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GUNDULF.¹

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WHEN our attention is directed to the antiquities of Rochester, the mind at once adverts to the name of Gundulf, and I have been requested to bring before the Archæological Institute what is known of Gundulf's history. A life of that distinguished prelate is given in one of the Cottonian MSS., Nero, A. 8., of a date little later than his age. Many passages in it tend to the conclusion, that it was written by a monk of Rochester; and the author affirms in the prologue, that he had conversed with the subject of his biography. This life has been printed in the *Anglia Sacra*,² and reprinted by Migne.³

There are several scattered notices of Gundulf in the *Anglia Sacra*. Letters from him and to him are to be found in Eadmer's *Vita Anselmi*, and in the correspondence of Lanfranc.⁴ There are allusions to Gundulf in the writings of William of Malmesbury,⁵ and in those of Florence of Worcester. Some information is supplied by the *Registrum Roffense*, the *Custumale Roffense*, and the *Textus Roffensis*. From these sources the following notice of this distinguished man has been compiled.

Gundulf was born in that part of Normandy called the Vexin. As he died in 1108, being then in his eighty-fifth year, we may fix the date of his birth in the year 1023. Of his family little is known; his father's name was Hathe-

¹ Read in the Historical Section at the Meeting of the Archæological Institute at Rochester, July 31, 1863.

² *Ang. Sac.* II. 273.

³ *Patrolog. Vit. Gundulfi*, II. 812.

⁴ *Opp. Lanfr.* I. 69, ed. Giles.

⁵ *Malmesb. de Vitis Pontif.*

guinus, or Hadwin ; his mother Adelesia survived her husband, and became a nun. He had a brother named William, who accompanied him to England. In the survey of the manor of Maidstone, in Domesday, this William is returned as holding of the Archbishop of Canterbury two sullings valued as high as as 10%.⁶ Gundulf received his primary education in his native place, and probably from his father, who destined him, not to monastic seclusion, but to the secular life, which at this time opened the way to all worldly honours, except those confined to the use of arms ; if even here an exception may be made, when the Bishop of Bayeux was a soldier and a general, only second in ability to his brother, the Conqueror himself. At the proper age, and when he had mastered all the learning he could receive at home, Gundulf was removed to Rouen, the chief city of the diocese. He was here distinguished for the gentleness of his manners and the humility of his disposition ; and (after he had received the minor orders) for the conscientious regularity with which he performed his duties in St. Mary's Church. His good conduct did not escape the observation of William, at that time Archdeacon, and afterwards Archbishop, of Rouen. The archbishop who ordained Gundulf was Maurilius ; and, through the kind offices of the archdeacon, Gundulf found in Maurilius more than a patron—a paternal friend. It speaks well for Gundulf, that he was not only entertained at the archbishop's table, but that he was permitted to join in the conversation, which turned chiefly on the topics frequently under discussion, contempt of the world, and the glories of eternity—on the hardships which righteousness had to encounter, on the self-denials to be endured in our earthly warfare, and on the fullness of the recompense in heaven.

At this period the minds of men were generally found in one of two extremes : they were either seeking for wild adventure, or else, in monastic asceticism, excluding themselves from the world, in which very frequently they had indulged their passions without restraint. Even sober-minded men were influenced by the spirit of the age, and a man like Gundulf was not likely to remain long a mere student at Rouen, performing a routine of clerical duty.

⁶ Cust. Roff. 130.

When it was proposed to him by the archdeacon to start on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the proposal met with ready acquiescence. From what subsequently took place we may conclude that, while a religious motive sanctified the proceeding, it was rather from a love of adventure and excitement that Gundulf set forth on his travels. It is to be regretted that he did not, in his conversations with his biographer, enter into a description of Palestine as it existed in the eleventh century ; but at this period external things, except as they related to the pomp and circumstance of war, to warlike exercises or religious ceremonial, were only valued for the impression which they made upon the mind, and the pious feelings they excited. The mind was becoming awake to the beauties of art, but could not as yet take an artistic view of nature. Gundulf and the archdeacon went, as they said, to visit the places of the Incarnation, Passion, and Ascension of our Blessed Lord, that they might ever after have a cheering recollection of these events, and they were duly impressed. One or two things emerge from the darkness. They travelled then, as now, in caravans ; and the dangers to which they were exposed from attacks by the Saracens were so great, that we can account for, if we cannot justify, the Crusades, which soon after commenced, not for the conquest of the land, but, as at first proposed, for the protection of pilgrims.

Gundulf and his party lived in constant dread of attack, and had to undergo intolerable hardships ; they were intolerable, in the literal sense of the word, to Gundulf, for he sank under them. He was so prostrated, that when an onslaught was expected upon the caravan, and orders were issued for its removal to higher ground, Gundulf, unable to move, was left behind. When the party halted, Gundulf was sought for in vain among his friends ; a young nobleman, whose name ought to have been preserved, boldly dared all danger, and hastened back to the place of their late encampment. There he found Gundulf in great perturbation, expecting, if he did not perish through weakness, to be exposed to a death of violence from a cruel enemy. The young nobleman did not hesitate for a moment ; he placed Gundulf on his shoulders ; he re-climbed the hill ; he restored Gundulf to the archdeacon, who must have blushed to find that accomplished by another, which he had not him-

self the courage to attempt. Gundulf and the archdeacon were glad to escape the perils of robbers, and turned their faces towards home ; but they had first to encounter the perils of the deep, which made a more lasting impression on their minds than any danger to which they had been hitherto exposed. On their voyage they were overtaken by a tempest. Gundulf and his companion prayed. They vowed, that if God in his mercy would preserve them, they would renounce the world and assume the cowl. The tempest soon after ceased ; the ship came safe to land ; the archdeacon returned to his archdeaconry ; Gundulf made his way to the monastery of Bec, where, in the year 1060, he became a Benedictine monk.⁷

A happier home than the abbey of Bec, Gundulf could not have chosen. The monastery was known throughout Normandy for the strictness of its discipline, and for the regularity with which the Benedictine rule was observed. Here, however, he could enjoy the conversation of some of the most learned men in Europe, and profit by the instruction given in schools, designed not merely for the young, but for those older persons who, when books were scarce, flocked to the lecture of the professor. The abbey stood in a valley extending for three miles through two ranges of hills, and was placed on the banks of a beck, or stream (the word is still used in Yorkshire), flowing into the Rille. Plantation, as well as building, was in progress, and some of the trees, which Gundulf assisted to plant, are said to have outlived the revolutions of France, and to be in existence at the present time, flourishing in a green old age amidst the ruins.

When Gundulf arrived at Bec, the venerable founder was still living. Herluin, who had been a gallant knight, and was by birth allied to some of the first families in Normandy and Flanders, was a meek and pious old man ; innocent of book-learning, for in his old age we find him straining his eyes over his spelling-book, and unable to master its mysteries, but respected by men really learned themselves, for his intuitive wisdom. The old abbot was also a good man of business, who, in an unworldly spirit, but with much worldly wisdom, husbanded the resources and managed the temporal affairs of the establishment ; the temporalities of

⁷ Chron. Bec. ed. Giles.

the monastery consisting chiefly of his own princely estate, with which he had endowed it. Meanwhile, no less a person than Lanfranc filled the office of prior, and presided in the schools.

The peaceful valley of Bec was invaded by persons in every condition of life : poor scholars attended to drink in wisdom as it overflowed from the teacher, while they lived on the alms supplied by the monastery ; nobles, princes, the sons of kings, laid aside their armour for a season, and took their place among the hearers of Lanfranc. The idea was prevalent, that knowledge was not only power, but wealth, or the cause of wealth, and men rushed to the schools of the greater teachers with a feeling kindred to that which now animates emigrants to the diggings in Australia—in either case to be subject to disappointment, at finding that the vicinity of wealth does not make men wealthy, and that neither learning nor gold can be procured without labor.

These formed, as it were, the mob of hearers ; there were others who were really students ; and many more who fled from the gross immoralities which pervaded society, to plunge into a life of asceticism.

In our own days, those who are intimate with the working classes have heard the wise men among them, those whom Mr. Cobden aptly describes as the aristocratic portion of the working classes, affirm that, until habits of temperance have been permanently formed, although there are many who quaff beer or spirits in moderation, yet, as regards the majority of their class, the question lies between drunkenness and teetotalism. In the middle ages, while there were some who could live soberly and without dissolute morals in general society, there were many who felt, that they must bind themselves by the strictest rules, and take upon them a vow of asceticism, or they would soon fall into the prevalent gluttony and immorality which were to be found in most of the great castles.

In either case an error was committed ; the error so common to man, too often unconsciously intolerant. What was a useful discipline to some, was enforced by enthusiasts as a system necessary to all, and asceticism then, like teetotalism at the present time, became a religion.

To the monastic vows Gundulf conscientiously, but not without difficulty, adhered. His energetic character, his

practical ability, and afterwards his science and skill as an architect, involved him in pursuits inconsistent with the duties of a contemplative life—to which, indeed, he was not inclined by nature, or qualified by genius. But he intensely admired in others those virtues in which he did not himself excel, and for not excelling in which he tormented his mind and sometimes lacerated his body.

For Gundulf, when at Bec, an enthusiastic friendship was formed by one, whose praise was soon to be, and still is, in all the churches; and the fact that Gundulf was admired, consulted, and beloved by Anselm, is a sufficient testimony to the excellence of his character and to his proficiency as a scholar. This last remark is made, because it is supposed that William of Malmesbury speaks disparagingly of Gundulf when he describes him as “*litararum non nescius*.”⁸ Scholars in one department of literature are too much inclined, at all times, to speak slightly of those whose line of thought has been in another direction. Gundulf could not, perhaps, have written a chronicle so well as William of Malmesbury; his genius did not incline him to the dialectic and metaphysical studies in which Lanfranc excelled; neither could he fathom the depths of that scholastic philosophy into which Anselm was launching the church. Nevertheless, he who could erect the Cathedral of Rochester and the White Tower of London must have been a man who had mastered the science of the age, with the ability of applying it to practical purposes. He was, also, in grammar and all that related to language acknowledged to be profound.

The firmest friendships are sometimes formed by a union of souls entirely opposite in what relates to external gifts, but made one by some kindred sentiment; and the one sentiment which bound together the hearts of Gundulf and Anselm was, love to God and zeal for His service. Two men more different in character we cannot imagine. Gundulf was a man of action; the genius of Anselm led him to a life of contemplation. To Anselm, whose nature revolted against self-indulgence, the Benedictine rule was scarcely a restraint; Gundulf found it a restraint so irksome that he was continually inflicting penances upon himself for the non-observance of it. Anselm, when called into active life, for want of

⁸ Malmesbury de Gest. Pontif. 132.

worldly wisdom, did not excel ; whereas Gundulf, when released from the cloister, plunged into secular business with such assiduity, that his monastic biographer, in recounting his proceedings, is continually obliged to pause, that he may remind us that, if busy like Martha, he always made time to sit at Jesus' feet like Mary.

The practical wisdom of Gundulf was attractive to the less practical mind of Anselm ; and, when Anselm poured forth with unrestrained fervor the riches of his overflowing mind, he would find in Gundulf a listener ever ready to drink in every thought as it flowed forth. Anselm sometimes became almost ashamed of being the sole talker, for great talkers have sometimes scruples of conscience, easily expressed, though not long influential. On one occasion Anselm exclaimed, when Gundulf proposed to him a question—"You are always seeking to sharpen your knife on my whetstone ; but my knife you never permit me to sharpen on yours. I do insist upon your taking your share in the conversation, that I may derive from our intercourse my fair share of advantage." It does not appear that Anselm talked less ; but at this very time he showed how highly he respected Gundulf's character, for, referring to a short period of his own life to which he could not look back with satisfaction, he exclaimed, "I may, indeed, compare myself to a whetstone, obtuse of mind as I have been made by my sins ; whereas your mind, like a knife always sharp, is ever ready for Divine contemplation."

Anselm was said to be more learned in the Scriptures ; Gundulf more abundant in tears. The author of the "Cur Deus Homo" would discourse on the mercies of redeeming love, until he was silenced by the sobs of Gundulf ; which was the reason, probably, that Anselm said, that he would that he were another Gundulf, and Gundulf another Anselm. An union of the two characters would have been, he thought, perfection, so far as anything human can be perfect.

There is nothing which strikes us in the history of Gundulf as more remarkable than his copious weeping. He seems to have encouraged it as a virtue, and he certainly indulged in it to such an excess as to injure his health. A frequent shedding of tears is observable in the history of other persons in the middle ages. They desired to excite sympathy by a display of their feelings in all their unrestrained energy.

The aptitude of Gundulf for secular employment did not escape the notice of Herluin or Lanfranc, both of whom were gifted with a discernment of character, and with a power of commanding the services of others. With the former it was an intuition; in the latter it was the result of experience. By these, his superiors, Gundulf was employed as sacrist of the monastery, an office of importance, which made the holder of it a dignitary of the church. He had the custody of all the valuables of the monastery, including not only the sacred vessels of silver and gold, but all the vestments, the office books, and the relics.⁹ Hence he had much to do in the regulation of the processions, and in making the arrangements on all festal occasions. Throughout his life, Gundulf was consulted as an authority in all that related to the ceremonials of the church.

The period of his residence at Bec was, perhaps, the happiest of Gundulf's life. With little responsibility, he had plenty of occupation; he was able, without interruption, to discharge his devotional duties as a monk; and when we consider the dissoluteness of the age, the savage character of society scarcely redeemed by chivalry, the profligacy and sensual indulgences patronized, not only in baronial castles, but, as we have the authority of Herluin himself for saying, in many of the monasteries also, Bec must have appeared to Gundulf a very heaven on earth. It resembled a well-ordered college at one of our modern universities. Here he enjoyed the conversation of some of the foremost men in the world; and even from female society he was not wholly excluded. A few ladies, some of whose relatives had fled from a profligate world and sought an asylum in the monastery of Bec, took certain vows there as nuns, with the sanction of the Archbishop of Rouen. These ladies, however, did not renounce all the comforts, or even the frivolities, of their former mode of living, as we gather from a ghost story pre-

⁹ The functions and dignity of a *sacrista* are set forth by Durandus, lib. ii. Ration. c. i.; see also Bernard. Mon. in Constit. Cluniae. c. 51 and 52; Udalric. lib. iii.; Conc. Tolet. in lib. i.; Decret. tit. 26; and the Liber Ordinis S. Victoris Paris. MS. c. 20, where we read as follows: "Ad officium sacriste pertinent omnia que in thesauro sunt custodire, reliquias et omnia ornamenta altaris et

sanctuarii ac totius ecclesie, sive in auro, sive in argento, sive in oestro, et pallis, et tapetibus, et cortinis; sacras quoque vestes, et pallas, et manutergia, calices, et textus, et cruces, et thuribula, et candelabra, et cetera vasa que vel ad ministerium vel ad ornamentum altaris et sanctuarii totiusque ecclesie pertinent; libros quoque missales, epistolares et evangelia."—See Ducange, *in v.*

served in the Chronicle of Bec. A good old lady promised one brother Rodolf, that, if possible, she would appear to him after her death, which was then imminent, and make known what she found in the other world. She died, and was buried. As she did not make her appearance immediately, Rodolf slept in peace, until one night his slumbers were suddenly disturbed. The venerable dame stood before him. "How now, lady," he exclaimed. "Quid est domina? quomodo se habes?" She sadly replied that she had to undergo a penance of sixty years, on account of her attachment to lap-dogs and other pet animals. I do not, of course, vouch for the truth of this story; but from that time the brothers of Bec were never more annoyed by canine favorites.¹

The monastery of Bec had commenced on a small scale; Herluin neither expected nor desired to become the founder of that magnificent abbey which he soon saw growing under his eyes. An extension of the buildings became necessary from the influx of students and monks, and works on a large scale were in progress during the whole period of Gundulf's residence. The practical mind of the sacrist was thus directed to the study of architecture. Had he commenced those studies sooner, he would probably have profited by the specimens of Saracenic art which must have met his eye in the East; but we do not trace the influence of his travels in any of the works in which he is said to have been concerned. It was, no doubt, on the ground of his skill in architecture, as well as for his practical wisdom, that when the Prior of Bec became the Abbot of St. Stephen's in Caen, he sought, in the discharge of the new duties devolving upon him, the assistance of Gundulf. The migration of Gundulf to Caen must have taken place about the year 1066. He does not appear to have held any definite office in the new abbey, but probably sustained the same position in Lanfranc's household as he afterwards held when his patron removed to Canterbury. The works at St. Stephen's were incomplete; and here again, therefore, Gundulf could pursue his architectural studies, and obtain that practical knowledge which he afterwards turned to good account.

Gundulf once more came into contact with his old friend Archdeacon William. They spoke of the perils they had encountered among false brethren, and they discoursed of

¹ Chron. Bec. 202; Ed. Giles. See also Anselmi Opp. Lib. ii. Ep. 2651; Lib. iii. 138.

the perils of the great deep. Gundulf reminded the archdeacon of the prayers and vows which, in the midst of danger, they had made ; and how, in answer to those prayers and vows, the storm had ceased. His own vow Gundulf had fulfilled : he was now a Benedictine monk. Archdeacon William was still one of the secular clergy. It was at Caen that he finally made up his mind to follow the example of the more consistent Gundulf, and he became a monk of St. Stephen's.

Lanfranc, when Abbot of St. Stephen's, continued his biblical lectures ; and to his lectures resorted not only the young, but men of all ages, who were anxious to advance in Scriptural knowledge. When copies of the Bible were scarce, and commentators few, a learned lecturer was a man of high importance. During Gundulf's attendance at one of these lectures something occurred which, when he became a great man, was magnified into importance. Gundulf, sitting near the lecturer, had a book of the Gospels in his hands, and was looked over by a friend on either side. The lecture ended ; and Lanfranc's attention being directed to something else, the three friends proposed that they should discover who of the three should be an abbot, and who a bishop, by turning over the pages of the Bible, and fixing upon a text,—by recourse to the "*Sortes Evangelicæ*," as they were afterwards called. The passage on which Gundulf opened was Matt. xxiv. 45 : " Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season ? " One of Gundulf's companions, Walter by name, opened upon Matt. xxv. 23 : " Well done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord." The third person opened upon some text which is not given ; but laughter was occasioned by their inability to decide upon the interpretation of the oracle, when Lanfranc inquired into the cause of their mirth, and at once decided that Gundulf was destined to be a bishop, and Walter to become an abbot. Years rolled on : Lanfranc became Archbishop of Canterbury, and Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester ; Walter became Abbot of Evesham. Then would the monks of St. Stephen repeat this anecdote as something serious, and deduce the conclusion that Lanfranc was inspired, and possessed the spirit of prophecy.

We are struck with the delicacy of William of Malmesbury,² to whom we are indebted for the anecdote, when he says of the third person,—“Some hard text, I know not what, caused him trouble of mind: I have indeed heard it; but I gladly forget it, for it is not the part of an ingenuous mind to insult the misfortunes of others.”

Gundulf, brought up at the feet of Lanfranc, was a devoted student of the Bible, to which Lanfranc, quite as much as his greater successor, Anselm, directed the attention of his hearers. It is an interesting fact, that Gundulf's Latin Bible is still in existence, and, after enduring many vicissitudes, it is at present in the library of Sir Thomas Phillipps at Middle Hill. It is in two folio volumes, and the writing is certainly older than the eleventh century, the character being that used in the ninth and tenth. Even in Gundulf's own time, it must have been highly esteemed; and, after his death, it was preserved as a valuable relic in the library of St. Andrew's, Rochester: any person abstracting it was threatened with excommunication by the Bishop, Prior, and Chapter,³ as set forth in an entry in this remarkable manuscript.

The denunciation had no effect to restrain those among the Reformers, who thought it meritorious to destroy the monastic libraries, and to sell them to grocers, unless they could obtain a higher price by sending them to foreign parts. Among the MSS. thus disposed of, was Gundulf's Bible. Its subsequent history may be found in a valuable memoir on the catalogue of the library of Rochester Priory, in 1202, by Mr. Rye.⁴ It was sold at Amsterdam in 1734, after having been for some time in the library of

² W. Malmsh. de Gest. Pontif., ii. 133.

³ There is a form of excommunication attached at the end of a Vulgate Bible, Harl. MS. 2798, which is extremely severe. “Liber . . . quem si quis abstulerit, morte moriatur; in sartagine coquatur; caducus morbus instet eum et febres; et rotetur et suspendatur. Amen.” *I.e.* If any one take away this book, let him die the death; let him be fried in a pan; let the falling sickness and fever seize him; let him be broken on the wheel and hanged. Amen. This, which I have found cited in the *Archæologia Cantiana*, vol. iii. p. 51, seems to approach Bishop Ernulf's celebrated form of ex-

communication in the *Textus Roffensis*. The chapter of Rochester appear to have been more moderate in their maledictions; they content themselves with a general threat of excommunication against any one who should purloin, deface, or destroy the volume “Pro bone memorie Gundulfum Roffen. Epim. Liber de Claustro Roffens. quem qui inde alienavit, alienatum celavit vel hunc titulum in fraudem delevit excommunicatus est. Penitentibus. Sententiam Do. Seo. Epo. Priore et Singulis Presbiteris Capituli Roffensis.”

⁴ *Archæologia Cantiana*, vol. iii. p. 62.

Herman Van de Wall, a great collector of MSS. The next notice of Gundulf's Bible is in the *Custumale Roffense* in 1788,⁵ stating that it had been sold, not many years before, for 2000 florins ; after which it fell into the hands of Mr. Theodore Williams, at whose sale, in 1827, it was purchased by Sir Thomas Phillipps for £180.

Gundulf followed the fortunes of Lanfranc ; and, when Lanfranc was settled at Canterbury, he sent for Gundulf to preside over his household. As no inconsiderable portion of Lanfranc's income was spent in the restoration, or rather the re-erection, of Canterbury Cathedral, here again Gundulf was perfecting himself in architectural skill. As the archbishop's steward and almoner, he exercised a wise economy ; but, in accordance with the wishes of Lanfranc and his own inclinations, he was most liberal in dispensing the charities of the archbishop. He arrived in England soon after that devastation of the country, which was the greatest blot in the history of the Conqueror, and which excites the abhorrence of posterity whenever his name is mentioned by those who have Anglo-Saxon blood in their veins.

The distress of the country was at this time so great, that even a chancellor of the exchequer would have been compelled to admit that almsgiving is sometimes a necessary department of charity. The misery became so great that Lanfranc despatched Gundulf to London, where there was an absolute famine ; and night and day was Gundulf employed in relieving distress. His readiness to weep with those that wept, made his charity the more effective ; at the same time his compassion extended even to his beasts of burden. He visited the stables to see that his horses were duly fed, and he was sometimes found concealed there, to perform his devotions in that peace and quiet, which he sought in vain in his crowded apartment, where his ears were assailed by the importunity of starving applicants.

Gundulf appears to have had a difficulty in abstracting his mind when surrounded by companions or immersed in secular business, and, wherever he went, in his manor-houses, he required his chamberlain to precede him to provide an oratory, and there to deposit his book of devotions. Nevertheless, when actually engaged in his devotions, he became

⁵ *Custum. Roff.* p. 158.

entirely absorbed in the duty ; so much so, that on one occasion, when ministering at the altar, by some inadvertence he suffered the chalice to fall from his hands. This was regarded as an omen of evil, and it made the greater sensation from the fact, that Lanfranc had been engaged in controversy with Berengarius on the subject of Transubstantiation, and Gregory VII. had been pressed, against his will, to convert that dogma, which had hitherto been mooted as a pious opinion, into an article of faith. The friends of Gundulf attributed the accident to the malignity of Satan, eager to bring discredit on a man so holy as Gundulf ; and a monk of Canterbury was accused of having been in league with Satan, because, having probably observed that Gundulf was far from being adroit, he had predicted the accident.

We gather from the Epistles of Anselm, that Gundulf left his native country with regret, and at first regarded his residence in England as that of an exile. This feeling he overcame ; but it made him anxious to keep up a correspondence with his old friends at Bec, and he complained much of Anselm's neglect in not writing more frequently. This brought a letter of apology from Anselm, expressed in exaggerated terms of affection, in which he speaks of Gundulf as—"Soul of my soul, most beloved." "When you ask me," he says, "by your messengers, when you entreat me by your letters, when you knock me over with your gifts (*pulsas me tuis donis*), that I may bear you in mind, I answer—May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if Gundulf be not among my chiefest friends." He says that, as the impression of a seal upon wax, so is the memory of Gundulf fixed on Anselm's heart. "Why," he continues, "do you, as I hear you do, complain so bitterly that you never see letters of mine, and why do you desire with such affection to receive them frequently, when my thoughts are always with you ?" There is more to the same purpose. And then, when we hope that he will pass on to a description of what was doing at Bec, he disappoints us, by saying, that of the state of affairs in the monastery it is unnecessary for him to write, as Gundulf will become acquainted with them through the bearer of the letter.⁶

There are two other letters⁷ written in the same strain,

⁶ Anselmi Opp. Ed. Migne, Lib. i. Ep. iv.

⁷ Ibid., Epp. vii. xiv.

from which we gather that Gundulf was continually sending presents to his old home. In one of the letters Anselm says, "We should do you wrong, if among your so many acts of kindness we should single out one as deserving of special thanks."

Meanwhile higher honours were in store for Gundulf. The see of Rochester stood at that time, and long after, in relation to the see of Canterbury, much in the same position in which a chapel of ease is now placed with reference to the mother church; or, as the comparison would have been made in the twelfth century, the Bishop of Rochester stood a feudatory to the Primate. The bishop was, to a certain extent, independent; and yet he was, as a kind of curate to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to perform official acts in the diocese, when the Metropolitan was engaged in the affairs of the province. In point of fact, after Gundulf's consecration, such duties as the dedication of churches, confirmations, and ordinations in the diocese of Canterbury were usually performed by the Bishop of Rochester. During the vacancy of the metropolitan see, while the Chapter of Canterbury administered the temporalities, the spiritual duties devolved upon the Bishop of Rochester. It was on this account that the diocese of Rochester was so small, until the late division of dioceses; and on this account it also was, that Lanfranc became, as we shall presently see, a benefactor to the church of Rochester. He repaid the bishop by contributing to the endowment of his chapter.

Hence, too, the archbishop had certain real, though undefined and scarcely acknowledged, rights in the appointment to the see of Rochester, when the bishopric was vacant. The chapters, in the other dioceses, claimed a right to elect their diocesan, and, as now, they received a *conge d'elire* from the Crown. But the Crown then, as now, expected its nominee to be elected. The king did not then enforce his commands with those heavy penalties which at the present time invest the sovereign with despotic power, and render the election of a bishop merely a nominal right; but still, if the executive was strong, the will of the king was only in extreme cases resisted.

But, as regards the see of Rochester, the archbishop stood in the position of the king; he was at least, though subordinate, a suzerain; and, consequently, it would be equally correct

to speak of Gundulf's unanimous election by the chapter, or, as in the case of his biographer, to attribute his appointment to the nomination of Lanfranc.

Gundulf was consecrated on the 19th of March, 1077,⁸ and was soon after enthroned at Rochester. Gundulf was a party man, and commenced his episcopal labors in a party spirit. He was himself a Regular, and his first object was to displace the Secular Canons, who from the time of Justus, in 604, had formed the chapter of Rochester Cathedral. Like most party men, he was blind to the merits of the party to which he was opposed, and exaggerated the virtues displayed on his own side. But we must admit, that at this period, the monks had the advantage of the secular clergy in zeal, activity, and learning. The secular clergy in the time of Wycliffe had regained their position, and were superior in all these respects to the regulars, and they finally triumphed over the monks at the Reformation. But in the twelfth century there can be no doubt, that the regulars were the real working clergy, and as such were in favor with the laity. From the time of Dunstan, the attempt had been made to place the management of the Cathedrals in the hands of the regulars, but only with partial success, as in the time of Henry VIII. there were only nine cathedrals of which the chapters were formed by monks, and so requiring to be reconstructed at the Reformation.

Gundulf was one of the bishops who desired conscientiously to effect this object, but he was a just man, and did not seek to accomplish his end by harsh conduct or recourse to unlawful measures. His proceedings were perfectly legitimate. He found the cathedral in such a state of dilapidation that repairs would be useless : it required to be rebuilt. But how were the funds to be procured ? Could the chapter provide the means ? Ethelbert, when the see of Rochester was established, endowed the chapter with a portion of land, known to the present day as Priestfield, and subsequently with some other portions within and without the city. But, as Dugdale remarks, from that time to the Conquest, benefactors were few, and many of their donations trivial. The lands had suffered much under the Danish invasion ; other causes might be assigned to account for the decrease of the funds of the chapter ; but, whatever the causes may have

⁸ Le Neve, edit. Hardy.

been, the fact was that, at the time of Gundulf's consecration, there were only five canons. When we remember that these were unassisted by minor canons or by any staff of subordinate clergy, that the daily services in the cathedral were numerous, that pastoral work was to be performed among an ignorant population, that this work was to a great extent (as it still is in our large towns), missionary work, that owing to the late devastations under the Conqueror the distress among the lower orders was indescribably great, that upon the clergy devolved the duties now performed by the overseers of the poor, and that the upper, middle, and even the humbler classes expected to find a good school attached to the cathedral for the education of those members of their respective families who thought fit to prepare for holy orders—we perceive that the chapter of Rochester was insufficient to perform the ordinary duties which they were justly expected to discharge. Gundulf offered to procure the funds, not only for rebuilding the church, but also for an increased endowment, but then he depended upon the archbishop for the assistance he required, and Lanfranc attached to his donation the condition that the chapter should henceforth be composed of Benedictines.

Gundulf made his bargain, and fairly purchased his position. The five secular canons took the monastic vows, and provision was made first for twenty, and eventually for sixty regulars. Gundulf introduced the system and discipline which he admired at Bec. In his own person, notwithstanding his various engagements as a bishop, an architect, and a politician, he exhibited a model of monastic propriety, and he was a strict though a kind and considerate disciplinarian. As at Canterbury, the bishop reserved to himself the rights of an abbot over his new institution, which was governed under him by a prior. He did not permit his monks to eat the bread of idleness. Some presided over the schools which were now called into existence or restored; others were, by constant transcriptions, adding books to the library; a few rendered assistance to Gundulf in his great architectural works; others were employed in managing the capitular estates; not a few were engaged in dispensing the bishop's charities, which were profuse; and all in their turn found pleasure and employment in rendering the services of the church more solemn than they had been heretofore.

Bishop Gundulf was a man of the world and a good manager. He was incessantly on the watch to increase the treasures of his new establishment. We have a curious instance of his eagerness to secure any advantage for his cathedral by what occurred at the translation of the body of King Edward the Confessor. The Bishop of Rochester was present during that solemnity in Westminster Abbey, an act designed to conciliate the Anglo-Saxons.

There is a MS. Life of Edward the Confessor, in verse, in the Public Library of Cambridge. The poem is of the thirteenth century, written in the *langue d'oïl* or Norman-French, and has been lately printed under the auspices of the Master of the Rolls, with a translation by Mr. Luard. He shows that the life embodies traditions of earlier date; and we have an account of an attempt on the part of Gundulf to obtain a relic, the possession of which would have given additional sanctity to his new monastery in the eyes of the Anglo-Saxons. The poem contains a graphic account of an attempt by Gundulf to obtain a hair from the beard of the Confessor, on the occasion of the opening of his tomb, but his object was frustrated by the remonstrance of the abbot.⁹

They who desire to see the difficulties which were at this period encountered by persons who would retain their property and assert their rights, will be interested in the account of a law-suit in which Gundulf was successful.¹ The amount of perjury committed on this occasion shows the very low state of morals, which is further proved by incidental circumstances to which allusion is made in various parts of the correspondence of Anselm.

It was now that Gundulf assumed that character by which he is best known in modern times—the character of an architect. How far his scientific knowledge was employed in those buildings which were erected under his eye at Bec, at Caen, and at Canterbury, it is useless to conjecture. That he was the architect of his own cathedral at Rochester is certain, but whether any portion of his work beyond the crypt still remains is, I fear, more than doubtful; on this point we shall be enlightened by Professor Willis.

⁹ Lives of Edward the Confessor; edited by H. R. Luard, Esq., for the collection of chronicles and memorials of

Great Britain, &c., p. 156.

¹ Anglia Sacra, t. i. p. 339, from the Custumale and the Registrum Roffense.

In the venerable ruins of Rochester Castle the inhabitants of Rochester have long felt an interest, in which the whole country may now be said to participate, since, under the shadow of those walls, in a house situate in the garden on which the tower abuts, was born a successor of Lanfranc, whose praise is now in all the churches. But I fear that when Mr. Hartshorne shall make known the result of his examination of the castle, he will be compelled to admit that the ruins are the remnant of works of at least half a century later than the time of Gundulf.²

Not so the architectural remains at West Malling. Here Gundulf, soon after his consecration, erected a monastery for nuns, and St. Mary's Church. A part of this nunnery was destroyed by fire, half a century after Gundulf's death, but large portions undoubtedly remain of his work.

There is one fabric still existing, and not a ruin, which is attributed by all, I believe, who are qualified to form an opinion on the subject, to Gundulf—the White Tower in the Tower of London—the fair proportions of which we most of us gazed upon, in our earliest years, with delight, not unmingled with awe. It is not, however, my province to enter into an examination of the claims of Gundulf to a high place in the list of mediæval architects. A division of labor is most important, especially in such a society as the Institute. The business assigned to me is to collect the facts which have come down to us by tradition, and through the chronicles and contemporary writers, which bear upon Gundulf's history; and I leave the investigation of his architectural skill to Mr. Parker, who will, I apprehend, only magnify the genius of the artist, by showing the difficulties he had to encounter through the rudeness of contemporary art.³

In passing lightly over these topics, I am following the example of the monastic biographer of Gundulf. There was evidently a feeling among the stricter religionists of the day, that Gundulf permitted himself to be too much involved in secular pursuits and duties. The object of his biographer by writing was to show that he made his spiritual duties to himself and to others his first concern, or, in his own repeated

² See Mr. Hartshorne's Memoir on Rochester Castle, Arch. Journ., vol. xx. p. 209.

³ Mr. Parker's Memoir on the Buildings of Bishop Gundulf has been given in the Gent. Mag. Sept. 1863, p. 255.

phrase, that his work was not mere Martha-work. He passes over, where he can, any allusion to his conduct as a politician, and entirely ignores his skill as an architect, architecture not having yet assumed the importance which it soon after reached.

We, on the contrary, are led to admire the wonderful power of work which Gundulf possessed and displayed. At the busy period of his life, he had to perform his own episcopal duties and those of the archbishop; he had to organize and govern his new institutions at Rochester and Malling; he had to attend to his public works; he had to resist the aggressions of lawless barons upon his property; and he was involved in law-suits. Add to this, that there was no other mode, except for a sick person, of moving from place to place but on horseback. We are not surprised that at one period his health gave way—a fact made known to us by the following letter addressed to him by Lanfranc:—“Having read the letters of your brotherhood, I find that you are laboring under some indisposition. Let me entreat you not to be cast down by this circumstance, but rather to rejoice, for you know the Scripture which saith, ‘I will glory in mine infirmities;’ and that other Scripture, ‘The Lord scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.’ He would not afflict you with stripes in this world, if he did not design you to be free from correction in the world to come. Examine yourself, call to mind your most recent offences, and confess your sins; so shall you be healed of your infirmity, or meet without fear that death which is so terrible to others. Death will be to you the end of all evil, the commencement of all good. I send you an electuary of horehound,⁴ which the doctors prescribe for such a complaint as yours. You may take about as much as a wild nut will hold three times a-day. May the Lord God Almighty ever be your everlasting safeguard, and absolve you from all your sins.”⁵

Lanfranc delighted in the society of Gundulf, and would often invite him to Canterbury to enjoy his conversation. We are informed that he never permitted him to depart empty handed. Sometimes he would give him copes, sometimes candlesticks of gold or silver, always something ornamental for his church. Those who have had to do with

⁴ Conf. Du Cange sub voc. “Dioprasium,” where this passage is quoted.

⁵ Lanfr. Opp. 1. 70.

building churches, know the value of discreet begging, and will sympathize with Gundulf, who, somehow or other, persuaded or compelled his friends to contribute largely to the work he had in hand.

At length the happy time arrived when Bishop Gundulf could call on Archbishop Lanfranc to return his visits, and to assist at the consecration of the cathedral church of Rochester. According to the custom of the Norman bishops, Gundulf had probably commenced with the east end, or the choir, and when this portion of the building was fit for occupation, the day of dedication was appointed. This event must have taken place before the year 1089, when Lanfranc died, and yet not long before: Mr. Denne assigns 1084 as the date. There was a large assembly both of clergy and people. When the consecration was concluded a procession was formed to translate the body of Paulinus from the old church to the new. Paulinus, "the Apostle of the North," and the first Archbishop of York, when driven from the diocese he had established among the people whom he had converted, sought refuge in the south, and became Bishop of Rochester. Here he was thenceforth, or rather after his death, accounted a saint. Lanfranc had provided for the remains a silver shrine, and in this the relics were transferred to the new cathedral.

At Lanfranc's death, which occurred in 1089, Gundulf administered the affairs of the province of Canterbury in spirituals, having received a mandate from the king to that effect, thus acting in accordance with the custom of the metropolitan see. During four years Gundulf was *de facto* Archbishop of Canterbury. A troublesome post he must have had, with William Rufus on the throne; surrounded by barons rendered lawless by the royal example, and by a population groaning under oppression and scantily supplied with food, with the will but without the power to revolt.

It was a great relief to Gundulf when at length Rufus consented to appoint a Primate; and Gundulf's heart was filled with joy when he knew that Anselm was the man. Hearing that his friends at Bec were offering impediments to the removal of their abbot, he addressed to them the following letter, which is published among the works of Anselm.

"Gundulf, by the grace of God, Bishop of Rochester, to his lords and very dear friends the servants of God at

Bec, greeting. Dearly beloved, you are well aware how long the Anglican Church has, like an orphan, been destitute of a pastor of its own, and deprived of all fatherly counsel. But the God of the fatherless and the widow has heard the complaints of his faithful people, and has graciously answered their prayers. Through the unspeakable power of Divine grace, the King of the English has been induced, with the counsel and advice of his peers, at the petition of the people and after the election of the clergy, to commit the government of the Church of Canterbury to the lord Abbot Anselm. That this is to be attributed to an immediate operation of Divine Providence, there can be no doubt. Therefore we do in all humility demand, we do with all earnestness entreat the brethren dearly beloved, not to resist the Divine will, and the choice of pious men ; but, overcoming the reluctance they naturally feel to resign so great a man, or any indignation, if it be so, that may be occasioned by his being taken from them, to glorify God for what has been done, and to give their assent to the proceeding with hearty good will. I will go further, and I will not conceal the fact, that whatever impediments you may offer to this proceeding, it must take place ; it is only a question of time. The preliminary measures have been already taken, and by this time the Apostolic see must have become acquainted with what has been done. Act wisely, therefore, and do without delay, and in a spirit of love, what you will indisputably be obliged to do some time or other. Farewell."

We see here that Gundulf was a man who, though evincing through life a conciliatory temper, could be firm in the maintenance of any cause he undertook, when the occasion required him to be so. The conciliatory disposition of Gundulf is remarkable ; he retained the favor as well as the respect of three kings, who are generally regarded as having been the most impracticable of men. He came into contact with the Conqueror when employed in building the Tower of London ; and William became, out of respect to Gundulf, one of the benefactors of the church of Rochester. The biographer of Gundulf mentions it as a remarkable circumstance in the history of William Rufus, that among his many oppressions he spared the see of Rochester all his days ; and not only spared, but largely augmented the episcopal revenues. Among other donations of the red king was that

of the manor of Lambeth. The manor-house on this estate was frequently placed at the disposal of the Archbishops of Canterbury when they visited the metropolis, until it at length passed entirely into their hands, and became ultimately the chief residence of the Primates.⁶ I need not mention the other donations of William Rufus, because they are to be found in those invaluable records—the *Registrum Roffense*, the *Custumale Roffense*, and the *Textus Roffensis*.

The mention of Gundulf's connexion with Rufus introduces the bishop under a new character, that of a negotiator. He was employed to negotiate between William, when he was besieging the castle of Rochester, and his uncle Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. Odo, being the leader of the insurgents in favor of Robert, Duke of Normandy, had been permitted, after his capture at Pevensey, to join Eustace, Earl of Boulogne, in Rochester castle, with the view of persuading the earl to deliver it up to the king. Odo, as usual, was false to his engagements, and the king, with the rest of the besiegers, were exasperated to the highest indignation. It was then that Gundulf interposed; and though we are not acquainted with the circumstances of the case, we must think highly of Gundulf's ability as a diplomatist, when we find him successful in persuading the besieged on the one side to propose a capitulation, and the infuriated king on the other to spare the lives of the garrison. Our appreciation of his ability is raised when we remember that the Earl-Bishop of Bayeux and the King of England were the most unprincipled and unscrupulous men of the age.

From Henry I. Gundulf obtained a confirmation by royal authority of the grants and possessions which, through the industry and economy of the bishop, had accrued to the see and priory of Rochester.⁷ To the Bishop of Rochester Henry was, equally with his brother, under obligation. Gundulf again appeared as a mediator, and successfully negotiated between the king and the barons who had risen up in arms. We are told that in carrying out these difficult negotiations he so conducted himself that, whether he was in the king's palace or the baron's castle, he was welcomed by either party as a friend and father; in other words, all placed confidence in him, because they believed that he had no private ends of his own to carry.

⁶ Ducarel's Lambeth.

⁷ The charter is given Reg. Roff. 35.

Gundulf was respected by Henry, and was received by the good Queen Maud as a paternal friend. She consulted him, visited him, and when her son was born she appointed Gundulf, in the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, to officiate at the baptism of the young prince.

It surprises us to find that, notwithstanding all this, Gundulf never sacrificed the friendship of Anselm. The politics of the two prelates were certainly not the same, and there is a letter in the fourth book of Eadmer's *Historia Novorum*, addressed by Gundulf to the Primate Anselm, when he was at Lyons, in which the Bishop of Rochester lays before him, as the consequence of his self-imposed exile, the deplorable state of the Church of Canterbury. Gundulf implores Anselm to return, and reveals a state of society so horrible that the letter is unsuitable for translation.⁸

The decided line, however, taken by Gundulf when he thought that the zeal of Anselm in the maintenance of his principles had degenerated into obstinacy, did not cause any permanent estrangement between the two friends. When Anselm returned, their friendship was as cordial as ever, and we find him ministering to the comfort of the bishop, when lying on his deathbed.

Gundulf lived to an extreme old age, and till his eighty-fourth year his health never failed. But in the year before his death, body and mind became enfeebled. He was afflicted with headaches, occasioned, it was said, by that copious effusion of tears in which he was accustomed to indulge. He was so completely prostrated at one time as to be unable to officiate in his cathedral, or to perform any episcopal act. To a man of active habits, who compelled himself to attend to all the minutiae of duty, this was a severe trial. He employed himself, however, in regulating his charities, and in giving directions for the management of that property with which he had enriched his see and his priory. His conduct was regulated by principle. He increased his charities by increased self-denial, but he was careful to leave the property in such a condition as not to impoverish his successor. He acted as a wise steward. He husbanded the revenue which, according to notions then in vogue, belonged to St. Andrew; and he spent it as he supposed St. Andrew would desire it to be spent, in donations to the poor.

⁸ Eadm. Hist. Nov. IV. 453; ed. Migne.

The old man rallied from his first attack, and he displayed the energy of his character by resuming his duties. The barons around were lawless, and the property of the church could never be secure from depredation unless the bishop, himself a baron, was present to protect the weak. When Gundulf could no longer sit on horseback, he caused himself to be carried in a litter from vill to vill, in order that he might superintend the distribution of his charity to the poor, and at the same time take care that there should be no encroachment on his prebendaries. It would often happen that when he arrived at one of his manors, he would cause himself to be lifted down from his litter, in order that he might visit the sick, who seem to have been sufferers chiefly from rheumatism and leprosy ; and he would not only supply them with food and clothing, but standing by their bedside, would weep with them, and offer for them the prayers of the church. He did this by night to escape observation, attended by his chaplain, and by two servants, who were required to assist him in his weakness. The bishop returned to Rochester in impaired health, and when his voice was once more heard within the walls of the cathedral, erected by his skill and enriched by his munificence, nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of his people. Gundulf, however, reminded them that the life of an octogenarian would not be much prolonged ; and to a friend who was delighted with the bishop's popularity, the good bishop said meekly, "Who am I that I should be applauded by the people ; I who have lived so long, and done comparatively so little." There was not any affectation in his humility, for, throughout his life he bewailed the fact, which caused him to weep profusely, that he did not experience those ecstatic fervors in religion which enthusiasts in all ages have regarded not only as a blessing—which they indisputably are—but as a proof of their being truly pious, which they as certainly are not. Gundulf prepared for death by a patient continuance in well-doing.

A relapse soon occurred, and, during this, Gundulf received a visit from his friend Anselm. One would much desire to know what transpired in the communion of two such souls at such a time. We only know that Anselm comforted him, received his confession, and gave his benediction. Gundulf was so greatly reduced that Anselm thought him to be

dying, and administered the last offices of religion. But Gundulf again rallied, and Anselm was obliged to leave him.

Gundulf now felt that his life of action was concluded, and he determined that he would devote to the duties of a contemplative life his few remaining days. His last public act was the appointment of an abbess in his nunnery at Malling. He had hitherto left the nuns to govern themselves, under his own superintendence. At St. Andrew's the bishop was the abbot, with a prior under him, and he determined that so it should be at Malling. There was to be a prioress, but he was himself to be the supreme governor. He forgot that he was usually resident in Rochester, and only occasionally at Malling; his friends, who had urged him in vain to appoint an abbess, now obtained letters from the king and the archbishop, entreating him to nominate a head to that establishment—and he yielded.

Having, after this, distributed all his goods among the poor, even to his shoes, and having bequeathed his rich vestments to the cathedral, he assumed the monastic dress, and directed that he should be carried to the priory of St. Andrew, there to die a monk among monks, which of all things was considered by his party in the church to be most desirable. With his usual consistency, he insisted, contrary to the advice of his brethren, to submit to all the discipline which the regulations of their founder required; but this could not last long, his weakness increased, and he was removed to the infirmary. A brother was appointed to attend him. There was only one ornament with which the bishop could not part—the episcopal ring, and he confided this to the care of his attendants, intending probably that it should be delivered to his successor. Ralph, who had lately been elected Abbot of Battle, had formerly been Prior of Rochester, and had been deservedly popular. The monks were anxious that he should be the successor of Gundulf, and were prepared to elect him, if they could obtain the consent of the archbishop. If to the Abbot of Battle Gundulf bequeathed or resigned the episcopal ring, it might be produced as an indication of Gundulf's wish that Ralph of Battle Abbey should succeed him. A suggestion to this effect was made to the old bishop, who said curtly, "He is a monk, what has he to do with an episcopal ring?"⁹ He was probably

⁹ There is a story connected with this episcopal ring which has been perplexing
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offended at the ambition of the ex-prior of Rochester, who ought to have been contented with his newly acquired dignity at Battle Abbey.

Soon after this another Ralph made his appearance at the priory, Ralph of Seez, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury. He, too, had the title of abbot, but he had been several years before ejected from his monastery by the violence of Robert de Belesme. Ralph had come to England, and, having no home of his own, he found one in every episcopal palace, abbey, or well-ordered castle. Wherever he went he was welcome, for he was a man of wit, distinguished for the point and vivacity of his conversation; and he was the more welcome because, under a cheerful exterior, he concealed a heart "open as day to melting charity," and deeply impressed with a sense of religion. He was the friend of Anselm and of Gundulf; and when he heard of Gundulf's illness, he hastened to Rochester, that he might console him on his bed of sickness. The friends employed themselves, as the biographer tells us, in sweet conversation on the heavenly life. Ralph was, however, obliged to leave Rochester after a short visit, and the friends parted, weeping to think that this would be their last meeting in this world. Ralph had scarcely reached the door of the infirmary, when Gundulf called him back. He remembered what had occurred in the case of the Abbot of Battle, and, demanding of his attendant the episcopal ring, he placed it as a parting gift in the hand of Ralph of Seez, who suggested that it might be better bestowed upon one of Gundulf's episcopal friends, since it did not pertain to an abbot to wear a ring. He reminded the bishop that, though not living a monk, still a monk he was. "Take it, nevertheless," said the bishop, "you may want it some day."

It had been probably arranged between Anselm and Gundulf at their last interview, that Ralph of Seez should be his successor; and his possession of the ring reconciled the monks to his appointment, as they regarded the donation in the light of a prophecy on the part of Gundulf. The cases of the two Ralphs were not parallel. Ralph of Seez did not seek the episcopal office, which the Abbot of Battle, contrary to his vow, coveted; and while the latter was presiding over

to some authors who in modern times have referred to the life of Gundulf. But all

perplexity vanishes if we call in the assistance of the Chronicle of Battle Abbey.

a monastery, Ralph of Seez was an exile, a monk unattached.¹ From this time Gundulf grew visibly worse; and not long after he made a proposal to the monks, which, whether we have regard to the request itself, or to the manner in which it was met, fills the modern reader with astonishment, and presents to us a scene which we find it difficult to realise. The old man seems suddenly to have called to remembrance some offence he had committed, and, according to the notion of the age, he supposed that for every offence he would receive punishment either in this world or the next. He therefore called upon the monks to administer stripes to his emaciated body. They were justly horrified at the proposal, and, as the efficacy of vicarious punishments was believed, they offered to be flagellated in his stead. The biographer says—"Factum est igitur."

On the following Sabbath, or Saturday, the good bishop was so feeble that he thought himself dying; he received the holy communion, and caused alms to be distributed. He was comforted by the fervor of his devotions, and was able to raise himself in his litter to show his reverence when the Gospel was read. A change took place towards evening, and he lay till midnight, speechless, though conscious. At matins the service was performed as usual in the infirmary, and it became apparent to those around that the venerated father was now *in articulo mortis*. The *tabula* was sounded—a board of wood which it was customary to strike with a mallet when it was desired to summon the inmates of the monastery without sounding the bell, which would rouse the external world. The *tabula* was sounded, and the dying man was placed on the pallet of horsehair. The brethren knew what the stricken *tabula* meant: they hastened to the infirmary; they solemnly repeated the creed, the litany, the commendatory prayer. The breathing, however, continued, and the Psalms were chanted in the ears of the dying man; the 80th Psalm was selected by the grateful monks: "Turn thee again, thou God of Hosts, look down from heaven; behold and visit this vine, and the place of the vineyard that thy right hand hath planted; and the branch that thou madest so strong for thyself." The day was just dawning as they came to this verse; the light of the eastern

¹ Cont. Chron. Mon. de Bello, p. 51. This chronicle has enabled me to give a full account of the transaction mentioned in the text.

sun shone brightly through the chequered window ; ere the psalm was concluded the spirit had departed from the body. "Their father had quitted that vineyard," says the biographer, "which under God he had planted, which by precept and example he had carefully cultivated, commending it to the care of God Most High."