

That monasteries had ceased long before the time of their suppression, to be, in the general opinion of Churchmen, of any practical value, is shown by the fact that for 150 years before the Reformation scarcely one had been founded. The benefactions of the faithful in the fifteenth century were directed towards colleges. Monasteries had done a good work in their day; but they had become obsolete, and the requirements of the advancing growth of the nation made their abolition necessary. They held about one-fifth of the land of the country, and caused the exemption of all this from State burdens, thus throwing an unfair weight upon the holders of the rest. They took up and isolated from the active service of the country a large number of active and vigorous men and women, which was an impediment to progress; and by their vows of chastity they interfered with the natural growth of the population. Putting aside the religious question altogether, it is evident that monasteries were doomed.

G. G. PERRY.

Reviews.

The Golden Chersonese, and the Way Thither. By ISABELLA L. BIRD (Mrs. BISHOP), author of "The Hawaiian Archipelago," "A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains," etc. With map and illustrations. Pp. 380. John Murray, 1883.

MISS BIRD'S "Unbeaten Tracks in Japan" was reviewed in THE CHURCHMAN at the time of its publication, and it was recommended as interesting and informing in a high degree. The volume before us—the last instalment of her travels in the Far East—is a companion of that charming work; and those of our readers who desire to put up a first-rate book of travels for a Swiss, Scotch, Norwegian, or American run; this summer, cannot do better than purchase this. The accomplished author has several gifts which are really rare; and her works, all of which have been warmly commended in these pages, well repay reading. Certain passages in "The Golden Chersonese" have just now a special interest, describing as they do "unbeaten tracks" in colonies, important from a commerce which is growing, and attractive withal, yet about which few English people know anything, and the general reader nothing. But the whole book, from beginning to end, is ably written, bright, instructive, and eminently real; free from a touch of either sensationalism or flippancy—its tone, indeed, is thoroughly reverent.

The *Aurea Chersonesus* of Ptolemy, the "Golden Chersonese" of Milton, the Malay Peninsula of our day, has no legitimate claim to an ancient history. The first definite statement about it seems to be in a letter from Emanuel, King of Portugal, to the Pope; and he states that

his General, Albuquerque,* had captured this city of Malacca, and slaughtered the Moors (Mohammedans) who defended it. As a result of this triumph, by the year 1600 the commerce of the Straits had fallen into the hands of the Portuguese. In 1641 their empire in the Straits was seized upon by the Dutch. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the East India Company acquired Pinang and Province Wellesley; in 1823, Singapore; and in 1824, Malacca. In 1867 these colonies were consolidated into one government under the Crown; and at present "the Straits Settlements," prized as among the most valuable of our possessions of the Far East, though merely small islands or narrow strips of coast territory, have exports and imports over £32,000,000! Besides these bits of British territory, there are also on the western side of the Peninsula the "protected" States of Perak, Selangor, and Sungei Ujong. Of the centre and of the east side of the Peninsula scarcely anything is known: more than half of it, indeed, has not at all been explored. The Malays are not the Aborigines of this singular spit of land. A population of "Wild Tribes," several thousands in number, called by the Malays *Orang Benua*, or "men of the country," roam about in the central districts and in the forests of the chain of mountains which run down the middle of the Peninsula. It is by the energy and capital of the Chinese population, which is rapidly increasing, that the resources of the Peninsula are being developed. The Malays are strict Mohammedans; they are a settled and agricultural people, to some extent educated, and living in houses more or less tasteful. Of the flora and fauna of the Peninsula, of its productions and climate, our author gives very interesting information. The descriptions of life and scenery in this gorgeous tropic land are very graphic. It is only of those territories which are under British rule or protection that her letters treat, although in order to make the book more useful, statements as to the whole Peninsula have been added.

Open this volume where one may, something attractive is sure to meet the eye. Two or three descriptions of life in Malacca may be given as specimens; but first let us see how the author voyaged to that city from Singapore.

The *Rainbow* (she writes) is a very small vessel, her captain half Portuguese and half Malay, her crew Chinese; and her cabin passengers were all Chinese merchants. Her engineer is a Welshman, a kindly soul, who assured Mr. — when he commended me to his care, that he "was a family man, and that nothing gave him greater pleasure than seeing that ladies were comfortable;" and I owe to his good offices the very small modicum of comfort that I had. . . . The wore their pig-tails coiled round their heads, and loose blue cotton trousers. We deck was packed with Chinese coolies, on their way to seek wealth in the diggings at Perak. They were lean, yellow, and ugly, smoked a pipe of opium each at sundown, had slipped our cable at Singapore because these coolies were clambering over every part of the vessel, and defying all attempts to keep them out, so that to "cut and run" was our only chance. . . . I am the only European passenger, and the

* The romantic exploits of Albuquerque, who conquered Malacca in 1511, were apostrophized in the *Lusiad*—

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Though poisoned shafts their ponderous quivers store,
Malacca's spicy groves and golden ore,
Great Albuquerque, thy dauntless toils shall crown.

only woman on board. I had a very comfortable night lying on deck in the brisk breeze on the waveless sea.

Later on was done this sketch :

There is a long bay with dense forests of coco-palms, backed by forests of I know not what, then rolling hills, and to the right, beyond these, a mountain known as Mount Ophir, rich in gold. Is this possibly, as many think, the Ophir of the Bible, and this land of gems and gold truly the "Golden Chersonese"? There are islets of emerald green lying to the south, and in front of us a town of antiquated appearance, low houses, much coloured, with flattish, red-tiled roofs, many of them built on piles, straggling for a long distance, and fringed by massive-looking bungalows half buried in trees. A hill rises near the middle, crowned by a ruined cathedral, probably the oldest Christian church in the Far East.

The *Rainbow* was surrounded by a crowd of Malay boats, with rude sails made of mats, and by one of these the lady's card and note of introduction were sent to the Lieutenant-Governor. Soon after, the captain and engineer went ashore, and she was left among a crowd of Chinamen and Malays, without any possibility of being understood by any of them. "At last," she writes, "when very nearly famished, and when my doubts as to the wisdom of this novel and impromptu expedition had become very serious indeed, a European boat appeared, moving with the long, steady stroke of a man-of-war's boat, rowed by six native policemen, with a frank-looking, bearded countryman steering, and his peons in white, with scarlet and gold hats and sashes, in the bow." As this boat swept up to the *Rainbow's* side, a man in white stepped on board, and introduced himself to her as Mr. Biggs, the colonial chaplain, deputed to receive her on behalf of the Governor, who was away on a little trip in the country. Quarters were ready for her in the Stadthaus, close to the Government bungalow.

I was introduced to my rooms (she writes) with their floors of red Dutch tiles, their blue walls, their whitewashed rafters, their doors and their windows consisting of German shutters only, their ancient beds of portentous height, and their silent and haunted look, and then went to tiffin with Mr. and Mrs. Biggs. Mr. Biggs is a student of hymnology, and we are soon in full swing on this mutually congenial subject. . . . The Government bungalow, in which I spend most of my time, is a comfortable little cottage, with verandahs longer than itself. In the front verandah, festooned with trailers and orchids, two Malay military policemen are always on guard, and two scornful looking Bengalis in white trousers, white short robes, with sashes of crimson silk striped with gold, and crimson and gold flat hats above their handsome but repellent faces, make up the visible part of the establishment. One of these Bengalis has been twice to Mecca.

"The Governor's bungalow being scarcely large enough for the Governor's family," writes Mrs. Bishop, "I am lodged in the old Dutch Stadthaus, formerly the residence of the Dutch Governor and which has enough of solitude and faded stateliness to be fearsome, or at the least eerie, to a solitary guest like myself, to whose imagination in the long dark nights, creeping Malays or pilfering Chinamen are far more likely to present themselves than the stiff beauties and formal splendours of Dutch ascendancy. The Stadthaus, which stands on the slope of the hill, and is the most prominent building in Malacca, is now used as the Treasury, Post Office, and Government offices generally. There are large state reception rooms, including a ball-room, and suits of apartments for the use of the Governor of the Straits Settlements, the Chief

Justice, and other high officials, on their visits to Malacca." Our author continues, as follows :

The worst of my stately habitation is, that after four in the afternoon there is no one in it but myself, unless a Chinese coolie, who has a lair somewhere, and appears in my room at all sorts of unusual hours, after I think I have bolted and barred every means of ingress. However, two Malay military policemen patrol the verandahs outside at intervals all night, and I have the comfort of imagining that I hear, far below, the clank of the British sentries who guard the Treasury. In the early morning my eyes always open on the governor's handsome Mohammedan servant in spotless white muslin and red head-dress and girdle, bringing a tray with tea and bananas. The Chinese coolie who appears mysteriously attends on me, and acts as housemaid, our communications being entirely by signs. The mosquitos are awful.

Malacca, we read, is a land where it is "always afternoon"—hot, still, and dreamy. Two Chinese steamers make it a port of call, but except that they bring mails, their comings and goings are of no interest to the very small English part of the population.

From a charming letter on Klang, we may make a brief quotation.

Klang looks as if half the houses were empty. . . . Yesterday evening we had service in the hall, the whole white population being "sounded up" for it ; seven men and two women, three of whom are Roman Catholics. The congregation sat under one punkah, and the Resident under another, both being worked by bigoted Mohammedans ! . . . We had one of the most beautiful of the Ambrosian hymns, and possibly Dr. Bonar may like to hear that his hymn "I heard the voice of Jesus say" was sung with equal enjoyment in the wilds of the Golden Chersonese.

We have made quotations from one portion of this delightful book, but every letter is equally well written and full of interest. We should add that a capital map makes the track of the journeys through this *terra incognita* easy to be followed, and that there are several good engravings.

Annals of the Parish of Almondbury, Yorkshire. By CHARLES AUGUSTUS HULBERT, M.A., Vicar, Honorary Canon of Ripon. London : Longman and Co.

THE title of this book might lead us to expect to find little of general interest, though there might be much local information. Reading it, we find it far otherwise. The history of Almondbury is, in fact, that of a large and populous district, including its topography, antiquities, families, and celebrities. While what is commonly called Church progress is fully described, the history of the Church spiritual is the thread which runs through the book. During the last fifty years we find that the number of churches in the ancient parish has increased from four to nineteen, and it has possessed, and still possesses, a large body of Evangelical clergymen. Not only the antiquary and the lover of history, but the general reader will find in these annals much to interest him ; and he who loves to observe the true work of the Church will derive much satisfaction. The book contains four parts, which have been published separately. The first is devoted to the Parish Church ; the second to the Halls, Grammar School, and Family History ; the third to the Ancient Chapels, District Churches, Local History and Records ; the fourth to Biography and Illustrations. An immense amount of labour has been bestowed upon the work, and we learn from the preface that the venerable author has been collecting materials for forty years.

The Rural Deanery of Huddersfield consists of four large parishes of

which Almondbury is one, and contains forty-two distinct parochial districts. All the incumbents of the mother churches have for many years been Evangelical men, and by the appointments they have made to their daughter churches and their zeal in church extension they have had a very important influence on the religious life of the neighbourhood. The church at Almondbury is thought by some antiquaries to have been founded by Paulinus, though on the neighbouring Castle Hill, where are the earthworks of an ancient fortress some of which are possibly Roman. The nave and tower of the present church belong to the early sixteenth century; the chancel being much older. A remarkable inscription runs round the painted oak ceiling of the nave, to which the name of Geferay Doyston is attached, and date 1522. The Saviour is supposed to be addressing the sinner. In the course of it are these words: "Thou man unkynd have in thy mynd my blody face, my woundys wyde on every syde for thy trespas. Thou synner hard turn heder (hither) ward behold thy Savyor fre. . . . For thy trespas my passion was to rede (rid) the from the fende (fiend)." Using the author's words, "The date is remarkable, as being just previous to the Reformation, indicative of sound doctrine even at that time in this church."

Mainly through the energy of the Vicar this interesting church has been restored at a cost of £9,000, all of which has been paid off. Among the contributors were Sir. J. W. Ramsden, the Earl of Dartmouth, and many of the leading manufacturers of the neighbourhood. The author has given many curious extracts from the churchwardens' accounts and registers. In the former is an item of 2s. 6d. on May 9th, 1705, "For walking in ye Church on ye Sunday to keep people from sleeping, and whipping of ye doggs." There is an item in 1698, "Wine for Communion for the whole year £16 3s. 3d." This a remarkably large sum, since further on we find that in 1712 the price was 1s. 6d. per quart. The mother church appears to have supplied wine to district churches. It would appear, however, that it was deemed necessary in 1727 that "Wine remaining unconsecrated be locked up duly in sight of all the Churchwardens then attending, and the key delivered to the Vicar." The following curious regulation of the vestry appears, made in 1778, "Vicar or Curate one quart (of wine), whenever he officiates, in lieu of any allowances which the Rubrick has appointed to the officiating Clergymen in celebrating the Communion Service. Churchwardens, on Easter Sunday, each one pint of wine for his proper use." This shows that the wine consumed was hardly due to the large number of communicants in those "good old times."

There are "frequent payments for Foxes' Heads, and Foomards' or Polecats' heads." There are payments for "Perambulations in Rogation Week." In 1713, for "Ye poore persons in Yorke Castle." In 1764, "Cloth for Communion Table and for a Pennance Sheet," "for a bason for the use of the Church to christen at Communion Table." The Registers go back to 1557. They contain dismal details of the ravages of the Plague in that neighbourhood in 1588, also a notice of the Plague in London, 1563. Many deaths by accidents and suicides are recorded, interspersed with prayers and godly remarks by the then Vicar, Robert Staynton. There is a record of a marriage in 1559, when the "Ministration of the Holy Communion in connection with the solemnization of

matrimony was desired by the bridegroom." Among the family records we find a full account of the family of Kaye of Woodsouse, from whom the Earls of Dartmouth derived their family estates. An extract is given from the life of Oliver Heywood, a distinguished Nonconformist, from which it appears that his preaching was seriously, and apparently unjustly, interrupted by the Sir John Kaye of the time, 1673, "who was zealous against Nonconformity." The history of the district churches wonderfully illustrate the zeal and liberality which is the result of wholesome religious influence. It contains records of many holy clerical and lay Churchmen, "whose works doth follow them." Among the biographies is that of Thomas Scot de Rotherham, Archbishop of York, who endowed a college at Rotherham with the rectory of Almondbury, providing for a vitar. An extract from his will, 1485, is given, where he makes his bequests out of gratitude to "Jesus, Whose name, O, if I had loved it as I ought and would." Conspicuous among the modern Vicars of Almondbury appears Rev. Lewis Jones, who was there for forty-four years. He found in the parish one church and three parochial chapels; he left "eighteen churches with districts assigned, parsonages, schools, burial-grounds, and endowments added or enlarged, and the spiritual interests of his flock were promoted by the appointment of able and faithful ministers." Eight of these churches are in the patronage of the Vicar, and two others of the Vicar and a layman conjointly. The difficulties Mr. Jones had to encounter, and the perseverance with which he overcame them, are very remarkable. There is an interesting notice of Rev. George Hough, who was the founder of the "Almondbury Clerical Society" in 1828, and for fifty years its secretary. The testimony of his consistent life and sound Evangelical teaching will not soon be forgotten. Canon Hulbert has added a list of the gravestones in the church, and much useful information of a local character.

The volume contains several photographs and lithographic illustrations, which add much to its interest, including a portrait of the esteemed author. It is well printed, and there is a good index. Conciseness is rarely arrived at in histories which must deal with so many subjects, and it is not easy for an author of such a book to exclude matter which cannot interest the world at large, though very important to his neighbours. Considering these difficulties, Canon Hulbert has been unusually successful in bringing out a readable book. A kindly Christian spirit runs through the record, and good work, by whomsoever done, receives its due acknowledgment. In giving a truthful record of his own parish, a clergyman cannot omit to state what he has himself been enabled to carry out, and our author is no exception to this; but in doing so he does not omit to make plain his obligations to others. We trust that the book may, by its circulation, fully accomplish the objects for which it has been written.

