

Philemon, who had long been his companion, all are recorded with the veneration with which the biographers of saints love to narrate every smallest circumstance of their last hours, collecting such details with something like the care with which the early Christians used to collect the blood and relics of the martyrs.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 4th of August, whilst the Angelus bells were ringing, in the year 1680, his soul passed happily away amidst the prayers and tears of his orphan children. The following epitaph was inscribed on his tomb: "M. S. R. A. P. Benedicti Stapylton, Ecclesie Metropolitanae Cantuariensis Prioris Cathedralis, Congregationisque Anglo-Benedictinae Præsidis Generalis, Qui in Monasterio S. Gregorii Duaci professus, Ejusdem bis Prior fuit, et in eadem Academia S. Theologiae Doctoratum et Cathedram adeptus est, Deinde in Apostolicâ Angliæ Missione XX. Annos impendit, Augustissimæ Angliæ Reginae Sacellanus Domesticus, Denique in diætæ Congregationis Generalem ter successive electus, quod munus postquam per XI. annos feliciter administrasset, suis moriendo destituens, Ingens sui desiderium et ingentem suis luctum reliquit. Obit in hoc Monasterio, Prid Non August. A.D. 1680, Ætatis suæ 58, Professionis 38, Sacerdotii 34.

“ ‘Requiescat in Pace.’ ”

THE MONKS OF OLD.

(Continued from page 190.)

IV. The Monks were almost the only artists, or patrons of art. Mr. Walpole, in his "Anecdotes of Painting in England," and incidental notes on other arts, observes, that as all the other arts formerly were confined to cloisters, so also was architecture, too; and that when we read that such a bishop, or such an abbot, built such and such an edifice, they often gave the plans, as well as furnished the necessary funds. "The justness of this observation," and the Rev. Mr. Bentham, "appears in this instance of rebuilding St. Peter's at York, of which Eanbald and Alcuin were the chief architects; in that of the church belonging to Gyrwi Monastery built by Abbot Benedict Biscop.; and those of the churches of Ripon, Hexham, and Ely, by Bishop Wilfrid; and in many other

instances that occur in history; some of which may be taken notice of afterwards. And, indeed, it is highly probable that the principle architects of many or most of our best churches and monasteries,¹ both in this and succeeding ages, were some or other of these religious societies themselves, who, generally speaking, wanted only inferior artists and workmen to carry their designs into execution; and even of these they were in part supplied out of their own houses, where the elegant and polite arts, particularly those of sculpture and painting, were much cultivated and improved.”²

¹ The patrons of these foundations were usually content with the adequate assignment of lands for their endowment, and left the construction of the fabric to the judgment and skill of those who were destined to inhabit it. Nor, in fact, could they have devolved the task on persons better calculated to do it justice, for the monastic orders long contained the best architects in Europe, and the disciples of St. Bernard were among the most celebrated for their knowledge of this art. Some Abbots of this order, in Flanders, are particularly commended by Felibien for their architectural abilities. (“*Recueil Historique de la Vie et des Ouvrages des plus célèbres Architectes*,” pp. 213-5, 4to. 2nd edition, Paris, 1696.) Dr. Whitaker says, that almost the whole of the stately Cistercian pile of Jerveaux, is a monument of the skill, the perseverance, and the piety of John de Kingston, its first abbot. (“*History of Richmondshire*,” i. p. 428.) He attributes to the taste and skill of another abbot, the noble fabric of Kirkstall. (“*History of Craven*,” p. 62, 4to edition, 1812.) Adam, a Monk of Fountain’s, was a great proficient in architecture. The Church of St. Peter, at Chartres, was built by a Benedictine Monk, named Hilduard, whom Felibien places in the first rank of architects of that age. Walter of Coventry, and William de Croyland, deserve honourable notice among the early professors of the art in England. But none, probably, attained such excellence as Alan de Walsingham, Prior of Ely, of whose works an interesting account may be found in Bentham’s valuable history of that cathedral. “It is pleasing,” says Mr. Dallaway, “to rescue from oblivion, the name of a single architect of such extraordinary merit.” (“*Observations on English Architecture*,” p. 26, 8vo. London, 1806.) To conclude; it is a known fact, that by far the greater number of handsome churches have been built from the funds of monastic institutions, either totally, or by munificent contributions.—Id. p. 57.

² “*History and Antiquities of the Conventual and Cathedral Church of Ely*,” pp. 26, 27, Camb., 1771. Respecting the state of the arts, anciently, at Fulde, consult Brower, (“*Fuldensium Antiquitatum*,” lib. i. pp. 45, 46, Antverp. 1612). Painting, sculpture, working in gold, silver, brass, and iron, were taught in Glastonbury, as well as philosophy, divinity, and music, in the tenth century. (“*Stevenson’s Supplement to Bentham*,” Notes, p. 16.) Instances of skill in most of the mechanical and ornamental arts are numerous from the time of St. Dunstan downwards. Mannius, Abbot of Evesham, from 1044 to 1058, was not only eminent for professional learning and study of the Scriptures, but in several mechanic arts was one of the most ingenious practitioners of his age. He was an adept in music, painting, and writing, and even in goldsmiths’ work and engraving. (“*Tindal’s Evesham*,” p. 15.) Matthew Paris, if we may believe the historian of his own abbey, was an exquisite sculptor in gold, silver, and other metals, and the best painter of the age in which he flourished.

Bibliographers have delighted to expatiate upon the friendly reception afforded to the works of men of genius, as well as to persecuted artists, in the monasteries of religious societies. Almost

("Tanner's Bibliotheca," p. 573.) Mr. Strutt speaks, of his accuracy and ingenuity as a designer. The first volume of the "Manners and Customs of the English," abounds with his designs, some of which sketches (for they are no more) are so well done, that many artists of the present age need not be ashamed to own them. (Id. iii., p. 182.) Walter de Colchester, Sacrist of the Abbey of St. Alban's, is celebrated by Matthew Paris, his contemporary, as an admirable statuary; and several of his works are described as exquisitely beautiful. An astronomical clock, made by Lightfoot, a Monk of Glastonbury, about the year 1325, is still preserved at Wells. It is a curious piece of mechanism, of complicated design, and ingenious execution. On its face, the changes of the moon and other astronomical particulars, are contrived to be represented; and an horizontal framework, at the summit of the dial, exhibits, by the aid of machinery, a party of knights, armed for the tourney, pursuing each other on horseback with a rapid rotatory motion. ("Warner's Walk through the Western Counties," p. 16.) Abbot Wigmore, who presided at Gloucester in the reign of Edward II., is represented not only to have encouraged the liberal and mechanic arts in his monastery, but to have excelled in them himself, and to have embroidered doves of silver upon a green satin cope, for the office of Pentecost, with his own hands. ("Dallaway's Anecdotes of the Arts," pp. 423-4.) Richard de Ritton and Adam de Lytlington were well practised in the elegant accomplishment of embroidery, and presented the Church of Croyland, where they were Abbots, with several specimens of their own workmanship. ("History Croyland Cont. apud Gale," i. p. 515.) Richard de Wallingford, Abbot of St. Alban's, in the reign of Richard II., is stated, by Leland, to have been the greatest mathematician, astronomer, and mechanic of his age. From a description of an astronomical clock of this Abbot's construction, given by the same author, who appears to have seen and examined it, it would seem that the art of making clocks was brought to a considerable degree of perfection in England, before the end of the fourteenth century. ("Henry's Great Britain," iv. pp. 496-7.) There cannot be the least doubt, that we owe the perfection, if not the invention, of the noble Gothic style of architecture to the Monks. ("Tytler's Scotland," ii. p. 392.) The mosaic pavements which constituted one of the principal and most beautiful features of our ancient churches, were certainly manufactured by the Monks, who kept kilns for the purpose. ("Dissertation on the Antiquities of the Priory of Great Malvern," by the Rev. H. Card, pp. 33, 34, London, 1834.—"Moffatt's History of Malmesbury," p. 65, note.) Many of the Monks were bell-founders: a Monk of Wenlock is mentioned as celebrated in that art. Indeed, they were usually cast in the precincts of monasteries and cathedrals. The great bell of Lincoln was cast in the close, as there is a tradition that those of Shrewsbury Abbey were in the churchyard. ("Owen and Blakeway's History of Shrewsbury," ii. p. 67.) It was long the custom to fetch even the engineers and managers of the warlike machines, then in use, from among the religious. ("Newcome's St. Alban's," p. 231, note.) About the middle of the fourteenth century, the weaving of woollen cloth was introduced, established, and brought to such perfection in Bath, under the active auspices of the Monks, as rendered that city one of the most considerable in the west of England for this manufacture. A shuttle, the emblem of the art, was incorporated into the arms of the monastery, and existed till the middle of the last century on the front of the

all the beautiful and splendid decorations which we see, and so enthusiastically admire, in ancient manuscripts, were executed within these peaceful abodes.¹ The art of printing was also

Abbey-house, as an index of the laudable activity of its ancient inmates. ("Warner's History of Bath," p. 132.) "The arts flourished so much in convents to the last," says Mr. Walpole, "that one Giffard, a visitor employed by Thomas Cromwell to make a report of the state of those societies, previous to their suppression, pleads in behalf of the house of Wolstrop, 'that there was not one religious person there but that he could, and did, use either embrothering, writing books with a very fair hand, making their own garments, carving, painting, graving.'" ("Anecdotes of Painting," i. 188, note. Ed. 1782.)

¹ It was in the cloister that the art of the painter or illuminator was chiefly exercised—a particular chamber being devoted to the sole purpose of transcribing and illuminating manuscripts. There, during the day, except when called to the performance of his religious duties, and often at the solemn midnight hour, would the silent enthusiast labour in the production of those splendid works of pictorial and calligraphic art, which, after the lapse of ten or twelve centuries, still exist to excite our wonder and admiration. Such pursuits were not only encouraged, but practised by the highest dignitaries. St. Dunstan, in particular, was famed for his successful application to them; and other celebrated names have been handed down as professors of the same study, which was held in the greatest respect and estimation. New Minster, or Hyde Abbey, at Winchester, was renowned for the beauty of the illuminated manuscripts which thence were issued to the world. In the Cottonian Library, Titus, D. 27, is preserved a psalter of the tenth century, which appears to have been executed for the abbey: it contains two small Saxon drawings, in outline, of a very delicate, and, for the time, elegant character. A calendar, at the commencement of the volume, thus records the death of one of the Monks: "July 6, Obit. Wulfrii, m. pictoris," by which entry we may judge of the estimation in which the illuminator was held by his brethren. In the library at Stowe, there is a very interesting volume, containing an account of the foundation and many matters connected with the progress of this abbey, where the MS. was executed, from the time of Edward the Elder to Ethelred, and which, as a specimen of the art in England, at the commencement of the eleventh century, must be considered as evincing considerable taste and correctness of design. The magnificent "Benedictional," now in the possession of his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, is another production of the same monastery; and for the splendour of the ornaments, the richness of the colours, and, we may add, the correctness and elegance of the drawings, cannot be equalled by any other production, native or foreign, of the tenth or preceding centuries, now extant. This MS. was undertaken by a Monk in the Monastery of New Minister, named Godemann, about the latter part of the tenth century, for Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, who appears to have been a most munificent patron of art. The limnings in missals were not confined to scriptural subjects, but frequently exhibited the portrait of the intended owner and his immediate relatives. The Sherborne missal, one of the most curious remaining, was compiled by John Was, a Monk, in 1339. It is a large folio, containing very numerous and beautiful illuminations of portraits, &c. In the later centuries, similar embellishments were added to chronicles and translations of the classics when designed for presentation to great or noble personages. A fund of information relative to the middle ages has been collected from this source. Dugdale, from some of these illustrations, has given cuts of two remarkable combats or tournaments performed in the fiftieth year of King

cherished in them ; for, on the breaking up of the Mentz printing-office, about 1462-4, Sweynheym, Pannartz, and Ulric Han, received

Henry VI., in which the designs are far from unworthy of a better age ; and the customs and habits delineated with great accuracy. Prints, of a prodigious number of them, have been published by Strutt. In Italy, as in England and France, many of the miniatures which adorn early MSS. were the production of the Monks, who, secluded from the world, sought some amusement in this elegant employment ; and from the monasteries of Italy have sprung some of its most esteemed painters. Cybo, surnamed "the Monk of the Golden Islands," from having passed his days in piety in the Hyeres Isles, anciently called Stecadi, in which his Monastery of Lerins had a small church, besides his study of monastic discipline, cultivated that of sacred and polite literature and the art of painting ; in all which, he made so great a progress, that, at his death, which occurred in 1408, it was a subject of doubt, says Baldinucci, whether he excelled as a monk, a theologian, a poet, an historian, or a painter. The writer just quoted, gives a most glowing description of his performances in miniature painting and calligraphy. Dom Silvestro, a Camaldulan Monk in the Monastery "Degli Angeli" at Florence, nearly about the same time, executed numerous works of painting and illumination, so beautiful for their care and design, that we are assured, they deserved the applause not only of monarchs, but even of professors in the best age of art. His talent was principally exercised in the adornment of choir books for his monastery and the neighbouring churches, which were written, for the most part, upon vellum, by a brother Monk named Jacobo Florentino, one of the most accomplished penmen of this class that had ever gone before him, or even succeeded him for several centuries after. So greatly were these book-adorning monastic brothers esteemed by all, and especially by the Monks, that the latter, after their deaths, chose to preserve with becoming care the right hands which had laboured so piously and so excellently in the service of the Church. There is an account of Silvestro's *chef-d'œuvre* in Dibden's "Biographical Decameron," vol. i. p. 111, note. In the notes at pp. 119-21, and 125-6, of the same work, will be found some highly interesting details, translated from Baldinucci, respecting Coby, Silvestro, and Jacobo Florentino. Bartolomeo, Abbot of St. Clemente at Arezzo, who died, according to Vasari, in the year 1461, was one of the finest illuminators of his time. But the most distinguished name in the annals of miniature painting is that of Julio Clovio, who died in 1579 at the advanced age of eighty, and whose drawings, of the most exquisite design and execution, are said to combine with the correctness and grandeur of Michael Angelo much of the grace and elegance of Raffaele.

William Bonde, a Catholic gentleman, published, in the year 1733, a curious volume, entitled, "Thesaurus Artis Pictoræ ex Unius Julii Clovii Clari admodum Pictoris Operibus depromptus." His work, which is divided into three parts, consists, according to Dibden, of a description of a psalter, executed by Clovio for John III. King of Portugal, which Bonde is desirous should be purchased by John V. ; and his work is a personal address to the latter monarch giving a description of the psalter and enjoining him to become the purchaser. The book is of extreme rarity, and contains many curious anecdotes of Clovio. The latest specimen of the art of book decoration, perhaps, remaining, is the magnificent missal in the public library at Rouen, nearly three feet in height, which occupied the labour of a Monk of St. Andsen for thirty years, and was completed in 1682. The encouragement given by religious societies to the profession of painting, generally, is well known. In Italy, the pencils of the

an earnest invitation, from some German Monks, to come and establish their presses in the Monastery of Subiaco,¹ situated in the Campagna di Roma, about two miles from the village of the same name. Here they printed a "Donatus," and "Cicero de Oratore," without date; and a "Lactantius," of the date of 1465, as well as a work of St. Austin, "De Civitate Dei," in 1467. The Benedictine Monks of St. Alban's are supposed to have been at the expense of the first and second editions of the Psalter printed at Mentz in 1457-9. In our country the Monasteries of St. Alban's and Tavistock emulated the example of St. Peter's in the patronage afforded to printing.² A translation of "Boetius de Consolatione Philosophiæ," undertaken at the instance of one Elizabeth Berkeley, and completed by John Walton, Canon of Osney, in 1410, was "emprented," as appears by a note at the end of this rare volume, "in the exempt Monastery of Tavestok in Denshyre, by Dan. Thomas Rychard, Monke of the said Monastery. To the instant desyer of the ryght worshipful esquier Mayster Robert Langdon. Anno d. M.DXXV. Deo Gracias."³

V. In enumerating the claims of the monastic body to the favourable consideration of posterity, their assiduous application to agricultural pursuits should not be omitted. The lands usually appropriated to the monasteries were uncultivated tracts of wood, moor, or morass; they preferred such situations for the advantage of retirement and contemplation, and as they were of less value, they were more freely bestowed by their benefactors. We greatest masters have been put in requisition to give the cloisters a mild attraction, blended with lessons of instruction, that are in strict consonance with their uses. Here are found some of the finest remains of Raphael, of Dominichino, and of Andrea del Sarto; and the traveller now enters vaulted galleries, that the Monk so long paced in religious hope or learned abstraction, to visit the most prized relics of art. ("The Heidenmauer," vol. ii. pp. 15, 16.) The same was the case in Spain; but the violence attendant on the unhappy civil dissensions which so long distracted that country, has consigned many of these noble monuments of national talent to destruction. The fine drawings by Mr. Smirke of the paintings which once adorned the collegiate chapel of St. Stephen's, Westminster, will enable us to form some judgment of the splendour and skill displayed in the pictorial decorations with which, it is certain, the walls of our cathedral, conventual, and other great churches, as well as other parts of the conventual buildings, were formerly covered.

¹ In regard to the ancient manners and customs of the town and monastery of Subiaco, let the curious reader peruse with attention the copious and very interesting note relating to Paul the Second's reception there, by Cardinal Turrecremata, in "Quirini's Optimor. Scriptor." Edit. pp. 74-6. Montfaucon has also a pleasant description of this monastery, "Diarium Italicum," p. 338. Dibden's "Bibliotheca Spenceriana," vol. i. p. 208, note.

² Dibden's "Typographical Antiquities," vol. i. p. ci. note.

³ "Gentleman's Magazine," vol. c, p. 220.

find that, in many places, where the Benedictine¹ missionaries established themselves, agriculture, next to preaching, was their principal occupation. M. Guizot acknowledges their industry in this respect in the most express terms. "Les moines Benedictins ont été les défricheurs de l'Europe; ils l'ont défrichée en grand, en associant l'agriculture à la prédication. Une colonie, un essaim de moines, peu nombreux d'abord, se transportaient dans des lieux incultes, ou à peu près, souvent au milieu d'une population encore païenne, en Germanie, par exemple, en Bretagne; et là, missionnaires et laboureurs à la fois, ils accomplissaient leur double tâche, souvent avec autant de péril que de fatigue."² There is good evidence of the fact, that in Switzerland, Germany, and the Low Countries, the Monks settled in wild lands, which they themselves cultivated, and set an example to the barbarous natives. Some of the finest lands in Flanders were once barren sands, and the means by which they were made productive by the religious houses are as well authenticated as anything in the history of the middle ages. To the Monks of the Abbey of Jumieges, is principally owing the draining of the fens of Upper Normandy, and the cultivation of many large tracts of land, which had long lain neglected.³ To the same indefatigable industry in clearing, planting, and draining, is originally owing the superior cultivation of several of the counties of England, whole districts of which, from morasses and regions of sterility, were, in this manner, converted into rich meadows and luxuriant cornfields. The Abbeys of Croyland, Glastonbury, Holm, Cultram, Ramsey, Rievaulx, and Thorney, to extend the list no further, were all of them reared in spots wherein, from never having been subject to the useful discipline of husbandry, nature reigned in primitive wildness; but the persevering exertions of the Monks surmounted every local disadvantage, and changed the scene of desolation into one of exuberant fertility. "From the beginning to the end, says Mr. Wharton, none ever improved their lands and possessions to better advantage, by building, cultivation, and all other methods, than the Monks did, while they kept them in their own hands: and when they leased them out to others, it

¹ "Le travail des mains, prescrit par ce saint législateur, fut à la fois un principe de santé pour ses disciples, la cause de la plus grande tranquillité dans son ordre qui était très étendu, et les sources d'une véritable prospérité dans les états qui eurent le bon esprit de le recevoir et de le protéger.—*Biographie Universelle*.

² "Hist. de la Civilization en France," vol. ii., p. 72.

³ "Advertisement to Nichol's Translation of De Bourget's Hist. of Bec.," p. vii., Note.

was the interest of the nation to have such easy tenures continued to great numbers of persons who enjoyed them. To this may be added, that they contributed to the public charges of the nation equally with the other clergy; and the clergy did always contribute in proportion above the laity. So that we cannot find to what better uses these possessions have been since put; save only that inconsiderable part of them which remains to bishoprics, cathedrals, and schools, founded by Henry VIII.”¹

It is remarkable, that in whatever part of the country a monastery reared its head, a human colony was sure, almost, to form about it, however destitute the place, previously, of inhabitants.² This is no less true of the continental monasteries than of our own: “Tanta vero fuit adhuc utilitas illorum (sc. monasteriorum), ut magnificentissimæ urbium nostratium sint ædificatæ prope ista. Unde enim civitas Sangallensis in Turgovia, nisi ex monasterio S. Galli? Unde Campidona, unde Verdea Suevica, unde aliæ complures, pagi, oppida, nisi ex monasteriis; quibus conditis, satim occurrerunt aliunde alii, constructisque domiciliis loca incolere cœperunt, et in dies quidem magis ac magis, donec in urbes, oppida, pagos excrescerent? Occasione cœnobiorum in Germanicio provinciis oppida ista fieri cœpta sunt, inquit B. Rhenanus, lib. ii. Rerum Germanicarum.”³ In early times, the monarchs, to give effect to their religious donations, frequently granted high privileges to the monastic foundations. The superior was usually invested with a temporal jurisdiction, which enabled him to receive tolls on the sale of merchandize, to try criminals, and to administer justice within the limits of his own territories. This power, in the hands of the ecclesiastics, was generally reputed to be exercised with such undistinguishing partiality, that the merchants and tradesmen chose for their residence the precincts of this mild jurisdiction, where they found themselves protected from the tyranny and rapacity of the great landed proprietors, from whom strict justice was not to be expected, as they frequently sat in judgment upon those who were accused by their own retainers.⁴

¹ “Specimen of some Errors in Burnet’s History of the Reformation,” p. 40, 41, 8vo. Lond. 1693. *Vide etiam*, “Mackintosh’s History of England,” vol. i. p. 48; “Tytler’s Scotland,” ii. pp. 211-2 and 215-6; Rev. Dr. Oliver’s “History of Beverley,” p. 51; “History of the Collegiate Church of Wolverhampton,” p. 35, note, “Calmet’s Commentaire sur la regle,” p. i., 514-5; “Henry’s Great Britain,” iii. p. 449-50; “Lingard’s Anglo-Saxon Church,” i. p. 208-10.

² Dans ces temps là, la construction d’un monastère était le commencement d’un bourg ou d’une ville.—*Biog. Univer.* v. 108.

³ “Caroli Stengelii Monasteriologia,” 1619.

⁴ “Oliver’s Beverley,” p. 51.

The tenants and vassals of the great abbeys had many other advantages over those of the lay barons, who were harrassed by constant military duty, until they became desperate and lost all relish for the arts of peace. The vassals of the Church, on the other hand, were only liable to be called to arms on general occasions, and at other times were permitted to possess in comparative quiet, their farms and fens. They, of course, exhibited superior skill in everything that related to the cultivation of the soil, and were, therefore, both wealthier and better informed than the military retainers of the restless chiefs and nobles in their neighbourhood.¹ The Monks appear everywhere to have been bountiful and kind masters. Dr. Whitaker has printed abstracts from some depositions, taken about forty years after the dissolution, which present a lively picture of ancient pastoral manners, and of the ease and plenty enjoyed under the Monks of Fountain's by their dependents.² Among all the events, which, in the course of one hundred and sixty-nine years, had fastened upon the memory of that venerable instance of longevity, Henry Jenkins, he spoke of nothing with so much emotion as the ancient state of Fountain's Abbey. If he were ever questioned on that subject, he would be sure to inform the enquirer, "what a brave place it had once been;" and would speak with much feeling of the clamour which its dissolution occasioned in the country.³ A reference to the pages of the eloquent historian of Richmondshire will show that the rule of the Monks of Furness was not less mild, benevolent, and charitable; and Miss Mitford testifies as much in favour of Reading. It appears that more than a tenth part of the regular income of Shrewsbury Abbey, at the period of downfall, was expended in payments which brought them in no advantage; ⁴ and it will leave no very unfavourable impression of the Monks of Whalley, to assert what may be proved from their accounts, that not more than a fourth part of their large income was consumed in their own personal expenses.⁵

Mr. Nasmith, in the preface to his edition of Bishop Tanner's "Notitia Monastica," dwells with undue emphasis upon the disagreements which, we know, occasionally prevailed between the abbeys and the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns; as if such occurrences, in a modified form, were unknown to the clerical corporations of the present day, or were, in short, possible to be

¹ Sir Walter Scott.

² "History of Craven," p. 202-3.

³ "Gilpin's Observations relative to Picturesque Beauty," vol. ii., p. 184-5.

⁴ "Owen and Blakeway," ii. 106. ⁵ "Whitaker's Whalley," p. 76, fol. ed.

avoided at times. The frequency of their disputes is, however, much exaggerated. We are content to have discovered that a particular monastery was sundry times involved in angry strife with its lay neighbours, and to set it down as irrefragable proof of the litigious spirit of its society ; without once reflecting that our retrospect extends through a vista of three, or perhaps more, centuries ; allowing, possibly, an intermission of fifty years and upwards between each collision ;—that certain epochs in that long expanse were signally noted for popular turbulence and violence, when the most peaceably inclined could hardly remain passive without a dereliction of duty ; that the rights of property were then very imperfectly understood and still more improperly observed ; that church property was, by no means, of so secure and inviolable a tenure as commonly represented ;—circumstances which, if allowed their due weight in the scale, would probably lead to a very opposite conclusion. It will be found, too, that the townsmen were invariably the *aggressors*, either by invading some right appertinent to the house, which the abbot, by his inauguration oath, was bound to defend—or by withholding some service which it was no less obligatory on him to exact. Equally certain it is that the sacred calling of the body encouraged a disposition in others to take advantage, and that had religious men *not* been parties, these attempts to disturb established rights, and to dispute legitimate authority, would have been fewer, and very differently resented.

The benefits accruing to the State from these institutions, in a civil point of view, are treated of at length by Tanner and Collier, and need not, therefore, to be enlarged on here. Suffice it to say, with a very worthy member of the Church of England—“ They (the Monks) did more to civilize mankind, and to bring them within the comforts of society, than any set of men of any denomination ever have done. And yet, the ungrateful world, that was enjoying the fruit of their labours and their riches, now beholding the edifice to be completed, cast down the builders and the scaffold, as if no longer useful.”¹

¹ Preface to Rev. P. Newcome's History of St. Alban's, p. ix.