



Review.

A CHESHIRE PARISH : BEING A SHORT HISTORY OF INCE.

Some ten years ago two notable papers relating to the parish of Ince were read by the Vicar, the Rev. F. G. Slater, M.A., now editorial secretary of this Society. The papers were subsequently printed in volumes XVI. and XVII., and afforded evidence of the keen interest of the author in all that related to his parish. The intervening years, have, clearly, effected no change in Mr. Slater's affection for local history, and the vicissitudes of the somewhat remote Cheshire parish, which have recently been published, will be read with much benefit and enjoyment.

Mr. Slater is not content with describing events of the past from a cold and detached standpoint ; he endeavours, and with success, to make his village magnates, and lesser individuals, live, and to bring home to readers much of the humour and pathos of their existence. The Right Rev. Bishop Mercer, D.D., justly pays a tribute to the author, for the zeal and care with which he has dealt with every phase of village life, and for the feeling that declines to look on anything human as alien to itself.

As Ince is fortunate in its vicar, so is he likewise favoured in having so much of antiquarian importance within the limits of the parish. An island the name implies, and isle-like it appears to-day on an eminence above the marshes and the Mersey ; but much more must Ince have merited its name in those distant days when the Mersey flowed on either side of Ince, past Wervin and Backford, to join the Dee below Chester.

Naturally the author has much to say about the church, the successor of one existing in Norman times, and about the churchyard with its many quaint and frequently illiterate inscriptions. He tells the reader of the early days of Ince and its place in Domesday Book, of the Parish Registers, of Ince in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and many other matters closely bound up in the parochial story.

To many the chapter possessing the greatest amount of interest is that devoted to describing the grange or manor-

house of the Abbots of St. Werburgh. The remains of the buildings are considerable, and give much scope for conjecture and much attention has evidently been paid to them. The plan and illustrations furnished by Mr. G. W. Haswell add greatly to the value of this section of the book.

Another mediæval object of interest is the scanty remnant of the Cistercian Abbey of Stanlow. This site is not within the parish of Ince, but closely adjoins it and receives numerous notices.

Interesting sidelights are thrown on English history, *e.g.*, Domesday Book, the County Palatine, the Benedictine Abbey, the Reformation, the Church of England under the Commonwealth, and the Woollen Act. A sketch of the romantic career of one of the greatest of Welsh sacred poets, Ieuan Glan Geirionydd, is also to be found in the pages.

Mr. Slater is to be congratulated on the welcome addition to local history he has given to his parishioners, antiquaries, and the general reader.

J. H. E. B.

