

The two foundations of St. Bartholomew's Hospital : A. D. 1123 and A. D. 1546, being an introductory address given at a meeting of the Abernethian Society, October 8th, 1885 / by W. Marrant Baker.

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THE TWO FOUNDATIONS
OF
ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.



THE TWO FOUNDATIONS
OF
ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL

A.D. 1123 AND A.D. 1546

*BEING AN INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS GIVEN AT A
MEETING OF THE ABERNETHIAN SOCIETY*

OCTOBER 8TH, 1885

BY

W. MORRANT BAKER, F.R.C.S.

SURGEON TO THE HOSPITAL

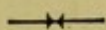
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PREFACE.



THIS Address is printed in accordance with the wish of many members of the Abernethian Society, before whom it was delivered at the first meeting of the Session 1885-6.

Since its delivery, Dr. Norman Moore has published in the 21st vol. of our Hospital Reports the complete text of the MS. Life of Rahere, from which I have made so many extracts; and I am indebted to his kindness, in permitting me to look at the proof sheets, for an opportunity of correcting several verbal misprints which were present in the previous editions from which I had taken my quotations.

A few additions have been made in the account of the Second Foundation.

The Frontispiece is a reproduction of a portion of an engraving contained in the *Vetusta Monumenta* of the Society of Antiquaries.

THE TWO FOUNDATIONS.

I.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL was founded more than seven centuries ago by Rayer (commonly called Rahere, from the Latin *Raherus*). Thus we may always boast of being members of the oldest Hospital in London, and claim whatever honour and glory may belong to that distinction; not forgetting, however, that with such honour comes also the greater responsibility—the responsibility of Inheritance.

Among the manuscripts preserved in the British Museum is one devoted almost entirely to the life and acts of the founder of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

It was written, a few years after Rahere's death, by one of the monks of the Priory of St. Bartholomew the Great, the foundation of which may be considered practically identical with that of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which at first formed a part of it.

The author begins—

“For as mooche that the meritory and notable operacyons of famofe goode and devoute faders yn

God sholde be remembred, for instrucion of after-cumers to theyr consolacion and encres of devotion ; thys abbrevyat Treteffe shal compendiously expresse and declare the wondreful, and, of celestial concel, gracious fundacion of oure hoely placys, callyd the Priory of Seynt Bartholomew yn Smythfyld, and of the hospital of olde tyme longyng to the same ; with other notabilities expediently to be knowyn ; and most specially the gloriouse and excellent myracles wroghte withyn them, by the intercessions, suffragys, and merytys of the forsayd benygne, feythful, and bleffid of God apostyl Sanct Bartholomy, ynto the laude of Almyghty God, and agnicion of his infinite power.

Ffyrst shal be shewyd who was ffunder of owere hoely places, and howh, by grace, he was ffyrst pryor of owere priory ; and by howh longe tyme that he contynued yn the same."

"And yn what ordir he sette the fundament of this temple yn fewe wordys lette us shewe, as they testified to us that sey hym, herd hym, and were presente yn his werkys and dedis ; of the whiche fume have take ther slepe yn Cryiste, and fume of them be zitte alyve, and wytnesseth of that that we shall aftir fay." *

Rahere, continues the author of the old chronicle,† was a

"Man sprung and born of low kynage ; and when

* Malcolm's *Londinium Redivivum*, vol. i. p. 266.

† In my quotations from the Life of Rahere I have used, for the most part, a modernised version as to spelling, and have followed Mr. Saunders in his interesting article in "Knight's London" in the order in which the quotations are taken.

he attained the flower of youth, he began to haunt the households of noblemen and the palaces of princes; where under every elbow of them he spread their cushions, with japes and flatterings delectably anointing their eyes, by this manner to draw to him their friendships. And still, he was not content with this, but often haunted the King's palace [Henry I.], and among the noiseful pews of that tumultuous Court informed himself with polity and cardinal suavity, by the which he might draw to him the hearts of many a one.

“There, in spectacles, in feasts, in plays, and other courtly mockeries and trifles intending, he led forth the business of all the day. This wise to the King and great men, gentle and courteous and known familiar and fellowly he was.”

Rahere is often referred to as the King's minstrel, or even his jester; but there is no good reason for believing that he ever held any official position in either capacity. He seems to have been rather the kind of man who would have been more properly termed the King's favourite, had his birth been noble or his social position more assured. As it was, the inferiority of his birth was probably overlooked for the sake of the brilliancy of his social gifts; although we may well believe that by those who were jealous of his success he may have been nicknamed the minstrel or the jester; and the tradition of his having held some such position at Court may have been thus originated.

Stow says, “Rahere was a pleasant-witted gentle-

man, and therefore in his time called the King's minstrel."

But to continue in the words of the old MS.—

"This manner of living he chose in his beginning, and in this excused his youth. But the inward Seer and Merciful God of all, he which out of Mary Magdalen cast seven fiends, the which to the Fisher gave the keys of Heaven, mercifully converted this man from the error of his way, and added to him so many gifts of virtue.

"For why? They that are fonnyfch and feeble in the world's reputation, our Lord chooseth to confound the mighty of the world."

Rahere, repenting of his follies and sins, determined to go to the Court of Rome—

"Coveting in so great a labour to do the worthy fruits of penance." "Where at the shrines of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, he weeping his deeds, prayed to our Lord for remission of them." "And while he tarried there, in that meanwhile he began to be vexed with grievous sickness; and his dolours little and little taking their increase, he drew to the extreme of life; the while dreading within himself that he had not still for his sins satisfied to God, therefore he supposed that God took vengeance of him for his sins, amongst outlandish people, and deemed the last hour of his death drew him nigh.

"This remembering inwardly, he shed out as water his heart in the sight of God, and all brake out in tears; that he avowed, that if health God would him grant, that he might return to his country, he

would make an Hospital in recreation of poor men, and to them so there gathered, necessities minister after his power.

“And not long after, the benign and merciful Lord, that beheld the tears of Ezechie the King, the importune prayer of the woman of Chanane, rewarded with the benefit of his pity; thus likewise mercifully he beheld this weeping man, and gave him his health, approved his vow.

“So of his sickness recovered he was; and in short time, whole made, began homeward to come, his vow to fulfil that he had made.

“When he would perfect his way that he had begun, in a certain night he saw a vision full of dread and sweetness; when, after the labourous and sweating that he had by days, his body he with rest would refresh. It seemed him to be borne up on high of a certain beast, having four feet and two wings, and set in an high place. And when he from so great a height would inflect and bow down his eye to the lower part downward, he beheld an horrible pit, whose horrible beholding impressed in him great dread and horror; for the deepness of the said pit was deeper than any man might attain to see; therefore he, (secret knower of his defaults) deemed himself to slide into that cruel a downcast.

“And therefore, as him seemed inwardly, he fremysid, and for dread trembled, and great cries of his mouth proceeded.

“To whom dreading and for dread crying, appeared a certain man pretending in cheer the majesty of a King, of great beauty and imperial authority, and his eye on him fastened: ‘O man,’ (he said), ‘what and how much service shouldest thou

give to him, that in so great a peril hath brought help to thee?’

“Anon he answered to this Saint, ‘Whatsoever might be of heart and of might, diligently should I give, in recompense to my deliverer.’ Then said he, ‘I am Bartholomew, the apostle of Jesus Christ, that come to succour thee in thine anguish, and to open to thee the secret mysteries of Heaven. Know me truly, by the will and commandment of the Holy Trinity, and the common favour of the celestial Court and Council, to have chosen a place in the suburbs of London, at Smithfield, where, in mine name, thou shalt found a Church, and it shall be the house of God; there shall be the tabernacle of the Lamb, the temple of the Holy Ghost: this spiritual house Almighty God shall inhabit, and hallow it, and glorify it. And his eyes shall be open, and his ears intending on this house night and day; that the asker in it shall receive, the seeker shall find, and the ringer or knocker shall enter; truly every soul converted, penitent of his sin, and in this place praying, in Heaven graciously shall be heard. The seeker with perfect heart (for whatsoever tribulation) without doubt he shall find help. To them that with faithful desire knock at the door of the Spouse, assistant Angels shall open the gates of Heaven, receiving and offering to God the vows of faithful people. Wherefore thine hands be there comforted in God, having in him trust; doubt thee nought; only give thy diligence, and my part shall be to provide necessaries, direct, build and end this work; and this place, to me accept, with evident tokens and signs, protect and defend continually it under the shadow of my wings; and therefore of this work

know me the master, and thyself only the minister : use diligently thy service, and I shall shew my lordship.' In these words the Vision disparyfchydde."

Rahere now "came to London," the monk continues—

"And of his knowledge and friends with great joy was received ; with which also, and with the barons of London, he spake familiarly of these things that were turned and stirred in his heart ; and of that was done about him in the way, he told it out ; and what should be done of this he counfelled of them.

"He took this answer that none of these things might be perfected, but the King were first counfelled ; namely since the place, godly to him shewed, was contained within the King's market." Therefore "in opportune time, he adressed him to the King." "And nigh him was he in whose hand it was to what he would the King's heart incline ; and ineffectual these prayers might not be whose author is the apostle ; whose gracious hearer was God. His word, therefore, was pleasant and acceptable in the King's eye. And when he had praised the good wit of the man (prudently as he was witty), he granted to the petitioner his kingly favour, benignly giving his authority to execute his purpose."

"Then nothing he omitting of care and diligence, two works of piety began to make ; one for the vow that he had made, another as to him by precept was enjoined. Therefore the cause prosperously succeeded, and after the apostle's word all necessities flowed unto the hand. The church he made of comely stone work, tablewise. And an hospitall house a little longer off from the church by himself he began to

edify. The church was founded (as we have taken of our elders) in the month of March, in the name of our Lord Jesu Christ, in memory of the most blessed Bartholomew apostle the year from the Incarnation of the same Lord our Saviour, 1123."

The Hospital was founded at about the same time as the church, the most probable date of its foundation being 1123.

But, indeed, Rahere was not the first to whom Smithfield had been pointed out as a place with a great future. King Edward the Confessor had dreamed a dream concerning it. In the words of the MS.—

"This blessed King, when he was in the church of God (replete with manifold beauty of virtue, as the book of his gifts declareth), as a religious and full of the spirite of prophecy, he shone bright, beholding things far off as they were present, and things to come as they were now existent, with the eyes of his soul by the Holy Ghost. For he was illumined.

"The which, in a certain night when he was bodily sleeping, his heart to God waking, he was warned of this place, with an heavenly dream made to him, that God this place had chosen, his name therein to be put and set, and holy and worshipful it should be shewed to Christian people. Whereupon this holy King, early arising, came to this place that God had shewed him; and to them that about him stood, expressed the vision that night made to him, said before all the people, prophesied this place to be great before God,

“Whose clear prophecies how they be supported, greatly with the might of truth, experience hath approved it. And every faithful man may clearly behold the fame.”

Three men of Greece also, of noble lineage, who were on pilgrimage and had entered England,

“Desiring to visit the bodies of faints there resting,” came to London and to Smithfield; “and before them that there were present and beheld them as simple ydiottys, began wonderful things to say and prophesy of this place, saying, ‘Wonder not to see us here to worship God, where a full acceptable temple to him shall be builded; for the high Maker of all things will that it be builded; and the fame of this place shall attain from the spring of the sun to the going down.’”

Rahere set himself no easy task when he determined to build in Smithfield.

“Truly this place” [the MS. continues] “pretended none hope of goodnes. Right unclean it was; and as a marsh, dungy and fenny, with water almost every time abounding; and that that was eminent above the water, dry, was deputed and ordained to the jubeit or gallows of thieves, and to the torment of other that were condemned by judicial authority.”

And here we meet with a very remarkable circumstance in the life of Rahere.

“Truly when Rahere had applied his study to the purgation of this place, and decreed to put his hand

to that holy building, he was not ignorant of Satan's wiles; for he made and feigned himself unwise; for he was so coacted and outward pretended the cheer of an idiot, and began a little while to hide the secretness of his soul. And the more secretly he wrought, the more wisely he did his work. Truly, in playing unwise, he drew to him the fellowship of children and servants, assembling himself as one of them; and with their use and help, stones and other things profitable to the building lightly he gathered together."

Mr. Saunders observes *—"Rahere's object in this conduct was, we presume, to avail himself of a kind of superstitious reverence that appears to have been not infrequently felt for persons of this class to which he made it appear that he belonged."

But Rahere used many other means for accomplishing his object, and especially that of preaching; his manner of preaching being that which in our own day, as in his, would be likeliest to obtain liberal contributions. His biographer says—

"And in this wise he compassed his sermon, that now he stirred his audience to gladness, that all the people applauded him, and incontinent anon he professed sadness, and so now of their sins, that all the people were compelled unto sighing and weeping. But he truly, in the same cheer and soul evermore persevering, expressed wholesome doctrine, and after God and faithful sermon preached."

* "Knight's London," vol. ii. p. 37.

“His life accorded to his tongue, and his deed approved well his sermon, and so, in the sacrifice of God, the moweth and bylle of the turtyll was returnyd to his armepittes, and reclyned unto the wynges, lest that he, preaching to othir, schulde be fownde reprovablen yn hymself.

“Of this all men were astonished, both of the novelty of the areysid frame and of the founder of this new work. Who would trow this place with so suddenn a cleansing to be purged, and there to be set up the tokens of the crosse? And God there to be worshipped where sometime stood the horrible hanging of thieves: who should not be astonished there to see constructed and builded honourable buildings of piety that should be a sure sanctuary to them that fled thereto, where sometime there was a common officyne of damned people, and a general ordained for pain of wretches? Who should not marvel there to be haunted the mystery of our Lord’s body and precious blood, where was sometime shed out the blood of gentyly and heathen people? Whose heart lightly should take or admit such a man, not product of gentle blood, not greatly endowed with learning of men or of divine kunnyng, so worshipful and so great a work prudently to begin, and it begun, to so happy a progress from day to day to perfect and perform?”

This chapter of the MS. concludes—

“This ys the change of the right hande of God. O Cryst! these ben thy workys, that of thyn excellent vertu and synguler pyte makyst of unclene clene, and chesist the feble of the worlde, to con-

fownde the myghty ; and callift them that be nat as yt wer they that been. The whiche Golgotha, the place of opyn abbominacion, madist a feyntwary of prayer, and a solempne tokyn or fygne of devocion."

Several miracles are related as occurring at the period of the building of the Priory and Hospital ; and the fame of these brought many gifts to the church. When the church was being built a light was seen at Evensong to play upon it for the space of an hour, then suddenly flash up into the sky and disappear.

A man who had been paralytic for many years was taken in a basket to the altar of the new church, and recovered the use of his limbs.

A young man, Osberne by name, whose right hand stuck to his left shoulder, and whose head stuck to his hand, was also cured at St. Bartholomew's.

A woman's tongue could not be contained in her mouth. Rahere touched it with relics and painted it with holy water, and within the same hour it went back between her teeth.

Many other miracles are related by the good monk ; but these will suffice to show at what an early period of English history St. Bartholomew's became famous for gifts of healing.

When the Hospital was finished its full staff of officers was composed of a Master, of eight Brethren, and four Sisters.

The first master was appointed by Rahere himself—an old man, Alfun by name, "to whom was,"

as the MS. states, "fad age, and fadness of age, with experience of long time."

The other titles of Alfun were Hospitaler or Proctor for tending the poor. His chief duties consisted in begging provisions and other necessaries for the Priory and Hospital, these supplementing, without doubt, in a very useful manner, the gifts that were obtained through the preaching and the fame of the miracles. In the words of the MS.—

"It was manner and custom to this Alfun, with ministers of the church, to compass and go about the high places of the church, busily to seek and provide necessaries, to the need of the poor men that lay in the hospital; and to them that were hired to the making up of the church. And that that was committed to him, truly to bring home, and to sundry men, as it was need, for to divide."

Alfun himself was a church-builder, having not long before built the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate.

Towards the end of his life troubles of a new kind assailed Rahere.

"Some said he was a deceiver, for cause that in the net of the Great Fisher evil fish were mingled with good. Before the hour of the last disservice, his household people were made his enemies, and so rose against him wicked men and wickedness laid to himself. Therefore with pricking envy, many privately, many also openly, against the servant

of God ceased not to grudge, and in derogation to the place and prelate of the same, brought many flanders with threatenings. The goods that they might they withdrewe and took away; constrained him with wickedness, made weary him with injuries, provoked him with despites, beguiled him with simulated friendships."

There was even a plot against his life, which, however, failed on account of the confession of a penitent conspirator.

Rahere came well out of his troubles. For he appealed to the King, begging that he

"Would open the bosom of his pity to them that were desolate," and "restrain the barking folly of unfaithful people."

The King thereupon confirmed his previous grant by a charter, which gave full liberty and great privileges to the Priory and Hospital.

Rahere died, after having been Prior twenty-two years and six months. In the words of his biographer—

"The clay house of this world he forsook, and the house everlasting he entered, that founded this house, into the laude and honoure of the name of Christ; that in the house of his father he might be crowned, in his mildness and in his mercies."

Rahere was a man, says his biographer,

"Not having cunning of liberal science, but that

that is more eminent than all cunning; for he was riched in purity of conscience; towards God by devotion; towards his brethren by humility; towards his enemies by benevolence. And thus himself he exercised them, patiently suffering; whose proved purity of soul, bright manners, with honest probity, expert diligence in divine service, prudent business in temporall ministrations, in him were greatly to praise and commendable. In feasts he was sober, and namely the follower of hospitality. Tribulations of wretches, necessities of the poor people, oportunely admitting, patiently supporting, competently speedynge. In prosperity not ynprided. In adversity patient; and whatsoever misfortune came to him, he rested himself under the shadow of his patron that he worshipped, whom he clipped to him within the bowel of his soul; in whose help for all perils he was secure, and preserved.

Thus he, subject to the King of Bliss with all meekness, provided with all diligence that was necessary to his subjects; and so providing, increased daily to himself, before God and man, grace; to the place reverence; to his friends, gladness; to his enemies pain; to his aftercomers joy."

Different views have been taken of the character of Rahere. It has been said that what he did in the latter part of his life was as much an evidence of his cunning and desire of self-advancement as the japes and flatterings which obtained promotion for him in his youth. Mr. Henry Morley in his book, "Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair," adopts this view, and looks upon all the miracles so-called, by means of

which offerings were obtained, as so many pieces of jugglery not far removed from those which formed a staple part of the entertainment provided in the booths of the great Fair which was held annually just outside, and indeed inside, the Priory walls. And of course, if we think of Rahere as a man of the nineteenth instead of the twelfth century, the accusation would be sufficiently well founded. A man who now used the word "miracle" as appropriate to the unglueing of a young man whose left hand stuck to his right shoulder would deserve no better title than that of an impostor. But we cannot justly estimate the character of Rahere on such grounds as these. We may as well complain of his not speaking modern English. Human nature remains the same in all the times about which we have any record. And it is from this fact, as well as from the details provided by the monk of St. Bartholomew's Priory, that we are able to realise the character of Rahere. It is not difficult to imagine the man who, after living a life of gaiety and fashion, the companion and flatterer of the rich and noble, became conscious of the true value of the wares which were bought and sold in the Vanity Fair in which he dwelt. Weary of the life he was leading, and perhaps as much disgusted by the very success of his worldly career as by anything else, he determines to do all in his power to make amends for his wasted youth and opportunities. The vision of the four-footed winged beast and the manifestation of

St. Bartholomew are but expressions of the spirit of the age in which he lived, and the natural result, in such a time, of a vivid and poetic imagination ; but the feeling which led him to found the Hospital is with us in the nineteenth as it was with him in the twelfth century, and many good works are now done with the same aspirations.

As we think of Rahere's work, his energy, his perseverance, his difficulties ; his determination to accomplish what he felt to be his duty to do ; his refusal to be discouraged by the feeble support of friends or the calumnies of enemies ; his willingness to be reckoned a fanatic, or, much worse to bear, even a fool, if he may only by that means help on the good work—as we think of all this we may well be proud of our Founder, and be stirred up to follow in his footsteps. The motto which is written over the entrance of our new school-buildings (for they still seem new to the seniors amongst us) might have been chosen by Rahere himself—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.”

Rahere was buried in his own church, of which, however, only a part—the choir—now remains. But this is a noble fragment ; and within the last few years much has been done to guard it from further decay, and to clear away from its walls and foundations various ignoble structures which the carelessness of past generations had allowed to accumulate. Without doubt every one who is now entering St.

Bartholomew's Hospital for the first time will take an early opportunity of visiting this building, now the parish church of St. Bartholomew the Great, which stands just outside the Hospital walls. And when he does so he will not fail to be impressed by its beautiful proportions, and to regret that so small a part of the original structure remains.

Rahere's tomb is in the north wall of the chancel (see Frontispiece). It consists of a highly wrought stone-work screen or, rather, canopy, with finely groined roof, beneath which is the sarcophagus; and on this the effigy of Rahere in black robes is seen, extended at full length, with shaven crown, and hands elevated as in prayer. At his feet, on a cloud, stands an angel, crowned, holding the arms of the Priory; while by him kneel two monks, habited, like Rahere, in black robes, each with a Bible in his hands, open at the 51st chapter of the prophet Isaiah. The third verse of the chapter, which is inscribed on the little stone tablets, is significant of the work which Rahere did when he covered the marshy ground of Smithfield with beautiful buildings for the praise and worship of God and good deeds to men—"He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

On the front of the sarcophagus are the four following shields of arms:—

London.
England.
The Priory.

Gules, a bend between two martlets.

And round the ledge is this inscription—

“Hic jacet Raherus primus Canonicus
et primus prior hujus ecclesiæ.”

The date of Rahere's tomb is not certainly known, but it is much later than that of the Priory church. Some have thought that the painted stone figure of the Founder is older than the tomb, and that it is a portrait executed when the features of the Prior were known. Mr. Morley observes,* “The statue has undoubtedly a real and individual, not a conventional face,” and, he adds, “answers very well to our impression of the person whom it represents.”

Some mental effort is required before we can in any way realise the great difference between a Hospital so-called of the twelfth century, or indeed of a much later period, and a Hospital of the present day. In a grant of privileges to St. Bartholomew's Hospital by Edward III. its functions are thus stated—“Ad omnes pauperes infirmos ad idem hospitale confluentes quousque de infirmitatibus suis convaluerint, ac mulieres prægnantes quousque de puerperio surrexerint, necnon ad omnes pueros de eisdem mulieribus genitos, usque septennium, si dictæ mulieres intra hospitale prædictum decesserint.” And it

* “Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair,” p. 48.

seems probable that these corresponded pretty nearly with the work assigned to it by the Founder.

However this may be, the lying-in and sick wards of a parish Workhouse of the present day probably represent more nearly the condition of the Hospital for some centuries after its foundation than any department of a modern Hospital.

But indeed we know very little of its plan or extent until after the lapse of several generations, by which time it would have undergone many changes and reconstructions. (I may mention in passing that one of these restorations of the Hospital was carried out in accordance with a bequest by that hero of our childhood, Richard Whittington, Lord Mayor of London, in the year 1423.)

Whether St. Bartholomew's Hospital was in its early days much resorted to in cases of surgical emergencies I cannot tell; probably not. But with regard to this point a word or two may be said.

As all know, Smithfield or Smoothfield was noted as a place for tournaments; indeed the name of the street which leads into it from Holborn (Giltspur Street) is derived, as Stow seems to assume, from "the Knightes and other riding that way into Smithfelde." And I hope I may be forgiven for digressing for a moment to quote a description from Stow* of one of the cavalcades of which there is now so little in our surroundings to remind us.

* Stow's "Survey of London," 1603, p. 383.

“In the 14th of Richard the Second, after Frofart, Royall Justes and Tournements were proclaimed to be done in Smithfield, to begin on Sunday next after the feast of St. Michael; many strangers came forth of other countries, namely Valarian Earle of St. Paul, that had married King Richard’s sister, the Lady Maud Courtney, and William the yong Earle of Ostarnant, sonne to Albart of Bauiere, Earle of Holland and Henault. At the day appointed, there issued forth of the tower, about the third houre of the day, 60 courfers, apparrelled for the Justs, and upon every one an Esquier of honour riding a fofte pace: then came forth 60 Ladyes of honour, mounted upon palfraies, riding on the one side, richly apparrelled, and every Lady led a Knight with a chayne of gold; those Knights being on the King’s party had their armour and apparrell garnished with white hartes, and crownes of gold above the harts neckes. So they came riding through the streetes of London to Smithfield, with a great number of trumpets and other instruments of musicke before them.” “Then alighted the Esquiers of honour from their courfers, and the Knights in good order mounted upon them; and after their helmets were set on their heads, and being ready in all points, proclamation made by the Haraults, the Justes began; and many commendable courfes were runne, to the great pleasure of the beholders. This Justes continued many dayes with great feasting, as ye may read in Frofard.”

With scenes such as these in Smithfield, it appears to me not too fanciful a notion that many

a dismounted knight has been taken within the friendly shelter of the Hospital to be mended of his wounds and bruises by the priestly house-surgeons and dressers of the period, who would staunch the bleeding with the red-hot iron or the boiling pitch with kindly sympathy and in as tender a manner as the nature of the case permitted.

And that it is not a mere fancy which would lead one to think that the wounded would be taken from Smithfield into St. Bartholomew's Hospital may be gathered from an interesting historical fact which is thus recorded in Stow's *Chronicles* (second edit., p. 461).

The scene is that so well known in English history, in which Richard the Second rides to Smithfield to meet the rebels there assembled under the leadership of Wat Tyler.

"The Mayor [William Walworth] being of an incomparable boldnesse and manhooe without any doubting straight arrested him [*i.e.* Wat Tyler] on ye head. Wat Tyler furiously strake the Mayor with his dagger, but hurte him not by meane he was armed. Then the Mayor drew his baselard and grievously wounded Wat in the necke, and gave him a great blow on the head; in which conflict, an Esquire of the King's house called John Cavendish, drew his sworde and wounded him twise or thrife even unto death; and Wat, spurring his horse, cried to the Commons to avenge him; his horse bare him about foure score foote from thence, where he fell

downe halfe dead, and by and by they which attended on the King, invironed him all about, whereby he was not seene of his company; and other thrust him in with their weapons in divers places of his body; and then they drewe him from amongst the people's feete into the hospitall of Saint Bartilmewe."

The Mayor rushed to the city for help, and when he returned to Smithfield, "and did not finde Wat Tyglar (as hee left him wounded) hee greatly marvayled; demanding where the traytor was; and it was told him that he was carried into the Hospitall of Saint Bartilmewe, and laid in the Master's chamber. The Mayor went straight thither, and made him to bee carried into Smithfield, and there caused him to bee beheaded, his head to bee set on a pole, and borne before him to the King, then remayning in the field; and the King caused it to be borne neere unto him, therewith to abash the Commons, greatly thanking the Mayor for that acte."

The cattle markets and the horse fairs and the great annual Fair at St. Bartholomew-tide would also, it may be imagined, provide plenty of surgical cases in the early periods of the Hospital's existence. But whether this be so or not, we may be certain that during the four centuries which elapsed between its first and second Foundations St. Bartholomew's Hospital did much good work; and that while many were cured of their injuries and diseases, there were also many sick and weary folk, then as now, who were thankful to lie down and take their final rest within its walls.

II.

IN the downfall of the monastic institutions at the time of the Reformation the Priory and Hospital of Saint Bartholomew did not escape, and the ecclesiastical part, the Prior and his black-robed Canons, the religious rites and ceremonies, disappeared without much regret, probably, on the part of the majority of the people.

But with the Hospital the case was different. It was necessary to provide still for the diseased and the infirm ; and what the Church was now unable to do must be done by the State or by civic or private benevolence. In 1537 Sir Thomas Gresham, the Lord Mayor, with the Aldermen and the citizens, begged the King to grant to them the governance of the Hospitals then existing in London, and among them of St. Bartholomew's.

The spirit of the times is expressed in the petition, or perhaps this was worded with the special intention of pleasing the King.

It speaks of such institutions being

“ Fownded of good devocon by auncyent fathers, and endowed w^t great possessions and rents, onely for the relyeff, comforte and ayde of the poore and indygent people not beyng hable to helpe theymselffs, and not to the maynten'nce of preeftes, chanons, and monks, carnally lyvyng as they of late have doon, nothyng regardyng the myferable people lyeng

in the streete, offendyng every clene perfon passyng by the way w^t theyre fylthye and naftye favors."*

No attention seems to have been paid at first to the petition, or at least to the part of it which begged the transfer of the revenues of the several establishments specified therein to the Corporation of the City of London. Their property was in the meanwhile held by the Crown. After about six years, however, letters patent of the date June 23 1544, were issued, by which, after reciting that the Hospital of St. Bartholomew's was then altogether vacant and destitute of Master and Fellows or Brethren, and that the same and the possessions thereof had therefore fallen to the Crown, the said King, endeavouring that there should be

"Comfort to the prifoners, shelter to the poor, visitation to the sick, food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothes to the naked, and sepulture to the dead administered there, erected and founded an hospital, to consist of one master and priest, and four chaplain priests, to be called the Vice-Master, the Curate, the Hospitaler, and the Visitor of the prifoners in Newgate; and the said King granted to the said master and chaplains the site, ambit, and precincts of the said hospital and the church, and all places parcels of and within the same hospital, together with the goods and chattels thereof, to hold the same in pure and perpetual alms."

* "Report of Commissioners for Inquiring concerning Charities, 1840." Christ's Hospital Appendix, p. 344.

The government of the Hospital was lodged in the body thus constituted, but the possessions were not regranted to them, nor was any visitatorial or other authority over them vested in the Corporation of the City of London.

As might have been anticipated, this attempt to refund the Hospital without its revenues, which the King retained in his own hands, only resulted in failure ; and, indeed, it does not appear that the new constitution ever came into active operation. But about two years afterwards, induced by the earnest solicitations of the citizens, and perhaps by the distress consequent upon the suppression of the religious houses, the King consented to grant to the Corporation of the City of London a new charter, by which the Hospital should be refounded for the reception of one hundred poor and sick, and to endow it from its former possessions to the extent of five hundred marks per annum, upon condition that the citizens should be bound yearly for ever to give a like sum. The actual instrument by which this obligation was entered into is not now extant ; but the fact of its execution on the 13th April 1546, is recited in an Act of Common Council, 20th December 1548.*

Thus the second Foundation of the Hospital came about, and we call King Henry VIII. the second Founder.

The gift of the Hospital to the city had been

* " Report of Commissioners for Inquiring concerning Charities, 1840."

previously announced by the Bishop of Rochester in a sermon at Paul's Cross.

It must not be supposed, however, that all troubles were past with the handing over of the Hospital to the Corporation. There were some, it seems, in those days, who assumed such to be the case, and who expected that all at once the Hospital would be able to get into good working order, and maintain its hundred poor men and women. They appear, indeed, to have openly slandered those who were responsible for the management because this was not so.

The accusations were considered worthy of a reply on the part of the governing body; and this reply was issued in the form of a Preface, with an account of the rules and regulations of the Hospital, so that all men might know exactly how matters stood with the New Foundation.

This Preface and copy of the regulations was first published in the reign of Edward VI., and again printed in 1580 and 1652.

A copy which I bought at a second-hand book-seller's, and carried off as a great prize, many years ago, is the reprint of 1652; and this, with the permission of the Editors, I published in the last volume of our Hospital Reports.

In the Preface the writer begins by saying :—

“The wickednefs of report at this day, good Reader, is grown to fuch rancknefs, that nothing

almost is able to defend it selfe against the venime thereof; but that either with open slander, or privy whispering, it shall be so undermined, that it shall neither have the good success, which otherwise it might, nay the thanks which for the worthiness it ought."

Then, after reciting the gift and endowment of the King, and the amount to be contributed by the citizens, the writer proceeds to describe the dilapidated condition of the houses which formed the King's part of the new endowment, and the expenditure which was necessary to restore them to a decent condition. As for the Hospital itself, there was found in it, to quote the writer's words, only

"So much of household implements and stuffe, towards the succouring of this hundred poor, as sufficed three or four harlots, then lying in childe-bed, and no more, yea, barely so much, if but necessary cleanliness were regarded, so farre had the godly meaning of the gracious King been abused at those dayes; and yet was little then smelled and less talked of."

And then, after a few more hard knocks at the slanderers—"I fear me, having all their zeal in their tongue onely."

The writer asserts that "the good citizens which now for these five years space have shunned for no loathfomeness, to administer the reliefe without other gain then that Jesus Christ, God and man,

promifeth, and will undoubtedly pay, have here received nothing else but for a commune benefit, an open detraction, and the poor (as shall afterward appear) a larger hindrance. Where in the mean feason notwithstanding, there have been healed of the Pocks, Fiftulæ, filthy Blains and Sores, to the number of eight hundred, and thence safe delivered, that other having need may enter in their room. Befide eight fcore and twelve, that have there forfaken this life, in their intolerable miferies and griefes, which else might have dyed, and ftunck in the eyes and nofes of the city, for all thefe charity tenderers, if this place had not vouched safe to become a pump alone, to eafe a commune abhorring."

And then, after referring to the large expenditure necessary,

"The wages of the chirurgions, and fuch officers and fervants, as needfully are attendant about the poor, the charges of bedding and fhift for fo many fore and diseafed, and the exceffive prices of all things at this day," he adds, "they might both marvell how fo many are there relieved, and daily maintained; and with repentance" [and here is another hard knock] "of that they have miffaid, endeavour themselves with as much good report and praife, to advance both the deed and the doers, to wipe away the slander, as they have to hinder them both by the contrary."

However, as he says, it is "doubtfull whether they will do as they may, and of confcience are bounden."

And we shall certainly agree with the writer in this; as he would be a very rare kind of slanderer who confessed and tried to make amends when he was proved to be in the wrong.

The writer continues—

“The slander is so wide spread, that a narrow remedy cannot amend it. It is thought good to the Lord Mayor of this city of London, as chief Patron and Governor of this Hospitall, in the name of the city, to publish at this present the overseers and orders by him appointed, partly for the stay and redress of such slander, and partly for that it might be an open witness, and knowledge unto all men, how things are administered there, and by whom. Wherein if any man judge more to be set forth in word, then in deed is followed, there be means to resolve him. But if there be not so much set forth as is expedient (as what thing at the first can attain to the top of perfectness?) or that any man spieth, ought in this order worthy to be reformed, he shall not need to cry it at the Cross, but shall finde those at the Hospitall, that both gladly will and may reform it.

“The Lord Jesus Christ, kindle in us all that faith that worketh by love, that we may indeed put on Christ our righteousness before God, and not suffer him to lye up in Presse, that seeketh to be worn to the glory of his Father, and ours, and to the Testimony of our hope laid up in him. Amen.”

Then, after the Preface, from which I have not time to quote more, follows an account of the

Governors and Officers of the New Foundation.

The *Governors* were—

“ The Prefident, alway the Seniour Alderman.
Surveyors, four—two Aldermen and two Communers.

Almoifners, four—one Alderman and three Communers.

The Treafurer—a Communer.

Scrutiners, two—both Communers.

The *Officers* were seven in number—

“ The Hospitaler.
The Renter Clerk.
The Butler and Steward.
The Porter.
The Matron.
The Sifters, twelve.
The Byddles, eight.

“ There are also in a kinde by themselves, three Chirurgians in the wages of the Hospitall, giving daily attendance upon the cures of the poor.

“ And a minifter named the Vifitour of Newgate, according to his office and charge.”

Then follow the charges, or directions concerning their duties, to the various Governors and Officers; this custom of delivering a charge to each Officer on his appointment being kept up at the present day. And although, in accordance with alterations in the duties, many changes have been made, the quaint

language of the old forms is still to some extent preserved.

As this little book of "Orders and Ordinances" has been so recently reprinted,* and is now accessible to all, I will touch but briefly on its contents. But I shall be pardoned, I hope, for giving a few extracts.

Not the least of its charms is the religious spirit (in the best sense of the term) in which the orders are conceived. In undertaking the duties of Treasurer, for example, or Almoner, or other honorary officer, it is assumed that a Governor undertakes a solemn religious duty, and he is reminded of this in the concluding sentence of his charge. Thus, after reciting the duties of the Treasurer, the charge concludes with these words—

"And in recompence of your pains, ye shall be assured of the mercies layed up for you in the promises, and blood of Jesu Christ our Saviour."

So with the Surveieur—"And for your pains taking here God hath promised to give you rest and pleasure in heaven perpetually." And so for the Scrutiners and the Auditours.

The surgeons too are admonished not to neglect to give good counsel to their patients.

"Also at all such times as ye shall goe to the dressing of any diseased person in this house, as much

* "St. Bartholomew's Hospital Reports," vol. xx., 1884.

as in you is, ye shall give unto him or her faithfull and good counsell, willing them to minde to fin no more, and to bee thankfull unto Almighty God, for whose sake they are here comforted of men."

And at the end of the book is a form of thanksgiving—

"To be said by the poor that are cured in the Hospitall, at the time of their delivery from thence, upon their knees in the Hall before the Hospitaler, and two Masters of this House at the least. And this the Hospitaler shall charge them to learn without the Book, before they bee delivered."

In comparing the charges of the various officers of the Hospital now with those which were delivered to them in the time of the second Founder, Henry VIII., one is struck by the differences which the lapse of time has brought about.

The Hospitaler, besides looking after the spiritual welfare of the patients by reading and preaching, received the provisions from the steward, and delivered so much as he thought necessary to the cook; and the provisions being dressed, he was to see that they were truly delivered and distributed to the patients.

The Matron was to receive of the Hospitaler the sick and diseased persons to be admitted, and to bestow them in such convenient places as she should think meet.

The Matron, too, was to receive the flax provided by the Governors, and set the

“Sifters to spinning it, or doing some other manner of work that may avoid idleness and be profitable to the poor of this house.”

In the Matron's charge is also the following:—

“Ye shall suffer no poor person of this house to sit and drink within your house at no time, neither shall yee so send them drink into their wards, that thereby drunkenness might be used and continued among them, but as much as in you shall lye, ye shall exhort them to vertue and temperance, declaring this house to be appointed for the harbour and succour of the dear members of Christ's body, and not of drunkards and unthankfull persons.”

The Sisters seem to have required a deal of looking after in the reign of Henry VIII. They were not to leave the woman's ward after the hour of seven of the clock in the winter, and nine of the clock in the summer—

“Except some great and speciall cause (as the present danger of death or needfull succour of some poor person).”

But some selection even here was exercised, for at

“Such a speciall time it shall not be lawfull for *every* Sister to go forth to any person or persons (no though it be in her own ward), but onely for such Sisters as the Matron shall think vertuous, godly, and discreet.”

And then in the Sisters' charge follows the special command—

“And so much as in you shall lye, ye shall avoid and shun the conversation and company of all men.”

An order which, I have no doubt, was as implicitly obeyed then as any similar command would be now.

The Porters had certain duties more or less resembling those belonging to them now, but they also exercised a general supervision over the patients, to see that there was no disorderly conduct in the wards. They had also a power of summary punishment.

“And whatsoever poor person shall be found a swearer or an unreverent user of his mouth towards God or his holy name, or a contemner of the Matron, or other officer of this house, or that shall refuse to go to bed at the lawfull houres before appointed, him shall ye punish (after once warning given) in the stocks, and further declare his follie unto the Almoners of this house, that they may take such order with him or them, as shall seem meet by their discretions.”

The Beadles (Bedells or Byddles) then performed the duties of constables for the city. When not specially on duty in the Hospital they were to walk about the city,

“Every man taking his separate walk.” “And if in any of your walks yee shall happen to espy any person infected with any lothely grieve or disease,

which shall fortune to lye in any notable place of this City, to the noyance and infection of passers by, and slander of this house, ye shall then give knowledge thereof to the Almoners of this Hospitall, that they may take such order therein as to them shall be thought meet."

The Beadles were to be also on the watch for any who had been healed in the Hospital, and who should afterwards counterfeit any disease and beg for charity.

"And if ye shall fortune to find any so doing, ye shall immediately commit him, or them, to some Cage, and give knowledge thereof to the Governors of this house." "Also ye shall not suffer any sturdy or idle begger or vagabound, to begge or ask almes within this City of London, or Suburbes of the same, but yee shall forthwith commit all such to ward, and immediately signifie the name and surname of him, or them, to the Alderman of that ward, when ye shall apprehend any such begger, or else to the Lord Mayor."

Among the list of officers of St. Bartholomew's Hospital was also, as I have said, a Visitour of the neighbouring prison of Newgate, whose charge was to visit

"All the poor and miserable captives within the Prison of Newgate, and minister unto them such ordinary service at times convenient, as is appointed by the King's Majestie's book for ordinary Prayer. Also that he learn without book the most wholsome

sentences of holy Scripture, that may comfort a desperate man, that readily ye may minister them to such persons as yee shall perceive them most needfull to be ministered unto."

Then the Clerk gives us an account of the annual expenditure of the Hospital; but I fear he will get but little sympathy from us with regard to the "excessive prices of all things," of which he speaks in the Preface.

Thus the Matron's board wages were eighteen-pence the week, and her livery thirteen shillings and fourpence a year. A Sister received sixteen-pence a week for board wages and ten shillings a year for her livery. The diet of each patient was reckoned to cost twopence per day. The salary of the Steward (Steward and Baker) was £6, 13s. 3d. The Cook received but £6 a year for his meat, drink, and wages. In comparison with these the Chirurgeons seem to have been well paid, for each of the three received about £20 a year.

The total amount of the certain charges was £798, 2s. per annum.

The uncertain charges are thus given—

"For Shirts, Smocks, and other apparell for the poor, needfull, either at their comming in or departure. For Sugar and Spices for Cawdles for the sick, Flax for Sheets, and Weaving of the same, Soltwich Cloth for Winding Sheets, Bolls, Brooms, Baskets, Incense, Juniper, Ashes to buck their Clothes. And also money given to the poor at

their departure, which is meafured according to their journey and need."

These uncertain charges amounted in one year to £60. The endowment of the Hospital by the King and by the City of London amounting only to £666, 13s., 4d., there was a deficit of about £130, in addition to the sum expended in the uncertain items—

"Which onely," the Clerk adds, "rifeth of the charity of certain mercifull Citizens, for whose continuance with the encrease of moe, we earnestly pray unto the fountain of mercy, Jefus Chrif, the Lord of all, to whom for ever appertain, the Kingdome, the power, and the glory, world without end. Amen."

In 1552 the repairing of the Hospital was begun ; and it was carried out and completed by means of subscriptions raised in the city after the following manner, as related by Stow * :—

"Then alfo were orders devised for reliefe of the poore, the inhabitantes were all called to their parifh churches, where by Sir Richard Dobbes, their Maior, their feveral Aldermen, or other grave Citizens, they were by eloquent orations perfwaded how great and how many commodities would enfue unto them and their Citie if the poore of divers forts which they named, were taken from out their ftreets, lanes, and allyes, and were beftowed and provided

* Stow's "Survey of London," second ed., p. 378.

for in Hospitales abroade, so therefore was every man moved liberally to graunt what they would impart towards the preparing and furnishing of such Hospitals. And also what they would contribute weekly towards their maintenance for a time, which they said should not be past one yeare or twaine, untill they were better furnished of endowment: to make short, every man graunted liberally, according to his hability, bookes were drawne of the reliefe in every ward of the City, towards the new Hospitales."

The Hospital was governed as a separate institution for about ten years; but in 1557 it was agreed to associate it with the rest of the Royal Hospitals, namely, Christ's Hospital, Bridewell, and St. Thomas's Hospital; the whole of them being under a comptroller-general and surveyor-general, while for each of the four was appointed, for its special government, three aldermen, a treasurer, and eight other citizens.

Probably the union of the Royal Hospitals under one government made but little alteration in the actual working of the different institutions. Each had its own particular governing body, and gradually each became more and more independent, even of the Lord Mayor and Corporation. At first, beginning in the year 1564, it was the custom to hold a meeting annually at Christ's Hospital on St. Matthew's Day, and to select a President, Treasurer, and other Governors for each of the Royal Hospitals; but after 1587 these meetings became irregular, though they were still held down to the year 1652. After this date the elections were made at the several

Hospitals, the elections being apparently confirmed, in a formal manner only, by the Lord Mayor. New Governors, moreover, were introduced in consideration of pecuniary donations, independently of the Court of Aldermen; and these naturally would not consider themselves under any bond of allegiance to the Corporation. The consequence of all this was continual squabbling between the Corporation on the one hand and the Governors of the Royal Hospitals on the other; the former endeavouring to retain its ancient powers and privileges, while the latter fought each for the particular Hospital of which he was a Governor, insisting, apparently with good success, upon its right to manage its own affairs.

At length there was a general agreement that all these disputes should be settled by Act of Parliament, and accordingly, in 1782, such an act was passed. By it the mode of government of St. Bartholomew's Hospital was arranged in the fashion which holds good at the present time, the Hospital being completely separated from its alliance with the other Hospitals. The Corporation of the City of London retained, and still retains, a considerable share in its management, in virtue of the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen and twelve members of the Common Council being *ex officio* Governors. But as the voting power of the *ex officio* Governors is only equal to that of a like number of the other Governors, the Hospital is now practically inde-

pendent; while it may be said to be materially strengthened by having as part of its governing body the influential members of the Corporation who take a share in its management.

The final separation of the Hospital from what may be termed the patronage of the Corporation of the City of London occurred in 1866, when a law-suit was instituted to determine whether the Lord Mayor for the time being should, in accordance with ancient custom, be elected President on the occasion of a vacancy in this office, or whether the Governors had the power of electing whom they might choose. The suit was determined in favour of the Governors, and the first President thereafter elected was His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who has continued to preside over us to the present time.

I have spoken of St. Bartholomew's Hospital only as an institution, and have but little time to refer to its buildings; but I hope you will be the more interested in looking at the engravings which I have placed in the library. You will be able to trace with their help many of the structural alterations which have taken place during the last two centuries.

Unfortunately we have little or nothing to show us what the Hospital was like in the first few centuries of its existence, the earliest representation of any kind, so far as I know, being that which is given in Aggas's Map of London, supposed to have been

made in the reign of Elizabeth. But, of course, little can be gathered from this, excepting the fact that the Hospital was made up of detached houses, or groups of houses, intersected by the narrow lanes or streets which formed the thoroughfares of the parish of St. Bartholomew the Less. As you will see from the facsimile of the map, the Hospital stands just outside the wall of London ; and instead of being, as now, with reference to the rest of London, almost in the centre, it was really on the outskirts. For the country began just beyond Smithfield, and London proper stretched away towards the east ; although at the date of this map (which was more than four hundred years after the first foundation of St. Bartholomew's) houses were becoming continuous along the line of Holborn, and the green fields did not begin westwards until one had walked to about what is now the corner of Gray's Inn Road.

The earliest separate engraving of the Hospital, so far as I am aware, is that which was published in Stow's "Survey of London" (ed. 1720), and of which I am able to show you a good impression this evening.

We see by it that the Hospital had two small quadrangles instead of one large as at present, besides various detached or semi-detached houses near them.

In 1729-1760 the Hospital was rebuilt from the foundations, and, with some modifications, these buildings remain to the present day.

In its buildings, as in other things, St. Bartholomew's has grown largely, and is still increasing. New wards are at this present time just being completed. Its annual income was at the time of the second foundation about £800; in 1837, £30,000; in 1885, £60,000.

“And with moor ampliant bylyngs were the
fkynnys of oure tabernaculys dylatid. To the
laude and glorie of oure Lorde Jefu Crifte, to
whom be honoure and glory, worlde withowtyn
ende. Amen.”

St. Bartholomew's Hospital, though growing for centuries, is, indeed, growing still. Long may it grow! For when it has ceased to grow it may indeed have come to the perfection of maturity; but such perfection will be the signal for the beginning of decay.

