

PECULIAR OF AYLESBURY, CO. BUCKS.

1726. April. WILLIAM SHELTON, of Aylesbury, widower, and MARY BISHOP, of Aylesbury, spinster, aged 32, at her own disposall.

The Bond is given by the said William Shelton and Charles Clarke, of —, taylor. [Decayed fragment].

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An Index of Names will be given in the next issue.

GEO. F. TUDOR SHERWOOD.

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## Choir Stalls and their Carvings.

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**M**OST of our readers will have studied those interesting monuments of mediæval art, which the carved stalls in our Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches present to us. These stalls were usually appropriated to the members of a collegiate body, and the seats, instead of being fixed and immoveable, turn upon hinges; and when turned up, the under side exhibits a mass of sculpture, arranged according to a regular and unvarying plan, in which the workmen and artists have exhibited their skill in a very remarkable manner. It is difficult to say why these seats were so arranged. The popular opinion is that they were turned up during a part of the service when the clergy were not allowed to be seated; but that out of pity the aged or infirm were allowed to rest themselves against the bracket over the sculpture, which afforded a support without allowing them actually to be seated. For this reason the seats are called in France *misericordes* and in England *misereres*. Why this particular kind of sculpture should have been used for these seats, is a question that has never been solved. Miss Phipson is about to publish a learned work on the subject of "Choir Stalls and their Carvings," which will shortly be published by Mr. Batsford, 94, High Holborn, W.C. The authoress has made a large number of drawings of these grotesque carvings, and given a detailed description of most that appear in our English Cathedrals and Churches. The volume will contain reproductions of three hundred sketches made by Miss Phipson, three of which we are able by her kindness to give in our pages. Very little has hitherto been written on this interesting subject, and we feel sure that Miss Phipson's book will be heartily welcomed by all antiquaries.



FROM WESTMINSTER ABBEY.