, Yorkshire, in 1519, they complain that “pedlars come into the church porch on feast days, and there sell their goods.”

In 1416 the wardens and questmen of St. Michael-le-Belfry, York, presented that “a common market of vendibles is held in the churchyard on Sundays and holy days, and divers things, and goods, and rushes, are exposed for sale” (“York Fabric Rolls”).

[203] Cardwell.

[204] Procter, “Hist. of the Book of Common Prayer,” p. 227.

[205] Peckham’s “Constitutions,” 1281, bid every priest to celebrate at least once a week.

[206] “The York Manual,” by Rev. J. Raine (Surtees Society), p. 123.

[207] See pp. 460, 461, 496, and p. 472.

[208] The canons of Edgar required the clergy to preach every Sunday.

[209] It was early in the twelfth century that seven was adopted as the number of the Sacraments, vices, virtues, etc. The seven Sacraments are first mentioned by Otto, Bishop of Bamberg, in 1124 (Neander, “Church History,” vii. 465).

[210] See second footnote, p. 214.

[211] See second footnote, p. 214.

[212] Not infrequently a great preacher was sent by a bishop round his diocese, and people were invited by the offer of indulgences to all who would go to hear him.

[213] From a very early time what we reckon as the first and second commandments were taken together as the first; and what we reckon as the tenth was divided into two. So King Alfred gives them in the beginning of his Code of Law.

[214] *Cum superstitionibus characterum.*

[215] “Indolence, carnal security.”

[216] His writings are chiefly translations or adaptations of the works of St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, and Hugh and Richard of St. Victor. They are marked by tenderness of feeling, vigour, and eloquence in his prose style, and grace and beauty in his verse. See “Yorkshire Writers”—“Richard of Hampole and his Followers,” by C. Horstman, 1895. Here is a short example from “The Book made by Richard Hampole, Hermit, for an Anchoress” (Early Eng. Text Society). “Wit thou well that a bodily turning to God without thine heart following, is but a figure and likeness of virtue and of no soothfastness. Therefore a wretched man or woman is that who neglecteth all the inward keepings of himself, and maketh himself outwardly a form only and likeness of holiness in habit or clothing, in speech and in bodily works, beholding other men’s deeds and judging their faults, thinking himself to be something when he is nothing, and so neglecteth himself. Do thou not so, but turn thine heart with thy body principally to God, and shape thee within in His likeness, by meekness and charity and other spiritual virtues, and then art thou truly turned to Him.”

[217] See “The Parson’s Tale,” in Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales.”

[218] Also in the Stowe MS. 89, 2, there are a series of trees representing virtues and vices.

[219] Together.

[220] Other sponsors were required at the Confirmation (see p. 59).

[221] Archbishop Simon of Sudbury, 1378, made a Constitution that all should confess and communicate thrice a year, viz. Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas, on pain of excommunication and refusal of burial (Johnson’s “Laws and Canons,” ii. 444).

[222] Death.

[223] In the latter part of the eleventh century, for reasons of expediency, the custom was introduced of dipping the bread into the wine, and so administering to the communicants. This was condemned by the Council of Claremont 1095, but kept its ground in England till forbidden by the Council of London in 1175. The withdrawal of the wine from the laity altogether began in the twelfth century. Anselm had prepared the way by affirming that “the whole Christ was taken under either species.” Robert Pulleyn, 1170, taught that the flesh of Christ alone should be distributed to the laity. The practice came into gradual use in the thirteenth century; the second canon of Archbishop Peckham, 1281, bids the parish priests to teach the more ignorant of the laity that the body and blood of Christ are received under the single species of the bread. It is believed not to have become general in England till it was ordered by the Council of Constance in 1415, which excommunicated all priests who should communicate the laity in both kinds. It is to be observed that in the Sarum Missal there is no recognition whatever of administration in one kind.

In some churches there was an endowment for the provision of the holy bread, as at St. Mary Magdalen, Colchester.

[224] Gravely.

[225] Both.

[226] Hence.

[227] Maiden.

[228] This was first ordered by Pope Honorius III. in 1217.

[229] The churchyard was frequently called the “sanctuary.”

[230] Ratified.

[231] In baptism.

[232] Locked.

[233] There are various forms on record of this “general sentence of excommunication.” Two are given at pp. 86 and 119 of the “York Manual” (Surtees Society).

[234] Upon.

[235] Go.

[236] See plate opposite.

[237] Printed by the Early English Text Society.

[238] Chasuble.

[239] Believe.

[240] Another version says, “Don’t wait for the priest to ask for the mass penny, but go up and offer, though there is no obligation; it will make your chattle increase in your coffer.”

[241] From another version of the book we extract the following sentence, which contains an expression of the doctrine of the Eucharist—

> Every day thou mayest see
> The same body that died for thee,
> Tent[A] if thou wilt take,
> In figure and in form of bread,
> That Jesus dealt ere He were dead,
> For His disciples’ sake.
>
> [A] Heed.

[242] Abroad.

[243] Dead.

[244] Give utterance to.

[245] Also.

[246] “The Epic of the Fall of Man” (S. H. Gurteen), 1896. The translation seems to be as close as may be, consistently with an intelligible expression of the thoughts of the original and a poetical form.

[247] “Political, Religious, and Love Poems,” Furnival (Early English Text Society), pp. 111, 151, 162.

[248] Ransom.

[249] Song of Solomon, ii. 5, 8.

[250] Whence his pain.

[251] Prosperity.

[252] It is easy to quote a long list of quasi-married bishops and dignitaries of this period. The last two bishops of Elmham, Stigand and Ethelmar, appointed by the saintly and ascetic Edward the Confessor, were married men; so was Herbert, the first bishop of the same see (removed to Norwich), appointed by the Conqueror, and perhaps the second William (1086), and Edward (1121). Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln (1094), had a son Simon, whom he made Dean of that Cathedral. Roger of Salisbury (1107) was married. Robert Lymesey, of Chester (1086-1117), left a daughter settled with her husband, Noel, on the see lands near Eccleshall; and Hugh, Dean of Derby in this episcopate, was married. Roger of Lichfield (1121) was a married man; he put his son Richard into the Archdeaconry of Coventry, and he was afterwards promoted to the see (1161). Three Bishops of Durham were married men, viz. Ralph Flambard (1099), Geoffrey Rufus (1133), and the famous Hugh Puiset (1153); the wife of the latter was a lady of the Percy family. Several Archbishops of York were the sons of married clergymen.

There is an extant letter from Thomas, the first Norman Archbishop of York, in which he complains that his canons were married men. The Canons of Durham turned out by Bishop William of S. Carilef (1081) were all married men, so were some of those turned out of Rochester Cathedral by Bishop Gundulf; one of them, Ægelric, who had retired to the Benefice of Chatham, on his wife’s death obtained her burial by the monks of the Cathedral in the most honourable manner (S.P.C.K., “Rochester,” p. 50).

[253] At a visitation of Lincoln Cathedral by Bishop Bokingham, 1363-1398, it appeared that almost all the cathedral clergy disobeyed the canons (S.P.C.K., “Lincoln,” p. 84). A statute of the Chapter of Bath and Wells, in 1323, forbade any canon who had a concubine [wife] before his appointment to meet her except in the presence of discreet witnesses. So late as 1520 the Vicar-General had occasion to admonish the dean to correct one of the canons for keeping a concubine [wife] in his house of residence. The use of the ugly word by which the

canons described these persons was not indefensible; the old laws of Imperial Rome recognized a kind of marriage with an inferior wife as respectable, it went so far at one time as to require unmarried proconsuls to take such a wife with them to their province, and this was not to prevent them from making afterwards a legal marriage. For example, St. Helena was first the concubine of Constantius, and he afterwards raised her to the higher dignity of his wife, and Constantine, their son, raised her to the dignity of empress.

[254] In 1221 and the following years, the pope issued mandates to the English bishops bidding them deprive married clerks ("Papal Letters," vol. i. pp. 79, 84, 86, 90, Rolls Series).

[255] See also Roger of Wendover under 1225, ii. 287, Rolls Series.

[256] This is an allusion to another canon which made it illegal for a man to separate from his wife in order to enter into a religious order requiring a vow of celibacy, without his wife's consent.

[257] One explanation of the frequent repetition of these canons by successive synods is that in those early days it was not a matter of course that a law once made stood good until repealed; rather, on the contrary, that a law lapsed by desuetude, and needed to be re-enacted from time to time to keep it in vigour. The early kings renewed their predecessors' concessions; grantees sought the confirmation of charters from the heir of the original grantor; and laws of Parliament were often passed again by subsequent Parliaments. So a new archbishop began his reign by calling the provincial synod together and issuing a set of provincial constitutions, repeating former canons, which it was still necessary to keep in active use.

[258] In the debates of the Twenty-fourth Session of the Council of Trent, in the autumn of 1563, one patriarch declared that the proposed decree annulling clandestine marriages was directly opposed to the law of God, and that he would resist it at the peril of his life (Bishop of Bristol, "On what are the Papal Claims founded?"—S.P.C.K.).

[259] Hook's "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," vi. 317.

[260] It is very significant that after the Reformation legislation had legalized clerical marriages, the wives of the bishops did not openly live in their palaces with them, but in houses of their own. It was a survival of the custom that ecclesiastics might have wives, but that their wives might not be introduced into society.

[261] "Harl.," 862, p. 221. A more important example is that of Margaret Countess of Flanders, who married a deacon, and subsequently repudiated him and married again, with the result of a disputed succession (Matthew Paris, under 1254 A.D., v. 435, Rolls Series).

[262] "Transactions of the Gloucester Archæol. Society," 1893. Paper on "Newnham," by R. I. Kerr.

[263] J. Raine, Preface to "Archbishop Gray's Register."

[264] See other curious instances of it in the "Papal Letters," Rolls Series, vol. i. pp. 239, 243.

[265] "Letters of Henry III.," Rolls Series.

[266] The Bishop of Oxford doubts whether the sons of such marriages after the twelfth century would be ordained without a dispensation.

[267] MS. 5824, f. 5. British Museum.

[268] Pope Clement VI., in 1398, sent to Bishop Grandisson of Exeter at his request a dispensation for fifty priests and scholars, by name, to receive holy orders and hold benefices. Thirty are classed as illegitimate, both parents being single persons; ten as having one parent a married person; ten as born of presbyters or persons in holy orders ("Grandisson's Register," Hingeston-Randolph, part i. p. 147).

[269] "Papal Letters," vol. i. p. 113.

[270] "Register of Archbishop Gray," p. 73.

[271] "Stapledon's Register," p. 180.

[272] "Archbishop Gray's Register," J. Raine, p. 29.

[273] Ibid., p. 153.

[274] A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills."

[275] Tonsured.

[276] There are frequent entries in the Episcopal Registers of dispensations *super defectum natalium* to the sons of *nativi* to take orders and hold benefices. There are several examples in which a bishop gives such a dispensation to so-and-so "*nativus meus*," to take sacred orders and hold ecclesiastical benefices; a gracious act of kindness to one of his own serfs (see p. 130).

[277] Should feed beggars.

[278] Usually the bishop, but there were many exceptions.

[279] Page 63.

[280] “Labbe’s Councils,” vol. xxii. p. 234.

[281] There is a picture of a bishop’s visitation in the fourteenth century MS. Royal 6 E. VI., and a much better of the sixteenth century in the printed Pontifical, p. 196, and of an archdeacon’s in the MS. Royal 6 E. VI., fols. 132 and 137.

[282] Procter, “History of the Book of Common Prayer,” p. 262.

[283] I refrain from repeating the unsupported assumption that these synodsmen gave name to our modern sidesmen, for which there is no evidence. Moreover, Professor Skeat assures me, in kind reply to a question on the subject, that the principles which govern the gradual changes of our language will not admit of the idea of the derivation of the one word from the other.

[284] From the “Annales de Burton,” p. 307.

[285] When St. Hugh became Bishop of Lincoln he made several decrees, one of which was “that no layman have the celebration of masses inflicted on him as a penance” (“Dioc. Hist. Lincoln,” p. 103, S.P.C.K.). It looks as if the clergy had set up a bad practice of inflicting attendance at Holy Communion, and making an offering as an ordinary act of penance. It was prohibited again in 1378 by Archbishop Simon of Sudbury (Johnson, “Laws and Canons,” ii. 444).

[286] A vulgar game.

[287] The pope was at this time discouraging the study of civil law by the clergy (see Collier’s “Ecclesiastical History,” i. 464).

[288] The bishop appointed certain priests as confessors of the clergy.

[289] Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph’s “Register of Walter Stapledon,” p. 194.

[290] Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph’s “Register of Walter Stapledon,” p. 130.

[291] Ibid., p. 111.

[292] Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph’s “Register of Walter Stapledon,” p. 573.

[293] Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph’s “Register of Walter Stapledon,” p. 109.

[294] S.P.C.K., “Dioc. Hist. of Hereford,” p. 112.

[295] Quivil’s “Register” (Hingeston-Randolph), p. 337.

[296] There may be some error, since in the “Taxatio” the annual income of Bigby is given as £4 6*s.* 8*d.*

[297] Stapledon’s “Register,” p. 342.

[298] S.P.C.K., “Chichester Diocese,” p. 104.

[299] “Dioc. Hist. of Hereford,” pp. 113, 114.

[300] “Papal Letters,” i. 59, Rolls Series.

[301] “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 163.

[302] Whitaker’s “Craven,” p. 95.

[303] (Job xix. 21), A. Gibbons, “Early Lincoln Wills.”

[304] “Test. Ebor.,” p. 73.

[305] Brown, “Fasc.,” ii. 412.

[306] October, 1441, the parishioners of Ashdown, Kent, complain that their rector, Lawrence Horwood, does not provide at his own cost, as he ought to do, a clerk to officiate in the church on holy days. The suit in the bishop’s court on this matter went on for two years, and was left unsettled.

[307] This parish clerk occurs in several other of our illustrations of processions and services.

[308] V. 171, Rolls Series.

[309] “Mon. Ang.,” iii. 227.

[310] White Kennett, “Parochial Antiq., Glossary,” *sub voc.*

[311] A. Gibbons, “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 87.

[312] Ibid., p. 6.

[313] Robert Aphulley, of Lincoln, 1407, makes a bequest to the Gild of Clerks at Lincoln, durante dicta gilda, quando recitabitur nomen meum inter nomina defunctorum, et hanc antiphon "Alma Redemptoris Mater," etc. (A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 108).

[314] Curled.

[315] Spread out.

[316] Hair.

[317] Complexion.

[318] Neatly.

[319] Watchet, a kind of cloth.

[320] Small twigs of trees (? May blossom).

[321] Musical instruments.

[322] Page 75.

[323] Elizabeth Darcy, 13 Henry V., in her will, desires to be buried in the church of the nuns of Heynynges, and leaves to their chapel a great missal, and her portforium and great psalter to be fastened with an iron chain. She leaves a book of romances, called "Leschell de Reson," and two Primers, and a book called "Bybill," and another called "Sainz Ryall," and another called "Lanselake." CC*s.* for masses, to be kept in a chest in some secret place in Lincoln Cathedral and distributed to the chaplains annually (A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 118). After the battle of Lincoln "Fair," in 1221, the victors "pillaged the churches throughout the city, breaking open the chests and storerooms with axes and hammers, and seizing all the gold and silver in them, clothes of all colours, women's ornaments, gold rings, goblets, and jewels" ("Roger of Wendover," ii. 218, Rolls Series).

[324] See instances of it in "Roger of Wendover," ii. 162, 165, and iii. 209, 211, Rolls Series.

[325] See Erasmus's "Praise of Folly," and an account of the "Sanctuaries at Durham and Beverley," by Rev. J. Raine (Surtees Society).

[326] See "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages," pp. 157-194, by the present writer.

[327] Lyndewood's "Pontificale," pp. 298, 156.

[328] J. C. Cox, in "Curious Church Gleanings," p. 44.

[329] "York Fabric Rolls," Surtees Society, p. 248.

[330] Wilkins, "Concilia," ii. 170.

[331] See articles in the *Churchman's Family Magazine* for 1865, p. 419.

[332] S.P.C.K., "Dioc. Hist. of Lincoln."

[333] Collier, "Eccl. Hist.," i. 438.

[334] Peckham, for example (see Collier, "Eccl. Hist.," i. 484).

[335] "Kingston-on-Thames," by A. Heales, p. 25.

[336] "Dioc. Hist. of Lincoln," p. 150, S.P.C.K.

[337] Boniface VII., in his decretal, allows a sub-deacon to take a benefice, and grants him seven years in which to qualify himself for the orders of deacon and priest, by dispensation or permission of his superior (Johnson, "Laws and Canons").

[338] Bishop Quivil, in 1281, gave a young rector the usual licence of absence for study, and to put his benefice to farm *salva Canonica Porcione assignanda per Episcopum pauperibus ejusdem Parochiæ prout in ultimo concilio Lambethensi est statutum* (Quivil's "Register," p. 321). See also pp. 32, 35, for donations to the fabric.

In 1322, the Bishop of Bath and Wells gave this licence to Emericus of Orchard, and also to Peter Pyke of Kyngeston, on condition that they each should say one hundred Psalms for the soul of the bishop, and of all the faithful departed (T. Hugo's "Extracts," vol. i. p. 86).

In 1312, Master William de Carreu, clerk, instituted to Holsworthy, had dispensation for non-residence for three years for study, which in 1315 was renewed for a year, and again in 1316, 1317, and 1318. Master Richard de Honemanacole, sub-deacon, instituted to Iddesleigh in 1320, had a dispensation for non-residence for three years for study, which was renewed in 1323 for a year in foreign parts, and in 1324 renewed again for two years (Bishop Stapledon's "Register").

[339] "Letters of Grostete" (Rolls Series), pp. 63, 68, 151.

[340] Quivil's "Register," p. 353.

[341] S.P.C.K., “Diocesan History of Bath and Wells.”

[342] Matthew Paris, under 1251 and 1252 A.D., v. 256, 279.

[343] Grandisson’s “Register,” p. 520.

[344] A.D. 1338, Licence to John Hert, Rector of Croxton, to put his church to farm for four years, at the instance of Ade. Lymbergh. Leave of absence for a year to William de Colesbrok, at the instance of Dom. Thom. de Astele. Leave of absence to Dom. Wells de Gresleygh, Rector of Hildresham, for two years, at the instance of the Countess Mareschal (“Register of Bishop Grandisson, of Exeter”).

[345] “Transactions of the Essex Archæological Society,” vol. vi. part ii. (New Series), p. 110.

[346] “Anglo-Saxons,” iii. 297.

[347] Whitaker’s “Craven,” p. 164.

[348] Whitaker’s “Whalley,” p. 134.

[349] In the time of Edward I.

[350] A ground plan and elevations of some of the buildings of the palace and deanery are engraved in the Lincoln Volume of the Archæol. Institute, 1848 A.D.

[351] The vicars of the residentiaries lived at first in the residence houses in something like the capacity of chaplains (“The Cathedral,” E. W. Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury). Ralph of Shrewsbury, 1329-1361, incorporated them at Wells.

[352] Benson’s (Archbishop of Canterbury) “The Cathedral,” p. 35.

[353] Octagonal at York, Salisbury, Wells; decagonal at Old St. Paul’s, Hereford, Lichfield, and here at Lincoln.

[354] Benson, “The Cathedral,” p. 19.

[355] An example of a married canon.

[356] Benson, “The Cathedral,” p. 12.

[357] Benson, “The Cathedral,” p. 27.

[358] There is a portrait of Bishop Longland, at the beginning of a Benedictional written for him, in the Add. MS. 21974, in the British Museum Library.

[359] In the “Taxatio” of Pope Nicholas IV., A.D. 1291, p. 76, the goods spiritual and temporal of the bishop everywhere in the Diocese of Lincoln are returned at the round sum of £1000.

[360] J. Talbot was Prebendary of Cliffeton, Notts, worth £20, and had £6 13*s.* 4*d.* from the dean and chapter to find a cantarist for the chantry of Queen Eleanor at Harby, in the parish of Clifton, Notts. S. Grene or Foderby was Prebendary of Bedford Minor, worth £3 10*s.* 9*d.*

[361] Probably a worker in *laton*, an alloy of brass.

[362] “Pulsan’ad organ;” it could not be the organ blower, for his stipend was twice as much as that of the carpenter and lathonius.

[363] They consisted of the impropriation of five parochial benefices.

[364] He was a very forward man in defacing the shrines of this church and delivering up the treasure thereof into King Henry VIII.’s hands (Willis’s “Survey of Cathedrals”).

[365] “Valor Eccl.,” vol. iv. p. 198.

[366] Ibid., p. 43.

[367] Ibid., p. 88.

[368] Ibid., p. 124.

[369] Ibid., p. 166.

[370] Ibid., p. 78.

[371] Ibid., p. 138.

[372] Ibid., p. 344.

[373] Ibid., p. 107.

[374] Ibid., p. 88.

[375] Ibid., p. 127.

[376] Ibid., p. 64.

[377] “Valor Eccl.,” vol. iv. p. 20.

[378] 1 Chron. ii. 5.

[379] There might be—often were—canons who had no prebends; that is the condition to which the too-sweeping reforms of recent times have reduced the great majority of the canons of all our cathedrals.

[380] Benson, "The Cathedral."

[381] See two canons in their tippets, in Tib. E. VII. f. 27, v., an English MS. of the latter half of the fifteenth century.

[382] "P'comunis et vinis" ("Valor," iv. pp. 8*b* and 22).

[383] See p. 362.

[384] The archdeaconries of this diocese (except that of Oxford) had no endowment; their income was derived from fees, etc.

[385] Dr. Foxe's Christian name is not given. A Matthew Foxe was rector of Hardwyk, £6 17*s.* 5*d.*; a John Fox was vicar of East Haddon, £15; and a Thomas Fox, vicar of Lewesden, £6 17*s.* 4*d.*

[386] ? founder of a Chantry, £5 6*s.* 8*d.*, at Leighton Bromeswold Church (see "Valor," vol. iv. p. 258).

[387] Up to the fifteenth century, at least, part of the cathedral nave was used as the parish church of St. Peter; at a later period, probably after Henry VIII., the north transept was used for that purpose, and so continued until 1853, when the present parish church was built.

[388] "Taxatio of Pope Nicholas," p. 138*b*.

[389] Among the items are the rent received from the Society of Lincoln's Inn for their Inn, £6 13*s.* 4*d.*; and the rent of certain tenements in Chancery Lane (which are still called the Chichester Rents), £2 13*s.* 4*d.*

[390] "Valor," vol. i. p. 308.

[391] Ibid., p. 318.

[392] Ibid., p. 340.

[393] Ibid., p. 346.

[394] Ibid., vol. iv. p. 19.

[395] Ibid., p. 19*b*.

[396] Ibid., vol. i. p. 301.

[397] Ibid., p. 185.

[398] "Valor," vol. i. p. 301.

[399] Ibid., p. 333.

[400] Ibid., p. 301.

[401] Ibid., p. 324.

[402] Ibid., p. 317.

[403] Ibid., p. 300.

[404] Ibid., p. 345.

[405] An antiphon was sung nightly before St. Mary's image by the junior vicar after evensong (1459-63). The shrine of St. Richard stood as usual at the back of the high altar; a harper used to play and sing the praises of the saint (Rev. T. Hugo).

[406] Rev. Mackenzie Walcott, *Building News*, May 15, 1874.

[407] The permanent relation between a religious house and its founder is illustrated in the case of Boxgrove Cluniac Priory, Sussex. The founder, in 1120, Robert de Hara, stipulated [for himself and his descendants, we take for granted] that he should choose one of the monks to officiate in the chapel at his neighbouring manor house of Halnaker; and that if at any time the monks should fail to elect to a vacancy in the office of prior within three months, he should nominate.

The prioress and nuns of Mount Grace, c. 1250, bound themselves to present each successive Prioress for approval to John le Verdun, their patron (*advocato nostro*), and his heirs or their deputies ("Eccl. Documents," p. 66, Camden Society. See also Cartnell Priory, "Papal Letters," vol. i. p. 135, Rolls Series).

[408] See the case of two of the Prebendaries of Lincoln, named at p. 343; and of two parish priests, at pp. 286 and 294.

[409] Matthew of Westminster says the Franciscans dwelt “in bodies of ten or seven;” but Chaucer seems to intimate that the usual number of friars in each house was thirteen—

> And bring me then twelve friars, will ye why?
> For thirtene is a convent as I wis.
> “Sompnour’s Tale.”

[410] Wert thou not.

[411] Health and strength.

[412] Seal.

[413] Neander’s “Church History,” vii. 403 and 399.

[414] Lynwoode’s “Provinciale,” p. 133.

[415] *e.g.* the valuation, in the “Valor Ecclesiasticus,” of the Carmelites of Lynn is a clear income of 35*s.* 8*d.*; of the Dominicans, 18*s.*; of the Austin Friars, 24*s.* 6*d.* (“Valor Eccl.,” iii. 397, 398). At Northampton the rent fetched by the whole friary, with the friar’s house and garden, is £10 10*s.*; of the Franciscans, £6 17*s.* 4*d.*; of the Dominicans, £5 7*s.* 10*d.* (“Valor Eccl.,” v. 318).

[416] Except the *trinoda necessitas*.

[417] As a consequence of the Scottish Wars, the northern province was so harried and impoverished that the clergy were unable to pay the tenths demanded, and a new taxation of part of the Province was made in 1318.

[418] St. Botolph, Colchester.

[419] See Appendix II.

[420] The Bishop of Oxford says the whole number of parish churches in the Middle Ages was not much over 8000 (“Const. Hist.,” iii. p. 396). There have been very erroneous estimates current. The Parliament of 1371 granted to the king a sum of £50,000, to be raised by contribution of 22*s.* 3*d.* from each parish, there being, according to the common opinion, 40,000 parishes in England. On this the Bishop of Oxford makes a note (“Const. Hist.,” ii. 459) that it is an illustration of the absolute untrustworthiness of mediæval figures, which, even when most circumstantially minute, cannot be accepted, except where as in the public accounts vouchers can be quoted. The returns to a writ issued by the king to the local authorities of each shire to certify the number of parishes in it, showed that there were only 8669. Stow, in his “Annals,” p. 268, gives the returns *in extenso*. The anonymous author of the famous libel, “A Supplication for Beggars,” says there are within the realm of England 52,000 parish churches. Maskell, in his “Monumenta Ritualia,” I. ccij, mentions several MSS. in the British Museum which contain memoranda on the subject, Royal 8 B xv., Royal 8 D iv., Titus D 3. In the first, in a fifteenth-century handwriting, is a note *sunt in Regno Angliæ Ecclesiæ parochiales*, 46,100.

[421] In 1371 the smaller benefices and chantries were taxed by the king (Stowe, “Annales,” p. 268).

[422] The following are the details for the several dioceses (except Durham and Chester):—

Diocese.	Beneficed.	Unbeneficed.
Lincoln—Archdeaconry of Lincoln, Stow, Leicester, and Rutland	2,001	1,660
Lincoln—Archdeaconry of Northampton, Hunts, Bucks, Oxon, and Bedford	1,522	1,313
Canterbury	599	495
Bath and Wells—Archdeaconry of Bath	119	82
Bath and Wells—Archdeaconry of Taunton	139	72
Bath and Wells—Archdeaconry of Wells	335	336
Salisbury—Archdeaconry of Berks and Wilts	461	246
Salisbury—Archdeaconry of Dorchester and Sarum	734	467
Exeter—County of Devon	559	756
Exeter—County of Cornwall	199	487
Ely	358	658
Chichester	473	168
London—Archdeaconry of London	336	427
London—Archdeaconry of Essex, Middlesex, and Colchester	268	241
London—“et predicti Coll.”	531	526
Rochester—In the City and Diocese of Rochester	157	54

Rochester—In the Deanery of Iselham	4	9
Jurisdiction of St. Alban	106	50
Winchester—Archdeaconry of Winton	616	305
Winchester—Archdeaconry of Surrey	218	—
Winchester—In Arch. predicti	—	152
Coventry and Lichfield—Archdeaconry of Coventry	272	241
Coventry and Lichfield—Archdeaconry of Stafford	180	321
Coventry and Lichfield—Archdeaconry of Derby	175	281
Coventry and Lichfield—Archdeaconry of Cestr	162	336
Coventry and Lichfield—Archdeaconry of Salop	106	—
Worcester—Archdeaconry of Wigan	425	425
Worcester—Archdeaconry of Gloucester	414	409
York	1,790	1,481
Carlisle	135	97
Norwich	1,844	1,848
	15,238	13,943

[423] The preface to the “Valor,” when it was printed by the Record Office, says, “We have here presented before us in one grand conspectus the whole ecclesiastical establishment of England and Wales, as it had been built up in successive centuries, and when it was carried to its greatest height.... So that we at once see not only the ancient extent and amount of that provision which was made by the piety of the English nation for the spiritual edification of the people, by the erection of churches and chapels for the decent performance of the simple and touching ordinances of the Christian religion; but how large a proportion had been saved from private appropriation of the produce of the soil, and how much had been subsequently given, to form a public fund accessible to all, out of which might be supported an order of cultivated and more enlightened men dispersed through society, and by means of which blessings incalculable might be spread amongst the whole community. If there were spots of extravagances, yet on the whole it is a pleasing as well as a splendid spectacle, especially if we look with minute observation into any portion of the Record, and compare it with a map which shows the distribution of population in those times over the island, and then observe how religion had pursued men even to his remotest abodes, and was present among the most rugged dwellers in the hills and wildernesses of the land, softening and humanizing their hearts.”

[424]

	Rectories.	Vicarages.	Chapels.	Chantries.
Canterbury	225	108	13	23
Rochester	128	56	10	13
Bath and Wells	368	126	33	53
Chichester	279	124	13	39
London	731	201	31	310
Winchester	289	95	21	14
Sarum	540	182	68	72
Oxford	167	64	8	10
Lincoln	1,310	492	30	213
Peterboro	355	92	10	30
Exeter	524	185	43	36
Gloucester	246	106	35	30
Hereford	152	84	27	57
Coventry and Lichfield	466	207	29	106
Chester	197	78	5	127
Worcester	133	47	17	31
Norwich	1,103	276	31	60
Ely	157	80	11	29
Llandaff	143	61	22	12
St. David’s	288	120	10	3
Bangor	110	27	45	4
St. Asaph	157	83	4	0
York	581	305	19	424

Carlisle	75	38	0	19
Durham	114	70	1	18
	8,838	3,307	536	1,733

[425] “Constitutional History,” iii. 366.

[426] In the Easter account-book.

[427] “Valor,” v. 32, 263, etc.

[428] “Valor,” v. 35.

[429] Ibid., p. 61.

[430] Ibid., p. 75.

[431] Ecclia de Donecaster divisa est pars que fuit Hugonis p’t’ pens’ in eadem, £43 6*s.* 8*d.*; pens’ Abbis Be Marie Ebor. in eadem, £5; pars Rogers’ in eadem p’t’ pens’, £40; pens’ Abbis Be Marie Ebor. in eadem, £5 (“Taxatio,” p. 299).

[432] “Valor,” v. 45.

[433] Ibid., p. 157.

[434] The chrisom was the linen cloth, or garment, which the priest put on the recently baptized child. It was to be offered by the mother when she came to be churched. It might be used again at baptism, or for other church purposes, or it might be converted into ornaments for the good of the church, but not turned to any profane use (“Constitutions of St. Edmund of Canterbury,” 1234).

In the Visitation of Churches in the patronage of St. Paul’s (1249-1252, p. xii.), fifty-six panni chrismales are said to be at Tillingham church, and at Pelham Furneaux several chrisoms were used as *manutergia*—napkins for wiping the hands at mass.

[435] “Valor,” iii. 45.

[436] “Valor Eccl.,” iii. 45.

[437] Ibid., iii. p. 38.

[438] Ibid., v. p. 189.

[439] Denar’ Missaribz et candel’ oblat’. Porcione panis bn̄dict’ diebus dni oblat’ (see p. 236).

[440] Ibid., v. 157.

[441] For sending his *locum tenens* to the synods and processions? (“Valor Eccl.,” i. p. 67).

[442] “History of Agriculture and Prices in England,” J. E. T. Rogers.

[443] “Annals of St. Paul’s Cathedral,” p. 145.

[444] Matthew of Westminster, under the year 1249, says of a number of men in the country about Southampton, that they were of such rank that they were considered equal to knights, and that their estates were valued at £40, £50, or £80 a year (Rolls Series, ii. 360).

[445] Ibid., under year 1253, ii. 383.

[446] Agobarth, Archbishop of Lyons, c. 833, complains that there is scarcely one to be found who aspires to any degree of honour and temporal distinction who has not his domestic priests; and that these chaplains are constantly to be found serving tables, mixing the strained wine, leading out the dogs, managing ladies’ horses, or looking after the lands.

[447] Lib. ix. ep. lxx. (Migne 77, p. 100).

[448] Thorpe’s “Select Charters,” pp. 521 and 511.

[449] Under the year 1067.

[450] In Ludlow Castle, the great chapel in the court was built soon after the Temple Church in London, and, like it, with a circular nave and aisles, and projecting choir.

[451] A chapel at Charney, Berks, of the latter part of the thirteenth century, is described and engraved in the “Archæological Journal” for 1848, p. 311.

[452] These castle chapels were usually dedicated to some saint; as Windsor to St. George, the Tower to St. Peter, Oxford to St. George, Tattershall to St. Nicholas, Toryton to St. James, Barnard Castle to the Twelve Apostles, Alnwick to the Twelve Apostles, etc.

[453] “Archæologiæ,” xxv. pp. 320, 323.

[454] Chapel of the Earl of Northumberland—

First, a preist, a doctor of divinity, a doctor of law, or a bachelor of divinitie, to be dean of

my lord’s chapel.

It. A preist for to be surveyour of my lorde’s lands.

It. A preist for to be secretary to my lorde.

It. A preist for to be amner (almoner) to my lorde.

It. A preist for to be sub-dean for ordering and keaping the quoir in my lorde’s chapell daily.

It. A preist for riding chaplein for my lorde.

It. A preist for a chaplein to my lorde’s eldest son, to wait uppon him daily.

It. A preist for my lorde’s clerk of the closet.

It. A preist for a maister of gramer in my lorde’s house.

It. A preist for reading the Gospel in the chapel daily.

It. A preist for singing of our Ladie’s Mass in the chapell daily.

The number of these persons as chapleins and priests in household are xi.

The gentlemen and children of my lord’s chappell which be not appointed to attend at no time but only in exercising of Godde’s service in the chapell daily at Matteins, Lady-Mass, Highe-Mass, Evensong, and Compeynge:—

First, a bass.

It. A second bass.

A maister of the childer, or counter-tenor.

Second and third counter-tenor.

A standing tenor.

A second, third, and fourth standing tenor.

The number of these persons as gentlemen of my lorde’s chappell xi.

Children of my lorde’s chappell—

Three trebles and three second trebles, in all vi.

A memorandum of all the offerings of my lorde and my lady and my lorde’s children customably used yearly at principall feasts, and other offeringe dayes of the yere—

Furst. My lorde’s offeringe accustomede upon All hallow-Day yerely, when his lordshippe is at home at the Highe Mass, if he kepe Chapell, xij*d.*

Item. My lade’s offerringe accustomede upon All hallowe-Day yerely, if she offer at the Highe Masse, if my lorde kepe chapell, to be paid out of my lord’s coffures, if she be at my lorde’s fyndinge and not at her owen, viij.

And, not to repeat the formal verbiage in every entry—

On Xmasday my lord gave xij, and my lady viij.

On St. Stephen’s Day, when his lordeshipp is at home, a groit to bow at a Low Mass in his closet.

On New-Yers-Day, my lord, if he be at home and keep chapel, offers xij, and my lady viij.

On Twelfth Day my lord offers xij, and my lady viij.

On Candilmas-Day to be sett in his lordschippe’s candil to offer at the High Mass v groits for the v Joyes of our lady xx*d.*, and my lady xij. And my lord useth and accustomyth yerely upon Candilmas-Day to caus to be delyveride for the offeringe of my lords son and heire the lorde Percy to be sett in his candil ij, and for every one of my yonge masters, my lords yonge sonnes to be sett in the candils affore the offeringe j for aither of them, iiij. On St. Blaye’s Day to be sett in his lordsshippe candil to offer at Hye Mass, if his lordschyp kepe chapell iiij*d.*, and my lady iiij, and my lorde sone and heire j, and my lords yonger sonnes j for every of them. Upon Goode-Friday when his lorschippe crepeth the cros, iiij, my lady iiij, and my lord Percy ij, and my yonge masters, when they crepe the cross, j.

On Easter Even, when his lordshipp taketh his rights, iiij, and my lady, when her ladischipe taketh her rights, iiij, and his lordschippe’s children that be of aige to take their rights, ij, to every of them. And my lord useth yerely to caus to be delyvrede to every of his lordschippe’s wardes or Hausmen, or anny other yonge gentilmen that be at his lordschippe’s fynding, and be of aige to take their rights after ij, to every such person.

On Easter day, in the mornynge, when my lord crepeth to the cross after the Resurreccion

iiij, and my lady iiij, and the lord Percy, and my yonge masters every of them j.

On Easter day at High Mass my lord offers xjj, my lady viij, and his children each j.

On St. George's Day, when my lord is at home, and kepith St. George's Feast, x*d.*

My lorde's offeringe accustomed at the Mas of Requiem, upon the morrow after Seyne George-Day, when his lordschip is at home, and kepith Sayn George Feast, which is accustomed yerely to be don for the soulles of all the knightes of the Order of the Garter departede to the mercy of God, iiij.

My lord useth when he is at home, and kepith Dergen over night, and Mas of Requiem upon the morrowe of my lord his Father xij month mynde, to offer at the Mas of Requiem iiij, and his sons, every of them, at the Mas of Requiem done for my lord's father xij month mynde j.

On Ascension Day my lord offers xij, my lady viij.

On Whitsonday xjj, my lady viij, and his children j.

On Trinity Sonday xij, my lady viij.

On Mychaelmas iiij, for his lordschipe offeringe to the Holy Blode of Hailles (Hales) iiij; for his offeringe to our Lady of Walsyngeham iij; to Sayne Margarets, Lyncolinschire iiij.

My lord useth yerely to sende for the upholding of the light of waxe, which his lordschip fynds byrnynge yerely before the Holy Blode of Hailles, containing xvj lb. of wax in it after vij*d.*, ob. for the fyndynge of every lb.; if redy wrought by a covenant maide by gret with the monk for the hole yere for fynding of the saide light byrnying x*s.*

The same for a light at Walsingham vj*s.*, viii*d.*, and at St. Margaret's x. And for a light to burne before our Lady in the Whitefrers of Doncaster of my lord's foundation at mas-tyme daily xiij*s.* iiij*d.*

Presents at Xmas to Barne Bishop [the Boy Bishop?] of Beverley and York, when he comes, as he is accustomed, yearly.

Rewards to the children of his chapell when they do sing the responde called *Exaudivi* at the mattynstime for xi in vespers upon Allhallow Day, 6*s.* 8*d.*

On St. Nicholas Eve, 6*s.* 8*d.*

To them of his lordshipe's chappell if they doe play the play of the Nativitie upon Xmas Day in the mornynge in my lorde's chappell before his lordship xx*s.*

For singing *Gloria in Excelsis* at the mattens time upon Xmas Day in the mornyng.

To the Abbot of Miserewle [Misrule] on Xmas (?)

To the yeoman or groom of the vestry for bringing him the hallowed taper on Candlemas Day?

To his lordship's chaplains and other servts. that play the play before his lordship on Shrofetewsday at night xx*s.*

That play the play of Resurrection upon Estur Daye in the mg. in y lorde's chappell before his lordship.

To the yeoman or groom of the vestry on Allhallows Day for syngnge for all christynne soles the saide nygthe so it be past mydnight 3*s.* 4*d.*

The Earl and Lady were brother and sister of St. Christopher Gilde Yorke, and pd. 6*s.* 8*d.* each yearly; and when the Master of the Gild brought my lord and my lady for their lyverays a yard of narrow violette clothe and a yard of narrow rayed cloth, 13*s.* 4*d.* (*i.e.* a yard of each to each).

And to Proctor of St. Robert's, Knasbruge, when my lorde and my lady were brother and sister, 6*s.* 8*d.* each.

At pp. 272-278 is an elaborate programme of the ordering of my lord's chapel for the various services.

At p. 292 is an order about the washing of the linen of the chapel for a year. Eighteen surplices for men, and six for children, and seven albes, and five altar cloths for covering of the altars, sixteen times a year against the great feasts.

At p. 285 is an order that the vestry stuff shall have at every removal [for it was carried about from one to another of my lord's houses] one cart for the carrying of the nine antiphoners, the four grailles, the hangings of the three altars in my lord's closet and my

ladie's, and the sort [suit] of vestments and single vestments and copes "accopeed" daily, and all other my lord's chappell stuff to be sent afore my lord's chariot before his lordship remove ("Antiq. Repertory," iv. 242).

[455] Whose emoluments at the beginning of the sixteenth century are all given in the "Valor" of Henry VIII., vol. ii. p. 317.

[456] "Valor," ii. p. 153.

[457] "Taxatio," p. 298.

[458] Where there was a single chaplain, he probably always had a boy who "served" him at mass, and also acted as his personal attendant.

[459] Whitaker's "Craven."

[460] "Taxatio," p. 18.

[461] Page's "Yorkshire Chantries."

[462] "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 6.

[463] "Valor Eccl.," ii. 403.

[464] An oratory differs from a church; a church is appointed for public worship, and has an endowment for the minister and others; an oratory is not built for saying mass, nor endowed, but ordained for a family to perform its household worship in. A bell might not be put up in an oratory, because it was not a place of public worship.

[465] The exemption from the jurisdiction of the ordinary of royal chapels is recognized by a bull of Innocent IV. ("Annales de Burton," p. 275).

[466] Grostete summoned Earl Warren and his chaplain for having Divine service celebrated in his hall at Grantham, being an unconsecrated place ("Letters of Grostete," Rolls Series, p. 171).

[467] Eyton's "Shropshire," ix. 326.

[468] There are similar conditions in a licence in 1310, to Dame Matilda de Hywys for her chapel of Tremetherecke, in the parish of Duloc (Register of Bishop Stapledon of Exeter, "Hingeston-Randolph," p. 300).

[469] Newcourt's "Repertorium," ii. 434.

[470] See "Description of the Vyne," by the late Mr. Chute, the proprietor.

[471] The clerk whose duty it was to keep the bishop's register sometimes grew weary of writing the so-frequent record in full, and simply noted that licence was granted to so-and-so, *in formâ communi*, or *in formâ consueta* ("Grandisson's Register," pp. 492, 509, etc.).

[472] Canon Hingeston-Randolph's "Register of Edmund Stafford," p. 271.

[473] Edit. J. Raine, p. 58.

[474] Edit. J. Raine, p. 271.

[475] "Register of Bath and Wells" (Rev. T. Hugo's "Extracts"), p. 158. There are other instances, at Maystoke, Hoddesdon, Atthorpe, in the "Papal Letters," vol. i. pp. 192, 522.

[476] Edited by Mr. George Nichols for the Camden Society.

[477] "Sussex Archæol. Coll.," iii. 112.

[478] G. Offor, "Life of Tyndale."

[479] A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 136.

[480] "Richmondshire Wills," p. 34.

[481] "Test. Ebor.," p. 220.

[482] A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 57.

[483] Ibid., p. 111.

[484] "Lichfield," p. 168, S.P.C.K.

[485] "Eccl. Proceedings of Courts of Durham," p. 44.

[486] "Register" of Bishop Gray of Lincoln.

[487] In 1348 the Convent of St. Augustine, Canterbury, and in 1365 the Convent of Westminster, petitioned the pope to have Divine offices celebrated in the chapels of their manors and churches, *i.e.* rectories ("Papal Letters," vol. i. pp. 139, 506).

[488] "Hingeston-Randolph," p. 319.

[489] Ibid., p. 378.

[490] Walcott's "Chichester Registers."

[491] Alternate vertical stripes of white and red (?).

[492] "Fifty Earliest English Wills," etc., E. E. Text S., p. 5.

[493] The longest time allowed for saying a mass is an hour; those who say it in less than half an hour are reproved (J. H. Dickenson, "The Sarum Missal").

[494] Mallory's "History of Prince Arthur."

[495] "Autobiography of Anne Murray," in the time of James I. (Camden Society).

[496] In Saxon times the priest and brethren of Bath admitted Sæwi and Theodgefu his wife to brotherhood and bedrœdenne (prayer) for life and death (Thorpe's "Diplomatarium," p. 436). Gilbert Tyson, *temp.* William I. or II., gave land to Selby "for the soul of my lord King William, and for my soul and the souls of my wife and children, ... on condition that I be *plenarius frater* in the said church." Sir Roger Tromyn and Dame Joan his wife were admitted, in 1307, to share in the prayers of the Abbey of Wymore, and to have their obsequies celebrated when they deceased as for a brother of the house ("Eccl. Documents," Camden Society, pp. 49, 72).

[497] Osborn, Abbot of St. Evroult (1063), instituted an anniversary, on the 26th June, for the fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters of all the monks of St. Evroult. The names of all the brethren were registered in a long roll when professed. This roll was kept near the altar throughout the year, and an especial commemoration was made before God of the persons inscribed, when the priest says in celebrating mass, "Animas famulorum famularum que tuorum," etc. "Vouchsafe to join to the society of Thine elect, the souls of Thy servants, both men and women, whose names are written in the roll presented before Thy holy altar." At the anniversary, on 26th June, the roll of the deceased was spread open on the altar, and prayers were offered, first for the dead and afterwards for living relations and benefactors and all the faithful in Christ ("Orderic Vitalis," i. 447).

William de Ros, clerk of Bayeux, gave £40 sterling to the monks of St. Evroult.... His name was inscribed in the register by the monks of St. Evroult for the many benefits he conferred on the abbey, and masses, prayers, and alms were appointed for him as if he had been a brother there professed (i. 269).

Some of the monks of St. Evroult contributed largely to the monastery, and procured from their relations, acquaintances, and friends donations of tithes and churches, and ecclesiastical ornaments for the use of the brethren.

[498] Surtees Society, the "Liber Vitæ of Durham."

[499] There were, in fact, a few others; *e.g.* the Domestic Chapel at the Vyne, Hampshire, had been founded as a chantry.

[500] In Yorkshire, less than a dozen are recorded before the fourteenth century, about a quarter of the whole number were founded between 1300 and 1350, the greatest number from 1450 to 1500 (Page's "Yorkshire Chantries," Surtees Society).

[501] If groups of united chantries be reckoned as one, or 53 if each be counted separately; served by 52 priests, with an average income of £7 9*s.* 6*d.* The chantry priests lived in a mansion founded for them called Priest's House, or in the chambers of their respective chantries ("St. Paul's and Old City Life," p. 100, W. S. Simpson).

[502] For another example of a foundation deed of a chantry, see that of Thomas, Earl of Derby (p. 469), in Blackburn parish church, 1514 (Whitaker's "Whalley," ii. 322)

[503] Dan John Raventhorpe leaves a wooden side altar with a cupboard beneath the said altar (almariolum subtus idem altare) to keep the books and vestments. So also in the will of Richard Russell, citizen of York, 1435 ("Test. Ebor.," ii. 53).

[504] Wodderspoon, "Memorials of Ipswich," p. 352.

[505] Chantry Certificates, Co. York, Roll 70, No. 6.

[506] "York Fabric Rolls," p. 87.

[507] "Register" of Bishop Buckingham, p. 282.

[508] A. Gibbons, "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 91.

[509] S.P.C.K., "Diocese of Lichfield," p. 161. So at the Free Chapel at Kingston (see p. 125).

[510] "Early Lincoln Wills," p. 29.

[511] Ibid., p. 60.

[512] Ibid., p. 150.

[513] Newcourt's "Repertorium."

[514] “Diocesan Hist. of Hereford,” S.P.C.K.

[515] “Lichfield Diocese,” p. 115, S.P.C.K.

[516] Here are a few examples from Lincoln Diocese only, within fifty years. William Aghton, Archdeacon of Bedford, 1422, left a bequest for masses for his soul. Richard of Ravenser, Archdeacon of Lincoln, 1385, leaves 2*s.* to every nun of the Order of Sempringham and every anchorite or recluse in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, and numerous other bequests to religious houses, besides a manor and certain tenements to be sold in aid of a chaplain of the vicars [choral] of Lincoln, to celebrate at St. Giles’s Without, Lincoln, for him, etc. William Wintringham, Canon of Lincoln, 1415, left 200 marks for mortuary masses. Richard Croxton, Canon of Lincoln, 1383, left £50 for masses for ten years. John of Haddon, Canon of Lincoln, 1374, left £21 to find two chaplains for two years. Robert of Austhorpe, Doctor of Laws and Licentiate in Arts, 1372, left 20*s.* for masses. Stephen of Hoghton, Rector of the Mediety of Lesyngham, 1390, left 20*s.* and two books to the Prior and Convent of Nocton for a perpetual anniversary. Robert of Lottryngton, Rector of Gosberkyrk, 1391, left £10 and his portiforium and psalterium to his church, and a bequest for two chaplains to celebrate for him for a year. Richard Morys, Rector of Bryngton, 1396, leaves £4 to Mr. William Ynflet, to celebrate for him (A. Gibbons, “Early Lincoln Wills”).

[517] “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 158.

[518] There are chantry chapels in two stories at Hereford and Gloucester Cathedrals, and Tewkesbury, and two at East Horndon, Essex.

[519] A. Gibbons, “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 201.

[520] Baines’s “Manchester” (Harland’s edition), p. 45.

[521] “Test. Ebor.,” iv. 121.

[522] See calendar of perpetual obits in St. Paul’s Cathedral in appendix to Milman’s “Annals of St. Paul’s.”

[523] In the “Sarum Manual” the rules which follow death began with a *Commendatio Animarum* [Exequiis] consisting of psalms and prayers for the dead. The body was then washed and laid on a bier; vespers for the day were said, followed by the *Vigiliæ Mortuorum*, divided into several parts, the special vespers and special matins known from their respective antiphons as the *Placebo* and *Dirige*. The body was then carried in procession to church. There the *Missa Mortuorum* was said, and after it came the *Inhumatio defuncti*.

[524] See p. 348.

[525] Hingeston-Randolph, “Stafford’s Register,” p. 399.

[526] Wodderspoon, “Ipswich,” p. 392.

[527] Ibid., p. 399.

[528] It was a very humble imitation of the primitive custom of giving a funeral feast.

[529] Ibid., p. 393.

[530] “Essex Arch. Trans.,” vol. i. part iii. p. 150 (New Series).

[531] “Diocese of Bath and Wells,” p. 136, S.P.C.K.

[532] “Diocesan Histories, Lincoln,” p. 81, S.P.C.K.

[533] Ibid., p. 197.

[534] “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 209.

[535] “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 164.

[536] Ibid., p. 107.

[537] Ibid., p. 158.

[538] Gibbons, “Early Lincoln Wills,” p. 185.

[539] Ibid., p. 210.

[540] Hamo, Bishop of Rochester, in 1341 endowed a chantry for himself in the cathedral, the prior and convent engaging to give the chantry priest lodging and the food of a monk and 24*s.* yearly.

[541] Archbishop Sudbury, 1378, ordered Annuellers to be content with 7 marks, and others who serve cure of souls with 8 marks, or diet and 4 marks.

[542] This is the same year as the statute quoted above; and is clearly the ecclesiastical counterpart of that civic legislation.

[543] The Black Death, in 1348.

[544] In 1391, the dean and chapter made a regulation that henceforth no beneficed person should hold a chantry in St. Paul's excepting their own minor canons.

[545] In 1323, J. de Taunton, priest and vicar in the Church of Wells, was collated by the Bishop to "annuate" in the Church of St. Mary, Wells, to celebrate for the soul of F. de Bullen (?) and all faithful souls (Rev. T. Hugo's "Extracts," p. 88). In the register of Montacute, Bishop of Ely, 1337, licence was given to Mr. Nicho. de Canterbury, *stare in obsequiis* of J. de Polleyne for two years, and this at the instance of Dnus. John de Polleyne. The same year licence was given to Dnus. Richard Rupel, Rector of the Church of Carlton *quod possit stare in obsequiis* of Dni. Paris Lewen for two years.

[546] The chantry priests of London, having been summoned by the bishop in 1532, and desired to contribute towards the £100,000 demanded by King Henry VIII. of the clergy, made such a stir that the bishop dismissed them for the time, and afterwards had some arrested and imprisoned (Stow's "Chronicle," p. 559).

[547] Enough.

[548] Also at Bromley. See Whitaker's "Whalley."

[549] Page's "Yorkshire Chantries."

[550] "Lay Folks' Mass Book."

[551] "York Fabric Rolls."

[552] In the "Calendar of Chantries" there are forty-two such schools recorded.

[553] Whitaker's "History of Whalley," ii. 322.

[554] Whitaker, "Craven," p. 147.

[555] Ibid., p. 326.

[556] Whitaker, "Whalley," p. 326.

[557] Whitaker, "Whalley," p. 155.

[558] Whitaker, "Craven," p. 438.

[559] For example, the chantry chapel of Billericay, Essex, continued in this condition until Bishop Blomfield induced the trustees to surrender the chapel and the right of presentation to it to the bishop, on condition of a stipend of £120 being settled upon it from Queen Anne's Bounty Fund.

[560] The rule of the Ludlow Gild was that, "if any of the brethren or sisters be brought to such want that they have not enough to live upon, then, once, twice, thrice, but not a fourth time, as much help shall be given them, out of the goods of the gild, as the rectors and stewards, having regard to their deserts, and to the means of the gild, shall order.... If any brother or sister be wrongfully cast into prison, the gild shall do its utmost, and spend money, to get him out.... If any fall into grievous sickness, they shall be helped, both as to their bodily needs and other wants, out of the common fund of the gild, until their health is renewed as before. If any one becomes a leper, or blind, or maimed, or smitten with any incurable disorder (which God forbid), we will that the goods of the gild shall be largely bestowed on him.... If any good girl of the gild cannot have the means found her by her father, either to go into a religious house or to marry, whichever she wishes to do, friendly and right help shall be given her out of our means, and our common chest, towards enabling her do whichever of the two she wishes." The rules of one of the gilds in Hull enact that "inasmuch as the gild was founded to cherish kindness and love, the alderman, steward, and two helpmen in case of a quarrel between two members shall deal with the matter, and shall earnestly strive to make them agree together without any suit or delay, and so that no damage either to body or goods shall in any wise happen through the quarrel." If the officials neglect to interpose their good offices, they are fined four pounds of wax among them; and if the disputants will not listen to them, they shall pay four pounds of wax; and, finally, all the members of the gild shall be summoned to meet, and the difficulty shall be referred to them for settlement.

[561] By the rules of the Lancaster Gild, "on the death of a member of the gild all the brethren then in the town shall come to placebo and dirge, if summoned by the bellman, or pay 2*d.*" "All shall go to the mass held for a dead brother or sister; each brother or sister so dying shall have at the mass on the day of burial six torches and eighteen wax-lights, and at other services two torches and four wax-lights." "If any of the gild die outside Lancaster, within twenty miles, twelve brethren shall wind and deck the body at the cost of the gild, and if the brother or sister so dying wished to be buried where he died, the same twelve shall see that he has fitting burial there where he died." Some of the gilds had a hearse and embroidered pall which were used at funerals of members of the gild, and sometimes let out to others.

[562] A return was made into Chancery, in the twelfth year of Richard II. (1387), of the original objects, endowments, and extent of gilds generally, and the masters and wardens; the records of more than 500 exist and form the substance of Toulmin Smith's book on

English gilds.

[563] Page's "Yorkshire Chantries," p. 83.

[564] See chap. xxiv. p. 417.

[565] S.P.C.K., "Worcester Diocese," p. 138.

[566] From the "Valor Eccl.," iii. 315, we learn that at Thetford, in Norfolk, there was a Gild of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a certain chapel in the Bayly end, with a master whose income was £6 13*s.* 4*d.*, two priests with £5 6*s.* 8*d.* each, and two clerks with 20*s.* each.

From the same source we learn that at Boston, Lincolnshire, there were three gilds, one of the Blessed Virgin Mary with five chaplains, whose revenues amounted to £24 a year; one of Corpus Christi with six chaplains, income £32; and one of St. Peter with two chaplains, income £10 13*s.* 4*d.*

Alice Lowys, widow of Lowys of Boston, merchant, 1350, leaves bequests to the High Altar, and to the Gilds of Blessed Mary, St. Katharine, St. George, etc. ("Early Lincoln Wills," p. 175).

Isabella Longland, widow, of Henley-upon-Thames, 1527, leaves "to the hye aulter of Henley Church 20*d.*, and hye aulter of our Ladye a diapur cloth of iij elles and more. To the Fraternity of Jesus in the said church, 4*s.*; to the Gilde of our blessed lady of Boston in the dioces of Lincoln, whereof I am suster, to have masses of *Scala celi* and *dirge* shortly after my departing, 6*s.* 8*d.*; to the Brotherhood of St. George and St. Christopher of York for ditto, 6*s.* 8*d.* To my sone my Lorde of Lincoln, a standing cup of silver and gilt with a kever, having the image of St. Mighell, and a droigon in the toppe, and borne with iij aungells in the foote.... To my prestes for to bere me to the churche ev'y preste, 8*d.* She was the mother of John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, 1521-1547" (Ibid., p. 208).

[567] "Valor Eccl.," iii. 237.

[568] Page 468.

[569] Thus Stamford had in All Saints' Church the Gild of All Saints, the Gild of St. John and St. Julian, the Gild of Corpus Christi, and Philip's chantry. In St. Mary's Church an endowment for stipendiaries and a chantry; in St. Stephen's Church a chapter; in St. Clement's Church a gild.

[570] Wm. Trenourth of St. Cleer, Cornwall, 1400, leaves to the store of St. Cleer, three sheep; to the store of St. Mary in St. Cleer Church, two sheep; to the store of Holy Cross therein, one sheep, and the same to the store of St. James (Hingeston-Randolph, "Stafford's Register," p. 380).

[571] W. Haselbeche, clark, 1504, leaves to the Fraternity of St. Peter, holden within the Church of Littlebury, Essex, his best brass pot and a dozen of great platters marked with C.

To the Fraternity of Our Lady's Assumption in the Church of Haddestoo, in Norfolk, toward the buying and building of a hall for the Fraternity, 26*s.* 8*d.* ("Essex Arch. Trans." (New Series), vol. i. p. 174).

In an inventory of the goods at Chich St. Osyth Church, 6 Ed. VI., occurs: "There be the ymplements sometime belonging to the Trinity Gylde. In the hands of the churchwardens—brasse pott, weighing 3 c. 4 li.; brass pott, weying 35 li. (much obliterated by decay), ... spitts remaining; dozen of peuter, waying 31 li. And also in the hands of Sir J. Harwy, church pryst, one garnyshe of peuter" (Ibid., p. 28).

[572] This is illustrated in two charming pictures of the end of the fifteenth century in the Royal MS. 19 cviii. cap., folios 3 and 90, where the town with its wall, round towers, moat and bridge, and one great church dominating the houses, rises out of the park-like meadows with a castle on a neighbouring height. In the lower margin of the late fourteenth-century MS. (Royal 13 A iii.) the scribe has given a number of sketches, very neatly executed, of towns mentioned in his narrative. They are probably for the most part fancy sketches, but they serve to show that the idea of a town in the mind of a mediæval draughtsman was a wall and gates with a grove of towers and spires soaring above. See folios 27, 32, 33, 34, etc., and especially "London," folio 56. An interesting view of a town with a great church and several smaller towers and spires appearing over the walls is in Lydgate's "Siege of Thebes," 18 D. 11, folio 148.

[573] It seems likely that sometimes the same proprietor built more than one church for his tenants, *e.g.* Abbot Ursin is said to have built three churches for his burgh of St. Alban (see p. 513). The Abbey of St. Edmund seems to have built two within a very short period (see p. 511). At Lincoln, a lay proprietor, Colsuen, shortly after the Conquest, built thirty-six houses and two churches on a piece of waste ground outside the city given to him by the king ("Domesday Book").

[574] References to the plan of Norwich. Places within the city indicated by letters—

A. St. Leonard's.
B. Bishop's Gate.

C. The Cathedral Church.
D. St. Martin’s at the Pallis Gale.
E. St. Bathold’s.
F. St. Clement’s.
G. St. Augustine’s.
H. St. Martin’s at the Oke.
I. The Castle.
K. St. Peter’s Permantigate.
L. St. Martin’s on the Hill.
M. St. John’s on the Hill.
N. St. Michael’s.
O. St. John’s at the Gate.
P. St. Stephen’s.
Q. The Market Place.
R. St. Gyles’s Gate.
S. Hell Gate.
T. St. Benet’s Gate.
V. St. Stephen’s Gate.
W. Pockethorpe Gate.
X. The New Milles.
Y. Chapell in the Field.
Z. St. Martin’s Gate.

[575] “Historic Towns: London.” Rev. W. I. Loftie.

[576] “Stowe’s Survey of London,” vol. ii. p. 26 (by Strype, A.D. 1720).

[577] “It may be that the parochial system was not fully organized in Exeter till the time of the Ordinance (of 1222), and that while some of the chapels were suppressed, others were now raised to the rank of parish churches” (E. A. Freeman, “Historic Towns”: Exeter).

[578] References to the Plan of Exeter. Places of the city indicated by figures—

1. East Gates.
2. St. Lawrence.
3. The Castle.
4. Corrylane.
5. St. Ione Cross.
6. St. Stephen’s.
7. Bedford House.
8. St. Peter’s.
9. Bishop’s Pallace.
10. Palace Gate.
11. Trinity.
12. Bear Gate.
13. St. Marye’s.
14. Churchyard.
15. St. Petroke’s.
16. High Stret.
17. Guild Hall.
18. Alhallowes.
19. Goldsmith Stret.
20. St. Paule.
21. Paule Stret.
22. St. Pancres.
23. Waterbury Stret.
24. North Gate.
25. Northgate Stret.
26. St. Keran’s.
27. Cooke Row.
28. Bell Hill.
29. Southgate Stret.
30. South Gate.
31. Grenny Stret.
32. St. Gregorie’s.
33. Milk Lane.
34. The Shambles.
35. St. Olaves.
36. St. Mary Arche.
37. Archer Lane.
38. St. Nicholas.
39. St. John’s.
40. Friar Waye.
41. Little Britaine.
42. Alhallowes.
43. St. Marie’s Steps.

44. West Gate.
45. Smithen Stret.
46. Idle Lane.
47. Postern Stret.
48. Racke Lane.

[579] Its thirteenth century hall and fourteenth century dormitory still exist.

[580] The existing fabric was built early in the second half of the fifteenth century, at the joint cost of the Abbot of Glastonbury, to whom the benefice belonged, and of the parishioners; John Shipward, the mayor, adding the handsome tower.

[581] On the suppression of the religious houses, the fine church of the Austin Canons supplied the Cathedral Church of the new diocese of Bristol—now happily restored to the dignity and usefulness of a separate see.

[582] References to the plan of Bristol. Places of the city indicated by letters—

A. Great St. Augustine.
B. Little St. Augustine.
C. The Gaunt.
D. St. Michael.
E. St. James.
F. Froom Gate.
G. St. John's.
H. St. Lawrence.
I. St. Stephen's.
K. St. Leonard.
L. St. Warburg's.
M. Christ Church.
N. Allhallowes.
O. St. Mary Port.
P. St. Peter's.
Q. St. Phillip.
R. The Castle.
S. St. Nicholas.
T. St. Thomas.
V. The Temple.
W. Ratcliff Gate.
X. Temple Gate.
Y. Newgate.

[583] J. Raine, "Historic Towns": York.

[584] Ellis's "Introd. to Domesday Book," ii. p. 491.

[585] Ellis's "Introd. to Domesday Book," ii. p. 491.

[586] A very complete inventory of the possessions of this Priory taken room by room, at the time of the suppression, is printed in J. Wodderspoon's "Ipswich," p. 314.

[587] See an account of this chantry at p. 444.

[588] There is a diagram of it, with the chapel at the west end, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1751, p. 296.

[589] Vol. iii. p. 147. At p. 145 the sum is given as £23.

[590] In 1233 the convent obtained a prohibition from the pope to erect an oratory or chapel within a Roman mile of their altar ("Papal Letters," vol. i. p. 137, Rolls Series).

[591] When the Countess of Clare, the lady of one of the manors at Walsingham, gave the Franciscans a site for a house here, in 21 Henry II., the prior and convent petitioned her against the foundation, but without success.

[592] See Wingham and Wye in Appendix III., pp. 564, 566.

[593] Ecclia de Roderham divisa est, Pars Abbis de Clervall, £16 13*s.* 4*d.*; vicar ejusdem ptis, £5; pars Rogeri cum vicar ejusdem partis, £21 13*s.* 4*d.*; Pens' Prioris de Lewes in eadem eccles de Roderham, £1 6*s.* 8*d.* ("Taxatio," p. 300).

[594] The example set by the cathedrals for gathering the cantarists into a college, was followed by private benefactors in several towns, *e.g.* Newark, p. 525.

[595] At the time of the "Taxatio," the portion of the prior of Worksop in the Church of Sheffield was worth £10 ("Taxatio," p. 299).

[596] The Augmentation Commissioners of Ed. VI. return that the Parish of Newnham, Gloucestershire, where are houselying people, ciijx, has certain lands, tenements, and rents given to the parishioners to bestow the profits according to their discretion, "in reparying the p̄m̄isses, sometyme in mendyng of high weyes and bridgs within the same p̄she; and sometymes, and of late, in findinge a prieste ther to serve for the soles of the givers and

founders, and for c̄ten Xtn works, worth £14 0*s.* 1*d.* Ornament, plate, and juellry to the same, none, r value x*s.*" (Notes on the Borough and Manor of Newnham.—R. I. Kerr, Gloucester, "Transactions," 1893).

[597] The castle chapel, dedicated to St. Philip and James, "was anciently given to the mother church" of Newark.

[598] A suburb outside the borough, called the North End, had a Hospital of St. Leonard, and was a separate parish.

[599] Dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen.

[600] p. 403.

[601] It was probable that he was the chaplain of the Castle Chapel.

[602] An effigy of Alan Fleming, merchant, who died in 1361, engraved, with canopy and ornamental work, on a great sheet of brass, is one of the finest of the "Flemish brasses," and one of the treasures of the church. It is engraved in Waller's and in Boutell's "Monumental Brasses."

[603] Thoroton records the epitaph of R. Browne, armiger, late Alderman of the Gild of Holy Trinity of this church, and Constable of the Castle, and principal seneschal of the liberty of the town and receiver for Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal of York, and for the Lord John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, and for the vice-count of the Counties of Notts and Derby, who died 1532.

[604] See p. 519.

[605] See p. 125.

[606] Thoroton gives the inscription on the tomb of Robert Kirkclaye, the first master of the Long School for forty-two years, who died in 1570 (?).

[607] See an account of them in "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages." Virtue and Co.

[608] "Valor," v. p. 157.

[609] Ibid., ii. p. 54.

[610] Matthew Paris (under 1250 A.D.) relates a case in which Bishop Grostete deprived a clerk accused of incontinency; the clerk refused to give up his benefice; the bishop excommunicated him; at the end of forty days of grace, the clerk still refusing to submit, the bishop sent word to the sheriff to take and imprison him as contumacious; the sheriff, being a great friend of the clerk and no friend of the bishop, delayed or refused; the bishop thereupon excommunicated the sheriff; he complained to the king; the king applied to the pope, and obtained an order restraining the bishop (M. Paris, v. 109).

[611] "Greenfield's Register," quoted in *Church Times*, March 11, 1898.

[612] "Grostete's Letters," Rolls Series, p. 48.

[613] S.P.C.K., "Lichfield," p. 178.

[614] "Durham Ecclesiastical Proceedings," p. 47.

[615] There is a picture of the confession of clerics in the MS. 6 E. VII. f. 506 *verso*.

[616] S.P.C.K., "Rochester," p. 224.

[617] Matthew Paris, v. 223.

[618] S.P.C.K., "Hereford," p. 87.

[619] "Papal Letters," vol. iii. p. 142, Rolls Series.

[620] "Gray's Register," York, p. 269.

[621] S.P.C.K., "Diocesan Histories: Bath and Wells," p. 129.

[622] Whitaker, "Craven," p. 149.

[623] S.P.C.K., "Diocesan History of Rochester," p. 189.

[624] Ibid., p. 231.

[625] S.P.C.K., "Rochester," p. 231.

[626] "Durham Eccl. Proceedings," p. 64.

[627] "Durham Eccl. Proceedings," Surtees Society, p. 107.

[628] S.P.C.K., "Rochester," p. 224.

[629] S.P.C.K., "Diocesan Histories: Bath and Wells," p. 128. We are reminded of the story told by Sismondi (chap. xlix.), that when Pope Urban V., in 1369, sent two legates with a bull of excommunication to Bernabo Visconti, Duke of Milan, that strong-willed prince compelled the legates to eat the documents, parchment, leaden seals, silk cord, and all. So Walter de

Clifford, in 1250, compelled a royal messenger to eat the letters he brought, with the seal (Matthew Paris, ii. 324). The writ of summons was sometimes a small slip of parchment, or perhaps paper, and the seal a thin layer of beeswax covered with paper, so that the story is not impossible. There are other instances on record in which the summoner was compelled by violence to destroy his writ—in what manner is not stated—instead of serving it ("Calendar of Entries in Papal Registers," A.D. 1247-48, pp. 239, 243).

[630] The castigation by the schoolmaster of a scholar hoisted on a man's back after the hardly obsolete fashion of our public schools is depicted in the same MS., 6 E. VI., at f. 214, under the heading "*Castigatio*;" and again in the second volume of the work (6 E. VII.), at f. 444, under the heading "*Master*;" as if the word "castigatio" naturally suggested "schoolboy," and the primary function of a "master" were to use the rod.

[631] "Ecclesiastical Proceedings from the Courts of Durham," p. 20.

[632] Ibid., p. 21.

[633] S.P.C.K., "Diocese of Lichfield," p. 171. See other examples in "Diocesan Histories of Bath and Wells," p. 130.

[634] There are forms of it in "The York Manual," Rev. J. Raine, Surtees Society, pp. 86, 119.

[635] See "The Repression of Overmuch Blaming of the Clergy," by Reginald Pecock, Bishop of Chichester. Rolls Series.

[636] The host asks him—

> "Sire preest, quod he, art thou a vicary,
> Or art thou a parson? say soth by thy fay,"

but the poet does not, by answering the question, narrow the class represented.

[637] Sparing nor proud.

[638] Rebuke.

[639] Scrupulous.

[640] "Camden Society," p. 23.

[641] Whitaker's "Whalley," p. 58.

[642] It appears, by a subsequent document, that he had a domestic oratory in his Hall, which stood at the east end of the churchyard.

[643] United by Act of Parliament. c. 1734.

[644] Morant says that a chantry was founded here in 1328.

[645] Appropriated to Abbey of Stratford Langthorne.

[646] The chantry was founded at and for the little town of Billericay, 1½ miles from the parish church.

[647] The advowson belonged to Bilegh Abbey. Morant says (i. p. 247) West Leigh was a parish held at the Conquest by the canons of St. Paul's adjoining this. In 1432 the abbey and the canons agreed to unite the two parishes, the abbey taking two turns of presentation and the canons one.

[648] Among the smaller benefices (p. 24); the greater part of their income having been apportioned to the Religious Houses.

[649] Built by the family of Barringtone Barnton on their estate here.

[650] Rectory belonged to Prittlewell Priory.

[651] "Taxatio," pp. 1, 2.

[652] "Valor," i. pp 36, 92.

[653] Elder brother of the Archbishop, Archdeacon of Canterbury, "Valor," i. p. 32.

[654] William Warham, nephew of Archbishop Warham, late Archdeacon of Canterbury, "Valor," i. p. 32.

[655] In Saxon times the manor belonged to a family named Liveing; soon after the Conquest it was in the possession of a family named Beke.

[656] "Revolving in his mind God's wonderful and great mercies to him in leading him and preferring him to such riches and eminence in Church and State, and in preserving him from danger both by sea and land, and out of gratitude to the memory of his parents and friends, at whose charge he was educated and brought to that pitch of honour, he thought he could not pay a more grateful acknowledgment than to set apart a very considerable part of his estate in this manner."—Preface to his Statutes for his College, Hasted's "Kent," iii. 173.

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