

OBITUARY NOTICE

OF THE LATE CANON C. R. MANNING, F.S.A.

BY REV. JOHN JAMES RAVEN, D.D., F.S.A.

With very genuine regret the lovers of archæology in East Anglia have heard of the death of the Rev. Charles Robertson Manning, M.A., F.S.A., late Rector of Diss, Honorary Canon of Norwich Cathedral, and Rural Dean of Redenhall.

He had been for so many years a prominent figure at our gatherings, and his contributions whether written or oral were always so marked by that mingled keenness of observation, sobriety of reflection and conclusion, and modest unobtrusiveness, that his place will be hard indeed to fill.

A few notes on his life and labours are here given, a small tribute to one who never spared himself pains to ensure that accuracy which has given a peculiar value to the papers by him, to be found in the Proceedings of a few Societies.

When Charles Manning went up as a freshman to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in October, 1843, the university was in the incipient stage of that mediævalism which shook the sister University of Oxford to its core, and has ever since exercised a strange and many-phased influence on the higher life of England.

But his was one of those minds which can admire the past and derive high instruction from it, without falling under the power of that perilous enchantment which distance lends to the view.

Living much in the past, he never failed to be also

a man of the present day, not wrecking his work, after the manner of some, by in vain attempting a return to that which had served its purpose in its own time. In the words of Dr. Whewell, that great leader of thought in Cambridge when Manning was an undergraduate, he felt that "A return to an obsolete state of things on the ground of antiquity, is generally a mischievous innovation." Certainly the prevalent condition of churches about that time might well make a historical student sigh for the gone centuries, and the motto chosen by the Cambridge Camden Society, "*Donec templa refeceris,*" displays the sentiment which led to the removal of many barbarisms, and the restoration of much that was comely in our churches.

When the Cambridge Camden Society itself was rent asunder by the conflicting tendencies of its members, there was sure to have been no lack of energetic discussion among undergraduates, and though we do not find the name of the future Secretary of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society among the members either of the Cambridge Camden Society, or of her later sister, the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, we may be confident that his Cambridge course was not passed through without laying the foundation of habits of investigation.

In 1847 he took his B.A. degree, proceeding M.A. in 1850. Archdeacons Emery (Ely) and Perowne (Norwich), both from Corpus, graduated at the same time; and from other Colleges appear the names of the Bishop of Exeter (Trin.), Sir John Budd Phear (Clare), Chief Justice of Ceylon, the well-known Augustus Arthur Vansittart (Trin.), and Charles Evans of the same College, not to be forgotten by Rugby boys. In the year following his B.A. he was ordained Deacon and officiated as Curate of Diss. In 1850 he was admitted to Priest's Orders, and after having served some time as curate of Tilney S. Lawrence, in Freebridge Marshland, he succeeded his father, the Rev. William Manning, in the rectory of Diss, in 1857. The advowson belongs to the family. At the Easter dinner, in

1898, the Rector stated that it was 87 years since his father's institution, while his grandfather's dated back 120 years.

In 1847 the first number of *Norfolk Archæology* appeared. The Society of which it is the organ took its rise in December, 1845, in the association of a small knot of antiquaries, called together by Mr. R. G. P. Minty of Norwich, the first Secretary. Boutell, great in sepulchral brasses, John Gunn, Richard Hart, Seth Stevenson, and others, represented various parts of the county, and the then Vicar of Yarmouth, the Rev. Henry Mackenzie, with Charles John Palmer and Francis Worship, formed a contingent for the principal Norfolk port. Bishop Stanley lent his powerful aid, and thus the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society was launched on what has been a remarkably prosperous voyage. Of this Society Mr. Manning became one of the Honorary Secretaries in 1852, and continued in that office, to the great advantage of all concerned, till 1895. A list of his communications to *Norfolk Archæology* follows in chronological order, beginning from 1852:—

- (1) Particulars of the Ancient Pulpit at Diss.
- (2) Notice of the Common Seal of the White Friars at Lynn.
- (3) Impression of the Counter-Seal of Roger Bigod, fourth Earl of Norfolk, Marshal of England.
- (4) State Papers relating to the custody of the Princess Elizabeth at Woodstock.
- (5) On Norfolk Families entitled to bear Arms.
- (6) Remarks on some Churches in the neighbourhood of North Walsham.
- (7) News-Letters from Sir Edward Moundeford, 1627—1633.
- (8) Notice of British Barrows at Bergh Ampton.
- (9) Notes on the Architecture of Hellington Church.
- (10) Font Cover formerly in Ranworth Church.
- (11) On Lost Brasses.
- (12) On Elsing Church.
- (13) On a Brass at S. Stephen's, Norwich.
- (14) Suggestions respecting Parish Registers.
- (15) On Wickhampton Church.
- (16) On Ancient Lecterns in Norfolk Churches.
- (17) On Grimes Graves, Weeting.
- (18) On Kenninghall.
- (19) On Coins found at Diss.

- (20) On Brasses and ms. volumes of the Howard family.
- (21) On the Seal of Wendling Abbey.
- (22) On Bone British Ornaments found at Feltwell.
- (23) On Framingham Earl.
- (24) On Moulds for casting Pilgrims' Signs.
- (25) On the Church Plate of Redenhall Deanery.
- (26) On Stone Cross, Sidestrand.
- (27) On Coffin Stones, Great Carbrooke.
- (28) On Earthworks, Darrow Wood, Denton.
- (29) On the Mote Hill, Wymondham.
- (30) On the Church Plate in the Deanery of Norwich.
- (31) On Brasses omitted by Blomefield.
- (32) On Weyborne Church and Priory.
- (33) Buckenham Castle.
- (34) The Will of Peter Peterson, of Norwich, goldsmith, 1603.
- (35) Three old Halls (Lovell's in Terrington S. Clement, Thelveton and Wilby) in Norfolk.
- (36) Mediæval Patens in Norfolk.
- (37) On Saxon Coins struck at Norwich.
- (38) Further Illustrations of Church Plate.

In addition to this list there are a few shorter communications.

Our Institute was originally entitled the *Bury and West Suffolk Archæological Institute*, and its first quarterly meeting was held under the presidency of the Rev. Henry Hasted, on June 8th, 1848. On this occasion, among other presents, was announced "A variety of gutta-percha impressions of Seals," by Rev. C. R. Manning.

A list of his contributions follows:—

- (1) Burgate Church.
- (2) Notice of a Gold Pendant found at Palgrave.
- (3) Wingfield Church.
- (4) Mettingham Castle and College.
- (5) Eye Castle.
- (6) Arms of the Borough of Eye.
- (7) First Fruits, Diocese of Norwich, temp. Hen. vi. and Ed. iv.
- (8) Church Plate in the Deanery of Hartismere.
- (9) " Sudbury.
- (10) " Stow.
- (11) " Mildenhall.
- (12) " Blackburn.
- (13) " Fordham, Suffolk part, containing Exning and Newmarket.
- (14) " Thurlow.

On March 4th, 1886, he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, having previously exhibited a Paten from Runton, Norfolk, at one of their meetings. The *Proceedings* of that Society have the following record of his participation in their work:—

- xi. 24 Exhibited Mediæval Paten from Runton, Norf. 3 Dec. 1885
- xi. 96 Elected Fellow, 4 March, 1886.
- xi. 134-6 Exhibition of 3 heraldic roundels of latten.
- xii. 64 Exhibited Seal of Archdeaconry of Colchester. 19 Jan. 1888.
- xii. 303 Exhibited rubbing of brass of an Archbishop on tower of Edenham Church, Lincs. 7 Feb. 1889.
- xii. 167 Appointed Local Secretary for Norfolk, 14 June, 1888.
- xiii. 68 Exhibited inscribed silver-gilt Brooch from Shelfanger, Norf. 6 Feb. 1890.
- xiv. 272. Exhibited silver medalet 26 Jan. 1893.
- xiv. 366 Exhibited Mediæval Paten from Barsham, Suff. 1 June, 1893.
- xv. 247 Exhibited two latten pendants. 29 Nov. 1894.
- xvi. 247 Exhibited photos of silver dish at Whatfield Church, Suff. 10 Dec. 1896.

In 1857 the Rev. gentleman was appointed as one of the Surrogates of the Diocese, and in 1868 he became Rural Dean of the Deanery of Redenhall. In 1895 he was appointed by the present Bishop one of the honorary Canons of the Cathedral.

It seems that on Sunday, January 22nd, Mr. Manning officiated as usual at Diss Church, and preached in the evening, when his sermon extended beyond the ordinary length and certainly afforded no indication that the preacher's physical strength was failing, much less that the system was about to collapse. The following day he was out and about, and those who conversed with him noticed that he was unusually cheerful and apparently in his usual good health. A sad change, however, came early on Tuesday morning when, without any warning, Mr. Manning was smitten with paralysis and apoplexy, from which in spite of medical skill and affectionate and patient nursing, he never rallied, but remained in a comatose condition up to the time of his death, which took place on Tuesday, Feb. 7th.

I cannot close this short notice with words more to the purpose than those of the Bishop of Norwich, addressed to the great concourse assembled at Canon Manning's funeral, on Saturday, Feb. 11th, 1899:—

“He was a man, a Minister of the Word, a Priest of the Church, and such a one it appears to me our common dear Church of England is more calculated than any other Christian body to educate and to mould—a man of simple, quiet, unostentatious piety; a man of pure and blameless life, an affectionate friend, a faithful pastor. He was not one to put himself forward in the world. You know it was said of his Master, He was one who did not strive or cry and His voice was not heard in the street. And I may say in that respect of him whom we mourn to-day he was a true follower of his and our common Lord. He was ever in the background, of a retiring, exceedingly modest and humble disposition, doing his manifold good works in secret—one may almost say by stealth—and yet at the same time a man of whom the Church of England might well be proud; of excellent intellectual capacity, admirable training, and of deep learning, and one of the foremost archæologists and antiquarians in this part of England. There is no need to dwell on this. His loss is deeply lamented in his own home, in this parish, in the whole district, and by none more than the Clergy here to-day who have come to show respect to our departed friend. We shall not forget him, we shall still think of him; we follow him with our thoughts and with our aspirations, and we shall all give an expression of our thanksgiving to God that He has taken away one from our midst who was prepared to die, and one about whom, thanks to the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, we have no doubt of his present and future happiness. We thank God for His grace bestowed upon His servant, and breathe the prayer that we with all God's faithful servants who depart this life, may hope by and by to have our perfect consummation and bliss in God's everlasting kingdom.”