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Son of God—ideas by means of which the priestly idea is to receive interpretation, enlargement and exaltation.

But here we are beginning to tread upon ground which will more fitly belong to the subject of our next paper.

N. DIMOCK.

(To be continued.)

ART. IV.—ARCHPRIESTS.

THE office and work of an archpriest in either the Anglican or the Roman Communions is somewhat difficult to define. In the English Church such a dignitary is almost, if not quite, unheard of. Nor can the title be termed familiar in the Church of Rome. But in the Greek Church an archpriest is a functionary more frequently met with, being known as the “protopapa,” or protopope. His authority is similar to that of a rural dean. A rural-deanery in Russia may perhaps consist of a circle of from ten to thirty parishes. In Siberia some of these are very extensive, though not necessarily populous.

But it would also appear that this Eastern protopope may be occasionally the equivalent in position, if not in income, of a Western dean. At one cathedral establishment we read of two of its priests being paid £220 to £250 each per annum, the deacon about £180, and the psalmist, or *diechok*, from £90 to £150. The protopope (archpriest or dean) received from £1,500 to £1,800 a year, with house.

In the consideration of this relation of the office of an archpriest to that of a dean, it may be pertinent to ask an apparently simple question—What is a dean?

The answer may be somewhat surprising. Primarily the office of a dean was one of low order! The word dean, *decanus*, was, in fact, unknown in the earlier centuries. *Decanus* (δεκαδάρχος, δεκάρχος) first came into use as a military title. It is explained by *decem militibus præpositus et contubernii præfectus*, i.e., a subaltern officer. Undertakers and gravediggers (*copiatæ*) were likewise called deans. Their duty was to take charge of funerals, and to provide for the decent interment of the dead. Jerome referred to them as *fossarii*, and regarded them as the lowest order of *clerici*, though both he and Augustine gave the name to overseers of monks. It was not until the eleventh or twelfth centuries that the heads of cathedral chapters were styled

decani, or deans. The name was first applied to them in England.

It has been said that so early as the sixth century there were found in the same diocese several archpriests, "from which time some will have them called deans." But these were probably "rural" deans.

The *rural* dean had a position similar to that of the inferior, or rural archpriest, the superintendent of a district. In the capitular dean was merged the superior, or urban archpriest, or urban dean. He was the head of a community, and in greater churches presided over the city clergy as the bishop's delegate. In certain Italian dioceses the office of an archpriest is somewhat like that of a rural dean, but in some Continental Roman Catholic churches, in Italy especially, it is similar to that of a capitular dean. Whenever there was a collegiate body of clergy established for the daily and nightly offices of the Church, one of them would always be considered the superior, or archipresbyter, and "by canon law he that is archipresbyter is also called dean" (Godolphin in Rep. Can. 56).

The duties of an archipresbyter were defined to consist in constant attendance in choir, the supervision of all the priests, and the right of celebration in the absence of the bishop. A great antiquarian authority upon these matters, the late Prebendary Walcott, quotes Lyndwood as distinctly writing of the *urban* archpriest, "he is one with the dean." It is asserted by Isidore that the archipresbyters were subjected to the archdeacon as early as the seventh century, and that this subordination was established by Pope Innocent III. ("De Offic. Archidiacon.", c. 7). "Let the archipresbyters, commonly called deans, know that they are subject to the jurisdiction of the archdeacon." But this statement is qualified by Walcott, who says that though Pope Innocent III. subjected the archpriests to the archdeacons, such subordination is incorrectly referred to the seventh century, as Isidore was evidently alluding not to urban, but to rural deans.

From the seventh to the ninth century the archpriest occasionally acted as deputy for the bishop. In matters of jurisdiction, in hearing confessions of priests, and, as has been already mentioned, in the right of celebration, the archpriest was, in fact, a kind of bishop-vicar. While the smaller cures or parishes would be ministered to by ordinary priests, the archpriest would have the care of the "Baptismal" churches, and report upon the inferior priests to the bishop, who governed the chief or cathedral church in person.

Shortly after the Reformation the Roman Catholics in England, finding themselves without bishops, importuned the

then Pope, Clement VII., to supply their need. But instead of sending them, as they desired, a number of bishops, he gave them, or rather sanctioned, one ecclesiastical superior, Robert Blackwell. But he, after all, was only a priest. An "arch-priest" indeed he was called, but, as such, having no episcopal power, he could neither ordain, confirm, nor consecrate. Three archpriests for England are also mentioned by Walcott as having been appointed by the Pope on the death of the deprived Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Watson, in 1584, and before the consecration of the Bishop of Chalcedon in 1623.

But an archpriest, though not a bishop, was not a person of small importance. If he were a capitular dean, he would preside over the internal chapter of his cathedral; if he were a rural dean, he would minister in the close or city; and as his chapter was a court of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and maintained a discipline within the precinct, where he could administer the sacraments and celebrate marriages, he also bore the name of "Dean of Christianity." At this moment there are rural deaneries with this distinctive title at Exeter, Lincoln, and Leicester.

Moreover, as the senior among the presbyters he was styled *Ἀρχιπρεσβύτερος*, archpresbyter, or *πρωτοπρεσβύτερος*, pastor primarius, first presbyter (Greg. Naz., "Orat." 20: "Conc. Chalced.," c. 14). In the choir he took the position of precedence next after the bishop, and at Ely, in 673, he was called the provost-archpriest, and had the right to mitre and staff (Walcott). It was at this period that the archpriest possessed great power and influence, and shared in the administration of the bishops' office, as their suffragans. Some duties were committed exclusively to their care. Hence, perhaps, it was that misunderstandings may have arisen between them and their bishops, resulting in the latter supporting the archdeacons as a check upon the power of the archpriests. The first trace of this is to be found in the Canons of the fourth Council of Carthage (c. 17), and this may probably have accounted for the statement of Isidore already mentioned.

Of the early existence of archpriests in England record can be traced at Penkewell, Whitechurch, Bereferis, and Haccombe in Devon; at Bibury in Gloucestershire; and at Ulcombe in Kent; and in Ireland at Newry. It is written that at Bereferis Sir William de Ferrariis having rebuilt the parish church was desirous of making it collegiate. For this purpose he assigned a sufficient endowment for an archpriest, and four other clergymen in priest's orders. They were to live in common under the same roof. Provision was also made for an assistant deacon or sub-deacon, or at least a clerk. The

community were to perform the daily and nightly office in the church, and the Bishops of Exeter, both living and dead, were to be remembered. The collegiate archpresbyters of Ulcombe in Kent were first appointed in the thirteenth century. They were subordinate to the jurisdiction of the ordinary and archdeacon. Bibury in Gloucestershire was claimed to be exempt from spiritual oversight. But the exemption has been thought to have been founded on a Peculiar, and not on the Archpresbyterate. A similar arrangement was said to exist in the case of the Vicar of Newry, "who is [1854] entirely free from ecclesiastical control." With regard to Haccombe a correspondent of *Notes and Queries* brings forward a statement that by a grant from the Crown, in consequence of services done by an ancestor of the Carews, the parish of Haccombe received certain privileges. One of these was that the priest of Haccombe should be accounted free from all ordinary spiritual jurisdiction. But it has been questioned whether the exact status of the archpriest of Haccombe can be exactly described, as it is generally understood that all peculiars except such as Westminster Abbey and the Inns of Court were abolished by the Act 6 and 7 Will. IV., c. 77. Another correspondent declares that the privileges alleged to belong to Haccombe are quite mythical. By the foundation deed the jurisdiction of the bishop and of the archdeacon is expressly saved. The archpriest was, and is, instituted by the Bishop of the Diocese, and there is consequently no ground for the supposed exemption from all but episcopal visitation. Indeed, the various rectors of Haccombe have always been summoned to the Bishop's Visitation, and have appeared in answer to the citation. The account of the parish itself is prosaic enough in the Post-Office Directory for Devonshire. There is the usual description of the church and its monuments, one of which, curiously, is to the daughter of a Sir Stephen de Haccombe (1250-1310), who married a John *L'ercedekene*. (Leland in his "Itinerary" speaks of "divers fair tumbes of the *Archidikens*" at Hacham). Then follows the simple statement that the living is a rectory, "the rector being styled the archpriest." The "style" in this particular instance has probably survived for more than 560 years, as it was in 1337 that a community of six chantry priests was established at this place. Of these six priests in this establishment the rector was one, and, being the superior, he was given the title of archpriest. When the community was dissolved, the head, being rector of the parish, remained, and succeeded to the revenues of the archpresbyter. In folio 14 of the second volume "Regist. Grandisson" is copied the foundation deed

of this archpresbyterate, written about 1341. From this we learn that Sir Stephen Haccombe had proposed to make the endowment, but was prevented by death. Sir John Lercedekne, Knight, the heir to his property, had, however, fully entered into his wishes and views, and had, therefore, erected, with the concurrence and approbation of Bishop Grandisson, an establishment for six priests, the superior of whom was to be denominated the archpriest. These six clergymen were to be chantry priests. They were duly to sing the canonical hours in choir, and to celebrate two masses. The first was the office of the day, the second was in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A third mass was to be said, but not sung except at dirges and anniversaries. The Rev. G. Oliver, in his "Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Devon," further remarks that Haccombe must formerly have been more populous than at present, for the priests were given the duty of assisting their superior in the cure of souls. Bishop Grandisson, moreover, required that the archpriest and his associates should lodge and board under the same roof (presumably that of the ancient parsonage-house). The salary of each was to be two marks per annum. Two clerks, sufficiently skilled in reading and singing, were to assist in the church, and render service in the clergy house. These clerks were to be provided with board and lodging, and receive a stipend of ten shillings. The dress of the community was to resemble that of the vicars of the Cathedral Church of Exeter.

It seems undetermined whether the archpriest had the privilege of wearing lawn sleeves, or rather a lawn alb. Prince, in his "Worthies of Devon," mentions the sleeves, but he introduces the statement with the words "It is said." We read, however, that a late Rector of Haccombe tacked on lawn sleeves to his M.A. gown—a proceeding which may have caused a little innocent amusement to the antiquarian world in general and to his ecclesiastical neighbours in particular.

In conclusion, one truth may with profit be gathered from the consideration of this subject. While we possess archbishops and archdeacons, it is patent that we have been content, and rightly remain content, to permit the title of *archpriest* to become obsolete. Already "sore opprest" as to whether "priest is presbyter writ short" or not, the "arch" title has been allowed to drop out of use by the Church of England. It would indeed be doubly unsuited to her primitive and reformed principles. It would have an appearance of inconsistency with her apostolical belief in the one ARCHPRIEST, to Whom alone she bids the sinner needing Atonement draw near "with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

JOHN ALT PORTER.