

LOCAL SKETCHES.

Papers Historical and Descriptive of Chesham and Neighbourhood.

By R. S. DOWNS,

Author of "Local Names of Bucks," "Medmenham Abbey," "History of Hughenden," "Curiosities of Local History," "Ecclesiastical Records of Great Marlow," &c., &c.

XXIII. CHESHAM BOIS.

A walk of a little over a mile and a half from Chesham will bring the pedestrian to Chesham Bois Church. The road leads across the Moor, where a Mission Church has recently been erected, passes under the Metropolitan Railway, and thence turns to the left up the steep side of the hill, on the summit of which stands the parish church and the remains of the once famous manor house. The village, which is a very small one, is about half a mile further on. The area of the parish is a trifle over 900 acres; and the population is not much above 200.

The last member of the name of this parish is derived from the forest that once covered this part of the country—Bois being a softened form of the name, derived from the Low-Latin *boscus*, a wood, the origin of which is, perhaps, to be sought for in the old French *bois*. This part of Chesham would thus come to be designated in *bosco*, or Chesham in the Wood, to distinguish it from that portion of the parish situated at the foot of the hills, on the more level ground, which had already been cleared and brought into cultivation. A family named De Bosco held the manor in the 12th century, but in the next century the word had become softened into Bois or Boyse, and this pronunciation has continued to the present day. Thus it would appear highly probable that a kind of etymological interchange took place between the locality and the lords of the manor, the family in the first instance deriving its name, De Bosco, from the place, and then the place in its turn borrowing its distinguishing appellation, Bois, from the family. There is a village in Epping Forest, called Theydon Bois, which, doubtless, obtained the latter part of its name in a similar manner.

In connection with Bosco I may refer to another place-name which has undoubtedly a similar Low-Latin, or Norman-French origin. Boscobel, so well known as the site of the friendly oak that sheltered Charles II from the pursuit of his enemies, derived its name from its beautiful situation on a moderate elevation, and the agreeable woods that lay round the house. The syllable added on to Bosco being the old French *belle*, beautiful.

Chesham Bois is one of those local names in which the personal and family element has almost entirely superseded, in common usage, the original designation. Thus we find people living in the neighbourhood speaking of going to Bois, of Bois Common, Bois Church, and so forth.

The history of this manor for some little time subsequent to Domesday Survey, seems to be involved in obscurity, and it is not until we come to the reign of King John, above a century later, when it was held by the family of De Bosco, that any distinct and satisfactory traces of its owners can be found. In that reign William de Bosco was lord of the manor of Chesham Bois, and he presented to the church, in 1216, the first rector whose name has been handed down to the present day.

This is about all I have been able to gather respecting this family. The name is met with in the northern part of Bucks and in Gloucestershire, but I have been unable to trace any connection between the family associated with those localities and that holding Chesham Bois. But since they might possibly belong to the same family I will just state briefly what is known of them.

In the reign of Henry I the Manor of Biddleaden, lying at the extreme northern verge of the county, was bestowed by Robert de Bellamont, Earl of Leicester, upon his steward, Ernald de Bosco, who in 1147 founded a Cistercian Abbey there. The same Ernald also possessed Ebbington in Gloucestershire, and his family held it for several generations. Another Ernald de Bosco died seized of that manor in 1276, and his son, John de Boyse, also possessed it. Within the Conventual Church, and the extensive burial-ground which once surrounded it, were interred many of the principal benefactors of Biddleaden Abbey, and among them was William de Boys, who died in 1313, and was reported to have wrought many miracles at the time of his decease.

The manor of Chesham Bois appears to have passed by marriage from the family of De Bois to that of Chesham. In 1446 Sir Thomas Cheyne became possessed of the Manor and advowson, according to some accounts by purchase, but more probably in right of his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Chesham, Knt., and widow of Sir Thomas Penyston, lord of Hawridge, to which he succeeded in right of his wife. Another account describes it as having been intermediately in the family of Widdow, citizens of London, who exercised the right of patronage by presenting to the church from 1392 to 1418. They disposed of the estate in the reign of Henry VI, when it was purchased by Sir Thomas Cheyne, who married the daughter of Sir John Chesham and relict of Sir John Penniston, called in this account Eleanor, and had issue John, who died in March, 1459, whose son and heir, likewise called John, who was heir to his great uncle, Sir John, who died without issue in 1458, married Elizabeth, daughter of Edmund Brudenell, Esq., of Baans, and died in 1496.

But whichever account we adopt, it remains that the manor passed by female heirs from the De Bois to the Cheshams and from them to the Cheynes. This once powerful and opulent family came to an end on the decease of William Cheyne, Viscount Newhaven, without male issue in 1728, and his widow bequeathed the manor to Lady Gower. About 1738, John, Lord Gower, sold it to the Duke of Bedford, whose family still retains it with the exception of the advowson, which the present Duke has disposed of to private trustees.

The site of the manor-house, a short distance to the south of the church, has no doubt been occupied as the residence of the lords of the Manor from the time, when the Saxon owner erected his homestead on the summit of the hill, through successive generations down to the period when it became one of the principal mansions of the Cheynes. The old manor house has long since disappeared, but the residence now known as Bois House occupies a portion of the site of the former mansion, which was a structure of great extent and importance. The

site was moated, and in a very dry summer the direction of the walls and other buildings can be distinctly traced in the meadow adjoining the present house, while foundations and portions of masonry have been met with occasionally while digging in the garden. With a little trouble and care the position and extent of the old mansion of the Cheynes might be pretty accurately traced. There were formerly some buildings near the road which have likewise disappeared, but of which the foundations still exist. The manor house was occasionally the residence of other families besides those possessing the manorial estate.

BOIS CHURCH.

Bois Church, if not originally a private chapel of the old lords of the manor, was undoubtedly erected contiguous to the old mansion, if not actually adjoining it, and, like many others similarly placed, was built and endowed by some former owner of the estate, who, on account of the place not having been in earlier times a separate parish, as it is now reckoned to be, claimed for the church certain privileges and exemptions, on behalf of which they appear to have been able to make out a good case; but of this I shall speak more fully later.

This is one of the four parish churches in Buckinghamshire dedicated to St. Leonard, whose festival is celebrated on November 6th. St. Leonard was born at Le Mans in France. He studied Divinity under Remigius, bishop of Limoges. He is reckoned the patron saint of prisoners, especially of those immured for conscience' sake, because he obtained from King Clodoveus the favour that all prisoners whom he visited should be set free. When, therefore, he heard of any persons being confined on account of religion, or any other good cause, he would go and see them, and thus procure their liberation. He died in the year 500.

In an old poem enumerating the various saints who were invoked for different objects, I find the following reference to this matter:—

But Leonard of the prisoners doth the bandes asunder pull,
And breakes the prison doores and chaines, wherewith
his church full.

(Barnabe Googe, "Popish Kingdoms," 1570.)

Also "If we were sycke of the pestilence we run to
Sainte Anne; if of the ague, to Saint Pernel, or
Master John Shorne; if men were in prison, they cried
to St. Leonard."

(Michael Wodde's Dialogue, 1554.)

St. Leonard likewise figured in old charms as in the following verse:—

With hi saynes of Saynt Germaine.
I wyl be so determyne,
That neyther fox nor vermyne
Shall do my chykens harme.

For your goose sake Saynt Legarde,
And for your duckes Saynt Leonarde,
For hares sake Moyne yards,
There is no better charme.

(Bale's Interlude, 1562.)

St. Leonard was the patron saint of locksmiths as well as of prisoners.

Bois Church is a small ancient edifice, the oldest portion dating back to the 13th century, but the principal part of the building as it now stands is a century later. The following is the account of this church given in "The Ecclesiastical and Architectural Topography of England," published in 1849. "OHESHAM BOIS, St. Leonard. Chancel and nave, with a modern vestry on the north side, and a modern tower at the west end. The Chancel has an Early English triplet at the east end. The nave is decorated with very good two-light windows; those on the north side are arranged in pairs, each pair being on a lower level than the other. On each side of the chancel-arch is a smaller arch, also leading to the chancel. Font modern; pulpit curious. There are some remains of painted glass of the fourteenth century, and several brasses. There are engravings of the window and doorway in Brandon's Analysis of Gothic Architecture, of the Painted Glass in Lysons; and the brass of Robert and Elizabeth Cheyne, 1552, in Lipscomb, Vol. III. p. 265."

In the introduction to the Buckinghamshire part of this work, Ohesham Bois Church is instanced as one of the best examples of Decorated Gothic to be found in the lower part of the county. The two smaller arches, communicating with chancel, were formed in 1823.

The churebyard is entered under a pointed 13th century arch which was formerly in the church, where it had formed the centre one of the three arches leading from the nave into the chancel. This was removed from its original position and re-erected, where it now stands, at the last restoration, because on account of its narrow proportions it intercepted the view of the east end of the church from the body of the building. The desire to preserve it as a relic of the church was a good one, and much to be commended; but it certainly does not give me an idea of being able to stand the assaults of

time and weather for any great number of years, and already presents some signs of decay. The churchyard is large, and does not contain a great number of monuments or tombs. The parish is exceedingly healthy, and the interments few and far between. There are two old yew trees here. John Cheyne was buried in this churchyard in 1496, but there is no memorial to him. Here is also interred the Rev. Charles Blackman, for twenty-six years Rector of this parish, who died July 27, 1868.

To be Continued.

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XXIV. BOIS CHURCH.

On approaching the church the first thing that arrests the attention of a stranger is the unusual position of the tower, which is placed on the south side of the church, near the west end, and its lower stage is made to do duty for a porch to the south door. The former tower, erected in the 17th century, stood, until 1881, in the accustomed place at the west end of the nave, but not having been very substantially built, and the beams in the stone-work having become decayed, it was deemed expedient at the recent restoration of the fabric to remove it altogether.

The present tower contains the same three bells that were in the old one. The oldest bell is inscribed:—"Sancte Andrea ora pro nobis"—in Gothic letters; the second—"O'handler made me 1705"; the other one has neither date nor inscription. The bell loft is reached somewhat awkwardly by an iron ladder, there being no structural steps in the tower.

In the head of the west window, which is of three lights, are portions of stone-work remaining from a former window, that had long been built up, probably ever since the erection of the old tower, but these remnants were discovered and preserved when the church was restored. Running across the west end of the nave before the recent restoration there was a gallery, enlarged in 1823, which has been very properly removed.

The church originally consisted of a nave and chancel only, but the north wall has been pierced, and an arcade of five arches, supported on circular pillars, now communicates with the newly added aisle on that side; the tracery of the three windows in the aisle being the same as was in the old windows, formerly in the north wall of the nave. On the south door is a board conveying the information that "the Incorporated Society for building, &c., churches granted £40 A.D. 1881, towards enlarging and restoring this church. All seats are for the free use of the parishioners according to law."

The roof of the nave is supported on stone corbels representing angels, some bearing shields, others scrolls. An exception, however, must be made in the case of the one at the east end of the nave near the chancel arch, which, apparently, is intended to represent the founder or builder of the church.

The pulpit, dating from the early part of the 17th century, is of oak, panelled and carved. The present base is formed out of the old sounding board, and in the wall on the north side of the pulpit is the ancient iron frame in which the hour glass formerly stood. The piece of carved oak now forming the back of the priest's stall was a portion of the pulpit. The lights of all the windows except that over the altar are bordered with a deep red, which I cannot say I admire. It has a common-place appearance, and an unpleasant effect upon the eyes.

The chancel is entered by a lofty arch erected at the last restoration in the place of the one now at the entrance of the churchyard, as already described. Some of the beams and the corbels here retain a good deal of their ancient colouring. The two central corbels on either side are busts of angels bearing shields, containing the coat of arms of the Cheyne family. The other two corbels on the south side are heads of bishops wearing mitres; on the north, the one in the west angle is similar to that on the other side of the chancel arch in the nave, only coloured instead of plain; that in the angle at the east end on the same side is intended for a female—maybe the wife of the bearded gent just referred to. On the splay of the north chancel window is cut "C.H. 1672." The walls in this part of the building appear at one time to have been coloured.

The east window is of three lights, and contains some fragments of the 14th century glass. The four hands above the Cheyne coats of arms were removed from the cusped head of the window in the north side of the chancel. Along the base of the lights run the words—"He saith, yea, I come quickly, Amen; come, Lord Jesus." The lights of this window and the portions of ancient glass which it contains are framed with bands of bright blue, which does not add to its effectiveness. On the east wall of the chancel are the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. The two sanctuary chairs here were made from portions of the old west gallery, and the carved heads of the altar rails are remnants of the same. In front of the Holy Table are some ancient tiles, probably dating from the 13th century. The chancel is on the same level as the nave, and the altar is only elevated one step from the floor, which detracts much from the appearance of the building, when viewed from the lower end.

The font is new, and was presented to the church at the restoration by the Rector of Amerham, the former one, now preserved at the rectory, being cracked and useless. The old metal almsdish is inscribed:—"The parish of Chesham Bois. John Batehlor, church warden, 1731." The two at present in use are specimens of the wooden ware of the district, and were given by the late Mr. John Pontin. They are inscribed:—"Bois church, restored 1881." On the south wall of the nave is a hatchment of the late Benjamin Fuller, Esq., of Germans, Chesham.

In a double oak frame, hanging in the vestry, are two coffin plates that were dug up by the sexton during the time that the work of restoration was going on. On one plate is inscribed, "John Pittman, Esqr. (late Capt. in His Majesty's navy). Obt. 8 May, 1752, Aetat. 64." A square box was found at the foot of the grave, supposed to have contained the official dress of the deceased captain, and was re-interred.

The other plate is inscribed:—"Mrs Euphemia Norris, Dyed at Newchatle, in Switzerland, the 3d day of December, 1756." This lady was interred at Chesham Bois a little over eight months after the date of her death as recorded above.

On the north side of the sanctuary there is a large altar-tomb, and above it, on the wall, is a tablet bearing the following inscription:—

XPS MIHI VITA ET MORIS MIHI IVERVM.

HVMATVS HIC IACET JOHANNES CHEYNE ARMIGER, QUI IN TESTIMONIUM SOLI DEI VERBIS DEI EVANGELIUM IN ECCLESIA DE TRINGA, FUNDAVIT PIUM PREDICATOREM EVANGELII SVMPPTIBVS PROPRIIS ANNUATI STIPENDII XLIIII. PRO TERMINO LXXXXIX. ANNOVRVM, ET IN FRATERNAM CHARITATEM VERBIS PILATIMVS PAVPERES PROFESSORIS CIVIDOM DONAVIT PAROCHIA DE AYLSBURY, WENDOVER, BECONSFELDE, MISSENDEN MAGNA, BYRNHAM ET DUNHAM, ANNATIM XLII. DENTATE DICTO TERMINO ET IN PERPETVVM DONAVIT SIMILITER PAROCHIA DE CHESHAM, AMERSHAM, TRINGA, ET DRYTON BEAUCHAMPE, ET ISTIS PARVVS PAROCHIA XXII. ET CHOLDSBURY XXII. POSTERITATI SVB EXEMPLVM ET DECORVM.

NON OBIT SED ABIT

NOVEMBRIS I, ANNO DNI 1585.

Since there may be many persons to whom the above inscription is unintelligible, I subjoin a translation into English:—

To me to live is Christ, to die is gain. Here lies interred John Cheyne, Knight, who in testimony of his zeal towards the Gospel of God established in the church of Tring a devout preacher of the Gospel at his own proper charges, at a yearly salary of £80, for the term of 50 years, and in brotherly love towards the most godly poor of the same parishes. He gave to the parishes of Aylesbury, Wendover, Beconsfield, Great Missenden, Burnham, and Dunham, 40s. yearly during the said term; and in perpetuity he gave in like manner

to the parishes of Chesham, Amersham, Tring, and Drayton Beauchamp, and to this small parish, 20s. as an example and pattern to his posterity. Not dead but gone before. November 1st, in the year of our Lord, 1585.

On the floor, inside the altar-rails, is this inscription on a large slab:—"Here lyeth interred the bodie of Mrs. Anne Cheyne, one of the daughters of the Right worth Sir William Fleetwood, Knight, and late wife to the worth Francis Cheyne, Esq., by whome shee had issue 4 sonnes, viz, William, Francis, Charles, and John. Shee departed this life vppon the 25th day of May, Anno Dni, 1630, aged 24 years."

There are two other slabs near to the memory of the Gilmore and Darrell families, partly hidden by the altar rails. On the south side a mural tablet bears the following inscription:—"Sacred to the memory of the Reverend Thomas Clarke, B.A., twenty-seven years Rector of this parish. He was an able, a learned, and a holy man; always abounding in the work of the Lord in his parish, in his ministry, in his school, wherein he trained up

many, whose praise has since been in all the churches. He was a burning and a shining light, doing the work of an Evangelist in season and out of season, that all might repent and be converted unto God; and after a life and conversation becoming the Gospel, full of zeal and brotherly love, and clothed with humility, died before many witnesses to his faith and patience, a blessed, although a painful death, on the 4th of October, 1793, aged 74. He was buried with his family beneath the stone at the entrance to this his house of prayer, waiting the resurrection of the redeemed, this monument being erected from an affectionate and reverent sense of duty to his name by a few of his surviving scholars A.D. 1831. Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus—2 Tim., I, 13."

The vault referred to is in the church-yard covered with a slab thus inscribed:—"In the vault beneath rest the bodies of the Rev. Thomas Clarke, Rector of this parish and resident in it, in all things showing himself a pattern of good works, from 1766 to 1793. Of his son and daughter, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; Thomas, who died March 20, 1795, aged 25, and Mary, the wife of the Rev. J. H. Swain, who died July, 1786, aged 35; and of Anne, his widow, who died trusting in God, and continuing in supplications and prayers, January 12, 1810, aged 61. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, whence thy victory? I Cor. xv. 55."

Over the window in the north wall of the chancel is a neat marble tablet by Nock and Pearce, of London, thus inscribed:—"Sacred to the memory of Henry Garrett Key, Esq., of Blackwell Hall, Chesham, who died September 17th, 1853, aged 77. Also of Mary, widow of the above H. G. Key, Esq., who died Nov. 14, 1861, aged 74 years."

ERRATUM.—I regret that through an oversight a mistake occurred in the last number of these Sketches. The population of Chesham Bois was therein stated to be about 200: it should have read—At the last census the population was 351; it is now nearly 500, and rapidly increasing.

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XXV.—BOIS CHURCH (continued).

On a mural tablet on the south side of the chancel:—"In memory of the Revd. James Stevens, M.A., late Rector of this parish, (eldest son of James Stevens, Esqre., of Farnham, Surry) Ob. Octr. 2nd. 1843. *Æt* 35."

But the most interesting memorials of the dead in this church are the brasses in the floor of the chancel. One of them is commemorative of an infant, who is represented in a shroud confined by the bands of a chrysom cloth, ornamented with crosses. Beneath the figure in old English letters is the following inscription:—"Of Rog' Lee, gentilma' here lyeth the son' Benedict Lee chrysom whos soules ih'u p'do'." ("Of Roger Lee, gentleman, here lyeth the sonne, Benedict Lee, chrysome, whose soules Jesu pardon.")

The word Chrysom signifies properly speaking the ointment with which children were formerly anointed at their baptism, but it was also applied to the white cloth placed on the child's head at the same time, and which consequently came to be designated the chrysom cloth. If the child died within a month of its Baptism it was customary to shroud it in its chrysom cloth for burial, but if it survived it was usual to bring it to the church, when the churching of the infant's mother took place. Benedict Lee died in 1542, and from his being represented in his chrysom cloth we may safely infer that he deceased before he had been christened a month.

Another brass, from which the figure has been torn, has this inscription beneath the matrix:—"All Ohrestian people gyve Thanks to the Lorde for the Godly dep'ture of Wenefride, daughter to the late Lorde Mordant, and wyfe to John Cheyne Esquyer, who deceased the viii th day of July in the yere of or. Lorde MCCCCXLII, whose Soule we comende to God's infinite mercy."

Another also contains a couple of well executed brasses, inscribed:—"All christian people gyve thanke for the godly dep'ture of Robert Cheyne, Esquier, who deceased the nynthe daye of December in the yere of or. Lorde God a thousand fyve hundredth fyfte too, whose soule we comende to God's infinite mercy."

Also:—"Of yor. Charitie pray for the soule of Elizabeth Cheyne late the wyf of Robert Cheyne, Gentilman, the which Elizabeth deceased the xi day of December the yer of or. Lord MCCCCXVI, on whose soule J'hu have mercy. Ame'."

These two figures are so placed on the slab as though space had been reserved for a third figure. It will be noticed that the lady died in 1516, her husband in 1552, and it is probable that her effigy and inscription were then placed upon the slab. The man's figure may have been either then or soon after affixed during his lifetime—no uncommon occurrence—and room left for a second wife, should he marry again. A similar arrangement is met with in other instances.

The Rectory of Chesham Bois was rated in the King's Book at £5 6s. 8d.; certified value £50 9s.; yearly tenths 10s. 8d. The income of the living seems to have been so completely swallowed up, that when the advowson had passed into the Cheyne family, the patron took upon himself the whole expense of providing for the minister and maintaining the fabric of the church, and thenceforth there were no institutions, although the ministers were sometimes called Rectors, but the church was considered and admitted to be a Donative of peculiar and exempt jurisdiction.

When Archdeacon Olagett in 1728 issued his citation to the minister and churchwardens to appear at his visitation, Lady Cheyne resisted the exercise of such authority, of which the annexed correspondence is illustrative.

"To the Minister and Churchwardens of the Parish of Chesham Bois in the County of Buckingham, and Diocese of Lincoln.

"The Archdeacon intending to be personally attending your parish church, Saturday, being the one and twentieth of September, 1728, expects your meeting him there, and having in readiness a paper signed by the Incumbent and churchwardens, containing an account of the several vestments and vessels belonging to your parish church, and of the several benefactions towards the Repairs, Utensils, and Ornaments of the same. James Garland, Apparitor."

Letter of the Lady, Viscountess Cheyne, to the Archdeacon, delivered to him by Mr. Robertshaw, Rector of Amersham:—"Rev'd. Sir,—I have received information of your intention of coming to Chesham Bois Parish Church on Saturday next, and of your requiring the Minister of that place, and churchwardens to meet you there, with an account in writing of the several books, vestments, and vessels belonging to the church, and of the several benefactions towards the Repairs, Utensils, and Ornaments of the same. In regard to that respect which I bear personally to you, and with intent to do that honour to my deceased Lord, which he abundantly deserved on account of that decent and ample provision which he always made, and of the great care he always took out of his own munificence to repair and ornament the church, and provide all things necessary for the celebration of Divine Service there, I have desired Mr. Jones, the present minister, to meet you there, and shew you the several particulars, in which his lordship has been benefactor to such his church. And I, at the same time require Mr. Jones, with all decency and respect to you, Mr. Archdeacon, to enter my own and his Protestation, to prevent any prejudice that may by his appearance arise to that just privilege and exemption, from all Visitations, Archidiaconal, and Episcopal, and Jurisdiction thereto relating, which my late lord and his ancestors from time immemorial, always laid claim to and enjoyed, and from which I shall never consent to depart."

The Protest:—"Whereas, a printed paper, directed to the Minister and Churchwardens of the Parish Church of Chesham Bois in the County of Buckingham, and Diocese of Lincoln, importing a Citation or Summons for them to be personally present on Saturday, the 21st of September, 1728, at the Parish Church there, with an account in writing signed by the Incumbent and Churchwardens of the several Books, Vestments, and Vessels belonging to the said Church, and of the several benefactions towards the Repairs, Utensils, and Ornaments of the same: Now, I, William Jones, Minister of the said church, and I, John Grover, Churchwarden of the said church and parish, in the name of the Right Honourable, the Lady Dowager, Viscountess Cheyne, and of ourselves respectively, protest and declare, that we do now adhere to and insist upon such Privilege and Exemption from all and every act and acts of Visitation, Archidiaconal and Episcopal, and all Jurisdiction thereto relating, as has been claimed and enjoyed by the late Right

Honourable, the Lord Viscount Cheyne, and his ancestors, from time immemorial; and under this our Protestation, and saving of all the Rights, Privileges, and Exemptions of the said church, and as the Minister and the same belonging and appertaining, and not otherwise. We present ourselves before the Archdeacon, in order to satisfy any legal or reasonably enquiry that may be expected from us."

Memorandum :—" That upon the Archdeacon receiving my Lady Cheyne's letter, he declared that he did not come to invade the right of my Lady Cheyne, and did not insist upon having an account in writing, as in the summons required; and further said he had oft-n heard of the decency and prettiness of the chapel; and therefore only desired to see it; upon which the protest was delivered, and he was shewn the chapel."

I may add here another memorandum, dated 1821 :—" In consequence of a dispute respecting the right of the Rector nominating his own churchwarden, which right was denied by a few of the parishioners, it was finally agreed that the Rector had the appointment of his own churchwarden, and another was this year appointed for and on behalf of the parish.

" Robert George Spedding, of Bois Cottage, Esq., was nominated and appointed by the Rector, and Thomas Page, of Mayhall, was nominated and appointed by the parish.

" Robt. Holt Butcher, Rector.

" Matthew Stalker, Curate."

(To be continued).

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XIV. RECTORS OF CHESHAM BOIS.

William de Risenbergha, presented by William de Bosco, Knt., to the chapel of St. Leonard, Chesham, 1246.

Hugh.

Thomas de Parva Linford, instituted Nov. 18, 1295, on presentation by Thomas de Hanvill.

John de Parva Linford, instituted May 14, 1330.

John de Waterfall, presented March, 1365, by Peter de Breceux.

Walter de Weston, presented Sept. 14, 1367.

William Gerveys, presented Aug. 10, 1392, by John Winslow, Lord of Chesham Bois.

John Martin, presented Oct. 9, 1393, exchanged for the Vicarage of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, with

John Lach, admitted March 15, 1394, but exchanged for St. Lawrence, Bradwell, with

Thomas Aldeburgh, Jan. 30, 1395.

John Neel, died in 1417.

Richard Wapounde, Nov. 17, 1417.

William Harvey, called Chaplain of Chesham Bois; resigned July 18, 1418.

Robert Selatter, chaplain, 1521.

William Salisbury, occurs in 1534.

Thomas Thomas, 1570.

Robert Heron or Herne, occurs in 1598 and 1605. Buried here Aug. 31, 1606.

Philip Edmunds, 1608; buried here.

Holland Brandreth, succeeded in 1638.

Mr. Whitby was in possession of living in 1650.

John Howe, died and buried here in 1661.

Richard Chase, B.D., held the living in 1662, and 1666; he took out a license March 30, 1667. He was also Rector of Stone in Kent, 1650.

John Hughes, instituted Feb. 7, 1677; died in 1704.

William Jones, presented 1704; occurs in 1740.

John Ball, A.B., of Trinity College, Oxford; presented by John, Duke of Bedford, and was inducted into the Rectory, &c., by his father, the Rev. John Ball, Vicar of Great Chesham, April 11th, 1741, in the presence of Walter Griffin, John Batchelor, and John Shedman, inhabitants of Chesham Bois.

Edward Emily, A.M., presented July 3, 1767, by Francis, Marquis of Tavistock. He was of Trinity College, Cambridge, A.B. 1672, A.M. 1765; also vicar of Chesham Woburn, and Chesham Leicester.

Thomas Clarke, B.A., 1766; died and was buried here Oct. 7, 1793, and his tablet is in the chancel.

Robert Holt Butcher, presented in 1793; died in August, 1822; also Vicar of Chesham Leicester. He was non-resident, and the following clergymen are mentioned in the Register as the officiating ministers at marriages during his incumbency, viz., John Shepherd, on October 20, 1793; Thomas Parkins, Nov. 9, 1793; Thomas Gent, Dec. 28, 1794, and April 15, 1795; John Simpson, who was also Curate-in-charge of St. Mary's, Chesham, occurs June 7, 1797, Nov. 5, 1798, May 4, 1799, and Jan. 29, 1801; John Tottenham O'Keiffe, July 25, 1799, and Dec. 28, 1800; James Samuel Pous, Nov. 9, 1802; Matthew Stalker, June 16, 1803, who remained Curate till 1830.

William Morris, presented in 1822, and died in July, 1824; also Rector of Chenies.

John Wing, presented in 1824, resigned this living and that of Chenies in 1830.

Hon. Lowther Barrington, presented June 8, 1830; he vacated this living July 15, 1839, and was preferred to Watton, Herts, which he recently resigned.

James Stevens, presented July 17, 1839; died Oct. 2, 1843; buried here, and his monument is in the chancel.

Charles Blackman, who had been Curate about nine months previously, presented in 1843, died July 27, 1868, and his monument is in the churchyard.

Joseph Matthews, the present Rector, was instituted Sept. 22, 1868.

The following "Lines on Chesham Bois Church and its surrounding scenery," by John Birch, published in 1872, by Reading and Son, Chesham, are given here, as it is thought that many persons will welcome the opportunity afforded them of thus obtaining a copy of the verses. The title-page is ornamented by a small photographic illustration of the church as it appeared before its restoration, taken from the south side. The lines are prefaced by a brief introduction by the Rev. Bryant Burgess, Rector of Latimer, giving an outline of the history of the church and manor.

"The little Church of Chesham Bois, nestled among the beech woods of the Chiltern Hills, was doubtless founded at a very remote period, probably as a chapel to the Mansion, which stood in the adjoining meadow.

"The family of De Bosco, or De Bois, taking its name, it would seem, from the great wood, which crowned the hill, is the first to which the Manor can be distinctly traced. William de Bosco was lord of the parish A.D. 1246.

"Thomas Cheyne, who was imprisoned for a time as a Lollard in the Tower, in 1446—(this date is incorrect, as he was set at liberty before 1416; it should read 1414)—became possessed of the Manor and Advowson of Chesham Bois, probably in right of his wife, who was the daughter of Sir John Chesham, Knight.

"The famous family of the Cheynes, also of Chenies and Drayton Beauchamp, continued to occupy the mansion of Chesham Bois.

"The Church (St. Leonard) consists of a chancel and nave, with tower at the west end. It has an Early English triplet window at the east end, and some good windows in the south wall. There is a curious carved oak pulpit, and the iron stand of the hour glass, used in Puritan times, remains.

"Lysons, in his history of the county, published at the beginning of this century, says, "In the Church of Chesham Bois are some small windows in the style of the 14th century, consisting of tracery and coats of arms;" and one of the windows in the north side of the nave is well figured in this work, some of the glass of which is now placed in the east window.

"In the chancel are brass effigies of Robert Cheyne, Esquire, who died in 1552, and Elizabeth his wife, who died in 1516. The former is represented in complete armour.

"The inscriptions indicate the change of doctrine respecting prayers for the dead, which occurred in the memorable interval between the husband and wife. The memorial of Robert Cheyne was executed in all probability under the direction of his son John, who became an active promoter of the Reformed Religion.

"There is a remarkable brass also in the chancel of a 'Chrisome child,' that is, a child who died while still clad in the Chrisome, or baptismal robe. This is a memorial of the family of Lee.

"There is an altar-tomb without inscription, which has, carved upon it, the Insignia of the Order of the Garter, probably in memory of a distinguished member of the Cheyne family."

LINES.

1.
Friends, in a meadow very nigh
An ancient church doth stand,—
It is the church of Chesham Bois,
Although not very grand.

2.
Her broken spire we plain can see,
Her ancient clock behold.
Ah! many a storm has o'er her passed,
There many a knell has tolled.

3.
And many a time the bells have chimed
Upon the Sabbath days,
To call us to the House of Prayer,
The Saviour's name to praise.

4.
All her bells but number three,
And they are very old;
But they call us to the Church,
To hear the Gospel told.

5.
All her walls are very thick,
And yet decaying fast;
Oh! may she ere long be restored,
That so she long may last.

6.
Her pointed windows they are small,
But still they give us light,
The Holy Lessons for to read
At morning, noon, and night.

7.
Here many a bird has found her rest
Beneath this sacred roof,
Until the autumn season came,
And then they all forsook.

8.
Unto their native land they go,
Across the mighty main,
Until the summer season comes,
Then they return again.

9.
Upon this little church they've sat
To sing their morning song,
And 'neath its sacred shelter they
Have often reared their young.

10.
This ancient House of God was built
By mortal hands like ours;
They all are gone, and we must go—
We cannot tell the hour!

11.
Since her foundations deep were laid,
Five hundred years have passed,
But they must soon repaired be,
If she is still to last.

12.
Those noble yews do ornament
The graves they stand among;
From year to year they stand secure
'Midst wind, and rain, and storm.

13.
When in this House of God we go,
We'll look upon our right;
The Offertory Box we see:
Let us cast in our mite.

14.
The little Font we next may see,
That stands upon our left,
Where many an infant's been baptized,
And will be baptized yet.

15.
The royal Coat of Arms we see
Before the Chancel hang:
Let all of us true loyalty be
Unto both God and man.

16.
How handsome the carved pulpit looks,
Close by the Vestry door,
Where stands the minister to preach
Both to the rich and poor.

17.
Her grand old Chancel, Tablets too
In honour of the dead;
That ornamental window light,
Where the Commands are read.

18.
The little lamps, they give us light,
When darkness gathers round,
And we can sing hymns of praise,
No fears of being found.

19.
As when in ages long gone by,
They met in secret here,
Their Psalms they sang with lowly tune,
They read and prayed in fear.

20.
Let us true reverence always pay,
When, in this House of God,
We sit and hear, and learn the way—
The path the Saviour trod.

21.
Let us remember when we go
Into this House of Prayer,
The blessed Gospel there is preached,
We each and all may share.

22.
The tombs that in and round her lie
The tale of death do tell;
How many here have been interred
At call of funeral knell.

23.
In her graveyard there doth lie
The dust of rich and poor,
Where one and all will silent be
Till Time's declared no more.

24.
Around this little church we see
The scenery's very grand;
Now the beechen woods are fallen
We can survey the land.

25.
Once woods around this ancient pile
Hid it from curious view;
Now open is the space; the ground
Is broken by the plough.

26.
The green-clad hills that round her rise,
Are pleasant to the eye;
The flowing river's rippling rills
Delight the passer-by.

27.
And people come from far and near
Our little church to see;
Some thither come to worship God,
Some from curiosity.

28.
Bois House, and pretty Dairy-house Farm
Close by our Church do stand;
Latimer Park, and Chenies Church,
Though distant, both look grand.

29.
The Rectory of Chesham Bois
Some half mile is away,
It is a comely edifice,
Saved lately from decay.

30.
These few lines have been composed
With a view to helping on
The day school that has been enlarged
To educate the young.

J. B.

(To be continued).

LOCAL SKETCHES.

Papers Historical and Descriptive of Chesham and Neighbourhood,

By R. S. DOWNS,

Author of "Local Names of Bucks," "Medmenham Abbey," "History of Hughenden," "Curiosities of Local History," "Ecclesiastical Records of Great Marlow," &c., &c.

XVII.—CHESHAM BOIS.—CONTINUED.

THE REV. THOMAS CLARKE.

These sketches are intended, as their title indicates, to be chiefly historical; but the great and good men of long ago, and those of more recent times too, are in reality the makers of history; therefore it is that history and biography should go together. History records the events of the past; biography makes us acquainted with chief personages who lived in that past, and took a leading part in the direction and development of those events. History and biography are thus nearly related to each other; the one puts the play on the boards, the other individualizes the performers, shows the motives which influenced them, and points out the effects that followed their actions. Local topography happily may be made to combine these two departments of an enquiry into the past, and while recounting the history of any particular place it is always well to interweave with it an account of those who by their noble deeds or bright examples have left an impress for good upon the spot with which their names have become associated.

"He who calls departed ages back again into being," says the learned Niebuhr, "enjoys a bliss like that of creating." History can do this, but biography is capable of accomplishing more. It can recall departed goodness, bring again before us the unselfish and saintly life, held up to our gaze a pattern worthy of imitation, show us deeds that have made the world better than it otherwise would have been, and by example give us all encouragement, if not to go and do likewise, at least to go and do better than we have before. No one but the most callous can live in a place with which the name of a good and saintly man is connected without being insensibly influenced thereby, and it is with much satisfaction that I am able to place before my readers the following account of one whose memory is so justly cherished at Chesham Bois as a true Christian, a ripe scholar, and a faithful minister of the church.

I am very pleased to be able, owing to the exceeding kindness of the Rector of Chesham Bois, the Rev. J. Matthews, to give a much fuller account of one who, for above a century, has been considered the glory of this parish, than I otherwise should have been able to do.

Mr. Matthews has been good enough to send me a small book, entitled "Some reminiscences of the days of a schoolboy in the last century," written by the late Dr. Rumsey, a physician of Amersham, and published in 1853. Dr. Rumsey was one of the many pupils of Mr. Clarke who rose to eminence, and as his "Reminiscences" has been for a long time out of print, and copies of it are very scarce, I thought at first of making such copious extracts from it as would not only supply an outline of Mr. Clarke's history, but show also what his daily life and conversation were. I intended to do this as far as possible in Dr. Rumsey's own words, but after consideration I have decided to present my readers with a reprint of the whole pamphlet, feeling that I cannot abridge it without, in some measure at least, spoiling its effectiveness. I am sure those who read it, remembering the local associations of both author and subject, will admit that no apology is needed for giving it in *extenso*.

The little work has on the outside cover a picture of Bois Church as it appeared before restoration, and inside it is illustrated with an engraving of Bois Rectory and School in Mr. Clarke's time.

It may, perhaps, render the reprint more acceptable if I prefix to it a list of those pupils of Mr. Clarke's who are mentioned in the book. I give them in the order in which they occur, and in cases where the name is not mentioned in the text, but the person only referred to, the name will be inserted, so that readers may know to whom reference is made.

The Rev. John Bishop, Chaplain of the Mercers' Company's Whittington College.

The Rev. T. T. Thomason, "so honourably known at Cambridge and then in India."

The Rev. Charles Jerram, Vicar of Witney.

The Rev. Nathaniel George Woodroffe, Vicar of Somerford-Keynes, Gloucestershire.

The Rev. Joseph Mendham, of Sutton Coldfield.

The Rev. William Rose, Rector of Beckenham.

The Rev. Basil Wodd.

The Rev. Stephen Langston.

The Rev. William Goode, father of the Revs. W. and F. Goode.

The Rev. J. S. Pratt, Prebendary of Peterborough.

The Rev. Mr. Stevenson, of Olney.

The Rev. Ambrose Serle.

The Rev. Edmund Beynon.

The Rev. Edward Burn, of Birmingham.

Sir Henry Blosset, Chief Justice of Bengal.

James Oldham Oldham, Esq.

J. R. Rumsey, M.D., of Amersham, and author of the "Reminiscences."

Dr. Rumsey was the son of a Dr. Rumsey, a surgeon practising at Chesham. He was educated at the school conducted by the Rev. Thomas Clarke, at Chesham Bois, and very early in life gave proofs of rising ability. Having completed his studies for the medical profession, he settled at Amersham, where he speedily acquired a reputation for his knowledge of diseases, and for his skill in treating them successfully. His practice became very extensive, and his fame increased with the advances of a long and useful career. His mind possessed a power of discrimination by which he almost intuitively arrived at a sound and accurate decision upon cases of the most complicated nature. His talents were not directed solely to the study of the healing art; but scientific and philosophical pursuits in other departments of learning were carefully and systematically taken in hand by him. Upon such matters he was a pleasant and agreeable companion, and no one could enter into conversation with him without being agreeably impressed with his extensive knowledge, and the originality of his remarks. He died very suddenly on the road between Amersham and Uxbridge. He had been out on professional duties, when his horses became somewhat restive. He accordingly alighted from his carriage with the intention of walking a short distance, but expired almost immediately, Feb. 27, 1824, in the 72nd year of his age.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF THE DAYS OF A SCHOOLBOY OF THE LAST CENTURY.

BY J. R.

A few years ago, the unexpected discovery of an old letter which was sent to me in the hope that I might be able to explain its very particular signature of "Jane Russell without hands," the letter being dated, although a long time back, from my birth place, and then still the place of my abode, I felt it to be not less than a duty to tell what I knew of "Janey Russell," as she had been familiarly called; who as it happened had taught me my letters. Her story was indeed remarkable, and the more for her happy connection with my present object, and their mutually strong association in

my mind; but I am not about to tell it again here, my mind being, after having long had such a thought, to tell all I can of my Schoolmaster, who also was a very remarkable man.

Of the first master, indeed, to whom I was sent after Jenny Russell, and of his school, I remember only that it was noisy, there being quite a crowd of boys, and a great deal of punishment generally going on in it, of which, and of the fixed and fierce look of that master, I have quite a picture in my mind, with something like the confusion in my ears, which there was between the up-stair and the down-stair school, the one being above the other. But having no good occasion to think any more of that part of my time, for I can hardly call it my education, I long to begin to talk of my real schoolmaster.

This was the Rev. Thomas Clarke, who was then, and for twenty-seven years, Rector of Chesham Bois, in Buckinghamshire, where he died a blessed death, in 1793. He was born in some part of Lancashire, in 1719; went to Oxford; and after taking the degree of B.A., at Brasen Nose College, became Curate of Amersham.

Of his first labours in the gospel at that place, not many particulars could now be collected; but enough has come down, even to this time, to associate a holy veneration with his name in the neighbourhood, whenever the state of religion, and of the church in that neighbourhood in those days, has been called to the recollection of the aged who knew, or of those who through them had heard of him. He preached, and he lived as they must who have been "moved by the Holy Ghost," (as all clergymen of the Church of England are very properly required to be) to "do the work of an Evangelist; to make full proof of the Ministry;" and he soon came to know that to "endure afflictions" is to be looked for as a part of that same sacred dedication and devotedness. Thirteen years, nevertheless, he continued to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," in that Cure; and then served the same blessed cause at Kippax, in Yorkshire.

The next and last of his movements was to the rural Rectory of Chesham-Bois, to which he was presented by the Duke of Bedford, in honourable and doubtless tender regard to the mind of his son, the Marquis of Tavistock, whom he had lately lost by a melancholy accident, and who had become acquainted with Mr. Clarke's character and circumstances. Happily indeed, it ought to be gratefully remembered, for Chesham-Bois, has the noble house of Russell then and since proved its considerate care there; and in true keeping were the considerate words of the last kind presentation, by the present Duke of Bedford, in 1843. And thus he was unexpectedly brought back to the very neighbourhood; for it was within a mile of Amersham, from which he had been in a very particular manner, and to the grief of many, removed.

That was indeed "a day of small things." And sharp to flesh and blood must have been sometimes what was perhaps not often then called persecution; Locke's common-sense argument being always, and especially in such times as our lot is cast in, too little recollected; to wit, that the principle is one and the same, whatever the penalty threatened; if only the interdiction of the most trivial supplies of the humblest tradesman to the needy, the stand should be made and kept, with its consequences. "We ought to obey God rather than man," being the only answer of the faithful in every such conflict, up to the faggots of Queen Mary. Alas! that we should again be, to all appearance, living into days when a Priest of Rome can, face to face, say, as it has just now been printed for our eyes to see, to a Minister of the Church of England; (let all who still have the Bible open in their own hands before them, observe the words) "I would not burn you now, because it would be just now inexpedient to do so, and would do much harm to our cause; but if we had the power—I wish that I had the power! I would kill every Protestant. Nothing but the punishment of death will ever do for heretics. This worked well while the Inquisition worked." "These sanguinary expressions he again and again used before we parted."

At Chesham-Bois, Mr. Clarke spent the rest of his life, the most active and the most important part of it; a life indeed to the last of as earnest occupation as could be put into the six days of the week, crowned with as much as the seventh could well admit of, and all in so calm and quiet a manner, that his whole aspect was rather that of inward contemplation than of engagement without; and a beautiful sight truly it was, as if nothing could have been more alive to the business in hand, whatever it might be; while something underneath, far better, silently waited for the uppermost place again.

And here I cannot but interpose another word or two of Chesham-Bois, before I pass on to say what I would fain leave behind me, of this my most dear master, seeing that no better hand has taken the pen for him. For "few and far between" as Mr. Clarke's grateful scholars have become, this very inadequate memorial may nevertheless perchance fall under an eye even now, here and there, which may gladden the thought of it;—of the old Rectory House, since swept away, because in truth it could stand no longer; of the green common, with its dells and its ponds, every one of them with its particular name, and difference, and interest, (without bounds, such as most school-boys are shut up in,) for our playground; and the school, humblest of all buildings for anything like learning. And there in his gown, something like a sign itself of ancient and master-like days, our master, venerable man! all emphasis, yet benign as a father among his children, teaching Latin and Greek in his own peculiar, conversational, companion-like manner; and in such a way, too, (unseemly pages always, as they easily may be, being passed over) that a boy of any classical capacity at all could hardly fail to get more or less of a classical taste, that surprisingly rare characteristic of after life, considering the plentifulness of provision for it.

(To be continued).

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XXVIII.—CHESHAM BOIS—CONTINUED.

But it was not of the school within, but of the scene without, I intended now to speak. Justly might one who, not far off, grew up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," "now to the grave gone down" in peace and hope, who could but now and then however have heard Mr. Clarke's school or domestic sermons, as they might be called, touching as they sometimes were to the quick of his juvenile auditory; justly might she observe when we were one day talking of him, as we generally did talk when, long years after, we occasionally met—"Yes! Mr. Clarke carried his religion into all the minute actions of life." For so indeed, as far as man might judge, assuredly he did; and so to his pupils, to his people, nay to the very world itself, which "cares for none of these things," he was made by the grace of God in such a measure "a burning and a shining light," that verily it may not seldom be discerned even unto this day. And what cannot be told, because it cannot be known, may yet notwithstanding be believed, even that as "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," the earnest cry of his soul for the sheep and the shepherd of that small fold in the days which were to come, ascended not in vain.

Again has his modest church, with devout thankfulness be it spoken, been filled with the glad sound of the gospel; and the voice of exhortation and prayer has been heard throughout that quiet scene, as it were from beneath his own mantle. More than half a century has passed over its farms and its cottages; upon the scene and them to whom dominion has in turn been given over it, since he, who while he sojourned there was ever about his divine Master's business, rested from his labours. And "I call you to witness," were among the farewell words, within the same walls, of one who could not be thought less, by any who had the happiness to know both, than a true successor of Mr. Clarke, though at such a distance of time, "I call you to witness, there is not one inhabitant of this parish, from the oldest to the youngest, capable of understanding, whom I have not privately admonished and solemnly warned." So spake, as he took leave of them, he who left the pulpit of one saint in no long time to fill that of another, then standing in the honoured place of Mr. Clarke, now in that of Mr. Bickersteth. May the Holy Spirit, and "the fruits of the Spirit," be with them who remain on the favoured ground, whether they teach or be taught, and with them whose lot has thus been cast henceforth in another part of the Lord's vineyard!

Most honoured friends: may they be so blessed in all their "meek and quiet path," that a still goodlier number may be added, who shall in their new home learn from both their lips and their lives what it is to "receive the truth in the love of it," walking accordingly.

Very graciously towards Bois (as commonly it was called in the days of Mr. Clarke), after thirty years or more of melancholy contrast, have its sacred ministrations been again ordered; for truly there has been nothing kept back "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Hopefully was soon filled again the sacred place, as it seemed for years to come; but then even once more in a little space to be made void; the heavenly light which shone along the path of the righteous so soon pointing to the departed in the heavens; "absent from the body, to be present with the Lord." For so with humble reverence may we also cherish the memory of the name of Stevens, and his brief passage through "the wilderness of this world."

And so, peace to Chesham Bois! the scene not surely of my happiest, with reverend thankfulness be it written!—but of singularly happy days, for even then I thought them so. How can I now but think with gratitude of him at whom, when I was but a boy, I never looked but with reverence and the most confiding affection; whose image after all these years is to this hour as a part of me; whose death-bed I stood by and kneeled by! How can I, in solitary musings, yea, in the busy world itself, but think of him, and how but solemnly! and not of him only, and as he was; nor of dear and like-minded friends there since, and to this very, this still privileged day, when the voice which once cried to the heathen of Tinnovally to cease from their devil worship, and "look unto Jesus," and be saved! is now lifted up to win, if so it may be graciously given, to the truth, the glorious "truth as it is in Jesus," for the rest of its time at Chesham Bois! Thus not seldom musing of the generation which sleeps beside the holy guide of my youth, I think with comfort and thankfulness of them who have followed him in the same paths of "pleasantness and peace;" and who have also in turn been listened to there with kindred reverence and love. And while thus, in lowliest humiliation, adoring the goodness of God, how can I but in better moments rise to the thought of "that great multitude which no man could number!"

Where the bright seraphim in burning row
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires;
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout, and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly!

And so the reverie and the vision vanishing, bring me round to the reality; and I go back to old times.

Out of school hours Mr. Clarke was much in the cottages on the common, and in the out of the way recesses of the parish, talking to all ages (it may well be believed from their manner of speaking of him when he could come to them no longer), as a Christian minister should talk; to the ignorant and the vicious, sternly or otherwise as the case might be; or comfortably to them of whom there is seldom more than "a little flock," walking slowly and with a very thoughtful air from one to the other. The "parlour," in which his older pupils spent part of the time with him between school hours, was said to be often the scene of very learned, oftener of religious, familiar discourse, never of frivolity, nor of that which is so commonly, in what is called conversation, worse than frivolity. And surely it may be frequently not without reason lamented, after half hours and hours of foolish talking and jesting which are not convenient, that we have not remembered that "of every idle word we must give account." So passed the week, and then came the Sunday.

Of Mr. Clarke, as a minister of the gospel, a boy could have said but little; and what can he say now at threescore years after him! In truth I pretend not to say more than a little of the much which some others might have said. All I should be glad to do, if I could, is to put the image then printed on my mind, rather on my heart, and which seems still as fresh as ever, into every mind and heart which may condescend to look into these pages. Because I do believe him, in the strength of that indelible impression, to have been as nearly after apostolical example as may perhaps have been since apostolical days. I mean that the

week was from beginning to end occupied throughout with its proper duties, all and each to the letter, and in the spirit conscientiously fulfilled; the Sabbath then being indeed "kept holy." Pleasant, truly, it may be to him who remembers Bois in the days of Mr. Clarke, to have seen at length like sabbaths revived there: the paths across the common and through the meadows and woods leading to the church, cheerful in all directions with people, the near and the distant, and then the overflowing church. To have again seen and still to see such sabbaths, could but indeed seem to say "It is a joyful and pleasant thing to be thankful."

His affectionate scholar, my dear and honoured co-disciple, the Rev. John Bishop, so long the assiduous Chaplain of the Mercer's Company's Whittington College, reminds me of "his daily morning retirement with part of his pupils, to read the scriptures to them, with remarks, concluding with solemn and seasonable prayers, and of his practice to assemble his neighbours at home on the Sunday evenings, and read a portion of scripture, expounding longer than a common sermon." "From what I know of his pastoral visits," says Mr. Bishop, "they must have been particularly serious, impressive, friendly, like all he did, and truly pathetic."

Of his sermons I scarcely presume to speak. Some few which remain in manuscript are precious evidences of his ability and efficiency for that form of pulpit address. I cannot say what were his habits of preparation for them; what time he took, or where, whether in his closet, or

When Isaac like, the solitary saint
Walked forth to meditate at even-tide.

I only know that they were delivered with an earnest voice and countenance, and that commonly they were extemporaneous, as preaching is said to have originally been, and as it may naturally seem that it should be, to make impression and to leave it.

And is it not a little strange as to this point, that a course should be taken with sermons, which is not thought of in any other public teaching or speaking? The medical lecturer, the lecturer on chemistry or astronomy, being an educated man, knows that he need not particularly concern himself about his language any more than he does in ordinary conversation or communication. Being master of his subject and desiring to make his hearers understand it, that is his only object; and both they and himself would think all palpable care beyond the perspicuity of his words and their arrangement out of place; he is in no danger of vulgarity or of bad grammar, and to be seen to aim at eloquence for its own sake would be affectation and vanity in the opinion of his audience, and a misapplication and a waste of mind, the whole powers of which ought to be devoted to his subject. How much more, so far as human influence of itself is concerned, would the minister of the gospel effect did he proceed on a like simple principle; the Bible in his hand, in his head, and in his heart. Of small account indeed would be the disadvantages he might occasionally fall into, compared with the formality, the monotony—to be plain, the dullness—so common to a written sermon. Does the lawyer read the address with which he hopes to win the cause of his client, or the judge that which warns the criminal to prepare for his punishment? And who, in the finest assemblies for this world's business, would expect to be heard to the end if he rose to recite his oratory!

(To be continued).

LOCAL SKETCHES.

Papers Historical and Descriptive of Chesham and Neighbourhood.

By R. S. DOWNS.

Author of "Local Names of Bucks," "Medmenham Abbey," "History of Hughenden," "Curiosities of Local History," "Ecclesiastical Records of Great Marlow," &c., &c.

XXIX.—CHESHAM BOIS—CONTINUED.

To quote the words of another of his pupils, the Rev. T. T. Thomason, afterwards so honourably known at Cambridge, and then in India, "Mr. Clarke every Sunday morning, in my time, preached at the new church of Loudwater, nine miles distant, first reading the prayers; then read prayers and preached at Bois; and expounded at his house in the evening. Before and after he so served at Loudwater, (that church after a time having a settled minister,) he did the whole duty twice at Bois." "His earnestness and love of souls," says Mr. Thomason, "are so great that I look at him and hear him with admiration. In conversation his cheerfulness and vivacity can be compared to nothing but that of a person of eighteen. He abounds in tales and humour, and they are made the channels of instruction. Two children whom he boards in his house, declare they are never so happy as when in his company. In his school he is equally pleasing. The more questions his pupils ask, the better he is pleased; and he will not let us pass over one word until it is well understood. It is a pleasure to be taught by such a Master, and to carry him the fruits of our labours."

"Mr. Clarke has been with us," writes Mr. Thomason to his mother, "and given us some rules which I here copy." "Being dressed in the morning, let each meditate on the Divine perfections, his dependence upon God; his obligations to obey Him. Let each recollect his own particular defects and weaknesses; and wherein he is most likely to fail in the duties he owes to God and man; remembering his reliance on the Redeemer for the forgiveness of his sins, and for power to discharge every duty. Having meditated on these subjects, let each separately apply himself to God in prayer, begging that he may have more enlarged views of the extent of God's laws, and of his own sins, whether in temper, words, or actions, entreating for an increase of dependence on the Redeemer in every office, and for ability to discharge every duty, and to suppress every wrong temper."

"In my last walk with him," says Mr. Thomason on leaving for Cambridge, "which was very affecting, he gave me his parting blessing, and told me he had no doubt we should meet again with everlasting joy upon our heads." "Watch strictly," said he, "over your heart, be much in prayer; and cleave closely to God. Pray for spiritual discernment, that you may have a clear perception of the path you should walk in. Pray to walk in that way in spite of all opposition; thus knowing and doing the will of God, you must be happy!"

"For many of his latter years," says the highly respected Rev. Charles Jerram, Vicar of Witney, also a pupil, "his school cares were principally confined to young men intended for the ministry. For this work he was eminently qualified. He was an excellent Hebrew scholar, and Biblical critic."

"That venerable and truly excellent minister, Mr. Clarke," continues Mr. Jerram, "was for nearly half a century the learned and indefatigable Tutor of some of the most distinguished men, both as Clergymen and Laymen, of the time in which he lived. It having been my privilege to receive his last instructions as a Tutor, I could not prevail on myself to omit an opportunity of recording the respect I feel for the memory of one of the most learned, humble, and useful men of the last century; and one of the most efficient agents in the revival of religion in our Church, towards the middle and conclusion of it. Many clergymen of the most decided piety and popular talents, most of whom have now entered into rest, received both their education and their deepest religious impressions from him. Except with his most intimate friends, he was for the most part silent, so as often to appear as far below the common standard of literary men as he was really above it. No argument could prevail upon him to let his name appear in print, although he has assisted, and perhaps had the principal share, in several publications. I do not like to keep from other eyes some lines by Dr. Lowth, on his daughter, in Cuddesden Church, with their translation by Mr. Clarke."

*Cara, vale, ingenio prestante, pietate, pudore;
Et plusquam nata nomine cara, vale!
Cara Maria, vale! at veniet felicius ovum
Quando iterum, tecum, sim modo, dignus, ero,
Cara, redi, lecta tum dicam voce, paternos
Eja, age in amplexus, cara Maria, redi!*

*Mary, farewell: of modest worth possess'd,
With wit, with sense, with genius richly bless'd:
Farewell, my Child! till happier times arrive,
When thy fair form shall from the dust revive:
If worthy judged, thy joyful Father then
To his fond breast shall clasp his Child again!*

"Among his more public avocations," says Mr. Jerram, "he was by no means inattentive to the individual concerns of his parishioners, assisting the poorer with money, and the perplexed with advice; being afflicted with their distresses, participating in their comforts, and so endeavouring to promote the happiness of all. His ministrations were blessed with much success, his discourses being remarkable for evangelical simplicity, for affectionate earnestness, and for his striking manner of setting forth Christ in all his spiritual dominion, enforcing entire conformity to Him in all the beauties of holiness. A conscientious minister of the Church of England, he rejoiced in the success of evangelical Dissenters in spreading the knowledge of the gospel, and in his humility would often exclaim with St. Paul, "To me who am less than the least."

And well may the office of the preacher lead to this humiliation! If there has been graciously given to him a right sense of sin, the whole world's and his own, it is wonderful that he can do less than "Cry aloud and spare not" to all around, while "my soul cleaveth to the dust" is his continual confession. It is not then the language which is called Composition, however in itself to be admired, with its divisions and subdivisions, which can satisfy him for either. All he thinks of, and desires to speak of, is far too awful for that. Life is too uncertain, too brief at the longest, for him to lose one moment. As an aged saint, well known to Mr. Clarke, once said, "The best study is Divinity, and the best Divinity is the Bible." He finds there a mine which cannot be exhausted, "light" in the darkest of it; and "life and immortality" there only. What then can he do, but "in season and out of season" give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name; make known his deeds among the people!—"remembering that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," he sets all forth as indeed the very word of the Great God. The more he learns of his own heart, the more he cries—"God be merciful to me a sinner!" And

the more he has to do with the world, the more earnestly, far and wide as he can, would he proclaim—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!"—never forgetting to remind all that "without Holiness no man shall see the Lord." Not that in the amazing richness in which it is his delight to expatiate, he is bounded to the right or to the left; he finds no end to the terror of the Lord; nor to "His wonderful works to the children of men." And so seeking to declare "all the counsel of God," he lives, as it were, on his Bible; not taking one leaf, and passing by another; having no thought but that all who hear him should understand it as he understands it, and by the Grace of God follow on to love and to obey His blessed Gospel, even unto "Eternal life in Christ Jesus."

In fine, it is in this great matter, as in all which belongs to Truth of any kind; what is wanted is, that it should be seen in its reality, and its importance—unspeakable importance!—first by the speaker, and through him by the hearer. And none can be duly qualified for the momentous office, nor be likely to promote its great end, who are of any other mind;—who think of their language beyond the necessary care for the full and proper conveyance of that Truth; of themselves, when their divine Master should be all in all.

This was Mr. Clarke's manner of preaching; not making a system of his own, nor following any made by another, that sure and endless source of division, but taking the Bible as it stands, and expounding it as it stands, never apprehending any real, any practical inconsistency from so dealing with chapter by chapter, verse by verse; sure that so all would end well, (and that no other course was good, nor could come to good,) so long as Scripture was given with Scripture.

(To be continued).

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XXX.—CHESHAM BOYS (CONTINUED).

But let us turn again to the school. This was filled with a multifarious assemblage. A few gratuitous scholars from the surrounding cottages occupied some humble forms, and some boys scarcely to be distinguished from these, from the farm houses, learning to read and write, with a little arithmetic; a considerable number of boarders, and day boys from the two neighbouring towns made up the bulk, some of them for "English" only, but most of them engaged in the ordinary school classics; and then always a few, younger or older, Oxford or Cambridge students, or to be such hereafter, interspersed generally, unless writing, or sitting with the master; and then usually reading, or quite as often conversing with him, on some passage in their books. And here I cannot but desire to preserve a few lines remaining in two letters of his clear handwriting, addressed on his ordination, to the late truly venerable and very benevolent and Christian vicar of Somersford-Keynes in Gloucestershire, the Rev. Nathaniel George Woodrooffe, a true admirer of Mr. Clarke, and formerly his pupil.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot dismiss you without a few words of plain but wholesome advice, which I beg you to accept at my hands. Believe that whatever I say proceeds from a sincere desire of your future welfare and happiness. If you could see the feelings of my heart, at the moment I am writing, you would think so.

Beware of Infidelity, I mean practical Infidelity. Be assured that God's eye is always upon you. Let this be the subject of your frequent and most serious reflection. Say to yourself: Is it true, than which nothing can be more so, that wherever I am, in whatever company I am conversing, God, He that made me, by whose power I live, and Who will dispose of me for Eternity, is now present with me: stands as it were by me; is writing down every action, every word, and every thought of mine, and will produce the account in the presence of all the inhabitants of Heaven, Earth, and Hell? Is this true, and shall I be guilty of actions, utter words, or admit of thoughts and desires, which must at last be produced to my everlasting shame and sorrow? Think, and think again, and again, upon these things. This will not make you unhappy, but may prevent unhappiness.

Be therefore assured that sin, shame, and misery are inseparably connected. Know for certainty, that if you sin, "your sin will find you out." Bad passions indulged are so many tormentors, are so many thieves let into your house, who will certainly despoil you of all your treasure, and all your peace.

Keep no company, at least have no intimacy, with thieves and robbers. Know, that of this character are all wicked men. They are robbing God of His honour, and would strip Him of every attribute. They are robbing you, if influenced by them, of your best friend, of every thing that is valuable, of whatever can contribute to your happiness. Consider seriously what they are attempting to take from you. Without enlargement, I leave this to your own reflection, begging that you will think attentively and earnestly upon it.

Fail not to pray to God constantly, not only morning and evening, but whenever you feel yourself in danger. Sin is of a very subtle and insinuating nature; and where there is a predisposition towards it, powerfully works upon the heart. Be sure to seek for protection against it under the power of God, who through faith in a Redeemer is always accessible. Remember the end upon which you are now entering; that you are to learn to be wise and good, and to be a means under God of communicating knowledge, wisdom, and true religion. Think what a disgrace it would be to betray the cause you profess to defend and promote.

I will add nothing further, only desiring you to believe that what is now said and advised is spoken by one who continually prays for and most earnestly desires your eternal welfare.

T. C.

DEAR SIR,

I am very glad to hear that you continue in health, that you have succeeded in your application, and that the Archbishop has been pleased to honour you with his recommendation. I doubt not, my dear Sir, that you will be faithful and diligent, faithful in your endeavours to represent to sinners the purity and extent of the Divine Law; the nature and fatal effects of sin; and the means, and only means, by which the offender can be reinstated in the Divine favour; and the holiness, and heavenly mindedness to be attained, without which no one can be admitted into the presence of God. To be successful ministers, we must well understand all the essential doctrines and duties of our profession, be able to discourse upon them with some degree of readiness and plainness, to understand what are deviations from the laws of God in actions, words, thoughts, and desires. To be accurate in the knowledge of the last article, we must not only be diligent in studying the law of God, and every precept and prohibition it contains, but examine ourselves by it, and that constantly, impartially, and particularly. When we know well what is evil in ourselves, we shall be

better able to discern what is evil in others. One great part of our office is to convince men of sin; as it is in vain to attempt to apply a remedy, where the disease is unknown. But not only our own defects, our Lord's perfections and absolute purity will furnish us with means of distinguishing the character of men, Deformities and blemishes are best discovered when compared with perfect beauty. When vices are known, they are then to be described; vices, to which the hearers are likely to be subject, not such as seldom fall to their share; not the vices of a court or of bishops, or of the gentry in general. Besides being applicable, our sermons must be particular, not describing sin in general, and its effects, but particular transgressions; pride, anger, malice, revenge, envy, sins that have their seat in the soul: those that arise more immediately from the body, lust, drunkenness, gluttony, idleness; and such likewise as spring both from the soul and body, covetousness, frauds of every kind, vanity and sensuality indulged in dressing, entertaining, furnishing, &c.; gaming, lying, sabbath-breaking, are to be ascribed to various causes. To a spirit of profaneness and malignity of heart we must ascribe swearing, cursing, profaning God's name, contempt of God's word and neglect of it; these seem to arise from unbelief, which has its foundation in pride and sensuality. In describing sins, care ought to be taken that the description may be as extensive as the vice, or comprehend the whole of it, not limited to a certain degree of it. For instance, poets, satirists, and many moral writers, in describing covetousness, represent only the worst degrees of it. With them, the covetous man is one who grudges himself the necessaries of life, is unmoved or but little affected with the distresses and sufferings of his fellow-creatures, &c., the love of money having excluded generosity. But under this description by far the greatest number of those who are guilty will acquit themselves of the imputation that their covetousness is a vicious disposition, with which they are therefore not chargeable. Covetousness, rightly understood, is every such degree of the disposition for the pursuit of gain as lessens or weakens our love to God or man.

The love of money unfit or indisposes us for any duty we owe to God or man: so far it must be considered as having something of a criminal nature in it. The same must be observed of every other vicious disposition. "Charity suffereth long and is kind," says St. Paul. If we cannot suffer, if we cannot suffer long, if we cannot suffer long and be kind to the person that injures us, there is a defect in our charity. But I must desist, and beg your kind pardon for straying into a series of thoughts, one of which, excepting what is placed in the beginning of this letter, I had not the least intention of putting down when I began. The trust, however, committed to us, suffer me to say, is very important. May we be found faithful! May God bless you!

I am, my dear Sir,

Your very affectionate friend,

Bois, Feb. 22, 1891.

THOS. CLARKE.

The routine of the busy, and not particularly, it may be acknowledged, orderly scene of his school, was not seldom varied by his call to "Stand out, boys!" This was a well understood summons to us to arrange ourselves, standing (the University gentlemen keeping their seats) in a semicircle before him, while he addressed us, in consequence of some casual incident, and sometimes from no incident at all, but only from the working of his own ever working mind for good, yes the everlasting good of the souls committed to his charge, setting out some moral or religious principle, or precept, or prohibition, from the root to its branches, the evil and the good; from a boy being found to have passed a bad halfpenny, and so, "Thou shalt not steal," being brought out in all its meanings before the whole school;

to such sublime and beautiful illustrations of Christian principle, Christian doctrine, and Christian walk and conversation, as, I doubt not, were often remembered at Oxford and Cambridge, and ever after. Not always were they heard without tears. Such was the continual impulse and desire of his mind, his whole mind and spirit, that we should be made "able to comprehend with all saints the breadth, and length, and depth, and height"—of all the wonderful Revelation of God to man.

And thus to his old age proceeded days at Bois. And here I know not how to refrain from a word in honour of old age; and the less because I so well remember my young imaginations concerning it, notwithstanding this palpable, and by me never to be forgotten example to the contrary; these being that it was apt to be "harsh and crabbed," and could only be apprehended by us all, should we be spared to it, to prove so; yet some of the kindest people I have ever known have been amongst the aged, so that it became at length a settled and very comfortable opinion with me that there is no peculiar tendency in Time to harden the heart: and that it is only as all habits grow into more and more confirmation, the ill tempered may be expected to become more so; the selfish to become cross and miserly; the passionate to become more angry, as years roll on in indulged evil; while in like manner the kind to be still kinder; the effect of either habit being alike to strengthen itself, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. And

oh! the inexpressible importance therefore of cultivating the better frames, repressing the contrary, in the great business of Education—Scriptural Education! the only education when old age at last comes, to be much valued! For then to excuse the wrong, to cover it over with a word literally not found in the Bible (for anger, malice, revenge, envy, are not called "*tempers*" there, but always by their own proper names), will give little satisfaction either to him who has allowed himself in the sin, or him who suffers by it. Not so indeed has the Old Age I have so seen, so honoured, so loved, come to its "Crown of Glory!"

(To be continued).

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XXX.—MR. CLARKE, OF CHESHAM BOIS
(CONTINUED).

But unwilling as I am to part with my subject, it is time I draw in. Gladly would I have given a more exact picture of the school, this "School for the Prophets,"—of the Church, and of him who thus made Bois what it has through life been even to me, of small account indeed compared with many unto whom, ever after they knew it, it was so dear.

The chasm was that Mr. Clarke was altogether a Christian; never seen but as a Christian; never heard but as a Christian. No matter for the circumstances of the moment, the day, or the place,—always a Christian. His religion was not a separate thing, to be taught, to be set forth, to be practised at expected or at any particular times; but, being a part of his whole frame, incorporated with his mind and life, neither boy nor academic in his school, nor man nor woman in his Parish, nor poor nor not poor in his Church, could look at him, or listen to him, but as a Christian.

Not that I would for a moment speak of him otherwisethan as himself spake of the descendants of Adam, one and all, from the beginning; and as on his death-bed he did speak, not merging the awful truth in generalities, which are more calculated to dilate it away altogether than to warn and alarm to "watching unto prayer." "He had been passionate," he said, "all his life; and his only remedy to the last was to fly to his knees!" and so, had occasion then presented, he would doubtless have confessed to more, although to others no such fault had appeared. I had myself never found out this, nor probably had many others, for I had never heard of it; but himself knew it, and that the victory was not yet.

This school sent forth no small number into the various walks of life, in ultimate character as various, but with a goodly proportion of the best; witness especially the office which is justly placed before all others. And truly reverent and very affectionate did all grow up and grow on toward him. Among whom I delight, whenever I may, remembering "honour to whom honour," to greet still the name of the Rev. Joseph Mendham, of Sutton Coldfield, as another Bois scholar, so advantageously known by his valuable publications, and especially by the earnestness he has manifested against the Popish dangers of days in which we have been spared to see withal so much happily of a contrary nature to be thankful for.

And how can I but be transported, as it were, into the midst of old times again, with all their strong associations in my mind, when looking back to our revered Preceptor; to the lessons, and the evenings with "Thomason and Bishop" so present to me now once more, then all kindness to me, their grateful junior, as both were: the one early called to his rest; his more than octogenarian survivor through half a century of devotedness to the gospel, ever humbleness itself; and in affection so sensibly ripening for the land where all is love!

Would indeed that I could recall, and here record, the names of the learners in the same unostentatious seminary.

Honoured in their day,
Now to the grave gone down!

And I doubt not "in the book of life!"

One however is specially in my thoughts, at this stage of my pleasant task, the Rev. Wm. Rose, afterward the much and justly respected and valued Rector of Beckenham, concerning whom, by favour of one worthy in all truth of her name, I will now gratefully take advantage of what has been so kindly communicated to me:—

Mr. Rose was the son of a country gentleman of fortune, and went to Oxford to pursue his education for the bar, with his two hunters and his groom, and all the love of field sports which a lively youth brought up in the midst of those who are eagerly pursuing them can scarcely fail to imbibe. I do not know how much of his Oxford course had passed, when his father, fearing that his love of horses was carrying him a little too far, and anxious that he should not attend the approaching races in a neighbouring town, wrote to a young relative, Mr. Stevenson, who was at that time reading with

Mr. Clarke, requesting him to invite his son to spend the week with him at Chesham Bois. The invitation was accepted, and Mr. Rose arriving at Bois just before the early dinner hour, was invited to join his cousin at Mr. Clarke's simple but hospitable board. There was in Mr. Clarke's countenance and whole manner an expression so marked with sweetness and holiness, that, united with his emphatic and striking conversation, was well calculated to make a powerful impression on the mind of his young visitor; and this was greatly increased by the first sermon which he heard from his lips on the following Sunday morning. Under the influence of these new feelings, Mr. Rose very soon conceived an ardent wish to quit Oxford for the present, and join his cousin at Bois to read with Mr. Clarke, and prepare himself for becoming a preacher of the blessed Gospel. It was some time before his father could be prevailed upon to consent to this change in his course; but he at length gave way to his son's earnest desires, and after remaining three years at Bois, Mr. Rose returned to Oxford to complete his terms there, and take his degree. This accomplished, he was anxious to proceed at once to enter the ministry, and preach to others that Gospel which had brought light and peace to his own soul; and hearing that the clergyman of a village about six miles from Oxford was in want of a curate, he lost no time in proposing himself for the office, and waited on the clergyman in question for this purpose. It was late in the year, and upon quitting Oxford, and inquiring of a countryman whom he met, the nearest road to the village, he was told that "the waters were out," and that it was impossible for him to reach it. "Only tell me the road, good man, and leave me to find my way," was reply. The countryman pointed out a Church on a distant hill, and said, "That is the Church, Sir, but it is not possible for you to get there." Mr. Rose with his groom arrived safely, however, at the door of the clergyman, was ushered into his presence, and made his errand known; but when the Vicar heard that he had come from Oxford, his first exclamation was, "But, Mr. Rose, how did you get here? why the roads are utterly impassable!" "Oh I did not find any difficulty, Sir, I came as the crow flies!" "Oh! then you have been used to hunting, I dare say?" This answered in the affirmative, the Vicar said, "Well, before proceeding farther, I should like to see the horse that could bring you!"

The gentlemen went together to the stable, and great was the admiration of both horses by the clergyman. On returning to the house, he said, "Well, Mr. Rose, I dare say we shall have no difficulty in coming to an agreement, and you will find very little to do, you will only have a few old women in their red cloaks to preach to on the Sunday." The agreement was soon made, and Mr. Rose entered at once upon the duties he had undertaken; and soon the

Church began gradually to be filled, numbers of people coming from a distance to hear him. On the approach of Christmas, Mr. Rose being in Deacon's orders, it was settled that the Vicar (who resided in another village) should attend his Church, and take part in the Communion service. When Mr. R. arrived at the village on Christmas day, people were coming in on foot, on horse-back, and in carts, in all directions, to attend the service; and on entering the Church, he saw sitting in the Vicar's pew, one of the Dignitaries of Oxford, and concluded that he was brought there to give his opinion of the doctrines he might hear. When the service was over, and Mr. R. went into the vestry, the gentleman came forward, offered him his hand, and said "Mr. Rose, I thank you for your sermon, I agree with you in every word that you have said; but I did not know that there was another man in Oxford who thought as I do." Mr. Rose replied, that he had "a little band of friends there who were of one mind, and to whom it would give him much pleasure to introduce him; an offer which was very thankfully accepted; and thus instead of the purpose for which this gentleman was probably brought to the church, the matter was graciously so ordered as to be the means of introducing him to the Christian society and fellowship he had longed for, and of confirming Mr. Rose in his place, to the blessing of many souls."

But I had better now let ~~him~~ ^{himself} speak for himself. In a letter written by him many years afterward, giving an account of this period of his life, he says, "I was at once exceedingly struck with Mr. Clarke; his good sense, his humility, his knowledge, his piety, his simplicity, and his kindness strongly impressed my mind. His judicious way of behaving to me led me to entertain a very favourable opinion of him; and to look up to him with respect. He reminded me much of the account of Goldsmith's brother. I began to feel what I could not describe; seeing his happiness, and in some measure reflecting on my own life, my mind was perplexed, and somewhat distressed, though I hardly knew why."

"Soon after, a very trifling incident made a deep impression on me. I was walking in the garden belonging to farmer Hunt's house, where I resided, and musing upon my things which occupied my whole attention, when I ran against the wall at the end of a grass walk. The observation I made was, 'I did not suppose I had got halfway.' At that moment the thought, which I can never forget, rushed into my mind; 'my life might have been cut off before I suppose it had been half spent.' This was succeeded by the consideration of what might have become of me. I did not believe there was a hell; but there might be; I became desirous of knowing whether there was, yet did not know how I could be sure whether there was or not. The Bible told us there was one, but how did I know the Bible was true? I had formerly read books to prove it true, but they did not prove it to me."

"When it was dark at night, I walked by the woods which extend a great way from the field adjoining the house, praying in my way that some supernatural appearance from heaven or hell (I did not care which it was, for I seemed prepared for either) might convince me of the truth of Scripture, if it were true."

"In this state of mind I continued for some days, till I determined to speak to Mr. Clarke, who had gained my confidence. When he thought my mind sufficiently composed, he put Leslie's 'Short and easy method with the Deists' into my hand. I read it with the greatest attention and eagerness, convinced, that if the four tests could be realized in their application to Scripture, the proof of its inspiration was unanswerable. Their application to Scripture was clear, and I made my most invaluable friend Mr. Clarke happy, by telling him the result. I read the book over and over again, wrote out the *four tests*, and carried them in my pocket book: changing them from one to another; I have them in my pocket at this time."

(To be continued).

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XXX.—MR. CLARKE, OF CHESHAM BOIS (CONTINUED).

"From that day to this, I have never had any doubts, beyond what the wickedness of my heart may have suggested, when infused by him of whose devices 'we are not ignorant.'

"Still it was weeks before my mind was seriously impressed, either with the vanity of the world, or the blessings of the Gospel. The first time I recollect to have been really impressed by either was one Sunday at Bois Church, to which I had gone in a more serious state of mind than ever before, and much better adapted to receive 'instruction in righteousness.' But that part of the service which most particularly struck me, was the following hymn:—

World, adieu! thou real cheat,
Oft have thy delusive charms
Filled my heart with fond conceits,
Foolish hopes, and false alarms;
Now I see as clear as day
How thy follies pass away, &c., &c.

I was so much affected by this hymn, connected with the other circumstances of the service, that I could scarcely refrain from tears; probably I did not. So sensible an impression was made upon my mind that I can almost date the first truly religious state of it from that day. I began then to take a lively interest in my attendance at the house of God, and Mr. Clarke's expositions and evening meetings, which were afterwards so delightful. From that evening I desired to give out the hymns at his house, and continued to do this ever after."

"Instead of a few days," as my kind correspondent says, "my dear father remained at Chesham Bois for three years, having with his father's consent given up all thoughts of the bar, with a view to taking orders. During this time he studied diligently under Mr. Clarke's guidance, who treated him like a son. He was to have been ordained to the curacy of Bois, but it was found that, being a donative, and not at that time under Episcopal jurisdiction, Mr. Clarke was unable to give a title. Of the signal blessing attending the early part of his ministry I have before told you.

"My father used to delight in recounting the names of faithful and evangelical clergymen who were educated by Mr. Clarke, and the testimonies of high respect borne not only to his Christian character, but to his wisdom and learning by some of the most eminent clergymen of the day. Among others I remember an expression of the Rev. Henry Venn's on my father's saying—'Such was Mr. Clarke's opinion,' respecting a text of Scripture; 'Sir, I'll take Mr. Clarke's opinion 'till Solomon rises from the dead': also the remark of the Rev. William Romaine, 'I consider Mr. Clarke like a great *Synopsis*, he gives you the opinion of every Commentator, and then gives his own, which is worth all the rest put together.'"

And I cannot but be glad, before taking leave of this choice company, to particularize a few more Bois names, some indeed far better known already than I could make them, as the Rev. Basil Woodd, the Rev. Stephen Langston, the Rev. William Goode (father of the Rev. William and Francis Goode), the Rev. J. S. Pratt, Prebendary of Peterborough, the Rev. Mr. Stevenson, of Olney, the Rev. Ambrose Serle, the Rev. Edmund Beynon, the Rev. Edward Burn, of Birmingham, of whom I gladly copy a few words from the kind hand of my much valued later friend the Rev. Josiah Allport. "I used often to hear Mr. Burn when a youth. At that time he stood alone, as the only preacher of the Gospel in the church in Birmingham; and his church used to be crowded to excess: the savour of his ministry yet remains, and is felt precious by many"; Sir Henry Blosset, chief justice of Bengal, whose early death was not a little lamented; James Oldham Oldham, Esq., who, after also filling many years a high office in the same more and more important part of our Empire, now occupies his *otium cum dignitate* with his ancient Bois interest and principles. And surely the Christian administration of the present Lieut. Governor of the north-west Provinces of India, the worthy son of the sainted Thomason already named in these pages, bears strong testimony to the influence of Bois teaching, descending to another generation; confirmed too by his ready and liberal help, for his father's sake, to the humble school for the poor of Bois, recently built, and now prospering there.

Happy Thomason! The last time I saw him, we walked together to our dear master's grave, in the same mind about him, with the super-added tenderness and solemnity of the thought, that he had for years been *there*. And now I have to think of him, the pleasant scholar and missionary, with his ever winning countenance and voice, with tenderness and sole *by* too.

Many other familiar names, precious in the dim light of the past, there were, in the church and out of it, given to those dawning days of the blessed Gospel from Bois. But they are not for the present or the future, save in that never on earth acknowledged stream of silent illumination, gently penetrating and prevailing around, which glory be to Him from whom alone it can flow, shall never altogether fail such favoured sources as Heaven-seeking Bois.

Of Bois Church, and of Mr. Clarke out of his church, in consistency with himself in it, the more I try for suitable words, the more they seem to elude my reach. I do not mean that the idea of the reality of his religion is so present to me in contrast to the absence elsewhere of that specific idea, for indeed I have no such disparaging thought; but only that it was so predominant, the one idea that, as it were, always looked you in the face,

And put so much of heart into his act,
That his example had a magnet's force!

The unspeakable, awful importance of religion seemed always uppermost in his mind. The glorious Gospel having been sent down from Heaven by God in Christ Jesus His Son, brought by Christ Jesus himself, yea, dying for us on the cross, "what else, (one might have imagined to be always in his mind) can we be thinking of?" Many a boy, of the rudest from the common, I doubt not, at his solitary toil in the fields years afterwards, may have thought of his loving exposition of the old Saxon "Good News," and many another in cloister or grove, of its Greek. This it is which completes the Pastor, and insures discipleship; and this alone—this reality of tone and aspect; of "walk and conversation;" this ever ready turn to apt illustration, which, with the blessing of God, leads to "edification;" yea to salvation!

Mr. Clarke died, after a fortnight's illness, in his 75th year, on the 4th of October, 1793. Mr. Jeram, who was then at Bois, and constantly with him, says:—

"His patience under excruciating pains, his meekness, humility, thankfulness, and cheerfulness; and above all, his confidence in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ inspiring him with 'hope full of immortality,' filled all with admiration and thankfulness to God, who bestowed such grace. He did not cease to speak in a most affectionate and instructive manner. In a sermon he had lately preached, he had spoken of the watchfulness required to guard against the vanity apt to be inspired by knowledge; on my thanking him for which he said:—'I did not intend its application to you alone, but also to myself.' He addressed us individually; and for some he seemed to be in an agony of soul: to the youngest present, warning him against the vices of his age:—'Avoid them; pass not by them; turn from them; and flee away'; praying for another, that he might be made a faithful and useful minister, enlarging on the necessity that ministers should watch against pride, vanity, and ambition, and beware of preaching in anger or opposition. On his desiring to speak to one of his people by himself, (numbers waiting to come into the room in small parties) it was intimated that this person, it was to be hoped, must be a serious man, as he had sat so many years under his preaching. 'Yes,' said he, 'but don't you know that there are stones in the church aisle which have been there many years, and that they are stones still?' And it being remarked that so much speaking might exhaust him, he replied 'I can preach best now.'"

"He was buried in the Churchyard of Chessham Bois, his beloved friend, eminently indeed worthy of such a friendship, Mr. Rose, in fulfilment of a reciprocal promise to that effect, performing the last duties. Mr. Rose afterwards addressed his afflicted people from I Cor. xv, 55—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy Victory?"

Mr. Clarke was twice married; and had two sons and a daughter, of whom only the eldest son survived him.

And now I come, whether I would or not, to the end of my dear subject, not altogether content indeed with the way in which I leave it—how could I with any account of it, of mine!—and yet rather glad nevertheless that I have done what I could. For the image of my beloved Master, however it may fare with others, has shone out the more expressively to me as I have gone on. I see him again, I hear him, and I talk about him to Whitchurch, and Thomason, and Bishop, and many another of whom I love to think. The whole scene, the school, the Common, and all, are again full before me, my morning and evening walks to it and from it, a mile and more, are almost as fresh as yesterday. The very hum and buzz of the school, the rise and fall of particular voices, with many a long forgotten face, all have come back to me, and for a little while I live the sweet time over again. For even then I enjoyed those days with a precious measure and sort of enjoyment. Even then I thought them precious, and well remember that I did not at all wish to be a man. My solitary walks thither were very sweet to me; and I went in all weathers, for there was then, I suppose, less valetudinary care generally. Certainly, I never staid away from school for rain, or snow, or whatever else would now perhaps be admitted lawful excuse. I do not pretend to set up this with its half-dried *sequels* through many a shivering lesson, for all the year round, as *per se* a recommendation of Bois days or Bois ways. But I do believe, with all my regard for the progression of my own more and more favourite calling, that it is truly much to be doubted whether the constitutions of the nineteenth century have, when they come to be proved, to say nothing of them *in transitu*, the happier hardihood.

I remember with special interest these walks in my latter school years. For a time I had a troop of companions with me, of the ordinary diversity of ordinary character, afterward I went to school *solus*, in silence therefore necessarily, and more than willingly meditative. My reverence and my affection for my Preceptor grew into strong and earnest confirmation; and I had not a little happiness in my books, and in those with whom I then read them; they being, to my great delight and advantage, Oxford and Cambridge "men," or in due season so to be. And truly the voice and the sight of him, to whom we all so looked, rise upon me in such a manner to this day, that I can hardly think I should do wrong here to say—I have not "looked upon his like again!"

But he is gone! The school is gone, and the generation in and around it is well nigh gone too!

What can I say more! It is a solemn thing to look back from the still seat of Old Age to the busy world of Boyhood! and oh! how much more to that of Manhood! Of the three, the middle stage now seems to me the most difficult to be reconciled to. Then, we knew so much more than in the first! could do so much more than in the last; and yet find in it now so little wherewith to be satisfied; whereof to think that, as to what we either knew or did, in that our best estate both to know and to do, the "fruits" were only what they were!

My "conclusion of the whole matter," is, that this is a mercy to be thankful for! this humbling retrospect! that, when I was a School boy, such Prophet-like denunciations of sin, with an authority, a countenance, and a tone never to be quite forgotten; and such earnest reiterations of "Good tidings of great joy" in the Lord Jesus Christ, were in turn, as the occasion might be—my daily hearing. And that now the remembrance thereof, and of the departed, with adoring thankfulness be it written, is anew as "life from the dead" to me. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!"

Amen! and Amen!

In the chancel of his Church, his surviving scholars nearly forty years afterward erected a tablet with the following inscription:—

Sacred to the Memory of
The REVEREND THOMAS CLARKE, B.A.,
Twenty-Seven years Rector of this Parish.
He was an able, a learned, and a holy man ;
Always abounding in the work of the Lord
In his Parish,
In his Ministry,
And in his School,

Wherein he trained up many,
Whose praise has since been in all the Churches :
He was made a burning and a shining light,
Doing the work of an Evangelist in season and out of
season,

That all might repent and be converted unto God ;
And after a life and conversation becoming the Gospel,
Full of zeal, and brotherly love, and clothed with
humility,

Died before many witnesses to his faith and patience,
A blessed, although painful death,
On the 4th of October, 1793,
Aged 74.

He was buried with his Family,
Beneath the stone at the entrance
To this his house of prayer ;
Waiting the Resurrection of the Redeemed ;
This monument being erected,
From an affectionate and reverent sense of duty to his
name,
By a few of his surviving scholars,
A.D. 1831.

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou
hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ
Jesus."—II Timothy 1, 13.

On the slab which covers the vault, opposite
the old door of the church is the following
inscription :—

In the vault beneath
Rest the bodies of
The REV. THOMAS CLARKE,
Rector of this Parish, and resident in it.
In all things showing himself a pattern of good works,
From 1766 to 1793.
Of his son and daughter,
Brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,
THOMAS, who died March 26, 1785,
Aged 25,

And MARY, the wife of the REV. J. H. SWAN,
Who died July, 1786,
Aged 26.

And of ANNE, his widow,
Who died trusting in God,
And continuing in supplications and prayers,
January 12th, 1810,
Aged 80.

O Death where is thy sting ? O Grave where is thy
victory ?—I Cor. xv, 55.