

books and of learned men, irresistible among women. A few friends held by him to the last, with more of what seems personal regard than Edward II. or Richard II. conciliated. He has partisans in London at the time of his deepest humiliation, and is welcomed rapturously in Lynne a few days before his death. The Cinque-ports seem to have been steadily faithful to his interests. It is evident that, while his clergy and his nobles hated him, a portion of the towns were with him, either grateful for past favors or liking his enemies less. The loss of Normandy was chiefly due to his quarrel with his English subjects; he held England against the pope with singular success; and his last campaigns prove that he had organized his tyranny till he was an overmatch for half the realm, and could still do something when France had succored the rebellion.

Yet, allowing all this, which has, perhaps, been too often overlooked, it may be doubted if it be not an aggravation of the infamy that clings to John's name. He favored the cities, not in the interest of freedom, but to gain money by the sale of charters, or to set class against class. His power was based on the systematic employment of foreign mercenaries; he tortured to extort wealth, and murdered freely when his avarice was disappointed. His great struggle against Innocent began in the attempt to usurp the rights of a corporate body, and was carried on by confiscations and violence. Lastly, like all voluptuaries, John perpetually broke down at the critical moment of his fortunes. He scoffed at religion, and was cowed by a strolling prophet's utterances. Bearing to be excommunicated for years, giving churches freely to be plundered, he yet attached a superstitious reverence to the relics he carried with him. Perhaps the best summary of his life is the simple record of the great facts of his reign, that he lost Normandy, that he became the pope's vassal, and that he died fighting against Magna Charta. Never, probably, was there an English king who

would more cordially have indorsed the Roman tyrant's wish: "When I am dead let the earth be consumed in fire;" never one of whom the poet might have said, with greater truth, that "he wearied God."

 XVII.

ENGLAND IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.—LONGMAN.

[John left, as his heir and successor, a little boy nine years old—Henry III. His long reign covers more than half of the thirteenth century, one of the most brilliant and eventful periods of the world's history. It was the age of great statesmen, great scholars, and great architects. It was, for England, an age of great constitutional progress; but in this the king himself had little share. He was essentially weak and untrustworthy—a mere figure-head; during his minority under the control of able ministers; then the tool of foreign favorites; while, later, he became involved in a fateful struggle with the baronial party. Some idea of the condition of England at this period may be obtained from the following sketch of domestic life and manners.]

ABOUT twenty years before Edward became king, more than seventy woods and forests belonged to the Crown; and this was one of the great grievances of the people. These woods were full of game of all kinds: wolves were far from uncommon; wild cattle were found so near London as in Osterly Wood, in Middlesex; and the fens and marshes were the abode of cranes, storks, and bitterns.

Besides these woods belonging to the Crown, the whole land was scattered over with forest. Between London and St. Albans the country was so thickly wooded, and the woods were so much frequented by lawless freebooters, who robbed the passing travelers, that the abbots of St. Albans kept armed men to guard the road to London. Throughout the whole country, indeed, the woods were so much the haunts of robbers, that, in 1285, a law was passed, ordering that all

highways leading from one market-town to another, should be widened, so that there might be no bushes, woods, or dikes within two hundred feet of each side of the road; and those owners of land who refused to cut down underwoods close to the high-roads were held answerable for all crimes committed by men lurking in them. Even the boundaries of parks were to be set farther back when they approached too near the highway.

This was the state of the high-roads; but there were cross-roads, from one town to another, so little known that guides—shepherds and men of like degree—were hired to show the way to travelers. There were but few bridges, and guides, therefore, were needed to show the fords across the streams and rivers.

Such were the roads; let us now see how men traveled on them. There were no carriages in those days; or, at least, they were so uncommon, and their use so completely confined to ladies of rank, that they cannot be looked upon as the means by which people got from one place to another. Such as were to be found, were a kind of covered car, fitted with a weather-tight roof, from which hung curtains of leather, or of heavy silk; the wood-work was painted, and the nail-heads and wheels were often gilt; there were plenty of cushions inside, but there were no springs. Edward's queen, Eleanor of Castile, and his daughter, the duchess of Brabant, each had a carriage of this kind. Henry III. had "a house of deal" made for him, which ran on six wheels, and was roofed with lead. In all likelihood this was meant for traveling, but it must have been ill-suited to the roads of those days. Litters, or covered couches, supported by horses, were also made use of, and must have been more convenient than wagons on wheels, on most of the roads.

The usual mode of traveling, therefore, was on horseback, and the number of horses wanted by the nobles was very great. Thus, in the year 1265, when Simon de Montfort was

at Odiham with his wife, the countess of Leicester, he had the surprising number of three hundred and thirty-four horses in his stables for himself and his retinue, and not for military purposes. Those who had no horses of their own hired horses of "hackney-men." Thus, a traveler going from London to Dover hired one horse as far as Rochester, for which he paid one shilling four pence, being about sixteen shillings of our money; the same from Rochester to Canterbury, and so on, in like proportion, to Dover. It was far from uncommon for travelers to steal these horses, and to cut off their ears and tails to prevent their being recognized. This practice was carried to such a length that, in the following century, a law was passed to put a stop to it.

There were other men who let out carts for carrying luggage; but the state of the roads, in some districts, was so bad that the cattle had to rest four days after traveling two. The general custom was to travel for four days, and then rest for three. At night travelers used to lodge at farms, or religious houses, where they were able to buy any food they wanted.

As an illustration of the traveling at this time, I may describe the way in which a large sum of money was carried from Chester to London. The sum of one thousand pounds, which meant one thousand pounds weight of silver, was due to Prince Edward from his barony of Chester. It was packed, by the prince's cook, in ten panniers, which were put on five horses, and thus carried to London, under the charge of two knights, attended by sixteen armed men on foot. Two cooks went with them to provide them with food, for there were no inns except in towns. It took the guard eight days to reach London, and six days to return without the heavy weight.

The houses of the barons, and, indeed, the king's palaces, were, most of them, very simply built. The hall was the great place of assembly, where all ate together, and, except at the dais, where the nobles sat, the dwelling-rooms on the

ground-story were seldom boarded over, the floor being nothing more than the natural soil, well rammed down, with litter spread over it. The tables were stuck into the ground. This part of the hall was, therefore, often damp, and it was sometimes called the marsh of the hall, a name it, no doubt, well deserved. An idea of its state, even in a royal residence, may be gathered from the fact that at the king's palace at Winchester the door-way was widened to let in carts. This rude condition of the houses is very remarkable considering the luxury and splendor with which the ladies were often dressed.

The upper floors were generally boarded, but carpets were uncommon, and were looked on as a luxurious innovation. Thus, on the arrival of Eleanor of Castile, to be married to Edward, the Londoners were angry "at the very floors being covered with costly carpets."

As a general rule, the houses were built of timber, but sometimes of wood and stone. Bricks were very uncommon. In the hall the fire was in the middle, and the smoke escaped through the roof, but in the kitchen the fires were in large fire-places built in the walls, and there was a hole in the roof to let out the smoke.

Whether the houses were built of wood, stone, or rubble, they were almost all plastered and whitewashed, both inside and out. Wainscoting was not much used in domestic buildings, but the royal chambers and chapels, and probably also the large and wealthy monasteries, were generally wainscoted. Fir was generally used for this purpose, and Norway planks were brought into England in great quantities. The wainscoting was sometimes worked in patterns, but it was usually painted with subjects from sacred or profane history.

To the king's houses there were always attached apartments called "wardrobes," where the heavy and costly stuffs and cloths wanted for the dress of the king and his household were kept; and where, also, the royal tailors worked. When it is remembered that the summer and winter dresses

of the king's attendants were furnished at his cost, and made under his roof, and that it was difficult to buy any large quantity of the cloths and furs necessary for the clothing of a numerous retinue, except at the great fairs, it is easy to see that the wardrobes needed ample room. In the wardrobes were also kept the rare productions of the East, which then found their way to England; such as almonds, ginger, the rosy and violet-colored sugars of Alexandria, and other "stomachics," as they were called.

Glass for windows was but little used. The windows were usually simply closed by wooden shutters, iron stanchions being sometimes added for greater safety. Canvas, or some such material, was often used to keep out the weather, and to admit a dim light. Glass for windows was a luxury, barely known to kings; and it seems that no glass was made in this country until much later times. Window-glass was one of the things we got from the Flemings in exchange for our wool; and so scarce was it, even in the next century, that the king ordered as much glass as was needed for the repairs of the windows of one of his chapels, to be searched for in the counties of Norfolk, Northampton, Leicester, and Lincoln. The wooden shutters cannot have afforded much defense against rough weather, and charges were often made for "making the windows shut better than usual." Draughts of cold air were somewhat prevented by putting the windows nearer the roof than the floor of the room.

The entrance to the manor-houses was usually by an outer staircase, shielded from the weather by an overhanging shed or pent-house; but the way from the hall to the first story was sometimes through a trap-door. From this it seems that the chief dwelling-rooms in these manor-houses were on the first story, and the ground floor was probably used only as the hall.

I will now try to give you a sketch of the way in which people lived inside their houses. Let us imagine ourselves

in one of them, as lookers-on, and that we see a lord sitting down to dinner with his guests and his vassals. All are gathered together in the hall. At the upper end, on the dais, where the ground is somewhat raised and boarded over, sit the lord and his chief guests. They are protected by a covering which, as our host is a great man, is made of silk. Below, in "the marsh," sit the vassals, farm-servants, and others. The door, which has lately been widened to let in carts more easily, is closed, to keep out the wind; a dim light is let in through the canvas windows, and "the marsh" is made tolerably dry and clean by litter and rushes. Fish in plenty is served up; eels and pike, and even whale, grampus, porpoise, and "sea-wolves" may be had. There is plenty of beef, and plenty of mutton, but it is nearly all salted; and the bread is rather black. Vegetables are plentiful enough; there are no potatoes, but there are peas, beans, onions, garlic and leeks, pot-herbs and sweet herbs. There is fruit enough, though not equal to what we now have. There are pears, and particularly one sort grown by the monks of Wardon, in Bedfordshire, which are made into Wardon pies. Then there are apples, particularly of the sort called "costard." These cost one shilling per hundred, or about twelve shillings of our money. Peaches, and cherries, and mulberries, too, are not wanting. If we suppose the entertainment to be given in London, the garden of the earl of Lincoln, in Holborn, would be ready to furnish a good supply, for the fruit out of it was sold for above one hundred pounds of our money in one year alone. There is plenty of claret, or clarets—so called because the wine was sweetened with honey, and afterward strained till it became clear—from our possessions in Gascony, and some sort of sherry from Spain, for those who sit on the dais; and beer and cider enough for those who sit in "the marsh." But the beer is made of a mixture of barley, wheat, and oats, without hops, which have not yet been "found out." The insipidity of the beer is taken off by

spices.* There is wine, too, made from English vineyards, but it must be sour stuff, and fit only for "the marsh." Nobody but the king has glass to drink out of, and he has none to spare for his friends; but he has cups made of cocoa-nuts, of gourds, of buffalo horns, and of beautiful agates for his principal guests. The wooden bowl, the earthen jug, and the leathern jack, serve well enough for the great bulk of the assemblage. The tables are pretty firm, for their legs are well stuck into the mud floor. Now that the guests are seated, and ready for their repast, up comes the meat on a spit, served round by the servants, and each man cuts off a bit with his knife, and puts it into his wooden bowl or on his trencher. Most of the people have wooden spoons, but nobody has a fork. The pitchers and jugs are made of earthenware, but the plates or dishes are all of wood.

XVIII.

THE MENDICANT FRIARS.—GEIKIE.

[With the increase of wealth and power corruption crept into the Church, and she lost much of her early purity and influence. At the end of the twelfth century many eminent men recognized the necessity of making some great effort to arrest her downward progress, and recover the lost ground. For this purpose the various orders of mendicant friars were established. Their special mission was to carry the Gospel to the poor. The most important of these orders were the Dominicans, or Black Friars; the Franciscans, or Gray Friars; and the Carmelites, or White Friars. The Dominicans and Franciscans exercised great influence in the social and political development of England.]

THE thirteenth century saw the Church rise to its most extravagant pretensions and sink to its deepest corruption. Its worldly splendor was at its height, but its spiritual condition was appalling. All its institutions had been noble in their first years, but success had ruined them. The vast

cathedrals had once been the pride of the serf, who felt himself on a level with his oppressors when within their walls, and saw the sons of his despised class set above barons and princes as their ministers. But their clergy had gradually secured independence of the bishops, and now transferred their duties to vicars, preferring worldly indulgence for themselves. The appointment of titular bishops had, in the same way, enabled the wealthier prelates to find substitutes, and few of them any longer troubled themselves about their sees, further than to draw the revenues.

The independent episcopal courts, in their early history, had been a bulwark to the weak and oppressed in rough and lawless ages, against civil misrule and injustice. To the Church, Europe had owed the Truce of God, which sought, though vainly, to establish a cessation of private and rational wars, then universal, for three days a week; it had aided emancipation of the slave in many ways in earlier times; the legislation of its courts against piracy, wrecking, incendiarism, usury, false coinage, tournaments, trial by ordeal, and much else, was of benefit to the nation and to morality. But ere long its claims became so excessive, and its tribunals so venal, that they lost all credit, and became a public scandal and oppression.

The efforts to enforce the celibacy of the clergy, which had been made unceasingly since Dunstan's day, through more than three hundred years, had only resulted in wide-spread immorality. The Church laws against married or immoral clergy could not be carried out from the number of offenders. This immorality of the clergy, their worldliness, their avarice, and notorious simony, were by turns rebuked with solemn earnestness by the few faithful men left in the Church, or upbraided with biting sarcasm by the wits of the age. Ecclesiastics, high and low, had, in fact, well-nigh lost the respect of the laity. "You are a worthy man, though you be a priest," says a female speaker in one of the poems of the

time. Nothing could be more bitter than the language in which ecclesiastical persons, as a class, are described by the writers of the day.

The enormous wealth of the Church had, in great measure, led to this state of things. The laity had gradually submitted to the demand for tithes; wills of all kinds, and all suits respecting them, were ecclesiastical matters; dispensations for marriage were needed, at heavy cost, on every hand, possession of ready money facilitated purchases of land, often at a nominal value; the safety of property held by the Church led many to make over their possessions to it, and rent them again from it, and a thriving trade in mortgages added to the whole.

The monks, also, had gradually become as corrupt as the rest. There was no end of orders—Carthusians, Cistercians, Carmelites, Benedictines, and a host besides. Exemption from episcopal authority and growth in wealth had done their work. The abbots obtained, in many cases, episcopal privileges, and in many others forged the right to them. Many parishes were united to monasteries to escape the oversight of the bishops. There were convents for both sexes under the same roof, and men, like Bernard in the century before, denounced the pride and luxury of abbots and monks alike. Bernard had, indeed, founded a stricter rule among the Cistercians, which, for a time, gave them great popularity, but they, too, after a while, became as corrupt as the others.

It was under these circumstances that the mendicant orders were founded, to try if the laity, scandalized by the corruption of the monks and clergy, could not be won back to the Church. From the year 1207 Francis of Assisi had first begun to gather round him a society which should reproduce apostolic life and labor, in strict obedience to Rome; and such had been the effect of his saintly life, disinterested love, transparent sincerity, and simple preaching, in an age of hypocrisy and vice, that before his death, in 1226, many

thousands had joined his order. "The Lord added, not so much a new order," says a contemporary (in the foundation of the "Begging Friars"), "as renewed the old, raised the fallen, and revived religion, now almost dead, in the evening of the world, hastening to its end, in the near time of the Son of Perdition; that He might prepare new athletes against the dangerous times of Antichrist, and might protect the Church by fortifying it beforehand. The Lord Pope confirmed their rule, and gave them authority to preach in any churches, the bishop of the diocese permitting. They are sent two by two to preach, as before the face of the Lord and before His second Advent. These paupers of Christ carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor bread, and have no shoes on their feet, for no brother of this order can own any thing. They have no monasteries or churches, no fields, or vines, or beasts, or houses, or lands, or even where they may lay their head. They do not wear furs or linen, but only woolen gowns with a hood: no head-coverings, or cloaks, or mantles, or any other garments have they. If any one invite them, they eat and drink what is set before them. If any one, in charity, give them any thing, they keep nothing of it to the morrow. Yet, not by preaching only, but also by the example of a holy life and blameless conversation, do they attract many, not of the poor alone, but of the rich and noble, to despise the world, forsaking their towns, and houses, and great possessions, and giving up earthly wealth, by a happy exchange, for spiritual—to put on the habit of the 'lesser brethren'—a tunic of no value—and to gird themselves with their cord. For, in a short time they have so increased that there is no Christian land in which some are not found, for they let all join them, if unmarried, and not already under a vow. All but these they welcome, committing themselves to the providence and love of God, and not fearing for support."

Beginning with professions so noble and, at first, so sincere, it was found desirable, in 1212, to found a Franciscan sister-

hood as well, and to this was added, in 1221, a third order—the Tertiaries—of both sexes, who were not required to take the vows of the order or to live apart, but were rather Associates, carrying out, as far as might be, the spirit of the order without leaving their ordinary callings or their place in life. The order of Dominican Friars, founded at first for the conversion of the Albigenses (1205)—who were soon, however, to be given over to pitiless massacre, when found obstinate—grew, also, apace. A generation later came the Carmelite Friars (1245) and the Augustines (1256); and all these, like the Franciscans, had their sisterhoods and their countless associates, or tertiaries, of both sexes.

The friars were, in fact, the Methodists, or revivalists of six hundred years ago; but it would have been well for them if they had been as permanently faithful to their mission as Wesley's great communion. The people flocked everywhere to their preaching. It was like a new Gospel. Seeing their power to work on the masses, the pope soon granted them privileges which speedily corrupted them. Bishops were ordered to secure them a hearty reception, to urge all to come to their preaching, and personally to help them in every way; nor were they to be hindered from confessing those who attended their services. They were to be independent of episcopal supervision, and had the right to bury any who desired it in their churches and inclosures. The door was thus opened for their gaining wealth, and wealth brought spiritual ruin.

Meanwhile they streamed into England—hailed by the people, hated and feared, in anticipation, by the clergy and monks. Foreigners, they had to beg their way, with only their rags and their mission to recommend them. But they soon learned English enough to begin their vocation actively, and, ere long, every parish priest found them unwelcome intruders on his bounds, for they set up their movable pulpit at any cross, without consulting him, and carried the multi-

tude away by their enthusiasm and the novelty and nobility of their principles and mission. Self-sacrificing love, for the sake of Christ, was the sum of their lives, and the only reward they asked, food and shelter. For a time they kept nobly true to the spirit of their rule. The towns of the Middle Ages were wretched in the extreme; fever and pestilence were permanently established in them, as in modern cities of the East; leprosy had its special houses, and little care was taken of the wretched inmates. But the Gray Brothers at once betook themselves to the most miserable quarters of the boroughs and to the foul leper houses, to alleviate suffering, and, if possible, remove it. Barefooted by day, they lay without a pillow by night. Their houses were as mean as the wretched hovels around them. True work, honestly done, had its ample reward in enthusiastic admiration.

Their preaching, ready, fluent, and familiar, was no less a wonder. The ignorant mass-priest, who depended on his fees, had been almost the only ecclesiastic with whom the lower towns-people had hitherto come in contact. The services of the Church were in an unknown language, the ritual was unmeaning, and the pictures or statues on the church walls needed an explanation which they did not receive. In contrast with this the friar addressed the crowd with fervid appeals, rough wit, or telling anecdote, as best suited the moment, with no attempt at studied harangues. It was a religious revolution, and gave the Church another lease of popular favor.

But they did not long confine themselves to preaching or tending the sick; they soon aimed also at higher flights. The universities were in their first glory: humble enough compared with their state to-day, but immensely popular. Thirty thousand students are said to have attended Oxford at one time. The revival of mental activity, however, was dangerous, and the friars resolved to check, or at least to direct, it. Their care of the sick had soon drawn them to study the

physical sciences, and their preaching led them to study theology. In 1230 the Dominicans had already gained a theological professorship in the University of Paris, and the Franciscans soon after secured another. The schools of both, at both the English universities, became famous. Theology resumed its old supremacy, and for a time such men as Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and Ockham gave a true glory to the new orders.

But the corruption of the rest of the Church ere long invaded the ranks of the Brethren, and speedily brought them to its own miserable level. Even so early as 1243 Matthew Paris writes of them: "It is only twenty-four years since they built their first houses in England, and now they raise buildings like palaces, and show their boundless wealth by making them daily more sumptuous, with great rooms and lofty ceilings, impudently transgressing the vows of poverty which are the very basis of their order. If a great or rich man is like to die, they take care to crowd in, to the injury and slight of the clergy, that they may hunt up money, extort confessions, and make secret wills, always seeking the good of their order as their one end. They have got it believed that no one can hope to be saved if he do not follow the Dominicans or Franciscans. They are restless in trying to get privileges, to get the ear of kings and princes, to be chamberlains, treasurers, bridesmen, match-makers, and agents of papal extortion. In their preaching they either flatter or abuse without bounds, or reveal confessions, or gabble nonsense." The monks and the clergy soon came to regard them as their mutual enemies, and the peace of the towns was often disturbed by riots caused by their mutual hatreds. X