

## RADBOURNE AND THE FORTY-FIVE.

## NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

The two controversial papers on Radbourne and the '45 by Mr. E. E. Chambers and Major L. Eardley Simpson, were in the nature of an experiment so far as this journal is concerned, and we are afraid it has not proved a successful one. The Editor realized that an annual publication is not a suitable medium for controversy, and the first paper was admitted solely on the ground that it dealt with matters of fact relating to the Pole family of Radbourne. In addition to facts, however, the subject bristles with conjecture and legendary matter which cannot be dignified by the name of tradition, about which there is not sufficient evidence to enable the impartial reader to reach a reasoned conclusion.

Leaving aside the family questions with regard to which both disputants have made their statements and quoted authorities capable of being checked, we propose to say a word or two about the alleged visit of Prince Charles to Radbourne Hall on his way from Leek to Derby.

Major Simpson says (p. 123 of his book), that "not a hint of this visit appears in any of the general histories of the Forty-Five, and only two slight references are to be traced in Derbyshire books," namely Dr. Cox in the *Victoria County History of Derbyshire*, 1905, and in Firth, J. B., *Highways and Byways of Derbyshire*, 1905. As an actual fact, however, the story seems to have first appeared in Dr. Cox's *Three Centuries of Derbyshire Annals*, 1890, vol. 1, pp. 310-311, and Cox was entirely

responsible for it, while the later publications merely epitomised the earlier and fuller account.

The categorical statements made by Dr. Cox in his "Three Centuries" are as follows:—

1. On December 4th the Prince "turned aside for an hour or two and visited Radbourne Hall" on his way from Ashbourne to Derby.

2. He there met by previous arrangement several of the recusants of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire.

3. Mr. German Pole was of strong Jacobite tendencies.

4. The Prince while at Radbourne made up his mind to retreat because of

5. The non-arrival of a large sum of money from the Jacobites of Leicestershire and the South Midlands.

6. This money was afterwards coolly appropriated by the Derbyshire yeoman entrusted with its custody.

7. Mass was celebrated at the marble altar of All Saints' by a French priest on the morning of December 5th.

Since the publication of Dr. Cox's work in 1890, a considerable amount of research has been devoted to the history of the '45, but not one of the above statements has received corroboration, nor does it seem likely that any ever will.

As to the last item (no. 7), Dr. Cox seems to have originally published this in his *Chronicles of All Saints'*, 1881, but Major Simpson will not admit that there is any truth in it and rejects it with contempt. Mrs. Catherine Thomson, in *Memoirs of the Jacobites*, 3 vols., 1845-6, was the first to publish the 'mass' story, and Cox repeated it with embellishments for which he gave no authority.

The truth is that the Radbourne visit rests on very insecure foundations, and should not be accepted without further evidence.—Ed.