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## Obituary.

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**B**ISHOP RYLE, first Bishop of Liverpool, has not long survived his retirement. He has gone from us, full of days and honour. With him passes away the most prominent among the Evangelical Churchmen of the last quarter of a century.

The papers have given such full accounts of the Bishop's life and labours that we shall not do more here than make a few quotations from notices that have already appeared. The first, a striking one, is from the *Times*, and runs thus:

"Was the first Bishop of Liverpool a failure on the pastoral side of his office? We cannot see how this can in justice be met by anything save an emphatic negative. It is true that Dr. Ryle did not set about building a cathedral, as Dr. Benson did as first Bishop of Truro; but the needs of the two dioceses were different. Cornwall was overstocked with empty churches, and Church-life wanted a centre. Liverpool was crying out for churches and mission-rooms for its seething population, and cathedral-building could wait. This was the Bishop's view, though he never frustrated the cathedral scheme, and it was justified of its effects. In his twenty years' episcopate forty-two new churches and forty-eight new mission-halls were consecrated and opened for Divine service, and there was a proportionate increase in the ranks of his clergy; the number of incumbents rose from 170 to 206, and that of the assistant curates from 120 to 220. His administration settled problems such as that of 'poor livings' and clergy pensions while others were thinking about them; and a diocese in which there are now few livings under £250 a year, and which can boast a pension fund of £1,000 a year to relieve the aged and out-worn clergy, can scarcely have suffered serious mismanagement."

The second quotation (given by the *Guardian*) is from words of the late Bishop himself, uttered by him on his first visit to Liverpool:

"You know what are my opinions. I am a committed man. . . . I come among you a Protestant and Evangelical Bishop of the Church of England, but I do not come among you the Bishop of any one particular party. I come with a desire to hold out the right hand to all loyal Churchmen, by whatever name they are known, holding at the same time my own opinions determinedly."

The last is from a letter of Ruskin, whom the Bishop has survived so short a while; it is valuable as giving expression to the universal conviction that Ryle's greatest work was done through the medium of the oft-despised tract:

"I forgot to say that the pleasantest and most useful reading I know on nearly all religious questions whatever are Ryle's tracts. They are not professedly doctrinal, but chiefly exhortative; the doctrine, however, comes in incidentally, very pure and clear."

