the waters passed by." "His voice is as the sound of many waters." "Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary."

Such words as these seem fitting, as we look up to the sheer granite cliffs and massive rock-towers, gleaming in dazzling brightness against the azure sky, whence the water-floods seem to pour down in snow-white cataracts.

C. F. Gordon Cumming.

Art. III.—THOMAS BECKET, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

THE great and familiar names of history are every now and then served up to us as a new dish by historical writers. But to make the dish new and attractive there must be a piquant sauce added, and some fresh surroundings. These Mr. Froude has certainly provided in his essay on Thomas Becket in the latest volume of his "Short Studies." It is a singular coincidence that of the two brothers Froude, one should have been the first to oppose the tide of invective long poured on Becket by Protestant writers, the other should have shown himself the most elaborate writer-down of the once popular saint. We are obliged to dissent somewhat from both the brothers. It is, indeed, a patent absurdity to maintain that Becket had any true title to that saintship with which the accident of his death invested him; it is also equally unhistorical, in our view, to hold that he had no good qualities, that he was a swindler, a traitor, and a liar. According to our view, Becket was an able man, with some high aims, but of a perverse and headstrong disposition—incapable of seeing more than his own view of the question, or of believing that anyone who differed from him could have any right on his side. His temper was extremely violent. His notions of right and wrong were the notions of his age. His morality was what we describe as *positive,* not founded on principle. He held that the end justified the means, and he worked sometimes unscrupulously for what he held to be the highest end, namely, the freedom and supremacy of the Church.

Mr. Froude, as it seems to us, sometimes misstates the case against him. For instance, he appears to attribute Becket's first quarrel with the King to the claims made by him for clerical exemptions, whereas it was due simply to a secular matter—the King's attempt to make the Danegelt a govern-

ment tax, instead of leaving it in the hands of the sheriffs who were to pay a composition to the Crown.[1] For some reason or other, Becket violently opposed Henry on this matter, and hence the first open estrangement between them. No doubt the King had been bitterly disappointed when he found his new Archbishop resign the Chancellorship. It had been his pet scheme to have the highest offices of Church and State held by the same person, that thus, through him, he might act indifferently in secular and ecclesiastical matters. This scheme was at once frustrated by Becket's resignation; but we can hardly blame Becket for thinking the two offices incompatible. Better would it have been for the Church of England had many of his successors held the same views—had Archbishops Hubert Walter, and Stratford, and Kemp, and others, been equally averse to the blending of the spiritual and secular.

Again, Mr. Froude seems to think that Becket was not really discharged from his financial liabilities before becoming Archbishop, or at any rate that this discharge mattered little, and that the demand suddenly made on him at the Council at Northampton, to account for all the revenues of vacant bishoprics and abbeys received by him as Chancellor, was a fair one. "The question is whether his conduct admitted of explanation. He would have done wisely to clear himself if he could, and it is probable that he could not" (Froude). Canon Robertson, in his excellent "Life of Becket," does not appear to be aware that the Archbishop had received any discharge. But both Mr. Froude and the Canon would have done better to refer to an authority than which there is no more valuable one for the life of Becket—we mean the "Annals" of Ralph de Diceto, Dean of St. Paul's. Diceto was a contemporary of Becket, and his great antagonist Bishop Foliot, and was well acquainted with them both. He is an eminently impartial writer, not betraying that eager advocacy to be found in the numerous "Lives of Becket," nor, on the other hand, any partizanship with Foliot. Now, the Dean states distinctly that Becket had received full acquittance and discharge for all his complicated money transactions before his consecration, and that only on that ground would he consent to be consecrated.[2] To call upon him, therefore, suddenly and without warning, when he had had no time for preparation or for obtaining the necessary documents, to explain complicated money transactions, which he had been led to regard as closed, was nothing less than sheer tyranny. We do not

[1] See Stubbs, "Const. Hist.," i. 462.
[2] R. de Diceto, i. 314.

think that any charge of dishonesty or peculation can be substantiated against Becket; and we hold that the insinuations about his luxurious living at Pontigny, adopted by Dr. Hook and Mr. Froude, are baseless.

Again we must differ from Mr. Froude in his estimate of the character of Henry II. That he was an able and politic prince all will admit; but he was not only grossly licentious in his life, but was subject to such fits of ungovernable passion and ferocity, that at times he lost sight of all his politic plans, all sense of justice and equity, and was the creature of the most savage impulse. There is scarcely a more ferocious act recorded in history than his banishing in midwinter 400 of Becket's relatives, friends, and supporters with the deliberate intention of letting them starve in Becket's sight at Pontigny. We cannot, indeed, at this period find one prominent person on whom we can contentedly dwell. The King was unscrupulous, passionate, sometimes brutal. The Archbishop, bitter, uncharitable, full of hatred and malice. Foliot, his antagonist, shifty, treacherous, untruthful. The Pope, full of mean truckling, without honour or principle. To construct an heroical history for the period, either for King or Archbishop, is in our view a hopeless task. Everywhere there are littlenesses, tricks, as well as violence and outrage. Even the "Constitutions" of Clarendon, so often vaunted as a grand declaration of the ancient customs, manifestly falsify ancient custom in favour of the Crown. Compare, for instance, the twelfth constitution, which says that all vacant Church benefices are to be held by the Crown which is to receive their rents, with the first article of the Charter of Henry I., which expressly abjures the right of the Crown to take anything from a vacant Church preferment—the whole of the accumulation belonging to the successor. It is manifest that the custom declared at Clarendon to be the ancient law, was not so in truth, but was stated thus to suit the convenience of a rapacious monarch, who kept the great See of Lincoln for seventeen years without a Bishop, all this time appropriating its revenues.

But while we can't find any prominent person at this period to regard with unmixed satisfaction, we confess that we regard the Archbishop with the least satisfaction of all. For Becket was an able man, as his early work as a Canonist and as Chancellor shows; he was a brave man, as all his life as well as his death testifies; he was, in our judgment at least, a man above care for pelf and money-getting; and yet withal he was a man most mischievous in his life, and who by his death brought the sorest calamity on the English Church.

The old romantic story as to Becket's mother being a

Saracen, who made her way to England and found out her Gilbert in London, simply by repeating his name, has now met with the fate which has overtaken so many old stories. Canon Robertson is also ruthlessly severe on M. Thierry's attractive theory that the family was of the old English stock, and that the vast popularity which the saint attained was due in great measure to race-antipathy between the English and Norman stocks. The first solid ground which we reach in the Archbishop's life is his being sent to Bologna, as a youth, by Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, to make himself acquainted with canon law. This is a matter of extreme interest, and of no small importance in our Church history. Up to near the middle of the twelfth century the canon law of the Romish Church did not exist *as a code*, although there were numerous scattered formulæ of it, as, for instance, the famous false decretals of Isidore of Seville. But about 1140 an attempt was made to construct a complete code of this law, in imitation of the civil code to be found in the Pandects of Justinian. Manuals were drawn up by Burchard of Worms, Ivo of Chartres, and lastly by Gratian, a Benedictine monk. Archbishop Theobald desired to introduce the law thus codified into England, and with this view sent Thomas Becket to Bologna, the headquarters of these legal studies, to make himself acquainted with it. This implies that Thomas in his early days showed much ability. It may also account, in some measure, for the strong bias which he afterwards exhibited for Church law as compared with the common and statute law of England.

Becket performed many useful services for his patron the Archbishop, and preferment was literally showered upon him. Rector of St. Mary le Strand and of Otford, Prebendary of St. Paul's and Lincoln, Provost of Beverley, Archdeacon of Canterbury—a lucrative and important post—finally Chancellor of England. As Chancellor he threw himself into all the secular policy of the King with the greatest zeal. He routed out the foreign mercenaries, judged and condemned malefactors, razed castles, established justice. Nor did he spare the Clergy, or in any way take their part against the King. He defended the King's claims as against the Bishop in the matter of Battle Abbey. He acquiesced in the Clergy being liable to scutage. He showed no disposition to protect them from the secular courts. In fact, he was regarded by them as a persecutor, as their long refusal to accept him as Archbishop testifies. The gay and gallant courtier, rich, profuse, ostentatious, worldly; leading his knights to battle with skill and bravery; conducting diplomatic affairs with keen insight; living with the King as "hail fellow, well met," without

a trace of clericalism about him—such was Becket till the Archbishopric was forced upon him. Everyone is familiar with the history of his sudden and complete change. What is the account to be given of it? In our view, it was due to the absence of moral principle in the man, and his merely positive and conventional views of duty. We thus explain his long hesitation, which no doubt was a genuine reluctance, as to taking the proffered Archbishopric. He knew well the King's mind about the Clergy, and what he would be expected to do as Archbishop. He knew that the same policy and conduct would be looked for in him, when raised to the Primacy, as had been exhibited by him as Chancellor. But, in his view, the two offices had two different sets of obligations. As Chancellor, in merely deacon's orders, he might lawfully join with the King in "persecuting" the Clergy. As Primate, entrusted with the supreme government of the Church, he would be imperatively called upon to contend for their liberties to the utmost against the secular power. Hence his long shrinking from the office. Could he make up his mind to enter upon what he knew must be a violent and terrible struggle? Had he strength of character and will sufficient, sufficient firmness of purpose, to carry him through? It was a trifling matter to be lax and careless, and secular, as a semi-ecclesiastical Chancellor. It would be quite another thing to display any of these qualities as Primate.

Becket knew well the King's character. He knew well his strong and resolute will, his fierce and unbridled passions. Could he venture upon what he was persuaded must be a severe struggle with him, sacrifice his friendship which he had long enjoyed, and perhaps experience defeat and humiliation from his powerful and resolute hands? Hence Becket's thirteen months' deliberation as to whether he would accept the Archbishopric, and hence, when he did accept it, the complete revolution in his life. He had, he thought, entered upon a new set of obligations and duties. Things which were right before, were no longer right to him. That which he was called upon to oppose before, he was now obliged to uphold. Thus his view of duty was entirely conventional and positive; founded on circumstances, not on principles. What was right in one place, was wrong in another. Had Becket been persuaded that right and wrong, truth and falsehood, were no shifting and mutable quantities, but principles fixed as the everlasting hills; that his duty to God and his King was precisely the same when he was Chancellor as when he was Primate, though the details of that duty might vary, we should have been saved the miserable conflict which distracted England, and indeed Europe, for so many years; which brought

out in such evil colours the character of the King, the Pope, and the Archbishop; which showed that the highest pretensions of Churchmanship, the most exaggerated asceticism, the loudest expressions of devotion, were compatible with spite, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness; with falsity, treachery, and deadly rancour; with all qualities least befitting a follower of Him Who "did not strive nor cry, neither did any man hear His voice in the streets."

Becket's life at Pontigny affords a curious psychological study. The singular contradictions which it exhibited, illustrate the view that the Archbishop had in fact no fixed principles to guide him; but adapted his principles and his conduct to the particular position which he had for the moment taken up. As regards his diet and way of life, he seems to have adopted an elaborate system of deceit. Rich viands were placed before him, while he secretly fed on the pulse and water of the Cistercians. A comfortable bed with costly coverings was supplied for him, while he (as is said), after horrible flagellation, "lay down on the bare floor, with a stone for his pillow, and yielded himself to a short slumber, which the galling cilice and the gnawings of the multitudinous vermin rendered a pain and additional weariness rather than a refreshment" (Robertson). But while thus adopting the senseless mortification of the ascetic for the benefit of the brethren of the Abbey, towards the outer world he displayed an unnecessary and extreme luxury and grandeur. The Bishop of Poitiers had to remonstrate with him on this, and tell him: "Your wisdom ought to know that no one will think the less of you if, in conformity to your circumstances and in condescension to the religious house which entertains you, you content yourself with a moderate number of horses and men such as your necessities require." He devoted himself to study, but his studies were of such an unedifying nature that his friend John of Salisbury wrote to remonstrate with him upon this, and to recommend the study of the Scriptures. "You would do better," he writes, "to confer on moral subjects with some spiritual man, by whose example you may be kindled, than to pry into and discuss the contentious points of secular learning." But the most terrible contradiction in the conduct of the Archbishop at this time was furnished by his proceedings at Vezelai. In the midst of his austerities and mortifications, instead of being really humbled, Becket had been nourishing the pride and malice of an uncharitable heart, and in spite of the Pope's attempts to keep him quiet, at length he broke forth. At Vezelai, "from the pulpit after sermon, on Whit Monday, with the appropriate ceremonies of bells and lighted candles quenched, he took vengeance at last

upon his enemies. He suspended the Bishop of Salisbury. He cursed John of Oxford and the Archdeacon of Ilchester, two leading Churchmen of the King's party. He cursed Justiciary de Luci, who had directed the sequestration of his See, and was the author and adviser of the 'Constitutions' of Clarendon. He cursed Ranulf de Broc, and every person he employed in administering his estates. Finally, he cursed everyone who maintained the 'Constitutions.' He did not actually curse Henry, but he threatened that he shortly would curse him unless he repented" (Froude). From this time forward, in fact, the Archbishop's life may fairly be described as a series of curses. "His mouth was full of cursing and bitterness." A remonstrance which his curses drew forth from the English Bishops only led him to repeat them with additional ferocity; and during the four years during which he remained at Sens, under the protection of the King of France, there was a constant repetition of the same horrible threats, denunciations, and curses.

It is difficult to understand how a man in whose life these things are certainly the main and distinguishing characteristics, could by any possibility, or under any circumstances, be dubbed a saint; and nothing more strikingly illustrates the absolute perversion of religious sentiment which existed at that day. "The most vehement enemies of Rome," writes Canon Robertson, "might enrich their abuse of the mediæval Church from the language and imputations which her eminent members lavish on each other. She appears distracted by schism and faction, corrupted and degraded by a multiplicity of evils, pitiably subjected to the variations of temporal affairs, and attempts to assert herself against the world, not by leavening it with a higher and purer element, but by setting up pretensions, unfounded, mischievous, and of a rival worldliness." The excommunications of Vezelai have furnished a considerable difficulty to the apologists for Becket. Dr. Lingard endeavours to get rid of the effects of them by a "series of transpositions," and by arranging the facts of the history, not in the order of their occurrence, but in the order which he thinks most calculated to serve the reputation of the saint—to make it appear that they were a response to the tyrannical and persecuting acts of the King, instead of the cause of them. But could even these be explained away or apologized, for there remains ample matter of the same sort in the life of the *saint* to testify "what manner of spirit he was of."

At Sens he renewed his curses. The Pope and Cardinals were at their wits' ends with him. What could be done to keep this disturber quiet? When, at one of their meetings, Henry said that all he desired was that he should carry himself towards him "as the most sainted of his predecessors had

behaved to the least worthy of his," even then Becket was not satisfied. What did he want? Did he expect absolutely to control and rule the land, and to make the King his subordinate, according to his theory of the priestly power being superior to the secular power? At any rate, he was perfectly impracticable. Every one, even his own supporters and friends, was heartily sick of him. The man's indomitable will was marvellous. "He fought for victory," says Mr. Froude, "with a tenacity which would have done him credit had his cause been less preposterous." And now a new grievance arose—a new cause of quarrel. Prince Henry had been crowned in England by Bishops hostile to him, led by the Archbishop of York, his especial enemy. This was a terrible blow to Becket. In his view the greatest issues were at stake. "The coronation was the symbol of the struggle in which Becket was engaged. The sovereign, according to his theory, was the delegate of the Church. In receiving the crown from the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the sovereign formally admitted his dependent position; and so long as it could be maintained that the coronation would not hold unless it was performed either by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Pope himself, the sovereign's subject state was a practical reality" (Froude).

The Pope, a vacillating and time-serving man, had first given the Archbishop of York license to proceed in this matter, and then, at Becket's instance, had revoked the license. But the revocation never reached the Archbishop, and he proceeded under the original license. Becket, in prosecuting his schemes of vengeance against the Bishops who had officiated at the coronation, seems to have concealed this fact both from the Pope and the King. He obtained from the Pope letters of excommunication against the Bishops, and from the King a permission to censure them, though there is no reason to think that Henry consented to their excommunication. Becket, overjoyed at the near prospect of vengeance, was at once reconciled to the King. "The Archbishop sprang from his horse in gratitude to the King's feet. The King alighted as hastily, and held the Archbishop's stirrup as he remounted" (Froude).

Mr. Froude, we think, clearly establishes the fact that the King had never assented to the Papal excommunication of the Bishops, but only had agreed that Becket might inflict some censure upon them, if he would agree to conduct himself quietly and orderly on his return to England. But the threatened Bishops had received from friends in the Papal Court some intimation of the danger which menaced them, and they were prepared to take steps to seize the Papal letters immediately on Becket's arrival, it being illegal to introduce such

documents into England. Their precautions were frustrated by an artful stratagem to which Becket had recourse. Before his own return, the letters of excommunication were secretly sent to England by the hands of a nun who was disguised in boy's clothes, and by this bold emissary actually served upon the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of London, Salisbury, and Rochester, by an absolute surprise. The boy then disappeared, and probably at once resuming her nun's dress, and taking shelter in a convent, contrived to elude the strict search made for the messenger. Becket having delivered this crushing blow in advance, soon afterwards landed at Sandwich, being received with the greatest transport by the people, who looked upon him as a champion contending against their oppressors—the King, with his severe laws, and the Norman Barons who were little scrupulous in their dealings with them.

In the midst of a grand ovation, Becket proceeded to London; but even now he must needs hurl forth fresh excommunications and curses against his enemies. His proceedings were almost tantamount to raising rebellion against the young King, whose title to the crown was invalidated by the excommunication of those who had performed the ceremony, and Becket was peremptorily ordered to return to Canterbury. He answered that he should not do so were it not that the great festival of Christmas was approaching, which he desired to celebrate in his cathedral. How he celebrated the great festival the chroniclers tell us: 'On Christmas Day he preached in the cathedral on the text, 'Peace to men of good will.' '[1] There was no peace, he said, except to men of good will. He spoke passionately of the trials of the Church. As he drew towards an end he alluded to the possibility of his own martrydom. He could scarce articulate for tears. The congregation were sobbing around him. Suddenly his face altered, his tone changed. Glowing with anger, with the fatal candles in front of him, and in a voice of thunder, the solemn and the absurd strangely blended in the overwhelming sense of his own wrongs, he cursed the intruders into his churches; he cursed Ranulf de Broc; he cursed Robert de Broc for cutting off his mule's tail; he cursed by name several of the old King's most intimate councillors who were at the Court in Normandy. At each fierce imprecation he quenched a light and dashed down a candle (Froude). A terrible preparation indeed for what was soon to follow. For now the aggrieved Bishops had sought out the old King in Normandy. Already

[1] The Vulgate rendering of Luke ii. 14, now adopted in the Revised Version.

the passionate monarch had, in the bitterness of his heart, uttered the well-known words which sent four of his knights in hot haste to Canterbury. On December 28th they arrived at Saltwood. On the 29th they reached Canterbury: on that afternoon they demanded an audience with the Archbishop, and entered his presence without their arms. He received them with studied discourtesy, as if he wished to goad them on to acts of violence. Fitzurse reproached him with having abused the King's confidence by publishing the letters of excommunication, and demanded that he should go with them to the King. He declared that they had been sent to bring him. But this could not have been true, as Henry had evidently given no commission to the knights. Mr. Froude remarks very well that much has been left untold that passed at Henry's Court. Various projects as to dealing with Becket must have been discussed, as well as the great difficulties which surrounded them all. The difficulties consisted in the danger of the Papal excommunication of the King being incurred, which, in the state of his dominions, would be a serious blow to him. The knights probably started quite uncertain as to what they would do, but determined, at any rate, to humble Becket and make him submit himself to the King. There was no thought, either in Henry or in the four knights, of murdering the Archbishop, but no doubt they were prepared to use violence in his capture. The altercation with Becket determined them at once to resort to this. They left his presence, and calling their men-at-arms, set a guard around the cathedral. Then they buckled on their swords. Word was brought to the Archbishop, but he was perfectly unmoved. The courage of the man was complete. The knights forced their way into the house. The Archbishop would not move. The frightened monks besought him to take refuge in the church. He refused to stir. Then he was told that Vespers had begun, and that he ought to be in his place. Upon this he moved, but refused to advance without his cross being carried before him. Upon his reaching the church the monks desired to fasten the door which opened into the cloisters. Becket ordered it to be opened, and when none dared to do it, opened it with his own hands. The armed men entered. The monks dispersed in all directions. The Vespers ceased. The only one who stood by Becket in the transept, which he had entered, seems to have been the Monk Grim, who afterwards wrote a most interesting account of the whole scene. The knights overtook Becket as he was ascending the steps which led from the transept into the choir. He turned to meet them, descending the steps. The dauntless courage of the Archbishop excited them to fury. They demanded that he should

release the Bishops. He refused. They threatened him with death. He scorned their threats. Fitzurse tried to induce him to escape. He refused. Then he seized his robe to drag him away as a prisoner. Becket thrust him away calling him a vile name. Then Le Breton and Fitzurse both seized him and tried to force him on Tracy's back. The Archbishop seized Tracy and hurled him to the ground. This decided his fate. Up to this point the knights had evidently been trying to capture him, and had not intended to murder him. But Tracy, rising furious from his fall, struck with his sword, with all his force, at the Archbishop's head. His faithful companion Grim, interposed his arm, which was broken by the fierce blow; but the force of the blow was so great that it also laid open the Archbishop's head and caused the blood to flow. Then Tracy struck him again, and Le Breton finished the murder, while a wretched apostate monk came forward and spread his brains upon the pavement. "Such," says Mr. Froude, "was the murder of Becket, the echoes of which are still heard across seven centuries of time." He then asks, "Was Becket a martyr? or was he justly executed as a traitor to his sovereign?" To both of these questions we answer in the negative. He was no "martyr," for he perished in a chance medley, the fruit of a quarrel; in which neither of the contending parties were free from blame, but in which he, especially, was greatly to blame, for the fierce and unfair weapons which he had used. He was not "justly executed," for he had done nothing to incur so severe a punishment; neither was his execution intended, nor, if it had been, had those who slew him any commission or title to act. But the greatness of the man on whom the eyes of Europe had long been fixed; the importance of the issues involved; the solemnity of the place; the undaunted courage of the victim; the belief of the day, that only in and through the Church was there any shelter for the oppressed, and that of this hope the bold prelate of Canterbury was the foremost champion—invested the deed done that day in the Canterbury Cathedral with a character of intensity which, perhaps, no other event in history has ever surpassed. A thrill of horror went through the land, and not through England only, but through the whole of Christendom. Then came the spectacle of the most powerful monarch in Europe grovelling in sackcloth and ashes, flogged by the monks, fasting and barefooted; the beatification and glorification of the Saint; the whole country, with intense enthusiasm and wealth of costly offerings, devoting itself to the worship of St. Thomas. Becket had been a grievous trouble to the Church during his life. He was a far greater mischief to it in his death. To his murder not only the vast development of creature-worship

among the people, but the almost entire obscuration of the nationality of the English Church is distinctly due. John, holding the realm of England as the vassal of Innocent III., is the natural outcome of the fierce Archbishop falling under the swords of the knights in the dimly-lighted church on that December evening.

GEORGE G. PERRY.

ART. IV.—PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAKE POETS.

FEW names have, in their day, been more intimately associated with each other, in the public mind, than those of the three Lake poets, Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge. There was a time when the mention of one would recall to mind the image of the other two. Nor is this chain of association, even *now*, altogether broken, though it is not so firmly riveted as in former days, when their writings and their respective characters were less known and understood than they afterwards became. At that time a sort of general notion prevailed that they were "birds of a feather," and therefore "flocked together." Their style was supposed to be similar, and the word *Lakish* was used to designate the poetry of their school, which was regarded by most persons as mawkish, childish, and insipid. But in due time the public became more or less aware of the fact, that in reality no three men could possibly have been more unlike, both in their cast of intellect, habits, and style of writing, than were the three poets of the north.

This must have been always apparent to those who knew them, and was so to us in respect of two of them; of Coleridge we can only judge by hearsay, for we were never in his company, though we knew his son Hartley intimately. Wordsworth and Southey we saw frequently, though our acquaintance with the latter began, unfortunately, at a time when the powers of his mind were beginning to give way, the commencement of that decay of intellect which was destined to end in a state of total fatuity. But having been intimate with several of his relatives, we are tolerably well able to conceive what he must have been in his best days, especially with the help of his works, which are a picture of his mind. The contemplation of the character of two such men as Wordsworth and Southey is in itself interesting; but the interest is en-