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THE

CHURCHMAN

A Monthly Magazine

CONDUCTED BY CLERGYMEN AND LAYMEN

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

VOL. XII.

LONDON
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW
1885

ART. IV.—THE ARCHDEACON OF LEWES ON CATHEDRALS.

The Pulpit, the Cathedral, and the School. An Address delivered at his Seventh Visitation, May, 1855. By JOHN HANNAH, D.C.L., Archdeacon of Lewes and Vicar of Brighton. Brighton: H. and C. Treacher.

ARCHDEACON OF LEWES is a title which has been especially known and esteemed in the present century; and a Charge by Archdeacon Hannah is sure to be read. A divine of marked ability and rich culture, whose learning is both varied and sound, Archdeacon Hannah has a reputation as an administrator as well as an author. In knowledge of educational and ecclesiastical questions he ranks high, and he is, moreover, a keen observer of the times who is thoroughly practical. His opinions, therefore, whether in a Diocesan Conference and the Central Council, or in the House of Convocation of which he is an ornament, carry weight; they are known to be the result of very careful consideration, free from prejudice.

The Archdeacon's Charge for the present year, which is now before us, seems to have more than ordinary interest. The subject set forth in it is the ideal of the *Ecclesia docens* through the Pulpit, the Cathedral, and the School. By most Churchmen, perhaps, it will be thought that the suggestions as a whole are judicious, and truly conservative; and the tone breathed throughout is such that, whether here and there we agree or differ, we cannot fail to listen with respect.

On only one division of the subject is it our present purpose to touch. What has the Archdeacon to suggest, in these democratic days, as to our Cathedrals?

The true ideal of these noble foundations, he says, "lends itself most worthily to the promotion of theological study, and to the work of raising the standard of sacred worship among the clergy. I am well aware that the relation of the Cathedral to the Diocese involves many considerations of deep significance and importance. 'The Cathedral,' says the Bishop of Peterborough, 'is the central and principal church of the Diocese, and ought to be the centre, as far as possible, of Diocesan organization and work.'[1] But this fruitful principle," continues the Archdeacon, "must not lead us to forget the claims which affect Cathedrals in relation to the Church at large. First and foremost, no doubt, a Cathedral was meant to supply the Bishop with his Council. But a Bishop's Council should contain men

[1] "Report of the Royal Commissioners on Peterborough Cathedral," appendix, p. 16.

of light and leading, as well as merely able administrators of Diocesan departments."

Three things appear "to me," says the Archdeacon, "to stand out clearly in the ideal of Cathedral institutions; first—for I should distinctly put this first—that the Cathedral should be the centre for Diocesan good works; next, that it should supply a home for study and devotion; thirdly, that it should provide a school of learning for the younger clergy, as well as opportunities for the training of candidates for Orders."

Now, the first of these heads, important as it is, has recently received, perhaps, an undue share of attention:

It is the aspect of the case [says the Archdeacon] which is put most prominently forward by the Cathedral Commissioners, in whose Final Report we read that, "in general they have regarded the Cathedral and the members of the Cathedral body with reference, not merely to the city in which they exist, nor, on the other hand, merely to the Church at large, but also, and *perhaps chiefly*, to the interests of the Diocese of which the Cathedral is the Mother-Church, and the Dean the leading Presbyter."[1] And again, at the close of their Report, "But, above all, the feelings with regard to the ties which bind together the Cathedral and the Diocese have undergone an unspeakable amount of change in the last few years, and, as we believe, have much improved. Many things have concurred to bring about this change."

The conception of the Bishop of a Diocese working from his Cathedral as a spiritual centre, of the capitular body being interested in the whole Diocese, and of the whole Diocese having claims upon the capitular body, has grown and is growing.

I readily admit [says the Archdeacon] that this consideration ought to occupy a leading place in any complete account of the present or prospective uses of Cathedrals. Taking them even in their broadest aspect, we must allow that a strong and healthy centre is the best support for an extended circumference; and that to make Cathedrals, in the words of the Commissioners, "more distinctly centres of spiritual light and life in the Diocese," "will strengthen their position, and make them more valued by the Church at large."[2] It is perfectly true that it was because the Cathedrals had generally, if not universally, lost touch with their respective Dioceses, that they were mowed down to a comparatively helpless uniformity by the legislation of 1840. It is because they have now drawn themselves into closer and more cordial relations with each Diocese, by many a useful act of sympathy and service, that Churchmen are beginning to recognise them as amongst the most important factors in the growing prosperity of the Church in England.

It is a good preliminary test for new proposals, therefore,

[1] "Final Report of the Cathedral Commissioners, 1885," p. 3.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

to ask these questions: Will their acceptance and adoption cause the Cathedrals to become more completely than they are already the centres of religious life and work throughout the Diocese? Will the new forms of statute which are recommended to our notice secure a more complete and living interchange of spiritual help and service, between the pastors and people of secluded parishes and the great Mother-Church?

To secure "affirmative answers to these questions," says the Archdeacon, "would be an excellent beginning; but I must maintain that it should be combined with a distinctive recognition of the value of Cathedrals as the homes and centres of theological learning."

An important feature in all recent proposals for Cathedral Reform, says the Archdeacon, is the restoration of the Greater Chapter to its proper position as the *concilium et senatus Episcopi*—an official Diocesan Council for the Bishop. With regard to the Lesser or Residentiary Chapter, he goes on to say that proposals for investing a portion of its members with Diocesan Administrative duties should be favourably considered. Thus, the Precentor and the Chancellor might do good service in the Diocese.[1] "And, above all, there is a widespread feeling that it would dignify and spiritualize their other duties if the members of the Residentiary Chapter could be counted on to assist their brethren as Missionary Preachers, whenever their other engagements permitted it and their assistance was desired. There would be no difficulty in finding time for this important function if the Residentiaries were resident; and the adoption of the plan would be a sufficient reply to the objections raised against the views of those who urge the necessity of longer residence, on the ground that they would bind fast to the Cathedral a body of clergy who for a large part of the year would have nothing to do." In this we thoroughly agree with the Archdeacon, and the point, our readers are aware, has been pressed in THE CHURCHMAN as an urgently needed reform.[2] The Archbishop of Canter-

[1] The Precentor might not only see that the Cathedral maintained in its services a model and example of the highest perfection of musical worship, which is his primary duty, but might, with very great advantage to the Diocese, take a kindly interest in the choral services of humbler fanes. The Chancellor, if not, as at Lincoln and elsewhere, the actual head of a great theological school, might usefully survey our whole educational apparatus.

[2] The plea has been three times urged in the Chichester Diocesan Conference by the Rector of Kingston-by-Sea. Thus, in the year 1880, Mr. Purton said: "A *Mission* can only be held after an interval of some years; but I plead for—to use a cumbrous term—ordinary 'extraordinary' services."

bury, some two years ago, suggested the appointment of Mission Preachers, Canons, or at least one Canon Preacher with a small staff under him, in every Diocese; and his Grace's letter was thankfully welcomed by Church Reformers who for years have pleaded for evangelistic Diocesan services in connection with the strengthening of the Cathedral system.[1]

We also agree with the Archdeacon when he speaks of the Cathedrals as homes for theological study.[2] He says:

> An honoured member of our own body, the late Professor James Mozley, as we read in the interesting volume of his letters, protested against a threatened policy which "would disconnect the Cathedrals from the great stream of theological and philosophical thought in the Church, and make them mere representatives of Diocesan Boards and Committees." The proposed plan, he thinks, would secure "a good deal of professional activity, but the whole will be a fall for the English Church."[3] Of course, we cannot expect that every country Cathedral should emulate the learning of Christ Church, where five of the six Canons are *ex-officio* Professors in a great University. But the tradition of this high function has never been lost. . . . At least one stall, if possible, should be reserved in each Cathedral as an opportunity of scholarly retirement for some man distinguished in sacred learning.[4]

The Archdeacon then turns to the work of theological education. Under this head he observes: "I cannot refer you to a higher authority than the late Bishop of Lincoln, the revered and lamented Bishop Christopher Wordsworth. We are told that 'to the Cathedral he looked for assistance alike in the conduct of ordinations examinations, and in the training of candidates for Holy Orders. "Our Cathedral Churches," he maintained, "were intended to perform functions like those which were discharged of old by the schools of the Prophets in the days of Samuel and Elijah."' This educational work of Cathedrals in relation to the Clergy has been made more prominent in recent years by the foundation of Theological Colleges in connection with many of these bodies, in which useful movement our own Cathedral bears an honourable part."

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[1] At the Leicester Church Congress Mr. Magniac, M.P., referring to Residentiary Canons, said: "*Residence* should be translated into *Diocesan work.*"

[2] THE CHURCHMAN, vol. xi., p. 304.

[3] "Letters," etc., pp. 303, 333.

[4] In some of the proposed statutes the Cathedral Commissioners provide that a Residentiary Canon may claim exemption from Diocesan duties, "on the ground of his devoting himself to the study of theology, or to pursuits akin to or subsidiary to theology," etc. (St. Paul's, § 5). It would have been desirable to make this condition more explicit and general.

"In some Cathedrals," the Archdeacon continues, "there are Divinity Lectureships of ancient foundation, as at Chichester and Hereford. It is possible that these might be made more useful to the younger clergy." And he adds:

The Cathedral Commissioners have suggested that it should be provided, as far as possible, in the proposed new statutes, that one or more of the Residentiaries should "give instruction in some branch of sound learning and religious education either in the Cathedral city or in some other suitable place or places in the Diocese" (Canterbury, § 10; Norwich, § 12; Ely, § 10; Wells, § 10; Carlisle, § 8; etc., etc.). But the proposal is not very definite, and exemptions are in every case allowed.

"In what I have now ventured to submit to you," concludes the Archdeacon, "I have not been setting forth any new doctrines, as you will see from the following well-expressed definition of the ideal Chapter, which was written by Bishop Scambler in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, as long ago as 1582: 'That kind of foundation,' he says, 'implieth always a Society of learned men, staied and grounded in all parts of religion, apt to preach the Gospel and convince errors and heresies; . . . and further to assist the Bishop, the head of the Diocese, in all Godly and wholesome consultations; inasmuch that the Cathedral [Church ought to be, as it was, the oracle of the whole Diocese, and a light unto all places lying near to it.' Bishop Scambler combines in this passage all the most important propositions I have wished to urge."

We have quoted Dr. Hannah's suggestions as to Mission Preaching in the Diocese by dignitaries of the Cathedral. We may here remark that several suggestions of interest and practical value, bearing more or less directly on diocesan work by members of the Cathedral body, may be found in a recently-issued Convocational *Report* entitled "Spiritual Needs of the Masses of the People."[1] Of the joint Committee of both Houses of Convocation, by whom this *Report* has been prepared, the Archdeacon of Lewes is a member. Among the many matters touched upon in this document, we are pleased to notice a frequent suggestion, by the clergy consulted, that evangelistic work should be carried on by Canons and other Diocesan Preachers.

Art. V.—ECCLESIASTICAL DILAPIDATIONS.

FROM time to time the law of dilapidations in its application to ecclesiastical properties attracts the attention of that considerable body of the clergy who are in the actual

[1] Convocation of Canterbury, 1885, No. 182.

possession of benefices in the Church of England, or are hoping at some future time to succeed to such benefices, and of that more limited proportion of the laity to whom Church matters present a subject of special interest, and who are anxious to promote the welfare of the Church by providing as far as may be for the temporal well-being of its ministers.

This has been more particularly the case since the passing of the Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act in the year 1871, since which time the law of dilapidations and the Act of 1871 have been pretty continuously under the consideration of Diocesan Conferences, Rural Decanal Chapters, Church Congresses, and similar gatherings, while the Church papers have opened their columns to those who have wished to make public their grievances or suggestions.

In 1876 a Special Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to consider the subject. They listened to the complaints brought before them by several clergymen; they examined the Archbishop of York, the Secretary of Queen Anne's Bounty, and a few of the Diocesan Surveyors, and were manifestly much struck by a scheme of insurance laid before them in eloquent terms by the Bishop of Peterborough. Their report recommended this scheme to favourable consideration; but failing its adoption they put on record an opinion respecting the Act of 1871, that an "amendment of the law should take place with the least possible delay." On consideration, the scheme of the Bishop of Peterborough did not commend itself to the great body of Churchmen, and the Select Committee's Report was ultimately put on one side by the Secretary of State, who remarked in the House of Commons that while the Report said that amendments were needed, it failed to state definitely what those amendments should be.

The Convocations of York and Canterbury have considered and debated this subject, and appointed divers committees thereon. A Committee of the Lower House of Canterbury has recently brought up a Report and submitted Resolutions which have received the sanction of the House. It is not too much to say that this Committee has shown a far better grasp of the whole bearings of the subject than any that has preceded it, while its Resolutions recognise, to a degree not hitherto common, the good done by the Act of 1871.

As a broad, general proposition it is true that the benefices of the Church of England acquired the glebes and buildings belonging thereto by private gift. No compulsion has ever been exercised, at any rate has ever been exercised by the State, to compel landowners, parishioners, or others to provide residences and glebes for the clergy. Neither has there ever

been any law compelling such persons to maintain the residences of the clergy. Hence from time immemorial the law has called on the clergy themselves to maintain, repair and restore the buildings they occupy and enjoy, in such a way that the Church, or more properly the church of their own parish, should in their time receive no damage; but that its possessions should be handed on from incumbent to incumbent unimpaired in value. When a founder or donor has made over property to a benefice, he has ever had the guarantee of the law that his gift will remain for the perpetual benefit of the incumbents, each of whom, in his time, appropriates, or ought to appropriate, to his personal use such only of the proceeds of the gift as remain after its permanent maintenance is provided for. Incumbents therefore do not occupy their residences entirely free, but on the condition of maintaining them in perpetuity; and it is the ignoring or denying this proposition that has given rise to the great body of the complaints which have been directed against the Act of 1871, and not, as logically they should have been, against the ancient law of dilapidations. In fact, the omission to draw this distinction has given an impractical character alike to the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, to the great mass of the complaints, and to the suggestions made for the amendment of the law.

The ancient law of ecclesiastical dilapidations is founded on the constitutions of mediæval ecclesiastics, on custom, and on the judgments of the Law Courts, particularly on the well-known decision of Wise *v.* Metcalfe, a case tried in 1829. The whole judgment of Justice Bailey is most carefully reasoned out, and it concludes as follows: "The incumbent was bound to maintain the parsonage and also the chancel, and keep them in good and substantial repair, restoring and rebuilding when necessary, according to the original form, without addition or modern improvement; and that he was not bound to supply or maintain anything in the nature of ornament to which painting (unless necessary to preserve exposed timbers from decay) and whitewashing and papering belong."

There is another decision given by Lord Campbell in the case of Martin *v.* Roe, quite in accord with the foregoing, which lays down that incumbents are not to be called on to maintain unnecessary or luxurious buildings, such as greenhouses and conservatories, which are associated with observatories, menageries, and aviaries, the luxurious buildings indulged in by incumbents in the thirteenth century, which it was declared by a constitution of Archbishop Othobon, incumbents were not to be called on to maintain.

While, therefore, the law is strict in requiring that the

substantial structures of the buildings shall be maintained, so that they may be handed on practically unimpaired to succeeding incumbents, it treats ecclesiastics with the greatest leniency with regard to all matters of a perishable or unnecessary character.

There is manifestly no analogy between the position of an ecclesiastical tenant of a benefice and a tenant holding under a lease from a landlord. The incumbent pays no rent; he has entered into no agreement, arbitrarily arranged, as to the repairs he is to do; the question of the subdivision of repairs between landlord and tenant does not arise, for the sufficient reason that being his own landlord, the incumbent has no one else with whom to share the repairs. On the other hand, an incumbent is relieved, so far as the law is concerned, from decorative repairs, papering and painting, a heavy portion of the burden usually borne by a lay tenant. An incumbent must, indeed, hand over his premises to his successor in sound structural and substantial repair, or pay the penalty in dilapidations; but he may omit to paper or paint internally for years, and with impunity leave this opening for the display of the taste of his more fastidious or æsthetic successor. In fact, the Courts of Law have in this case arrived at a conclusion which must be felt to be intrinsically reasonable and just, and which in practice is by no means inconvenient.

On those who would alter this law rests the onus of showing that it is unduly burdensome to the clergy, or that it is unjust, and that there are funds available, other than the revenues of the benefice, from which the repairs of the buildings can be provided for.

Those who have been loudest in their calls for amendments have not perceived—or, at any rate, have ignored the fact—that it is the ancient law with which they are at issue, rather than the Act of 1871. A suggestion has been put forward—and it is recognised by the Select Committee of the House of Commons—that there was a "want of a definition of dilapidations." A more complete study of the subject would have shown that the suggestion is quite unfounded. The law is clear—possibly in some cases it is really felt to be only too clear—as to the liabilities of incumbents.

The administration of the law, however, before 1871 was to the last degree uncertain, and it was to obviate this that "The Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act, 1871," was passed. It is a purely administrative Act, and its passing did not alter the liabilities of the beneficed clergy as to their residences and glebe buildings; and hence, in the nature of things, it is impossible that amendments or alterations, while they are confined to the Act itself, should alter those liabilities.

Nevertheless, it is true that the Act has revolutionized the whole practice of Ecclesiastical Dilapidations. In a word, it has substituted certainty for uncertainty.

The administration of the law is put under the control of the Bishops. It is carried out by officially appointed surveyors.

Before 1871, in cases of vacancy, each incumbent appointed his own surveyor—very possibly a local man with fair knowledge of lay dilapidations, but to whom, from their fewness, ecclesiastical cases could come but rarely; and the principles of the two being directly opposed to one another, his views would naturally be very uncertain. To meet him might be appointed a man of like experience; or a sharp new incumbent would call in a London surveyor who made ecclesiastical dilapidations his speciality, to the infinite confusion of the local man.

Either by compromise or by reference to an umpire, a settlement was ultimately agreed to, and a sum of money passed to the new incumbent. He was, however, in the great majority of cases, given no details as to the dilapidations actually paid for; and, in truth, the whole matter being compromised, no details could be given. The new incumbents laying out the money as it seemed to them best, substantial repairs were very likely to be overlooked in favour of more decorative matters.

For this the Act substituted the official surveyor, who necessarily takes pains to acquaint himself with the whole law of the subject, and who acts equitably, somewhat in the character of umpire, between the two parties. It made provision that the works paid for should be set forth in detail, and full particulars served on the parties interested.

Thus it will be seen that the surveyor's work is done in an official way, and that it is open to the inspection and review of the parties interested in the result; and it is not to be wondered at that the reports of men of experience working under such circumstances should be found very generally to be of such a character as not to be modified under the very sufficient provisions for appeal which are embodied in the Act.

When the matter is settled between the new incumbent and his predecessor or his representatives, it becomes the duty of the former to have the necessary repairs executed under the supervision of the surveyor, and hereby an improvement in the condition of church property of a most important kind is now seen to have been effected. By the process of securing that at each vacancy at least the buildings are surveyed, and that they are then put into repair, and that the money recovered for dilapidation is expended on them, a far higher state of repair is established than in former times; while before long, when all benefices will have passed under the Act, the heavy cases of dilapidations, frequently pointed to as causing

great hardships to widows and surviving relatives of incumbents, will be things of the past.

It is open to incumbents themselves to carry out the principle, suggested by the Act, of periodical surveys, to be followed by the execution of such repairs as the surveyor shall find necessary. In order to encourage incumbents in applying the voluntary clauses of the Act a certificate is granted them on the execution of the repairs which exempts them from liability for dilapidations for a period of five years, in case during that time they vacate their benefices.

Every incumbent, therefore, may now obtain information as to his liabilities, which in so limited a time as five years ought not to become very onerous, and by his own action save much trouble, anxiety, and expense to his heirs or representatives.

This constitutes a system of insurance against dilapidation risks of a very perfect kind, and it can be worked much more economically as to office and surveying expenses than any system emanating from a central office: while there is an equitability in each man's repairing the buildings he enjoys, which it would be difficult to equal by any adjustment of premiums.

It would be incorrect and indeed manifestly futile to speak as though, even under the Act of 1871, dilapidations presented no difficulties, and that incumbents might not, under certain circumstances, find themselves unfortunately placed.

Many incumbents who entered on their benefices before 1871 received but a small portion of the amounts which ought to have been secured for them on account of the dilapidations of the buildings which they took over, and as to the expenditure of the sums actually received, they were probably not well advised, and so wants of reparation may have been allowed to accumulate. Even yet a man may succeed an incumbent whose estate is insolvent, and find himself with a responsibility to execute repairs, and no funds available.

In such cases the Act allows the repairs to be put on the future revenues of the benefice by means of a loan from Queen Anne's Bounty, a resource not exactly in itself equitable or desirable, but it is difficult to suggest any more efficient way of solving the question unless some external funds can be drawn on, and none such have yet been pointed out.

There are other sections in the Act relieving incumbents from special difficulties. They are, however, subject to the reasonable condition that the reliefs they afford should be applied by the incumbent during his tenure of office. There is probably no foundation for the suggestions sometimes made, that the Act has been systematically, or even occasionally,

harshly administered. If it is believed to be harshly drawn, it is because a large number of its provisions have been overlooked by the critics.

It is sometimes said to be hard that an incumbent who has laid out money in improvements or additions to the buildings of his benefice, should not be allowed to set off such improvements against the claims for dilapidations. The recognition of such a principle would involve great difficulties in adjusting claims, and lead to long disputes; and as the necessary repairs must be provided for in some way, the living would have to be burdened by a loan. As a fact, however, legislation, which is far more complete in regard to ecclesiastical than to ordinary property, has, by means of the "Gilbert's Acts," already provided for improvements, if only they are such as a bishop and patron can approve, being charged on the benefice by means of loans from Queen Anne's Bounty. Those who, in making additions, have not thought proper to avail themselves of such aid must be content to be numbered among those donors to the Church by whose generosity the ecclesiastical property throughout the country has been accumulated; and it is the merest act of justice to recognise how very largely the beneficed clergy themselves have contributed of late years, from their own resources, to the improvement of their benefices.

Dilapidations can never be an altogether pleasing subject. It is associated with and in fact arises from that decay which is inherent in all mundane things. Storms will beat on our houses, wind and water will find out their weak places, the worm will attack the wood, posts and fences will decay, and buildings wear out, do what we will. The evil of these things can be checked, and an accumulation of dilapidations avoided by timely care, and the Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act has done something to compel, and much more to encourage, the application of that care by the clergy to the buildings of the benefices they enjoy. It has done much to adjust simply, cheaply, and efficiently questions of the duty as to the maintenance of buildings of persons holding property with an absolute ownership, hardly inferior to that of freeholders, but for a period strictly limited and in the highest degree uncertain. It is well after fourteen years of severe, if not well-directed, criticism, that the Act should be declared by so competent and at the same time so deeply interested a body as the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, in the Resolutions passed on the 1st May last, to have effected much good, and practically to be incapable of any amendments calculated to be beneficial to the clergy.

LACY W. RIDGE.

ART. VI.—THE VENERABLE BEDE.

IT is altogether a matter of congratulation that a knowledge of the Venerable Bede and his works is becoming much more generally diffused in the country which has had the honour of producing and possessing him. In the history of England before the Conquest there is, with the one exception of King Alfred, no greater ornament of the English Church or of the English nation than Bæda, commonly known as the Venerable Bede. And, at the risk of seeming heterodox in the eyes of the more strict school of modern historians, let us venture to retain the more familiar form of the venerated name. Nothing will induce Englishmen to prefer Aelfred to Alfred, or Eadward to Edward. And a similar prejudice in favour of what is popular rather than pedantic prevents us from substituting Bæda for Bede. Professor Freeman says: "When a name is thoroughly naturalized and has acquired an English form, I would retain that form;" and for this reason he prefers Mahomet to Muhammad. Surely one may with reason go a step further and say: "When in the natural development of a language ancient names have become modified in form, a writer should retain the form current in his own day." In such things (as in translations for popular use), it is better to be understood and found interesting by those who are not scholars than praised by those who are.

The revival of the study of Bede in England began in a most appropriate place—the city of Durham, where whatever portions of his body have not been scattered over Europe as relics still rest. Dr. John Smith, Minor Canon, and afterwards Prebendary of Durham (the only known instance of such promotion), devoted the last years of his life (1700-1715) to editing the Works of Bede. His work was completed by his son, George Smith, afterwards a Nonjuring Bishop, and was published in 1722.[1]

It was a member of the University of Durham, Rev. Joseph Stevenson, at one time University Librarian, who produced the next important edition of Bede, but only of the Historical Works. This was undertaken for the English Historical Society, and published in London in 1841. It reproduces some of Smith's notes. Dr. Hussey's edition was published at Oxford in 1869, and contains more of Smith's notes, but not the "Life of St. Cuthbert." Next year the very careful edition of Books III. and IV., by Mayor and Lumby, was published at

[1] See an interesting paper by Rev. J. L. Low on "The Ven. Bede and his Durham Editors," in the *Durham University Journal*, Nov. 12, 1883.

the Cambridge Press. It is to be hoped that they will edit the remainder with the same thoroughness. But the book would be more attractive to ordinary readers (and it is precisely ordinary readers that it is desirable to attract), if the archaic style of printing were abandoned. To persons accustomed to the usual method of printing Latin it is simply vexatious to have *u* perpetually for *v* and sometimes *v* for *u*.

Besides these valuable editions, various translations have contributed to make Bede's Historical Works accessible even to those who cannot read the original. The present writer knows of no translation between the famous one by King Alfred and that by the controversialist, Thomas Stapleton, published at Antwerp in 1565, and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. Since then there have been translations by Stevens, 1723; Hurst, 1814; Giles, 1840; and Gidley, 1871. To which may be added the popular account of the saint and his times by G. F. Browne in the "Fathers for English Readers," S.P.C.K., 1879; the articles on the subject in the "Dictionary of Christian Biography," and in the new edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica;* and the notices of Bede in the "Old English History" of Professor Freeman, in the "Early English Church History" of Dr. Bright, and in the historical works of the late J. R. Green. Through these various channels one of the greatest names of the eighth century, and indeed of several centuries before and after that, is becoming something more than a name to educated Englishmen.

In almost every branch of human knowledge, whether we are studying the history of literature, or of science, or of Biblical exegesis, or of the course of events in Church and State, if our investigations do not stop short of the time at which Bede flourished, we must, if our work is to be done properly, take account of Bede. Not merely in the history of his own country, of which he is the father, and in the interpretation of Scripture, in which he is a master, but in almost all other departments of learning that had been opened in his day, Bede is first, or among the first. His works have been justly called an encyclopedia of the knowledge extant at that period. His industry must have been enormous, and rivals that of the "adamantine" Origen, or the restless Jerome. The stereotyped epithet of "Venerable" must not make us forget the fact that he did not live to be old. He died at the age of sixty-two, and most of his extant works were written between thirty and fifty-nine. And all his life long he was not only reading and writing, but teaching. Besides which, a very considerable portion of each day was taken up with the services of the monastery. He must have been one of those men to whom change of work is as a rule more refreshing than cessa-

tion from it. "To learn, to teach, or to write was always a delight to me."

It is, of course, his "Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation" that is of supreme interest both to the student and also to the ordinary reader. As the work of a scrupulous, cautious, able scholar, and of a writer who was for the most part contemporaneous, or nearly so, with what he records, its value can scarcely be overrated. If Bede had done nothing else than set the example of dating events according to the Dionysian era of A.D., instead of the clumsy methods, "in the consulship of A," "in the 10th year of the reign of B," and the like, his service to history would have been very considerable. But he not only shows how historical events may most conveniently be dated, but with what care they must be collected and sifted, and in what spirit recorded.

The title of his chief work has probably had something to do with the comparative neglect of Bede. Men who would be ashamed if they had to own that they had never read a play of Shakespeare, or an essay of Bacon, would perhaps hardly take it as a compliment if you assumed that they had read some parts of Bede. It is "*Ecclesiastical* History;" and Ecclesiastical History is not much in their line. But we altogether mistake Bede's meaning and the purpose of his work when we translate *Historia Ecclesiastica* by "Ecclesiastical History" in the modern sense of the term. By the epithet "ecclesiastical" we mean that our observation is to be limited to those things which directly or specially concern the Church. Bede means nothing of the kind; nor is any such limitation observed by him. He adds the epithet in order to assure us that whatever he records is of importance. In his day the Church was the centre of history. Very frequently the leading men who had most to do with the making of history, the ablest statesmen and the ablest legislators, were ecclesiastics. Purely secular history, *i.e.*, history which entirely ignored the doings and writings of Churchmen, would have been comparatively insignificant; and Bede does not wish us to suppose that he works in any such narrow spirit. We prefix "ecclesiastical" to "history" in order to indicate that the point of view is limited. Bede does so to intimate that the point of view is lofty. In his own day this would be understood. But in modern times he would probably have had three times as many readers if, omitting the epithet, he had called his chief work simply "The History of the English Nation."

It is from the last chapter of this priceless history that we learn nearly all that is known of Bede's own life. Apparently he himself recognised this as the culminating point in his

labours; for he appends to it a brief autobiography and a list of his writings (Book V., chap. xxiv., § 453, 454).

Thus much of the ecclesiastical history of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our ancestors, or of my own knowledge, has with the help of God been digested by me, Bæda, the servant of Christ and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow.

Being born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given by the care of my relations when seven years of age to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid. And from that period, spending all the remaining time of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of the Scriptures; and amid the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, to learn, to teach, or to write was always a delight to me. In the nineteenth year of my age I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth those of the priesthood: both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John [of Hexham], and by order of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From this time—when I received the order of priesthood—until the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for the use of me and mine, briefly to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers and to interpret and explain according to their meaning (adding somewhat of my own) these following pieces. [Here follows the long list of works up to that date, A.D. 731, when he was fifty-eight.]

In these artless lines we have nearly all that is known of Bede's simple, beautiful, and most useful life. His parents were no doubt already dead when the "relations," who evidently were not his parents, placed him permanently under the care of the Benedictines of Wearmouth, whose ranks he afterwards entered. He never regretted the choice which had been made for him. He thankfully acknowledges that in this peaceful but active life Christ had "graciously granted him sweetly to drink of the words of His wisdom;" and on his death-bed he declared that "he had had a long life, and that the kind Judge had ordered his life happily." Perhaps nowhere in England—certainly nowhere north of the Thames—could Bede have found such opportunities for study as in this celebrated monastery. Thanks to the energy and enlightenment of the Abbots Benedict and Ceolfrid, the libraries at Wearmouth and Jarrow were excellent, and even Bede's insatiable love of reading could there find ample material. Benedict Biscop had been five times to Rome—a prodigious journey in those times—and on his third, fourth, and fifth visits purchased large quantities of books there and at Vienne. It was after his third journey that he founded Wearmouth, and after his fourth that he founded Jarrow, bringing with him John, the Abbot and Archchanter of St. Martin's at

Rome, to teach his monks music and ritual. One of the treasures brought by Benedict from Rome was "Cosmographorum Codex," a work of such beauty that Aldfrid, King of Northumbria (685-705), patron of Benedict, and himself a scholar, gave "land of eight families," or eight hides, for the possession of it. From the death of this enlightened prince, who had been a schoolfellow of Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury, Bede dates the decay of morals among the northern clergy. It was largely owing to his peaceful policy that such a life as that of Bede became possible. During the troubled reign of his restless predecessor, Egfrid, who gave the land for the monastery at Wearmouth,[1] the warfare which was waged all round Northumbria towards Mercia, Strathclyde, and Scotland, must have caused constant anxiety to the peaceful monks, and have hindered the congregating of scholars. Another literary treasure brought by Benedict Biscop from Rome was a copy of the old version of the Latin Bible, the "Vetus Latina," which, though fast going out of use, had not yet been quite extinguished by Jerome's superior version. What Benedict had so well begun, his friend and successor, Ceolfrid, completed. Benedict, Bede tells us, had brought back from Rome on his third visit "no inconsiderable number of books on every branch of sacred literature;" on his fourth, "a numberless collection of all kinds of books;" and from his fifth "he returned (as was his custom) enriched with countless gifts for ecclesiastical purposes, and with an equally large supply of sacred volumes." Ceolfrid doubled the libraries both at Wearmouth and Jarrow. In particular he added "three *Pandects* of the new translation (Jerome's version) to the one of the old version which Benedict had brought from Rome. One of these, on his return to Rome in his old age, he took with him as a gift; of the other two, he left one to each monastery."[2]

From all this it is evident that the industry and ability of Bede had ample materials ready at hand for their exercise. Only at Canterbury, even if there, could he have been much

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[1] Egfrid's name occurs on the dedication-stone of the monastery church of St. Paul at Jarrow: "Dedicatio Basilicæ Sti. Pauli VIII. KL. Mai Anno XV. Egfridi Reg. Ceolfridi Abb. ejusdemque Eccles. Deo auctore Conditoris anno IIII." The fifteenth year of Egfrid would be A.D. 684, when Bede was about twelve.

[2] "Lives of the Abbots," § 4, 6, 9, 15; "Six Ages of the World," A.D. 720. "Pandecta" was the name which was adopted by some writers; *e.g.* Alcuin, to express the collected books of the Old and New Testaments. The older name was *Bibliotheca*. It is to be regretted that "Bibliotheca" has gone entirely out of use. We lose much by regarding the Bible as an inspired *Book* instead of an inspired *Library*.

better off. Almost from the first Canterbury had had a school; and this had served as a model for Bishop Felix when he founded a similar institution in East Anglia at the now submerged Dunwich[1] (c. A.D. 631). But the Canterbury school had been greatly increased in importance by Archbishop Theodore and his energetic friend Hadrian, who "gathered together a host of disciples, to water whose minds rivers of wholesome knowledge daily flowed."[2] And as proof of their efficiency, Bede states that some of their scholars knew Latin and Greek as well as they knew their own language. It was from one of these Canterbury scholars that Bede received the chief encouragement to undertake his "History of the English Nation," as well as much assistance in collecting material for it.[3] This was Albinus, Hadrian's pupil and successor as abbot, who knew Greek well, and Latin as thoroughly as English.[4] Bede himself knew both Latin and Greek well, being able to write the former fluently and translate the latter; and, moreover, had some knowledge of Hebrew. In estimating which attainments, we must remember that a knowledge of Hebrew was at this time very rare in the West, while a knowledge of Greek was fast becoming so.

But excellent libraries at Jarrow and Wearmouth, with encouragement and help from Canterbury, were not the only advantages which Bede enjoyed. Besides the English learning which he received direct from Canterbury, he also had good instructors from other important centres—Scottish, Roman, and Gallican. From Trumbert, the disciple of Chad, and Sigfrid, the fellow-student of Cuthbert, he learnt Church discipline and Scriptural interpretation, as it was understood in the Scottish Church of Iona and Ireland. Acca, Bishop of Hexham and pupil of Wilfrid, would teach him much of the learning of the Roman school. The Benedictine form of monasticism in which he was trained from a child was of Gallican origin.

It has been suggested above that the title of "*Ecclesiastical* History," given by Bede himself to his chief work, has probably in modern times deterred some persons from reading him. The fact that he was a monk may have had a similar effect. "Monkish chronicles" are to most people not very attractive reading, and "monkish legends" still less so. And

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[1] "Hist. Eccles.," III. xviii.

[2] "Hist. Eccles.," IV. ii. There are two MSS. of the Gospels, one in the Bodleian and one in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, which are supposed by some to have belonged to the Canterbury Library, and to be part of a present from Gregory to Augustine.

[3] Bede's Preface to his "Hist. Eccl."

[4] "Hist. Eccl.," V. xx.

from the fact that Bede's history and biographies are known to contain various accounts of miracles, some have very possibly jumped to the conclusion that "legends" rather than "chronicles" would fitly describe Bede's historical writings. If so, we may trust that so utterly mistaken a view of our great national historian's value is fast becoming extinct. Among monkish historians, as among secular historians, we have every degree of badness and excellence; and each writer must be judged on his own merits. When judged thus, Bede's rank for intelligence, accuracy, and fairness will be of the highest. A readiness to believe in the frequency of miracles was the fault of his age, not of himself; and it ought no more to discredit him in our eyes than the similar defect discredits his great counterpart in Greek literature, Herodotus. Moreover, the miraculous element in Bede has been exaggerated. Some of the reported miracles are a mere misinterpretation of natural phenomena. Others, in which sick persons become steadily better after prayers have been offered for their recovery, are occurrences which a Christian will hesitate to disbelieve.

Again, it would be a huge mistake to confound the monastic system in which Bede was trained with those which prevailed in England during the centuries preceding the Reformation. The corrupt influences which ruined the latter were mostly wanting in the former. In Bede's day English monasticism (when not a sham) was still in the freedom and comparative purity of its youth. It was not of English growth; but, like Christianity and along with it, it had been imported into the nation from abroad. In the old Teutonic religion there was nothing analogous to it. Pagan Rome had its vestals; the pagan East had its celibate priests. The deities of the Jute, the Saxon, and the Angle seem to have exacted no such vows from either minister or worshipper. Hence monasticism, when it entered England, took a new departure upon virgin soil. The rule of Benedict found no heathen rival; nothing to conquer, or transform, or absorb. It became more elastic and more free than in its older homes. In England it was more in contact with the world: and we may well believe that both the world and it were the better for the intercourse. As yet no very strict line was drawn between the layman and the lay brother, between the secular priest and the ordained monk. And it was in the open, healthy atmosphere of a flexible system such as this that Bede was trained, and in his turn trained others. There was enough discipline to brace the soul and give regularity to labour: not such seclusion and rigour as to narrow the sympathies or warp the mind. Bede seldom left his beloved monastery. But his interests were as wide as the

universe. To know all that could be known; to teach all who cared for teaching; to pray for all who needed prayers—these were the three great occupations of his uneventful life. Bede was a monk and a priest. But he was keenly alive to the corruptions to which monasticism is liable, and to the worldliness which had begun again to infect the English clergy. The evils over which Gildas had wailed in the British Church were beginning to show themselves in the English. If anyone needs to be convinced of the openness of Bede's mind and the general soundness of his judgment, let him read the famous letter to Bishop Egbert, afterwards Archbishop of York, and the concluding portion of the "Six Ages of the World." To make his ready belief in miracles an exception to this is to blame him for not being far in advance of his age. In his time a miracle was the most obvious explanation of unusual phenomena. It was the first hypothesis that presented itself to men's minds, and it was commonly retained as adequate. With us a miracle is the very last hypothesis that we should try as an explanation of exceptional facts. And even in narrating miracles Bede's scrupulous honesty comes out. He tells them as they were told to him. "This story was told me by some of those who had heard it related by the person himself to whom it happened."[1] Another "was told me by the brother himself, on whom it was wrought."[2] St. John of Beverley, who ordained Bede, was "a holy man, of whom those who knew him well are wont to tell many miracles; and more particularly the reverend Berthun, a man of undoubted veracity."[3] And so on. The "Life of St. Cuthbert," which is specially full of such things, was submitted in its first form to some monks who had long been intimate with Cuthbert. And when their emendations had been embodied in it, it was sent "in proof," as we should say, to be criticized by the authorities at Lindisfarne, where Cuthbert had lived; and they found in it nothing to correct. Then, and not till then, was it finally transcribed. The difference between such careful reproduction of evidence and the careless repetition (or invention) of idle tales is immense. We may have our own opinion of the evidence, but Bede's method of collecting and stating it seems scarcely worthy of blame. His reason for continuing to work hard, even on his death-bed, is proof, if any be needed, that in all his writings his aim is the truth. "I don't want my lads to read what isn't true," he said, "and herein labour to no purpose when I am gone."

Nor will any unprejudiced person do otherwise than commend Bede for having followed Cuthbert and other

[1] "Hist. Eccles.," IV. xxii. [2] *Ibid.*, IV. xxxii. [3] *Ibid.*, V. ii.

excellent Englishmen in pronouncing in favour of the Roman rather than the Scottish method of fixing the time of Easter. It is evident from the frequency with which this subject recurs in Bede's writings that it was the burning question of his day. And it is argued with much probability that in no matter of greater importance can there have been any discord between English or British Christians and the rest of the Western Church; otherwise Bede would have noticed it. In the Paschal controversy the usage of Rome was the usage of Christendom both in the East and in the West. The Scottish practice was the survival of an anomaly, schismatical in its tendency. It was not the old quarto-deciman usage of keeping the crucifixion on the 14th Nisan, independently of the day of the week; a custom which was not likely to spread from Asia Minor to Britain. It was rather the result of a defective method of calculating the Sunday. This is quite clear from Bede's statements.[1] It sometimes happened that, while those who followed the Scottish usage were keeping Easter, the rest of Christendom were keeping Palm Sunday.[2] Even some of the Scots recognised the faultiness of their own system; and it would have been calamitous indeed if Bede had given the weight of his authority to the perpetuation of a confusion pardonable in its origin, but inexcusable then. The isolation of the British and Scottish Churches had inevitably produced some anomalies: but it was time for these to cease when intercourse with the rest of Christendom showed that they were anomalies.

The tonsure, though in our eyes a question of much smaller importance, was rightly decided by Bede on similar principles. Separation from the rest of Christendom, and from Rome, the chief representative of Christendom in the West, was a thing to be avoided, not merely in doctrine, but in customs. Local prejudices should give way to the interests of unity.

In judging of these questions we must beware of confounding the Rome of Bede's day with the Rome of a later age. In his time she was still the enlightener of the nations, from whom not only the truths of the Gospel, but letters and organization, arts and manufactures, were diffused throughout the West. As Englishmen, we ought to rejoice at the fact that Roman, rather than British or Scottish, Christianity in the end prevailed throughout England, and be grateful to Bede for helping to make the work of Augustine swallow up the work of Columba and Aidan. The Christianity of the Celts meant the Christianity of barbarism, or at best the Christianity of an insular and stunted civilization. The Christianity of Rome meant the

[1] See especially "Hist. Eccles.," III. iv. [2] *Ibid.*, III. xxv.

Christianity of culture, and of the highest form of culture then known. Bede acted in accordance with the best interests of his Church and country in preferring in that age to draw closer to the Churches of the Continent, over which Rome was gaining more and more influence and authority, rather than to the dwindling Celtic Churches, whose power of expansion and development seemed to be almost spent. In the conversion of the English nation the British Church perhaps could not have done much, and had done nothing; while the work of the Scottish had been absorbed, under the strong hand of Archbishop Theodore, in the larger work of Rome.

If we are determined to find that monasticism had some sinister effect on Bede, we had perhaps better study his "Martyrology." "In this Calendar of Martyrs, in which, however, even Beda could not yet fill every day, the tortures are related at great length for a calendar: and we have often real cause for amazement how so learned, and indeed so enlightened a man as Beda, not merely credulously accepted the most absurd and loathsome exaggerations, but also repeated them with a certain relish. Read, for example, the sufferings of St. Pachomius (14 May)."[1] The delight excited by Christian triumphs over suffering may easily become morbid when the details of the suffering are dwelt upon. But even this is far removed from the unwholesome descriptions of victories over sensual temptations, which some monkish biographers allow themselves to draw. No taint of this kind appears in Bede.

But we have not yet exhausted Bede's advantages. It has been mentioned that during his day, since the death of King Egfrid in the ill-advised and unprovoked attack upon the Picts in A.D. 685, Northumbria had had peace in all its borders.[2] And what was true of Northumbria was true of England as a whole. The struggle between the British and the English was over. Seven-and-twenty years before Bede was born the last great blow was struck, when King Oswald defeated Cedwalla at Heavenfield in 635.[3] Fighting did not forthwith cease between the victorious invaders in the East and their baffled opponents in the West. But thenceforward no British prince attempted serious warfare against the English. The armed struggle between Christianity and Paganism within the English nation itself lasted twenty years longer. King Oswald was defeated by his heathen English rival Penda at Maserfield in 642. But this struggle also came to an end in 655, when Penda of Mercia was defeated at Winwidfield by the Bretwalda

[1] Ebert, quoted by Mayor and Lumby, p. 13. See also the martyrdoms commemorated Feb. 16, March 16, May 3, July 23, Sept. 20.

[2] "Hist. Eccles.," IV. xxvi.; "Life of St. Cuthbert," xxiv., xxvii.

[3] "Hist. Eccles.," III. iii.

Oswy of Northumberland. Thus, when Bede was born in 672, both the contest of races and the contest of religions, so far as regards an appeal to the sword, was over.

And this peace and order among the secular princes of Britain was quickly followed by peace and order in that power which was destined to give unity and solidarity to the whole —the English Church. Christianity had been spread among the different sections of the English nation from various centres. Roughly speaking, we may say that the original mission sent by Gregory under Augustine converted Kent and Essex. Augustine's companion, Paulinus, went north and converted part of Northumbria, whose powerful King Edwin he baptized on Easter Eve, 627. At the same time the Burgundian Felix preached to the East Angles. In 635 an independent mission, sent from Rome by Pope Honorius I., converted the West Saxons. Its leader was the Benedictine Birinus. The great central kingdom of the Mercians was converted by Christian teachers of Scottish origin. And then the last strongholds of heathendom, Sussex, isolated by its belt of forests, and Wight, isolated by its belt of sea, were won over by the preaching of the Northumbrian apostle, Wilfrid of York. The result was a number of loosely connected Christian communities, without any systematic union or government. It was the work of the strong-headed and strong-handed Theodore of Tarsus to bring order out of this confusion, and consolidate the various elements into one national Church.[1]

He was the first among the Archbishops of Canterbury to whom every Christian community among the English was willing to yield obedience. He was welcomed from the first by kings and people alike, and the event showed that they had placed confidence in a man who deserved it. He was already an elderly man when he came to England in 669, and had no time to lose in tentative measures. He had a strong will, and made it felt. And when his long Primacy of one-and-twenty years was closed by death, it was found that his work had been thoroughly, if somewhat imperiously, done. For the first time in history there was an English Church. Long before there was an organized Kingdom of England there was an organized National Church, the Primates of which occupied a position, even in secular matters, such as no Bretwalda ever enjoyed. They were at the head of a system, all the officers of which were bound to obey their chiefs. Bishops from different kingdoms met together in synod under their presidency, and what was there decreed was obeyed by

[1] "Isque primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret."—"Hist. Eccles.," IV. ii.

Christians in all kingdoms alike. Elsewhere Englishmen might be rivals or enemies: they were West Saxons, Mercians, or Northumbrians. In the Church they were fellow-subjects under one and the same rule. In all the confusion caused by the rivalry of the kingdoms and the inroads of the Danes the Church was the one working unity; and when the time for national union under one sovereign came, it was the Church which supplied a model and a basis for it. It was in Bede's youth that the foundations of this ecclesiastical union were laid, and he lived to enjoy the fruits of it. The careful investigations which he instituted in various parts of the island, in order to collect material for his history, were not only rendered much more easy in consequence of the peace and order which reigned both in Church and State, but were in some respects actually carried out by means of the machinery provided by the ecclesiastical organization.

Such, then, were some of the chief advantages with which Bede was blessed. He had a command of books almost unrivalled, at any rate in Britain. He had excellent instructors of various schools. He was from a child trained to monastic life of a very high type, training to which, in his case, we can trace little or no counterbalancing evil. And the whole of his working life was cast in a period of singular tranquillity, in which intercourse and inquiry were facilitated, and the distractions of warfare found no place.

It remains to give a brief account of the use which Bede made of his advantages. And this falls naturally into two parts: (1) His work as a teacher by word of mouth; (2) His work as a writer.

1. Of his work as a teacher of other students at Jarrow all that we know has to be gathered from a few significant sentences in his own works, in the priceless account of the last days of his life written by one of his pupils, and in the anonymous biography, which is probably of a considerably later date, and mainly consists of gleanings from Bede's own writings.

"Amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, to learn, *to teach*, or to write was always a delight to me." And thus on his death-bed almost his last thought is of his scholars. In his last sickness he insisted on continuing to teach and dictate. "I don't want my lads to learn what is not true," he said, "and spend their labour for nothing when I am gone;" and as his asthma became more painful, he would sometimes urge his hearers on with the warning, "Learn quickly, for I know not how long I may abide, nor how soon He who created me may take me away." And, as is well known, he died almost immediately

after completing by dictation a translation of the Gospel of St. John. It is unhappily lost; but it is among the very earliest pieces of English prose of which we have any certain knowledge.

This was one of the main causes of Bede's success as a teacher—his enthusiastic love for his work, and his power of kindling the like enthusiasm in others. His method was exactly that embodied in the teacher's three *R*'s—"Read, Reflect, Reproduce." All that was best worth knowing in every department of learning in those days he had taken pains to master. He had sifted it and tested it to the best of his ability, and then had given what he believed to be true to his pupils. He had no wish to burden them with a learning which might after all turn out to be baseless. A spirit of reverent, conscientious criticism guided his teaching. Of his teachers," says his anonymous biographer, "he emulated the better gifts of each; insomuch that, whatever spiritual wisdom each of them had acquired, he by hard study drank the whole from all of them, so that he was satiated with the plentifulness of God's house. . . . And thus this eminently wise bee of the Church, thirsting for that sweetness which is pleasing to God, gathered flowers all over the field of God's house, from which he made honey, as it were, by the alchemy of wisdom." And in another place this same writer compares him to a "clean animal" ruminating by learning, reading, or meditation, and reproducing by writing and teaching. His success was such, that the joint monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul had in his day hundreds[1] of inmates, and in some cases his own teachers were among his pupils.

2. Of his work as a writer we can judge for ourselves. Something has already been said of the unique value of his "History;" and his smaller historical works will always be of great interest and usefulness, especially the "Lives of the Abbots." Throughout them all his scrupulous care in collecting and sifting his materials is conspicuous. Consider the difficulties of correspondence in those days, and then judge what it must have been to have got together the material for his history while he was studying, and teaching, and commenting on a variety of theological and scientific subjects at Jarrow. He had correspondents who were working for him in Lindsey, in East Anglia, in Mercia, in Wessex, in Kent, and in Rome.

But his historical writings are not the only ones which have permanent value, nor do they form the bulk of his works. As we might expect in one who, as he says, "wholly applied himself to the study of Scripture," the majority of his treatises

[1] *Sexcenti* is perhaps only a round number.

are on Biblical subjects; and though he speaks of them very modestly as brief compilations out of the works of the venerable Fathers, with additions of his own, yet the additions are substantial, and are still found worthy of being quoted in commentaries on those portions of Scripture which he has annotated.[1] In the Old Testament he has commented on (1) Genesis, (2) the Tabernacle, (3) Samuel, (4) the Temple, (5) Kings, (6) Proverbs, (7) Canticles, (8) Ezra and Nehemiah, (9) Song of Habakkuk, (10) Tobit; in the New Testament on (11) St. Mark, (12) St. Luke, (13) the Acts, (14) the Catholic Epistles, (15) Revelation. Besides which there are a variety of treatises bearing on both Old and New Testaments, which are of more or less doubtful authenticity, printed in some editions of his works. The "Retractiones" on the Acts is not mentioned in Bede's own catalogue of his writings, but it is admitted by all editors in the collective copies of his writings.

To his historical and Biblical writings must be added a variety of treatises on arithmetic, astronomy, chronology, grammar, medicine, music, poetry, and rhetoric, together with a book of hymns, a book of epigrams, and the martyrology already described. The expression already quoted respecting his writings is fully justified. They form an *encyclopedia* of the knowledge of Western Christendom at that date.

We have about a dozen letters of Bede. Far the most interesting is that to Egbert, Archbishop of York, on the condition of the Church in Northumbria. It was finished November 5, 734, just about six months before Bede's death, and when he was already too ill to travel to York to see Egbert. It would seem that Egbert had received the pall some weeks before, and was, therefore, an Archbishop. Yet Bede is evidently unaware of the fact, for he addresses him simply as Bishop: so slowly did news travel in those days. The picture which Bede draws of the state of the Northumbrian Church is not a very cheerful one. The corruption which almost inevitably attends a time of peace and prosperity had already begun:

> Of certain Bishops it is commonly stated that they serve Christ in such sort, that so far from having about them men of religion and continence, they prefer those who are given over to laughter, jesting, gossiping, revellings, and drunkenness, with all the other incitements of a loose life. . . We have heard, and it is a common report, that there are many villages and hamlets of our nation situated in inaccessible mountains and thick glens, where for many years past a Bishop has never been seen . . . and yet that not even one of them can be exempt from

[1] Canon Westcott in his "Commentary on the Epistles of St. John," cites Bede frequently.

paying him tribute. . . There are numberless places, as we all know, enrolled under the name of monasteries, but yet having nothing of the monastic life.

He goes on to enlarge on the loss to the country of these extensive properties, and on the scandalous lives of those who thus shirk work and military service on pretence of being monks; and as large sums were sometimes paid for charters, the civil powers did not discourage these mock monasteries. He concludes thus:

These brief remarks have I made against the poison of avarice. But if I wished to treat at equal length of drunkenness, revellings, luxury, and all the other plagues of this kind, the letter's limits would be extended into immensity.

Bede's "Pœnitentiale" is an interesting document. What is often printed as his is a mixture of the genuine work with others of a similar character, especially the "Penitential" of Egbert.[1]

It was on Ascension Day, May 26, 735, that this beautiful life ended in an equally beautiful death. The description of Bede's last hours in Cuthbert's letter to Cuthwin is one of the most touching narratives in literature; it is too well known to need repeating here. Placed on the pavement of his cell, with his head raised in his pupil's hands, that he might look towards the church in which he had so often prayed, he recited the *Gloria* and died. He was buried in his dearly-loved monastery at Jarrow; but in the eleventh century a monk of Durham stole his bones, and placed them in the new cathedral there, beside the bones of Cuthbert.[2] At what period his relics were moved from ths shrine of Cuthbert to the Galilee is uncertain; either when the Galilee Chapel was first completed in the twelfth century, or more probably not until late in the fourteenth. Whatever of his body has not been scattered over Europe to furnish reliquaries rests in the Galilee still. Considerable portions were found when the tomb was opened May 27th, 1831. They were all carefully replaced; and it is now the privilege of resident members of the University of Durham to begin their daily round of lectures and study with

[1] It is perhaps impossible now to determine exactly how much is rightly ascribed to Bede. The text printed in Haddan and Stubbs ("Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents," vol. iii., pp. 326-334) is obtained by striking out of the conflate "Pœnitentiale" all that can be recognised as coming from other sources. It is remarkable to find in it that accidental homicide is visited with penance for a year, and justifiable homicide (*in bello publico*) with penance for forty days. The "Penitential" of Theodore has exactly the same penalties.

[2] The story of the theft is told by Simeon of Durham in his "History of the Church of Durham," chap. xlii.

common prayer beside the tomb of one of the earliest and saintliest of English scholars.

ALFRED PLUMMER.

ART. VII.—DR. LANSDELL'S TRAVELS IN CENTRAL ASIA.

Russian Central Asia, including Kuldja, Bokhara, Khiva, and Merv. By HENRY LANSDELL, D.D., M.R.A.S., F.R.G.S. Author of "Through Siberia." With frontispiece, maps, and illustrations. 2 vols. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1885.

BY "Russian Central Asia," as read in the title of Dr. Lansdell's work,[1] is meant the Tsar's dominions lying between the Oxus and the Irtish and between Omsk and Samarkand. This territory measures from west to east 1,250 miles, or the distance from London to Petersburg, and from north to south 1,100 miles, or the distance from Petersburg to the Crimea. It has a population of nearly four millions, which is at the rate of only five to the square mile. It is divided into two general governments or vice-royalties, the western portion being Turkistan and the eastern the Steppe.

In his third chapter Dr. Lansdell relates his journey from the Urals to Omsk; and in the fourth chapter we have a description of the vice-royalty of the Steppe. The Steppe is divided into the governments or provinces of Akmolinsk, Semipolatinsk, and Semirechia. Akmolinsk, it seems, is as large as France. On arriving at Omsk, says our author, "I noticed from the deck of the steamer[2] an officer on the landing-stage whose face seemed to be familiar to me. He turned out to be the police-master, who, three years before, had shown me the prisons of Tomsk. He recognised me, and kindly sent men to look after the baggage, by whose help ere long we were safely housed at the Hotel Moskva." In the evening, the travellers[3] took a droshky to make some calls, having introductions to some members of the Omsk branch of the Imperial Geographical Society. One of these gentlemen, Mr. Balkashin, who had met Mr. Mackenzie Wallace and Mr. Ralston at Yaroslaf, earnestly advised Dr. Lansdell not to try to spread the Scriptures among the Kirghese. In friendly warmth he said,

[1] The author's previous work, "Through Siberia," was warmly recommended in THE CHURCHMAN of February, 1882.

[2] In 1879 our author followed the post-road from Tiumen to Tobolsk. But in the present journey he made his way up the Irtish to Omsk, a voyage that occupied five days.

Mr. Sevier, M.B., a physician who had just finished his studies at Edinburgh, Paris, and Vienna, accompanied Dr. Lansdell as interpreter.