



TO FACE P. 459.

ALTAR FOUND AT BEWCASTLE,

ART. XL. *Roman Altar at Bewcastle.* By F. HAVERFIELD, M.A., F.S.A.

THE inscription lately found (in the autumn of 1898) in the churchyard at Bewcastle is cut on an altar 27 inches high by 16 inches broad; it is in six lines of $2\frac{3}{8}$ inch letters with a few ligatures and several letters written small. Expanded it reads as follows :—

Deo sancto Cocidio Q(uintus) Peltrasius Maximus trib(unus), ex corniculario praeff(ectorum) praetorio eemmvv. (eminentissimorum virorum) v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).

To the holy god Cocidius, erected by Q. Peltrasius Maximus, tribune, [commander of the garrison at Bewcastle] formerly clerk to their Eminencies, the Praefects of the Praetorium.

The “cornicularius” was a kind of clerk or registrar attached to several Roman officers—in the case before us, to the service of the Praetorian Praefects at Rome. Usually such “cornicularii” were promoted to be centurions in legions: in the case before us the man became “tribunus,” that is, not a military tribune in a legion, but commander of an auxiliary regiment such as would garrison the fort at Bewcastle. An even higher promotion is recorded on a Numidian inscription (C.I.L. viii. 4325). There one Flavius Flavianus somewhere about A.D. 300 was “praeses (governor) provinciae Numidiae ex corniculario praeff. praett. em. v.”

The inscription may belong to the third or even the commencement of the fourth century. The Praefects of the Praetorian Guard (there were usually two at a time) were given the title of Eminence somewhere during the second or the opening of the third century; on the other hand the Praefecture was radically altered by Constantine the

the Great about the end of the first quarter of the fourth century.* These two dates form limits for dating our altar. The lettering suits these limits, but does not seem to me to afford any more precise indications; perhaps it best suits the first half of the third century.

Cocidius is a local god, much worshipped in Northern Britain; three other altars dedicated to him have been found at Bewcastle. Peltradius is, so far as I can discover, a hitherto unknown Roman nomen.

* One or two instances of the title are quoted from the second century: most belong to the first half of the third century. The latest instance is on an inscription of A.D. 315-317 (Mommson AEM xvii, 115).