

CONTENTS.

- V. ON THE HERALDS' VISITATIONS OF THE COUNTY OF CAMBRIDGE.
By CHARLES HENRY COOPER, F.S.A. p. 67
- VI. A CATALOGUE OF THE BOOKS GIVEN TO TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE,
BY THE FOUNDER. Communicated by G. E. CORRIE, D.D.
Master of Jesus College, Cambridge. p. 73
- VII. LETTERS OF GEO. ACWORTH TO ARCHBISHOPS POLE AND PARKER.
Communicated by JOHN E. B. MAYOR, M.A. St John's
College. p. 79
- VIII. LETTER FROM BISHOP BEDELL TO SIR NATH^l. RICH. Commu-
nicated by JOHN E. B. MAYOR, M.A. St John's College. p. 95
- IX. ON AN EARLY AUTOGRAPH OF SIR HENRY SPELMAN, WITH SOME
NEW OR NOT GENERALLY KNOWN FACTS RESPECTING HIM, BY
CHARLES HENRY COOPER, F.S.A. p. 101
- X. ORIGINAL LETTER OF GODFREY GOODMAN, TOGETHER WITH MATE-
RIALS FOR HIS LIFE. Communicated by JOHN E. B. MAYOR,
M.A. St John's College. p. 113
- XI. ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM ROBERT BOUTH AND JOHN BOIS,
PRESERVED IN ST JOHN'S COLLEGE TREASURY. Communicated
by JOHN E. B. MAYOR, M.A. St John's College. p. 139

REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

REPORT

PRESENTED TO

The Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

AT ITS TWENTY-FIRST GENERAL MEETING,

MAY 13, 1861.

ALSO

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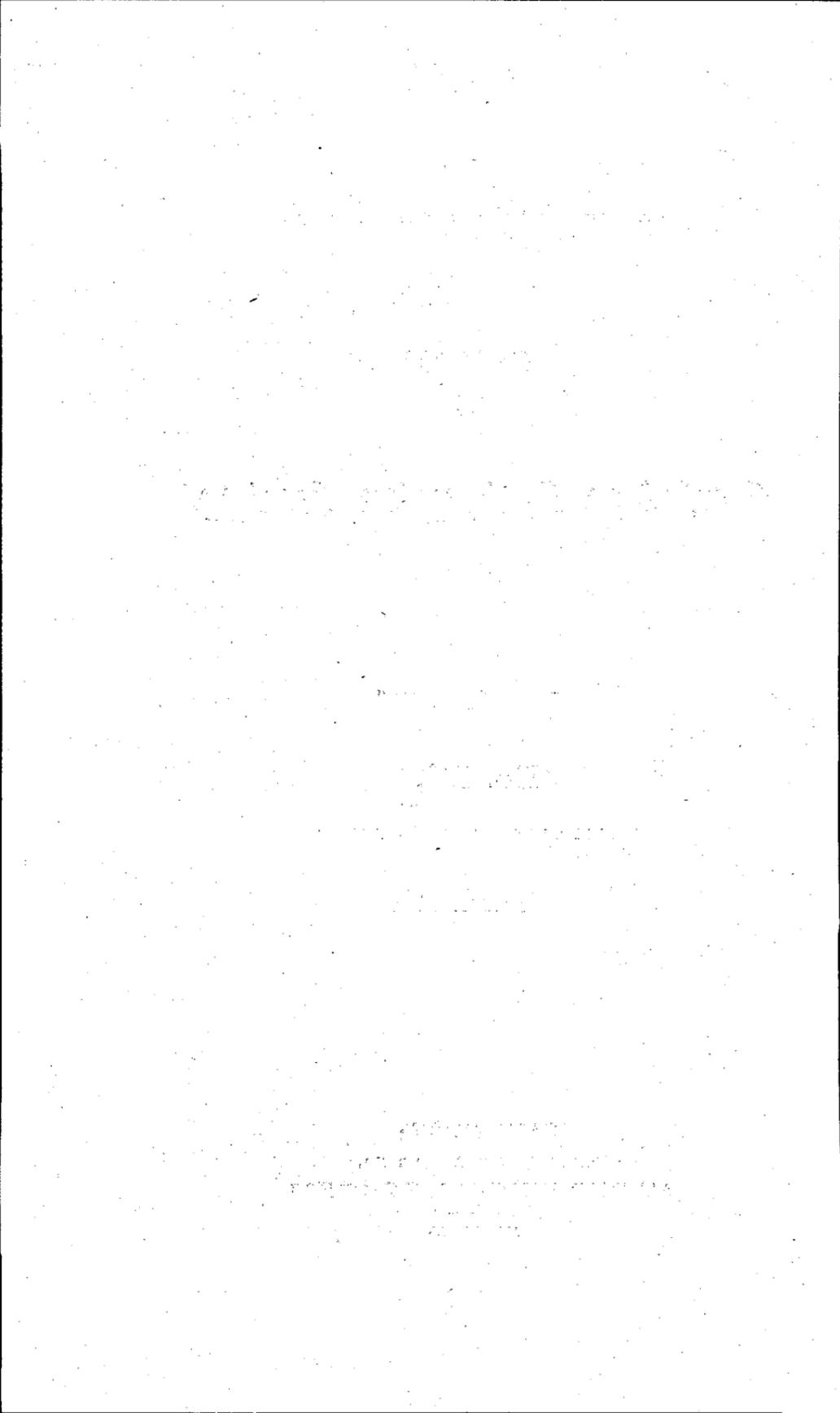
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VIII. LETTER FROM BISHOP BEDELL TO SIR NATH^L.
RICH. Communicated by JOHN E. B. MAYOR,
M.A. St. John's College.

(From the original [holograph] in the possession of His Grace the Duke
of Manchester at Kimbolton Castle).

[Read May 13, 1861.]

A large mass of letters addressed to Sir N. Rich is preserved at Kimbolton; Sir Nath. was connected with the earl of Manchester of his day, and there is also a portrait of him in the Castle. For the transcript of the following letter I have to thank B. Beedham, Esq. of Kimbolton, who kindly obtained the Duke of Manchester's permission for its publication.

The letter tells its own tale plainly enough; it may be compared with Elrington's *Life of Ussher*, pp. 97—102; where (p. 98 n.) Mr. John Floyd (doubtless the vice-provost Lloyd of our letter) is charged by the fellows of Trin. coll. Dublin with labouring to hinder the good of the college by his pragmatism and sinister plots; Dr. Elrington has also printed the documents relating to the election of Dr. Rob. Ussher (here called Mr. Usher), as Bedell's successor in the provostship¹. Sir N. Rich² endeavoured

¹ Cf. Laud's *Works*, vi. 356.

² See more of him in Nichols' *Progresses of Jas.* I. iii. 448, Birch's *Court and Times of Jas.* I. ii. 54, 298, 389, Whear's *Charisteria*, p. 127, *Communications to Cambr. Ant. Soc.* i. 261. One or two notices of him occur in the *Calendars of State Papers*.

on that occasion to procure Joseph Mede's nomination. (Mede's *Works*, p. 783.)

I may add that archdeacon Cotton has liberally committed to me transcripts of two contemporary lives of bishop Bedell (from the Tanner MSS.), with many other papers relating to the bishop, all of which I hope to prepare for publication in the course of 1862; I shall thankfully acknowledge any indication of new materials; what I have already succeeded in bringing together may be learnt from a series of papers communicated within the last 3 or 4 years to *Notes and Queries*.

Rich and Bedell were of the same college, as appears from the following account, which I owe to Mr. Cooper. "Sir Nathaniel Rich, who was of the same family as the earls of Warwick and Holland, was educated at Emmanuel college, proceeding B.A. 1604—5. He was knighted at Hatton House in Holborn 8 Nov. 1617. In 1621 he represented East Retford in parliament, and opposed the measures of the court. Upon the dissolution of that parliament he and other popular leaders in the commons were dispatched to Ireland, to enquire into matters concerning the public revenues of that kingdom and the king's service as well in the government ecclesiastical as civil. To the parliament of 19 Feb. 1623—4 he was returned both for East Retford and Harwich, making his election to sit for the latter town. He was a member of the Virginia company, and his name occurs in a special commission touching that colony issued 15 July, 1624. In the parliaments of 6 Feb. 1625—6 and 16 March 1628—9, he again represented Harwich. In 1629 he was one of those who set out the voyage of discovery to the isles of Providence and Henrietta. His name occurs in the charter of 4 Dec. 1630, incorporating a company for the plantation of those islands and adjacent islands between 10 and 20 degrees N. Lat., and 299 and 310 degrees of Longitude. On 7 May 1635, he was chosen deputy governor of the company. It is supposed that he died shortly before 26 May 1636, when the earl of Holland was elected deputy governor of the Providence company in his stead."

Salutem in Chrō. Jesu.

S^r, I am returned from Dublin vpon Michaelmas day, whether I set forth vpon S^t. James day. My iorney I thanck God was prosperous, as farre as hitherto I can judge of it, if the vndertaking a place of y^t. charge & burthen aboue my strength do not oppresse and crush me. At my comming I p^sented my selfe to my Lord Deputy, by whom I was graciously vsed. The next day came to me Mr. Usher who was elected by y^e junior fellowes wishing me to be advised ere I entered a place whereto he had right; He doubted not but when His Ma^{ty}. should be informed, he would administer indifferent justice to all his subjects ec. I could not get of him the grownds of his p^r.tension nor perswade him to go w^t. me to Drogheda to my L Primate whether I went y^e next day & communicated with him of all things. He to the point of Mr. Usher sayd he was sorry he would not be advised by his friends: wished me to proceede ec. I retourned & having pervsed the Statutes, went to the Colledge, and took y^e oath yet w^t. Protestatiō y^t. I entended not to binde my selfe to every clause & phrase in the Statutes, but to the Substance: & where y^e Provost might not hold any Benefice except it were w^t in three miles of Dublin, I did not intend presently to give over my Benefice, in as much as the place was litigious, & my family & affayres in England vnsetled, but would do it when w^t. conveniency I might. Thence forward having taken vpō me y^e place I endeavoured to sow vp the rent betweene y^e fellowes; & to y^t. end appointed a Communiō y^e next Sunday (A thing intermitted these 11 yeares). Then ordered the members of o^r. governing Senate, I meane y^e Seniors; removeing (as by o^r. charter we were bound) such as by tyme after their Degree of M^r. of Arts were to be removed. Next we chose officers, gave graces in the house for Degrees, reformed some abuses in the Chappell & Hall: as y^e Evening Prayers were in the Hall, and Philosophicall Acts in the Chappell. But my

next care was about the Statutes, which being part latin, part English, & in sheetes of Paper some stick'd together, some loose, a heape w^t out order, w^t. long p^rambles, & sometye vnecessary, and in many thinges defective: w^t. the cōsent of y^e greater part of the Seniors, I digested into a new forme, and and¹ at last perfected as I hope & published in the Chappell. The state of the Colledge in respect of the Revenew & Treasure should have been the thing I would next have entered into consideratiō of. But it required a long tyme. And this in short I fownd, there was not money enough in the chest to pay y^e Commons & the stipends when y^e day should come. I consigned all the Bookes of former accounts into the handes of the Vice-Provost (M^r. Lloyd) & the Auditor (S^r. James Ware) desiring him to set me downe the Estate of the Colledge especially in respect of Areares. Which hitherto he sayd he could never doe, in as much as he had not so much as a Rentall of the Colledge revenewe, but had made vp every years account, only out of what was taken out of the chest, & disbursed. Wherein notw^tstanding sundry Bursars had left in their hands large summes of the Colledge money, never satisfied. And to mend the matter a custom was brought in of giveing to the Senior Fellowes at ther departing a *Viaticum* as they call it. Which also was demanded by those Fellowes who now left their places. But to these Viaticums I have I hope given a Viaticum. And when ever I shall retorne to the house, I hope to looke a litle better to the Accounts: & if it be possible to recover some of those hundreds w^{ch} I doe already by a superficiall view perceive are vnjustly w^helde frō the Colledge, partly received & never accounted; partly lent (as is p^rtended) but w^t out assent of the greater part of y^e Seniors; partly lent indeede, but never repayed; & as it is now hoped to be granted for a Viaticum to the form^r Provost. S^r, you may by this w^{ch} I have in short run over, conceive what a world of busines I am put into: yet I repent me not of my iorney though I have not

¹ and and] So in orig.

had there one houre voyd of paines, trouble, or thought, nor do looke to have when I shall retourne, for many moneths. But if I shalbe able to setle the Colledge in a good state, for their maners, lawes, reueneu, & studies, whereof in respect of many difficulties in each I have great reason to doubt, yet the state of y^e Country considered, now wholly assubjected to Romish superstition, & as it seemes, in respect of religion euen abandoned by those y^t should have the care and charge of it, I have little hope euer to have comfortable day there. Unlesse w^t. the A^ple I could reioice in Labours, & troubles, & euen to be offered vp, on the sacrifice and service of y^e faith of God's people; which I do some tymes wish, & have some comfort I confesse even in y^t. very wishing. But I should enter into a Sea to goe about to relate vnto y^u the p^rsent state of religiō in Ireland. Your selfe I beleeeve would scarce beleeeve it possible y^t. in a few yeares since y^r. being there it should receive such a headlong downefall. I shall reserve y^t. to o^r. meeting, which shalbe I hope ere long, when I shall receive the Colledge, & my Lord Primates letters, or advice y^t. they are in London for me. At w^{ch} tyme also I hope to make my excuse & satisfaction for my not seeing my Lord of Canterbury at my parting, being in truth required by my L Primate to repaire to Dublin w^t. *all possible speede*. I hope y^u have in part made my excuse, & in any occasiō will further doe it. Meane while — desiring y^u to remember my [hum]ble service to the Earle of Warwick my ever honoured Lord I committ y^u to the protection of o^r. good God, and rest S^r

Yours ever in Christ

Horningerth October the 9th
1627.

to be commanded

W. BEDELL.

[Indorsed.]

To the Worsh^d and my Very
good friend S^r Nathaneel

Riche at Warwick

house d^r. these

in London.

