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THE
CHURCHMAN

NOVEMBER, 1896.

ART. I.—STRONGHOLDS OF THE CHURCH IN
BRITAIN.

CHRIST CHURCH, CANTERBURY.

ON Whitsunday, June 2, of the year 597, the little church of St. Martin's, at Canterbury, is said to have been the scene of the baptism of Ethelbert, King of Kent, who had been converted to the Christian faith by the Italian missionary, St. Augustine. Queen Bertha had worshipped in St. Martin's some years before the landing of St. Augustine and before the conversion of her husband. Tradition still points to a postern gate in a little lane called "Quenen Lane"—the Queen's Lane—between the city and the monastery wall, through which the first Christian Queen of England used to pass on her way from the wooden palace of her Pagan husband to the church, which, as had been stipulated in her marriage contract, was set apart for her special worship.

Ethelbert proved the reality of his faith in many ways. He gave up his royal palace at Canterbury to be a dwelling-place for Augustine, after the latter had been made Archbishop of Canterbury, and transferred his own residence to Reculver, seven miles distant, where he converted the old Roman fortress into a palace. The King also made over to Augustine an ancient heathen temple as a place for Christian worship, which Augustine named St. Pancras, after the Roman boy who was martyred at the age of fourteen. Both the churches of St. Martin and St. Pancras were outside the city walls, and since a place of worship within the city was also required, the foundations of the great Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ Church were shortly afterwards laid, on the site probably of a primitive Roman or British Church.

The Priory of Christ Church, which was connected with the cathedral, soon proved to be insufficient for the number of monks who were continually augmenting the original community of St. Augustine. The King therefore granted another large tract of land, adjacent to the Church of St. Pancras, for the building of a second monastery. It was to be both a centre of learning and also a burial-place for kings and archbishops, since the Roman law forbade interment within the city walls. The monastery was dedicated on Christmas-Day, 605, and named after St. Peter and St. Paul, though afterwards known, from its founder, as St. Augustine's Abbey. Thus were founded "the Church of St. Martin, the mother church, and the Cathedral of Canterbury, the mother cathedral, and St. Augustine's Abbey, the mother school, the mother university of England, the seat of letters and study at a time when Cambridge was a desolate fen, and Oxford a tangled forest in a wide waste of waters."¹

When Lanfranc, the former Abbot of St. Stephen's, Caen, was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by William the Conqueror in 1070, his first work was to restore the cathedral of his new diocese, which had been destroyed by a great fire in 1067. He pulled down nearly all of the old Saxon work which remained, and rebuilt the church in the massive Norman style. In the school attached to the monastery there was in those days a boy called Eadmer, who afterwards became a monk, and rose to be the Cantor, or Precentor. He wrote a history of England between the years 1066 and 1182 called "*Historia Novorum*," and it is from his narrative that we learn about the rebuilding of the cathedral. He tells us that "when Lanfranc came to Canterbury and found that the church of the Saviour which he had undertaken to rule was reduced to almost nothing by fire and ruin, he was filled with consternation. "But he took courage, and, neglecting his own accommodation, he completed in all haste the houses essential to the monks." He built the "great cloisters" with a sloping wooden roof, resting on a stone arcade; the celerer's offices behind the west cloister wall, the refectory on the north side, the dormitory—occupying the site of the present Chapter Library—of which the windows are still visible above the cloister roof, and the other convent buildings. "As for the church," continues our historian, "which the aforesaid fire, combined with its age, had rendered completely unserviceable, he set about to destroy it utterly and erect a more noble one. And in the space of seven years he raised this new church from the very foundations, and rendered it nearly perfect. To

¹ Stanley, "*Memorials of Canterbury*."

which I, Eadmer, can bear witness, for I was then a boy at the school." Lanfranc, he tells us further, added one hundred monks to the previous number, and ordained that the total number should always be from 140 to 150.

The work of restoration was continued by Archbishop Anselm in William II.'s reign. Prior Ernulph superintended the work, built the greater part of the crypt, and began the building of the choir, which was completed by Prior Conrad, and obtained from its unwonted magnificence the name of the "glorious choir of Conrad." At the dedication of this choir in 1130 Henry I. of England, David, King of Scotland, and all the English bishops were present.

On December 29, 1170, occurred the most famous event in the history of the cathedral, namely, the murder of Becket, the account of which has been so graphically told by Dean Stanley in his "Memorials of Canterbury." There is no need to do more than refer to it here. We can trace every event in the narrative, from the Archbishop's flight from his palace, where parts of the room are still shown in which the altercation between Becket and the four knights took place, through the celerer's lodgings into the cloisters, and so into the chapter-house. From this he was almost forcibly hurried by his attendants into the chapel, now known as the Martyrdom, where the knights found him, and where, in violation of the sacred rights of the sanctuary, he was hewn down by repeated blows. For a later account of the cathedral and monastery, we must turn to the records of Gervase, who was a monk of Christ Church at the time of Becket's murder, and an eyewitness of the great fire which occurred in 1174, two months after the penance of Henry II., and four years after the murder of Becket. In an account termed "On the Burning and Repair of the Church of Canterbury," Gervase describes the work of William of Sens, a French architect, who undertook the restoration of the cathedral. "French William, as he was called, rebuilt and enlarged the choir and raised the walls of Lanfranc's church twelve feet higher. But in the year 1179, the fourth year of his work, while "turning the vault" in the upper part of the clerestory, William of Sens fell from a scaffold, the beams of which had given way under his feet. He was too much disabled to continue the superintendence of the work, though for a time he made a brave attempt to do so from his pallet. Another architect, therefore, who had previously assisted William of Sens, was put in charge of the building. He was known as "English William." "English by nation, small in body, but in workmanship of many kinds acute and honest." He very much added to the beauty of the cathedral by extending and

raising the east end of the choir, and by the addition of the stately Trinity Chapel. The oblations to the shrine partly covered the cost of the rebuilding, and the offer of indulgences secured large donations. "English William" introduced the Early English style of architecture, but in order to avoid too sudden a transition to the new style, he alternated round-headed and pointed arches. In 1180, on Easter Eve, the work was sufficiently complete for the monks to worship in the restored choir. The ceremony of lighting the "Paschal Candle," or the "New Fire," took place always on Easter Eve, and was renewed on this occasion. The fire was made in the cloister, the monks in procession proceeded thither, and, having consecrated the fire, lighted a taper from it, which was placed at the end of a long stick. This was carried to the choir with psalms and hymns and incense, to light the Paschal Candle. "And then the pontiff, standing at the altar and invested with the *infula*, began the *Te Deum Laudamus*, and the bells ringing, the convent took up the song with great joy, and, shedding sweet tears, they praised God with voice and heart for all his benefits."¹

The "translation" of the coffin of St. Thomas from the crypt, where he had first been buried, to the recently completed Trinity Chapel, took place on Tuesday, July 7, 1220, fifty years after the "murder," in the presence of Archbishop Stephen Langton, and King Henry III., then a boy of thirteen. The *feretrum* which contained the remains was carried on the illustrious shoulders of Archbishop Langton, Pandulf, "of fair Milan Cardinal," the Archbishop of Rheims, and the Chief Justiciary, Hubert de Burgh. In 1304 Prior Henry of Eastry erected the beautiful Decorated stone choir-screen, which at one time was as brightly coloured as the tomb of Archbishop Chichele—the famous founder of All Souls' College, Oxford—on the north side of the choir. In 1400 the cloister of Lanfranc was demolished by Prior Chillenden, who built the present one, with its traceried openings, pinnacled buttresses, and "ogee hood-moulds." Prior Chillenden also rebuilt the Chapter House and the nave, which, having fallen into disrepair, had been pulled down in 1379 by Archbishop Sudbury. He had intended to rebuild it in the Perpendicular style, but his murder by the rebels on Tower Hill put a stop to the work he had begun. His coat-of-arms—a talbot sejant—may be seen under the hood-mould of the south-west entrance into the nave; and this would seem to show that he had advanced thus far in his task before he fell into the hands of Wat Tyler and his wild mob.

¹ Gervase.

Great changes took place towards the middle of the next century. On March 30, 1539, the Priory of Christ Church was dissolved. Secular canons, living in their own houses, took the place of the ejected monks, and the Prior became a Dean. Dean Wotton, appointed by Henry VIII., was the first to occupy the new post. The shrine of St. Thomas was destroyed on April 27, 1540, by the orders of Henry VIII., who is said to have taken therefrom "eight cart-loads full" of treasures. The King is said to have ordered that the bones of St. Thomas should be burned; but if the order was ever really given there is strong reason to believe that it was evaded. For remains have been recently discovered in the crypt which there is the strongest possible reason to believe are those of St. Thomas à Becket himself. If so, we must suppose that the monks concealed the genuine relics in a stone coffin, which was buried where it has been found, near the old *tumba* of the saint.

Towards the close of the century the terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew in France in 1572, and the cruelties of Alva in the Netherlands, caused an influx of persecuted French and Flemish Protestants into our country. Eighteen families, with their pastor, Hector Hamon, arrived at the city of Canterbury, where they humbly prayed the Mayor and Aldermen to permit them the free exercise of their religion within the city walls, and to grant them favour and protection in the carrying on of their trade of making "Florence serges, bombazine, Orleans silk, bays, mouquade, and other stuffs." Queen Elizabeth, at the instigation of Archbishop Parker, who represented the refugees as "gentle and profitable strangers," is said to have granted them the use of the crypt, or "undercroft," of Canterbury Cathedral; but no document to that effect has ever been discovered. The crypt extends the whole length of the choir and Trinity Chapel, and is the largest in England. The greater part of it was built between the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth centuries, though part of the west wall has marks of far older work, and is said to date back at least as far as the time of St. Augustine. It was here that the body of Thomas Becket was first buried, and here, with his head thrust into one of the apertures of the tomb, that Henry II. performed his memorable penance.

Part of the crypt under the south cross-aisle is occupied by the chantry chapel endowed by the Black Prince in requital for the Pope's dispensation, which permitted him to marry his cousin Joan, the "Fair Maid of Kent." The little chapel of "Our Lady of the Undercroft," in the centre of the crypt, was probably also endowed by the Black Prince. Though now much mutilated, it was at one time the most gorgeous of all

the shrines in the cathedral, "the sight of which was debarred to the vulgar and reserved for persons of great quality." Erasmus, who visited Canterbury with Dean Colet in 1512, thus describes this shrine: "There," said he, "the virgin-mother hath a habitation, but somewhat dark, inclosed with a double sept, or rail of iron, for fear of thieves. For, indeed, I never saw a thing more laden with riches. Lights being brought in, we saw a more than royal spectacle. In beauty it far surpasseth that of Walsingham. This chapel is showed but to noblemen and especial friends." At the dissolution of the monastery Henry VIII. appropriated all the treasures of this shrine, as well as those of Becket's shrine in Trinity Chapel. For some years the crypt was deserted and neglected, till the refugees settled there, and made the vaults resound with their hymns and prayers, with the murmur of the children's voices as they repeated their tasks, or read aloud to their elders at work, and with the ceaseless whirl of the busy looms. Archbishop Laud tried to insist that the Walloons and Huguenots should abandon their Genevan form of worship, and conform to the Anglican use; but happily the affairs of Scotland diverted his attention elsewhere, and the community stood firm till the Long Parliament fully established their right to worship according to their own ritual. The majority of the French workmen in Canterbury removed subsequently to Spitalfields for the greater convenience of trade. Though the numbers of genuine Huguenot worshippers have dwindled to a mere handful, the service is still conducted in the French tongue, and the Psalms are sung to the Huguenot tunes, while in the choir above the more elaborate choral service is taking place. In 1826 a space on the south-west side of the crypt was walled off for the use of the French congregation, but since the end of last year—1895—the numbers having still further diminished, the French services have been held in the Black Prince's chantry, thereby opening out and greatly improving the crypt by the removal of the wall.

The next important event in the history of Christ Church—but not a pleasing one—happened in 1642, when on August 31 the Puritans, under Colonel Sandys, plundered the cathedral, ruined the font, burnt the vestments, destroyed the images, tore off the brasses from the monuments and tombs, and destroyed many of the windows. The worst offender was Richard Culmer, known as "Blue Dick," rector of Chartham, who with a long pike broke many of the ancient stained-glass windows, including one given by Edward IV. in commemoration of a visit to Canterbury. Christ Church gateway, which forms the entrance to the precincts on the south side of the cathedral, was also partially destroyed by the Ironsides, who shot at and pulled down the figure

of our Saviour in the central niche, because "it was the means of much idolatry, as travellers knelt to it in the street." The Prebendaries were driven from their houses, the Deanery invaded, and the wife and family of Dean Bargrave subjected to great indignities. The Dean himself was at Gravesend. The Puritans went there, seized him in bed, and confined him in the Tower, where he remained for three weeks. He was broken-hearted at these cruel indignities, and died shortly after at the age of fifty-six.

For eighteen years the cathedral and church property were in the hands of the Puritans; and at one time the sacred building was desecrated by being used for a stable and armoury by the soldiery. Not till the restoration of 1660 did the Cathedral Chapter recover their property and the use of their plundered and mutilated church, the state of which a contemporary writer thus describes: "The sad, forlorn, and languishing condition of our Church at our returne was such as made it look more like a ruined monastery than a Church, so little had the fury of the late Reformers left remaining of it besides the bare walles and rooffe, and these, partly through neglect, and partly by the daily assaults and batteries of the disaffected, so shaken, ruinated, and defaced, as it was not more unserviceable in the way of a cathedral, than justly scandalous to all who delight to serve God in the beauty of holiness."¹

This is fortunately the last of the disasters recorded in the history of Christ Church, with the exception of a fire in 1872, which broke out in the roof of the cathedral, and necessitated its complete renewal. The aim of succeeding generations was, as it is now, to preserve and embellish the venerable cathedral of the metropolitan city of Canterbury.

We have dealt so far only with the history of the cathedral, of which it is well to know something before we enter in through the beautiful fifteenth-century south porch and take a brief glance around. Within we find every variety of architecture—Pre-Norman, Norman, Transition, Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular—and yet all these varying styles are harmoniously blended together with the most consummate skill.

The nave, with its lofty Perpendicular piers and arches, was built two hundred years later than the choir. The font has been recently restored to its original position on the north-west side. We pass into the choir under the screen with canopied niches, once filled with silver figures of the Apostles, on the choir side of which are the oak-panelled stalls of the Dean and Chapter. The Decorated stone screen on the

¹ Somner.

north and south sides of the choir is of the fourteenth century, and was once brightly coloured. The eye finally rests on the jewelled cross on the high altar, which stands above two flights of steps, on either side of which are the tombs of Archbishops. The shrines of St. Alphege and St. Dunstan, formerly on either side of the high altar, have long disappeared.

Beyond the choir lies Trinity Chapel, the approach to which is by a flight of steps, which pilgrims, in double lines, ascended on their knees when they came to visit the far-famed shrine of St. Thomas. The shrine occupied the centre of the chapel, and stood on a pavement of mosaic and medallions, upon a platform elevated on three marble steps. Above was the chased and gilded coffin of the saint, supported by three arches, generally hung with votive offerings, and covered by a richly-decorated oak case, which was drawn up by pulleys for pilgrims to view the riches within. The interesting and beautiful thirteenth-century windows in this chapel—representing the miracles of Becket—give us some notion of the appearance of the shrine, of which nothing is now visible but the pavement, composed of fragments from the marble steps.

In Trinity Chapel are the tombs of Henry IV. and his second wife, Joan of Navarre, and of Edward the Black Prince, with surcoat, gauntlets, shield, lion-crested helmet and scabbard above his effigy in full armour. The sword is no longer in the scabbard, and is said to have been taken away by Cromwell, to save it from his soldiers. He placed it in Windsor Castle, where it is still preserved. The ill-fated Odo de Coligny, Cardinal of Chatillon, also lies here; and the first Dean, Wotton, and Archbishops Courtenay and Hubert Walter. The tomb of the latter was recently opened, and the chalice, paten, embroidered shoes, and pastoral staff which were found in it are now exhibited in Henry IV.'s chantry, on the north side of the chapel.

At the head and extreme east end of the church is the part known as the "Corona," or Crown of Becket, perhaps so called from a silver image of the skull of Becket said to have been kept there. In the centre of this little apse is the famous Chair of St. Augustine, which is believed to have been made for the occasion of the "translation" (1220), though according to tradition it was the ancient throne of the kings of Kent, which had been presented by Ethelbert to St. Augustine. It is made of three pieces of Purbeck marble, and the ornament on it seems to indicate the date of its construction, for it resembles that on the tomb of Stephen Langton. On the north side of the Corona is the plain tomb of Cardinal Pole, the cousin of Queen Mary, who died in 1559. He was the last Archbishop buried in the cathedral, until, after a discon-

tinuity of 337 years, Archbishop Benson was laid in his grave under the north-west tower on October 16, 1896.

At the foot of the steps on the south side is St. Anselm's Chapel, where Archbishop Anselm is said to have been buried in 1109. When this chapel was being restored in 1888 an interesting wall-painting of the twelfth century, representing St. Paul and the Viper, was discovered by the removal of a buttress. Similar paintings can be seen in the little chapel of St. Gabriel, below St. Anselm's Chapel, in the crypt. On the north side is the corresponding Norman Chapel of St. Andrew. The very perceptible narrowing of the choir aisles towards the east end is occasioned by these two chapels—St. Andrew's and St. Anselm's—which originally adjoined the apse of the choir, and which, being uninjured by the fire of 1174, William of Sens was anxious to preserve and, at the same time, extend the choir beyond them.

The tomb of Archbishop Stephen Langton, who was mainly instrumental in forcing King John to sign Magna Charta, is in St. Michael's Chapel, more generally known as the "Warriors' Chapel," from containing the banners and monuments of the "Buffs"—the East Kent Regiment. We pass out through the "Martyrdom" into the cloisters, where we call to mind the scene of Becket vainly struggling to turn back and face his foes, but urged on by his little band of faithful friends, and of the four knights rushing in their clanking armour through the south-west door, straight down the cloisters and in at the cathedral door on the south-east side. We think, too, of the monks who spent the greater part of their day here, when not at one of the seven services. We are told that "the cloisters were the place of business, instruction, reading, and conversation, the common study, workshop, and parlour of all the inmates of the house—the professed brethren—and the children who formed the school attached to the house. In this cloister, open apparently to the weather, but under shelter, all sat, when they were not at service in church, or assembled in the Chapter, or at their meals in the refectory, or resting in the dormitory for their mid-day sleep; all teaching, reading, writing, copying, or any handicraft in which a monk might employ himself, went on here. Here the children learned their letters, or read aloud, or practised their singing under their masters." We peep in at the Chapter House, and notice the oak-panelled ceiling, once beautifully gilded, the ancient canopied stall of the prior, and the stone benches round the walls, on which the monks used to seat themselves when holding their formal "chapter."

The monastery buildings can be clearly traced in the precincts—the ruins of the priory in the front deanery garden, the refectory, kitchens, porter's lodge, granary, bakehouse,

brewhouse, and the separate guest-houses for pilgrims of noble, middle-class, or humble rank.

The massive central tower of the cathedral is a landmark for miles around, though the cathedral itself lies in a hollow in the valley of the river Stour. The "Bell Harry" Tower, as it is now called, replaced in 1495 the "Angyll Stepyll," which was so named from the gilded figure of an angel which surmounted it and could be seen by pilgrims from a great distance. The bell of this tower still rings the curfew every night, and the "ghostly mass" in the early morning hours, though the service for the "souls of the dead" ceased to be held centuries ago. The watchman still parades the precincts and cathedral every night, proclaiming the hour and the state of the weather, and assuring those who lie awake that "all's well." The monastery was protected not only by its own walls, but on the north and east sides also by the city wall, which was of tremendous strength, being in parts from six to seven feet thick, and rising some twenty feet above the ground; for Canterbury was in ancient days "Cant-wara-byrig," *i.e.*, the stronghold of the men of Kent. The walls enclosed an area of nearly two miles, and were provided with twenty-one turrets, or watch-towers, and with six gates, of which only one—the West Gate, rebuilt by Archbishop Sudbury in 1380—now remains. The five other gates, called the "Newing Gate," or New Gate; the North Gate; "Werth," or Worth Gate; "Burgate," or Borough Gate; and "Riding," or Road Gate, were all destroyed by the barbarous indifference of the citizens in the last century. The exact date of the oldest part of the walls is not known, but there was probably a rampart of some kind round the city as early as the period of the Roman occupation of Britain.

F. W. FARRAR.



ART. II.—THE FUNERAL HYMN OF PRUDENTIUS.

A free rendering of the hymn, "Jam mæsta quiesce querela" (Prudentius, "Cathemerinon," X.), written about 390. The Latin is given almost complete in Trench's "Sacred Latin Poetry." In the rendering an approach to the cheerful rhythm of the Latin is attempted.

Now hush'd be the accents of mourning,
 Ye mothers, your tears all be dried;
 Our lost treasures shall yet be returning—
 To live, and for ever, they died.

So the sere grain lies low in its prison,
 Yet soon wears its emerald again,
 To repeat, in young beauty arisen,
 The tale of the last harvest-plain.