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LETTERS RELATING TO THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN KENT, DURING THE PRIMACY OF ARCHBISHOP SAN- CROFT [1678—1690].

TRANSCRIBED FROM THE TANNER MSS.

BY THE REV. C. EVELEIGH WOODRUFF, M.A.

THE following letters from the "Sancroft Correspondence," preserved amongst the Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian Library,* throw considerable light upon the condition of the Church of England and its clergy in the county of Kent during the latter half of the seventeenth century, and as they have not hitherto been published I venture to submit them to the notice of the Kent Archæological Society.

The debt of gratitude which the Church of England owes to Archbishop Sancroft for his courage in the great crisis known as the "Declaration of Indulgence" has been generally recognized, and his subsequent career as a "Non Juror" has earned for him the epithet of the "saintly" or "impracticable" according to the political bias of his biographers, but of his energy as a diocesan it does not appear that any notice has been taken.† That the Archbishop was fully alive to the needs of his own diocese, and that in dealing with the abuses

* Sancroft bequeathed his library and MSS. to Emmanuel College, Cambs., with the exception of such papers as his friend Henry Wharton might care to select. It is stated, however, that, contrary to the Archbishop's wishes and instructions, a large portion of his MSS. were sold by his nephews to Bateman the bookseller, of whom they were purchased by Bishop Tanner, and by him presented to the Bodleian Library. (See D'Oyly's *Life of Sancroft*, vol. ii., p. 90, note.)

† Canon Jenkins in his *History of the Diocese* passes over Sancroft's primacy with the remark that "nothing of note occurred in relation to the diocese," p. 370.

he found therein he was prepared to exercise the same uncompromising firmness as when confronted with dangers and difficulties of a more public nature, his correspondence fully testifies. Indeed, it seems not unlikely that had not his opportunities been prematurely closed by deprivation, Sancroft would have so effectually roused the clergy of his diocese to a sense of their responsibilities, that in Kent at least the Church of England would have been spared the blight of apathy which afflicted her during the eighteenth century.

In the fourth year of his primacy (1682), Sancroft granted a commission to Dr. White, Bishop of Peterborough, to hold a visitation in Canterbury Cathedral. Dr. White writes to the Archbishop giving him an account of the proceedings [Letter No. I.], which do not appear to have differed much from those observed at the present day, except that owing to some neglect on the part of the public notary inadequate notice had been given to the Prebendaries. The result, however, of this visitation was important, for it seems that it revealed to the Archbishop the need of devising some means by which amid the many and engrossing cares of the primacy, he might be enabled to exercise a more effectual supervision over the clergy of his diocese. With this object he resolved to revive the ancient office of Rural Dean, thereby anticipating by more than one hundred and fifty years the reopening of these "oculi Episcopi" by Archbishop Howley in 1833.*

The clergymen appointed were:—

Dr. George Thorpe†	to the Rural Deanery of	Canterbury.
Dr. Giles Hinton‡	„	Charing.
Dr. John Castilion§	„	Westbere.
Dr. Henry Ullock	„	Sandwich.

* In the diocese of Canterbury the office of Rural Dean seems to have fallen into disuse in the fifteenth century.

A similar revival was attempted at this period (1683) by Dr. Seth Ward of Salisbury, and of Dr. Fell of London.

On Tillotson's succession to the See we hear no more of Rural Deans. (See Dansey's *Horæ Decanice Rurales*, vol. ii., p. 347.)

† Canon of Canterbury and Chaplain to the Archbishop, obt. 1719. (See *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XIV., p. 132.)

‡ Successively Vicar of Westbere, Faversham, and Biddenden.

§ Canon of Canterbury and Dean of Rochester 1676, obt. 1688.

|| Rector of Great Mongeham, one of the six preachers in Canterbury Cathedral, Prebendary of Rochester, succeeded Dr. Castilion as Dean of Rochester 1689.

William Wickens* to the Rural Deanery of Ospringe.

James Wilson†

„

Sutton.

The Rural Deans, in accordance with the terms of their commission, inquired into the condition of the parishes in their deaneries, and made a return to the Archbishop. From these returns we are able to gather many interesting particulars. Dr. Ullock seems to have taken special pains to furnish a full account, for he not only records, with all the fidelity of "Crockford," the names, degrees, and preferments of the clergy in his deanery, but furnishes particulars as to their wives and families. From his return it appears that in the deanery of Sandwich there were nineteen incumbents, of whom ten were "double beneficed men," but with the exception of three (who were almost *sine curâ*) all resided upon one or other of their livings. Nor does it seem that these pluralists were open to any very grave censure, for their cures were for the most part small, contiguous, and modestly endowed. The system was one, however, which Sancroft did not countenance, and the letters of the Vicars of Sittingbourne and Westcliff [Nos. XI. and XII.] prove that even in those instances where extenuating circumstances might be pleaded the Archbishop brought pressure to bear upon the incumbent in order to induce him to resign one of his benefices. Dr. Hinton furnishes us with an account of the parishes of Faversham and Biddenden [Nos. IV. and V.]. If the ridiculously low composition paid in lieu of small tithes in the latter parish may be taken as a representative case, the Commutation Act of 1835 was by no means so disadvantageous to the tithe-owner as has sometimes been represented.

Dilapidations—the bugbear of modern incumbents—seem to have pressed no less heavily upon their predecessors in the days of Charles the Second. Dr. Gerard, the wealthy Rector of Lydd and Deal, is able to assume a tone of dignified remonstrance when dealing with this subject [No. VIII.], but from the poor Vicar of Biddenden we have a veritable wail of woe. His vicarage-house, after fifty years of neglect and ill usage, had become so "ragged and unclean" that he has had to lay

* Vicar of Eastling 1677, obt. 1718.

† Vicar of Leeds.

out nearly £200, "to make it capable of a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick," and he fears that "altho' not born in a pigstye" he may die in a worse place; two years later these fears appear to have been in a fair way of realization, for he writes to resign his living, the charges of faculties, first fruits, and dilapidations having come so fast upon him that, unable by his "best thrift and parsimony" to satisfy his creditors, he is about to retire "to the common place of confinement in Maidstone" [No. VI.].

The neglect of public worship and the spread of non-conformity naturally form the subject of some of these communications.* The Rural Dean of Sutton deplors the apathy of the magistrates who neglected to enforce the statutable penalty for absence from church, for, as he naively remarks, the common people paid far greater attention to the twelve-penny fine than to a sentence of excommunication, which, unless it were followed by a writ *de excommunicato capiendo*, was treated as a mere *brutum fulmen*; nor were satisfactory results always attained when such extreme measures were resorted to, as appears from the letter of the Curate of Ash [No. X.], who gives an amusing account of the escape from custody of a Presbyterian against whom the writ had been put into motion. Our sympathy with the prisoner "for conscience's sake" is, however, somewhat qualified by the knowledge that he regained his liberty by a very flagrant breach of his *parole*.

The Rector of Biddenden admits that his parish contains all the "vulgar sects," together with one of greater rarity—a congregation of particular Brownists, but on the whole he is inclined to believe that Biddenden non-conformity was due to ignorance rather than to any rooted dislike to the formu-

* The non-conformist population in Kent at the time of the Restoration may to some extent be estimated from a register made in the year 1663 and preserved amongst Sancroft's correspondence. In the latte of St. Augustine, containing 78 parishes, it appears that the Dissenters numbered 393 persons—Independents 116, Anabaptists 181, Quakers 96. Charles Nicholls, who exercised his office at the houses of Mr. St. Nicholas, Stephen Bing, and John Mockett in Ash, was the only Minister of the Independent body. The Anabaptist preachers were Richard Mills at Chatterling in Ash, James Robins and James Henry at Eythorne, Isaac Slatter and James Golder at Northbourne, and John Radcliffe and John Cooke at Harbledown. The Quakers are said to "teach promiscuously and meet uncertainly."

laries of the Church, for he confesses that his flock know as little of the constitution and usages of the Church of England "as the disciples of Ephesus did of the Holy Ghost" [No. V.].

Sancroft's independence in the matter of patronage is well illustrated by the letter of Sir Thomas Culpeper [No. XIV.], who writes in high dudgeon that his grace has presumed to appoint to the Vicarage of Hollingbourne without first consulting or even notifying the fact to so important a person as the Lord of the Manor.

The following note of "All Benefices within the Jurisdiction of the Archdeacon of Canterbury," appears to belong to the times of Sancroft's predecessor, but it is found with his correspondence,* and the compiler, whoever he may have been, is amusingly frank in his statements: unfortunately the return bears no date, and is incomplete.

St. Andrew's, Canterbury.—The parish full of sectaries and schismatics. The Incumbent, a soft quiet man, makes not much more than 40^{li} a yeare of it.

St. Mildred's, Canterbury.—Value 50^{li}. Incumbent Mr. James Arderne, a young man of good schollerlike parts but vaine, unlike a clergyman in his hayre, and habit, and garbe, followed by Presbyterians and Schismatics, and proud of his popularity.

St. George's, Canterbury.—Incumbent Mr. Blaze White, Petticanon of the Church, & best singer there, of good parts for scholler-ship, and every way to be liked, if he be not a little too much a good fellow. Value 30^{li} or 40^{li}, about 100 houses.

All Saints', Canterbury.—Mr. Richard Burny, a person of parts sufficient if a good man had them in keeping, a Bragging talker, Dissolute, and much in debt, and for his protection sworne Chaplain extraordinary to His Ma^{ty}. Marries without licence or banns, will not stick to do irregular things. Value 20^{li}. Patron, the King.

St. Mary Northgate, Canterbury.—Value 20^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr. John Stockar, a Switzer by birth, a civill person of good parts, commended for his benefice by Mon^{sr} Durell, preaches a little after the Presbyterian Modell, and gives measure enough, but sound in his judgment for and conformable to the government and ceremonies of ye Church.

St. Margaret's, Canterbury.—Value 30^{li} or 40^{li}. Patron the Archdeacon of Canterbury. Incumbent Mr. William Hawkins, a Petty Canon of ye Church and a man of good and sufficient parts,

* Sancroft was Archdeacon of Canterbury 1668—1670. The above (though not in his handwriting) may have been drawn up for his use when entering upon his duties as Archdeacon.

and of right judgment for ye Church, very well liked by discreet men.

St. Dunstan's, Canterbury.—Value 20^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr James Penny, a good honest poore man, hath been in it many years, aged 80.

St. Paul's, Canterbury.—Value 20^{li}. Patrons the Dean and Chapter. Incumbent Mr William Jordan, Petty Canon of ye Church, a good sober civill person and of parts sufficient. Tithe 2^s p' lib. house rent. Communicants in ye Parish, if they would come, about 400. Durand* a washball maker, and Minister in Oliver's dayes, now a great keeper of conventicles.

Harbledown.—Value 100^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Dr John Bargrave, Prebend. of Canterbury. He sayd he makes not now of it at most above 70^{li}. Some Fanaticks in ye Parish but not considerable, about 40 families, 30 Communicants last Easter, which was thought a great Reformation.

Fordwich.—Value 40^{li}. Patron Lord Finch. Incumbent Mr William Osborne, a person inclined to Presbytery. The towne a pretty bigge place, and the inhabitants inclining to their minister.

Sturry.—Value 40^{li} at most. Patron Lord Strangford. Incumbent Mr Thomas Jones, a poore good old man of parts sufficient for so meane a living, a very small parish.

Hackington.—Value 80^{li}. Patron the Archdeacon of Canterbury. Incumbent Mr William King, a discreet person of good parts.

Milton juxta Canterbury.—Value 30^{li}. Incumbent Mr Gregory Pulford, a good man and able.

Hardres parva.—Value 60^{li}. They come indifferently to church. No gentlemen in the parish, 2 inconsiderable families Anabaptists.

Westbere.—Value 40^{li}. Patron the King. Incumbent Mr Giles Hinton, a person not well known because newly put in.

St. Peter's, Thannett.—Value 80^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr James Shipton, a good man. Noe gentlemen but Culmer's son (an Independent preacher, presbyterian, Anabaptist, anything, dead), this Culmer comes to Church.† The parish full of seamen. Noe Papists, nor sectaries, rather dull & worldly men. Church in good repayre. They have font and Communion table, and a Surplice in making.

St. Lawrence, Thanet.—Value 50^{li}. The parish full of Presbyterians of whom the leader is Mr Johnson, the late Minister outed for not subscribing, who together with his Brother makes a violent party against the Incumbent, holds conventicles, & is implacable to the Church.

St. Mary's, Sandwich.—Value 50^{li}. Patron the Archdeacon. Incumbent Mr John Lodowick, a Fleming, lately put in, of good

* Was this the John Durant who with Mr. John Player occupied the Cathedral pulpit during the Commonwealth? See Canon Jenkins' *Diocesan History*, p. 360.

† Richard Culmer of Monkton, alias "Blue Dick," one of the Six Preachers, and notorious for his share in the destruction and desecration of the Cathedral in the days of the Commonwealth. (See *Chronological History of Canterbury*, by G. S., p. 282.)

parts and right for the Church, and a sober man, preaches a little after the Presbyterian model, 200 houses in the parish, many Dutch in it, many sectaries and enemies to ye late King, Some subscribers to his death.

St. Peter's, Sandwich.—Value 30^{li} or 40^{li}. Patron the King, and the town by turns. Incumbent Dr Robert Wilkinson of late lives upon sequestrac'ons at Adisham, Mayor and Jurats most live within the parish, and are indifferent well affected. Presbyterians and Sectaries much infest the towne & parish, noe surplice, nor will be endured. The incumbent hopes well of the parish because he came with their desire. The last incumbent Webber by name outed for not subscribing. The Church fallen down but now rebuilding.*

St. Clement's, Sandwich.—Value 100^{li}. Incumbent Mr Ben Harrison, a good man, about 200 houses. Full of sectaries and grossly ignorant persons.

Barfreston.—Parishioners all comers to Church but noe surplice.

East Langdon.—Value 40^{li}. Patron Richard Masters. Incumbent William Osborne, Sen^r, a presbyterian. Parishioners all farmers indifferently well affected, as ye incumbent sayes, all but a carpenter and cobbler.

Eythorne.—Value 100^{li}. Patrons Heirs of Sir Edward Boys & Sir William Munnings. Incumbent Thomas Walton a presbyterian.

Mungeham Magna.—Value 120^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr John Sackett kept in all these last times, Presbyterian heretofore but now conformable, speaks much of his being well knowne and beloved by Sir Thomas Meers. The Church much out of repayre, preaches in ye chancell, parish much infested with sectaries. One third of ye parish at least absentees from the Church, noe surplice.

Northbourne.—Value 50^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr James Burvile,† one of the 6 preachers, a right man. Forty families or thereabouts, full of Anabaptists and Quakers, whereof Wildbore, Slaughter and Verryer are the chief, poore fellows. Font and surplice providing.

Tilmanstone.—Value 40^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr Humphrey Dycas, a good honest man, but a little good fellow. Twenty houses, 50 communicants, but not above 20 that come.

Deale.—Value 120^{li}. Patron the Archbishop. Incumbent Mr Edward Ibbot,‡ a young man of good parts. One hundred and fifty communicants, of whom 100 received last Easter. They all generally come to Church, not above 20 sectaries, of whom Captain Taverner the chief. Church and parsonage house in very good repaire. They have noe font, nor surplice.

* "On the 13th day of October 1661 St. Peter's Church fell down" (*Parish Register*).

† Vicar of Tilmanstone 1675—1697, and Curate of Whitfield.

‡ Appointed Librarian at Lambeth Palace 1708.

LETTERS.

No. I. [1682.]

The Bishop of Peterborough to the Archbishop, giving an account of a Visitation in Canterbury Cathedral.

Cant. 26 Ap. 82.

May it please y^r Grace.

Wee came hither yesterday about 4 of ye clock in ye afternoon having been saluted by ye way by some gentry and severall of ye clergy. Att ye Minster gate we were receaved by ye prebends and by ye whole quier, and by them conducted to Mr Archdeacon's house, from whence in an orderly procession wee went to prayers, ye quire and schoolboys singing an anthem before us, after evening service wee were decently entertayned and lodged. This morning Dr Thorp gave us a good sermon upon ye 4 chap. Ephes. 3 v., from ye church went to ye chapter house where y^r Grace's commission was read. Wee were forced to assume public notary, Mr Lukin was not well, who after pretends y^t he had noe deputation, but ye omission was supplied by ye power of your Grace's commission to assume deputy preg^{rs} (*prerogatives*?). Here was another mistake y^t surprised us and y^t was y^r monition for ye prebends to appeare att this visitation was not fixed on ye church door until last Saturday soe that wee could not legally censure any of ye absent prebendaries in regard they had not a competent notice to appeare w^h I conceave ought to have been given 15 days at least before ye visitation. We have given ye articles to ye Prebends and all ye members of ye church and swore them and enjoyned them to give a due account of all matters and things therein contayned by tomorrow in the afternoon,* and then we adjourned and since we have been seutibly att dinner where a great number of gentry came to dine.

.... WILLIAM PETERBOROUGH.

No. II. [1683.]

Henry Ullock, Rector of Great Mongeham, and Rural Dean of Sandwich, to the Archbishop.

A Commission could not be received with greater dutifulness than yo^r Grace's was by me, but I must confess my perplexity for

* An important reform in the services of the Cathedral Church may be dated from this Visitation—the revival of the weekly celebration of the Holy Communion. Dr. Thorpe, one of the prebendaries and his Grace's chaplain, wrote to his patron shortly afterwards, "I presume Mr. Dean gave you satisfaction in the other particulars. I believe we had begun to have the Sacrament every Sunday by this time, but that most of us were earnest then to have the sermon always in what we call the sermon-house, and not as now on Sacrament days in the choir, which some of us think would be most decent and solemn. The objection is that the choir is not convenient to the speaker, much less to the hearers. . . . We are advising how to make it more commodious, but I find most of our company think it will take off from the beauty of the church to have any gallery in it."

fear I should not be able to answer the design of it, however I most humbly thank y^r Grace for your good opinion of me, looking upon it more the effect of y^r goodness than any character that my best friends could give of me, and shall serve your Grace with all faithfulness and with as much prudence as possibly I can, and in regard of a letter I received from D^r Thorpe on the 28th of March I presume to give your Grace the following account. There are 19 persons concerned as clergymen in the Deanery of Sandwich of w^h 3 do not reside, viz. M^r John Plimley, M^r Leonard Goteer (*Couteur*), M^r Blase White. M^r Plimley hath the Rectory of Ham, a parish of 3 families, he is Usher of Merchant Taylors' School in London, is married, and was (I am informed) of Oxford, but I cannot come to the knowledge of his college degree; there is no parsonage house. M^r Thomas Boys reads prayers and preaches for this M^r Plimley once every month. M^r Goteer hath the Rectory of Little Mongeham and (as I hear) some cure either in Jarsey or Gernsey, there is now no church in Little Mongeham nor parsonage house, but about 7 or 8 families, although the principal house that is very near my parish and by w^h ye church stood is particularly called Little Mongeham. M^r James Burvil hath done all offices for the inhabitants and doth still hope for some compensation. I suppose Mr. Goteer is of French extraction, and I can give no account of him as to other particulars. M^r White hath the Rectory of Stonar, it is in Thanet but very near Sandwich, even just over the Haven, this place memorable for the landing of the Saxons and for the Sepulchre of Vortigern the driver of them out; as considerable as once it was for greatness hath now but 2 houses upon it, and one of them was lately erected. M^r White the present rector did once belong to the King's Chapel, whether he doth now or not I am not certain; he was (as I am informed) of Oxford, but his college or degree I cannot learn or anything more of him; there is no church or parsonage house. I do not understand that any particular person doth constantly perform the offices necessary for ye inhabitants. Of those that reside in the Deanery 10 are concerned in more parishes than one, viz. M^r John Piggot, M^r Alexander Mills, M^r Thomas Boys, M^r Alexander Innes, M^r Thomas Paramour, M^r Thomas Walton, M^r William Balderston, M^r James Burvil, M^r Henry Gerard, M^r John Whiston. M^r Piggot hath both S^t Mary's and S^t Peter's in Sandwich, lives in ye house belonging to one of them; he is Master of Arts and was bred in Katharine Hall in Cambridge, is married, and hath 2 children. M^r Mills is Vicar of S^t Clement's in Sandwich, and y^r Grace's curate at Ashe, lives in Sandwich, and officiates in his church when ye Dutch congregation hath not the use of it. Ash is not in ye Deanery of Sandwich, and soe I doubt not but your Grace will have an account of it from a better hand. M^r Mills was born in Scotland, and so I suppose had his education and took his degree in one of its universities; he is married and as yet hath but one child. M^r Thomas Boys is Rector of Betteshanger, and y^r Grace's curate at Sutton next Dover officiates at both places; is a single person, hath no house at his

cures, but lives as near them as conveniently he can, is Mr of Arts, was bred in St Katharine Hall, Cambs. Mr Innes hath Coldred and Shepherdswell, and understanding that he hath ye honour to be particularly known to y^r Grace I shall not be so impertinent as to add anything of him. Mr Paramour hath both East Langdon and West Langdon, lives at East Langdon. The roofoe of the church at West Langdon is faldn down wth some of the walls. Mr Paramor is also y^r Grace's curate at Walmer, is Mr of Arts, was bred in Lincoln Coll. Oxford, is newly married. Mr Walton with the Rectory of Eythorne holds Waldershare, lives at Eythorne, officiates at both places, is Mr of Arts, had his education in Cambs. and I think at Peter-house; is married, hath no children, but his wife had 2 by a former husband, one of w^h is married, the other marriageable. Mr Balderston hath Northborne and Shoulden w^h is annexed to it, lives at Northborne, officiates at both places, is Mr of Arts, was bred in Emanuel Coll., is not married. Mr James Burvil is Vicar of Tilmanstone, and y^r Grace's curate at Whitfield alias Beauxfield, lives at Tilmanstone, officiates at both places, had his education at Queen's Coll. in Cambs., is but Bac. of Arts, having not yet been in a condition to spare so much money as is necessary for a journey to Cambs. and the taking ye degree of Master; this he hath declared to me, having married a person related to me; he hath 2 children. Mr Gerard hath both Deal and Lyd, for most part lives at Deale and officiates there, keeping a curate at Lyd; when he is at Lyd the curate comes up to Deal; the present curate is one Mr Wood, a Scotchman. Mr Gerard is Mr of Arts, was bred at Wadham Coll. in Oxford, is married, and hath 3 children; his wife had 2 by a former husband, w^h live with him. Mr Whiston hath Eastry and Word alias Worth that is annexed to Eastry; lives at Eastry, officiates at both places, is Mr of Arts, was bred at Jesus Coll. in Cambs., is married, has several children, but all married or marriageable. The rest of the Deanery are concerned only in single parishes, who are Mr Peter Pury, sen^r, Mr Isaac Lovel, Mr Richard Edwards, Mr John Dawling, Mr Henry York wth myself. Mr Pury is Rector of Knowlton, is Mr of Arts, had his education in Cambs. in Christ's Coll., is a widower, hath several children, but they are all married or marriageable. Mr Lovel is Vicar of Woodnesbarrow, had I suppose his education if not his birth in Holland; he was formerly preacher to the Dutch congregation in Sandwich, is married, hath 4 children. Mr Edwards is Rector of Barfreston, is Mr of Arts as I have heard and was bred at Cambs. in Emanuel Coll., is married, hath several children, all of w^h are of considerable years. Mr Dawling is Rector of Ringwoud and Mr of Arts, was bred in Cambs. in Bennet Coll., and hath 4 children. Mr York is Rector of Ripple, is Mr of Arts, was bred in Cambs., afterwards of Oxford, and I think of Magdalen Hall; he is lately married. All these reside on their cures and officiate in their own persons as well as the others, and as for myself my residence is at Great Mongeham when not at Rochester, and God knows I do my duty as well as I can, but I must confess that I cannot but think that I should

perform it better were not my prebend and cure at so great distance. If y^r Grace please to remedy this inconvenience I shall present all humble and hearty thanks wth several others, as there will be great reason we should, and I hope I shall behave myself so so that yo^r Grace shall have no reason to repent it. I should not have mentioned this but that my most honoured lord and great friend the late Lord Chancellor being now in a better world, I know not whether any one recommends me now to yo^r Grace's consideration and favour. I begge y^r Grace's pardon, blessing, and commands in all things if y^r Grace be pleased to command me at any time in anything, and order y^r commands to be directed to me att Great Mongeham in Kent near Deale, they will be received with all humility and thanks observed wth all care and dutifullness by,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most humble and dutiful servant,

HEN. ULLOCK.

Great Mongeham,
April 4th, 1683.

No. III. [Undated.]

James Wilson, Vicar of Leeds and Rural Dean of Sutton, to the Archbishop concerning Francis Green, Minister of East Farleigh.

Most Reverend ffather.

There is one Francis Green minister of East Farleigh, a village about seven miles distant from Leeds and in ye diocese of Rochester, who as he was never qualified for the office of a preist, having been a common trooper in ye late Rebellion, so his moralls have been no credit to ye church since he crept into holy orders. This man for severall years past under pretence to grant licences hath married all commers of what diocese soever; he hath lately married three couple out of Leeds and Bromfield, of whom he exacted twenty shillings apeice for licence and marriage. And about four years ago he married a man's son of Leeds who was an apprentice, and required of him a bond of 60^{li} to secure himself from trouble w^h he was apprehensive of from the ffather of that youth who is an apparitor to ye court of Canterbury. He boasts y^t his privilege is of very large extent, but if he hath received it from the court of Rochester it can but extend to y^t diocese. And how a person of his mean reputation s^d be intrusted with licences from the prerogative or court of faculties they who best know his interest cannot imagine.

I have been long doubtful whether it were consistent with the office with w^h it hath pleased y^r Grace to honour me wth in this Deanery to acquaint y^r Grace wth a matter of this nature, but ye repeated complaints of ye neighbring ministers in this Deanery who are prejudiced by this pretended privilege, and of some parents whose children have been married without their consent, prevailed with me to lay aside y^t consideration and to give y^r Grace ye trouble of this information.

There is great reason to complain of many of ye meaner sort of people besides dissenters from ye church who absent themselves from ye publick worship, and this is ye generall complaint of all parishes amongst us. But this must in a great measure be imputed to those who are in comission for ye peace who can be induced by no argument to putt ye Act for twelve pence a Sunday in execution ; for if a judgment may be made of ye success here from ye good effects y^t have followed ye executing y^t Act in other places, ye vigorous and steady execution thereof in these parts would effectually reduce great numbers from their neglect and nonconformity, ffor y^t is very certain y^t ye common sort of people are more afraid of ye penalty of twelve pence weekly than of ye sentence of excommunication w^h is now accounted by them but brutum fulmen without the writt de excommunicato capiendo follows it, w^h is so very rare in ye country y^t ye common people know it not. I have addressed myself to ye High Sheriff, who upon my request very zealously moved ye Justices in the division to execute ye Act, but by reason of their disaffection to ye business it fell with a bare attempt onely.

I presume not to proceed any further, but shall reserve what I have more to acquaint y^r Grace with till I have opportunity to wait upon y^r Grace.

I am, my Lord,

Y^r Grace's most humble and most obedient servant,

JA. WILSON.

Leeds, Septemb^r ye 11th.

No. IV. [1681.]

Dr. Giles Hinton's Account of the Vicarage of Faversham.

An estimate of the Vicarage of Faversham.—There is now a very tolerable house, and a garden well planted with good fruit trees situate near the church. The Vicarige tithes arise from land and fruit, viz., apples, pears, cherries, etc. The arable pays two pence for every acre per annum. There is a great deal not titheable, and since the way of assessment to ye king church and poor hath been by pound rent, the account of acres hath been neglected and the number lessened to the vicar's loss and prejudice.

The pasture land is to pay twelve pence for every acre, but of this sort of land there is not much in the parish. If any be digged up by gardiners the usuall composition is 6^s 8^d the acre.

The fruit is com'only sold on the trees to chapmen, but between the buyer and seller there is such an obstinate and perverse secrecy that 'tis very hard to be truly informed of the price. What is confessed by one or both pays after the rate of two shillings in the pound. farther the first proprietor of this fruit makes com'only a reserve for his owne use of some bushells, etc., of w^h noe tithe is allowed.

The whole tithes of land and fruit with a little piece of glebe and ye churchyard may be reckoned thirty pounds per annum.

The perquisites arising from christnings, churchings, marriages, and burials may reasonably be estimated att fifteen pounds p' annum.

The Easter offerings alsoe att fifteen pounds, for though every communicable person should pay one shilling, yet there being many poor who can pay nothing and servants that grudge to pay above sixpence, I cannot value them more.

Besides there is a weekly lecture on Saturday (bestowed by the mayor, jurats, etc.) now long since augmented to twenty-four pounds p' annum q'tarly paid by the chamber of the towne, alsoe thirteen shillings and fourpence for a sermon on Mid-Lent Sunday paid alsoe by the chamber. And forty shillings more for preaching yearly on Good Friday payd by the heirs of John Trouts, esq^{re}.

Gt. H., lately V. of flaversham.

No. V.

Dr. Giles Hinton's Account of the Rectory of Biddenden.

The state and condition of the Rectory of Biddenden in the diocese and patronage of the see of Canterbury humbly offered to his Grace the Archbishop of the same, 1683.

Imprimis. The parish of Biddenden in the Weld of Kent is situate neer the midway between Tenterden and Cranbrook of large extent, and containing about six thousand acres of land, but not soe populus now as formerly when the clothing trade there flourished.

The parishioners there (as elsewhere in the Weld of Kent) have among them all the vulgar sects about London and one more, for there are alsoe remaining some Brownists who boast that they have kept themselves unmingld with all other dissenters ever since the days of that notable seismatic from whom they have their denomination. But the generality of dissenters there are not soe much by their own choice as by the ignorance or error of their education, for they are as much to weke in the constitution and usages of the Church of England, as the disciples of Ephesus were of the Holy Ghost.

The land in this parish is all titheable except the woodland of w^h there is full a thousand acres in the parish, and is anciently privileged, as other places in the Weld, from paying tithes, on which account by a kind construction of some lawyers the Weld is of a greater comprehension than in former times.

The p'fits of the Rectory arise from corne tithes, privy tithes, and glebe land.

There is not a sixth part of the plaine land tilled for corne, the rest being used for hay and pasture. The wealth and occupation of the inhabitants consisting mostly in feeding cattle. The tithes whereof are by some pretended custom made inconsiderable (as will appear by the table of specialities herein inclosed), w^h I have carefully and exactly picked up among them, though otherwise I never saw nor heard of any record to justify them. If the tithe of hay might be brought to the reasonable composition of one shilling

per acre, the Living might be recovered to its former credit and revenue, w^h I feare will require more money, credit, and carriage than the present incumbent is master of unless he be well assisted. The glebe land consists almost of fourteen acres, and neer together beside the churchyard and site of the parsonage house.

There is another parcell of land now rented at eighteen pounds per annum called bread and cheese-land, given (as they say) for the entertaining of all the parishioners with bread and cheese in the church after evening service on Easter Day, w^h custom even to this time is with much disorder and indecency observed, and needs a regulation by His Grace's authority. This land adjoins to the glebe land, and was never so much as fenced from it till the late usurpation, when by a county committee (as appeareth by their parish books) it was put into the hands of the parish, where it remains to this day probably to the injury of the Rector and increase of the disorder on Easter Day, for there is an agreement registered between D^r Wild, Rector, and the parishioners that the said D^r Wild should enjoy the same for nine pounds per annum to be expended in the said entertainment, but D^r Wild going of quickly by sequestration and M^r Lee found very easy the wrong continues.

The parsonage house was once doubtless a large fair building, but noe Rector having dwelt in it for neer fourscore years I found it a most ruinous and dreadful spectacle, and my immediate predecessor without lands, goods, or chattells. The roof only was tolerably covered, but the floors, windows, doors, stairs, and walls within broke and spoyld beyond the possibility of reparation, and without doors, all fences lost, one great barne and malt house soe demolished and carried away that the foundations are hardly now discerned. Into this condition this house came the more speedily, for that it was tenemented out to vile and vicious people who made it soe ragged and unclean that I never saw any building stand more in need of a lustration. However I brought my family into it, and since I have had a title to it I have laid out neer two hundred pounds only to make it capable of a bed, and a table, a stoole, and a candlesticke. I was not borne in a pigstie though I may die in a worse place, soe thicke have been upon me my charges in removing, in first fruits (35^{li}) and necessary reparations.

My predecessors Rectors of this parish since the first year of Q. Elizabeth were: 1. M^r John Whetcombe, who enjoyed this living 50 years, dying in 1609. 2. D^r John Bancroft, who held it in com'endand with his Bishoprick of Oxon till he dyed, to which I believe he was indulged by Ap. Laud, for that he was to build a seat for ye Bishop of ye diocese, w^h he performed. 3. D^r George Wild, after Bp. of Londonderry, soone sequestrated, but restored in 1660, yet he then made resignation of it to M^r Lee to the good liking of Ap. Juxon. 4. M^r Moses Lee next. In the latter end of the year 1681 was I collated to it by ye bounty and undeserved favour of William by divine providence Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. It may be observed from the death of Whetcombe to M^r Lee being 51 years there was noe Rector resident, and from the

death of Whetcombe to 1682 there hath noe Rector lived in ye parsonage house.

G. HINTON.

The pretended Customs of Biddenden for small Tithes.

for every sheep and wool	00	00	01
for the tenth lamb		2	00
for a cow and calf			3
for a bullock of a year old			1
for a bullock of 2 years old			1 ob.
for a fat oxe (though worth 10 ^{li})			4
for a fat cow			3
for piggs, each			0 ob.
for 12 geese			4
for an acre of meadow bearing often 2 load of hay			1 ob.
for the tenth bushell of apples and pears			1 ob.
for a garden			2
for a gallon of honey			4

No. VI. [1685.]

Giles Hinton of Biddenden to the Archbishop.

May it please y^r Grace,

Since I am unable any longer to keepe soe much liberty to mysele as will serve me to perform the respective offices of my charge, and am now going to the com'on place of confinement in Maidstone, I most humbly and earnestly beseech yo^r Lordship my most honourable Diocesan and Patron to have me in yo^r compassionate and favourable consideration in respect of my two livings w^h of yo^r Grace's mere bounty I have for sometime enjoyed. They were conferred on me in a time when my difficulties were growing, but the necessary charges of faculties, first fruits, and reparation of dilapidated houses (amounting to above 300^{li}), came soe fast on me that I could not by my best thrift and parsimony in this scantling of time satisfie my creditors any further than I have out of my good but mistaken revenues. My Lord, I will take all possible care to provide in an honest consionable way for the service of my cures, though I am now useless myself, and by my behaviour in these troubles will studiously endeavour to take off some of that reproach that may be occasioned to ye neighbouring clergy by my misfortunes. This year (my Lord) I have presented four persons of the parish of Biddenden for not coming to the holy Communion after many earnest exhortations. They are not formidable otherwise than that they are old and in this point most pernicious examples. I cannot follow them now as I would, but hope that in y^r Grace's courts effectual course may be taken that they be noe longer hinderers of that reformation that is begun among the younger sort.

I am, may it please y^r Lordship,

Y^r Lordship's most obedient servant and bounden clerk,

May 2, 1685.

GILES HINTON.

No. VII. [1684.]

Will^m Wickins, Vicar of Eastling, and Rural Dean of Ospringe,
to the Archbishop.

May it please your Grace,

I have at last met with D^r Eve, who owns he hath received the copy of your Grace's Letter, but tells me he will take no notice of your order till he hath heard further from the Lord Keeper, for he saies he hath by letter acquainted his Lo^p that he hath repaired the Vicarage of Linsted, and that we are agreed.

My L^d, I am sorry his ill behaviour urges me to give your Grace an account:

1. Of his repairing Linsted Vicarage, and suing me.
2. Of w^t he intends to plead and offer to L^d Keeper.
3. That he is justly called the farming D^r.
4. How ill he came into his living.

1. My L^d, about the Vicarage repairs there is no end like to be of this man's trifling, for if we are agreed why s^d I complain, and if it be repaired why s^d he be loath to have the Vicarage viewd, or if he were not very confident how c^d he dare to set so slightly by your Grace's intimation of the L^d Keeper's appointments. But just so he affronted my L^d Bp. of Peterborough, who represented your Grace in ye late Visitation after the D^r had promised the B^p to forbear his lawsuit as I also did, and stand to the award of two ministers to whom he should refer the consideration of all differences between us, but the D^r falsified, and while I stopt proceeding in the law on my side he surprised me with the advantage he made of my believing him, and sues me in the Excheq^r ever since meerly upon that trepan. . . . And then also he would bear me down he had agree with me. 'Tis true, my L^d, he gave me once a penal bill of 10^{li} and under his hand to repair the house by such a day upon consideration I would permit him to come upon the premises so to do, but as he brag'd the note signified nothing in law, having but one witness; the D^r also brought workmen upon the place and layd out near five pound when fifty w^d have been too little; he hid the faults which should have been mended, and when it was reveiwd by able workmen they found two rooms pulled down to repair one. My L^d, the house is habitable because at present it is wind tite and water tite, but Vicarage houses are not to be made lesse nor fitted only for a tenant of a year, beside there is no outhouse for horse or cow, and the neighbours y^t know what hath been, it being long ago, are few and afraid of him and dare not speak out. . . .

2. As to the D^rs waiting upon my L^d Keeper the first of next term, he intends it, since our last hearing he is very brag, forbids any tithe should be paid me, for Linstead is his, my L^d Keeper himself says I am in by a false title and he hath a true one, and whereas my Lord Keeper questions him about pluralities that objection shall be taken off, for either his counsel (Holt Pollexfen) will make it appear that one of his livings is a sine cure, the other under value are very well consistent with his having Linsted, or (if that will not

passee) he will resign Midley or Buckland, one of his livings; not Buckland, because the next advowson being made over in trust for Mr Taylor of Tenham, Vicar (upon consideration of 50^{li} of dilapidations and 20^{li} augmentations, all due fr ye Dr to Mr Taylor remitted), who was glad to comply to be rid of a suit of law, the Dr suing by a writ of ejectment for his living, the Dr cannot possibly take any further advantage by resigning Buckland. But Midley, though it be worth twice as much as Buckland, he will resign because he can for slight consideration procure a clerk to take the title of it (whenever it shall become vacant), and he and his heirs the profits for ever, for he purchased it at 400^{li} od money in his son's name, and so hath the perpetual advowson, and tho' y^r Grace hath heretofore put by two of his clerks (w^h he presented to it) for insufficiency, so that he was feign to come to take institution to it in his own person, and consequently hath occasioned all this noise and stirr, yet he is now dealing with a clergyman that he believes your Grace will be better satisfied in.

3. The reason the Dr hath such an extraordinary love for the people of Linstead and the place, is not only because he hath lived in it so long, but having purchased much land about it he can the better manage those 5 or 6 farmes w^h he hath many years had in his own hands (enough the people say for any 3 farmers in this country to look after well tho' they sit up late and rise early), 2 in Linstead, 2 in Buckland, 2 or 3 in Tenham, besides an estate in houses in London and at Newinton by Sittingbourne, but the farms about him as he dwells at Linstead occasion him to employ severall persons, and so when they come to reckon with him he could when he was minister discount for tithes as he pleased insomuch that it is thought the living in that regard w^d be better to him by 8 or 10 pound than to any other man yearly.

Before I ever saw Dr Eve I knew him in discourse onely by the name of the ffarming Dr, w^h I think upon these considerations is not given him amisse.

4. Soon after I was inducted into Linstead the Dr told me that he sometimes thought it was a judgment of God upon him y^t he s^d see another enjoy his living because he himself came into it in the room of Mr fflothersby, a man sequestered for his loyalty.

He purchased the advowson of Buckland, and then woorried out the incumbent, Mr Dingley, as I have heard by suits of law till he had tired him, and then gave him a peice of money to resign.

Between Linstead and Buckland lieth Tenham, and being possesst of the other two and in his way, he first makes a friend to the patron for the reversion of it and then frightened the incumbent, and fooled his wife to persuade her husband to resigne, as by her certificate w^h I have herewith enclosed may plainly appear. In its vacancy he purchased Midley in his son's name.

By his Ma^{ties} mandate he was made Doctor, and his first wife, whose portion of 1500^{li} set him up, 'tis commonly said, to the great grief of her mother, he stole. In effect from nothing (for his father was a taylor at Wye in this county, where having the advantage of

a free school he brought up his son Henry to that learning w^h he hath) he is now Dr Eve, a man reputed of 5 or 600^l p^r annum.

'Twould make a treatise large enough to describe the several tricks of gain and surprising bargains that advanced him, but I am ashamed I have already detained your Grace thus long in so unclean a subject, my L^d I beg your pardon with y^r Grace's blessing for

Y^r Grace's most obliged, humble and faithful servant,

WM. WICKINS.

Eastling, April 4, 1684.

No. VIII. [1682.]

Henry Gerard, Vicar of Lydd, to Dr Thorpe of Cant^y.

Dr Thorpe,

I much wonder to hear of any complaynt concerning my vicaridge house at Lyd as if it were in so very bad a condition when I know it to be in a good repaire as most of that nature in ye diocese, there is only this to be said to the contrary that last winter the top of the chimney was blown down which is not yet repaired, but there are ready bricks and mortar for to do it, and the only thing that retards it being want of poles to scaffold, w^hall it proving so wett a summer that in those dirty ways wagons could not travel to ye woods to fetch them. I believe the mason has some by this time, and he promised me to make an end by this week. It is of necessity to be done on my own account, it being the chimney of the parlour and chamber which I reserve to myself and ly in when I am there and in winter I can as well be without a chamber as without a chimney. Abateing that I will appeal to any impartial man upon view to say whether 20^s will not repair every thing defective in that house ye barn and stable belonging to it. Alas, Sir, 'tis a mason is my tenant, and he knows how to paye himselfe for what he does, and will not let it be inconvenient. Besides I do not use to be a nigurd but instead of letting them fall down build new ones, as I have done at two places, for which I am allmost 500^l the poorer than I might have been. And I think I may speak with truth and confidence that I have expended more in repaying and building parsonage and vicaridge houses than any one man in this diocese (except a dignified person) since the King came into England. And as to that house now in question to give you an inventory of what has been done by me is now out of memory, but this I remember that I new braced the barn which was falling assunder, took off ye thatch toward the sea and tiled it because thatch is a yearly expence in that blustering country, new tiled ye stable, new plancked it, made a new door to ye mansion house which before was like a church door with a wickett, made a new staircase, made a new ffloor to ye entry, new ript as they call it all ye north end of the house, and to make an end when the chimney is finished and ye glass repayred. He is a very ignorant or very impudent that says 'tis out of repair. As to the chancell it shall be

done as soon as the plumber can fit his lead and pipes w^h he has promised by the 10th of August, a time well known there by the name of Romney ffayr, and when that is done I shall set the mason to work ffor whitening the inside, and the glasier to repayr the windows and do every thing that is necessary besides, and do not you doubt but that the next audit at Lambeth the Treasurer shall find by the bills that I have taken care that my Lord Chappell s^d be well repaired. This is all I can say to it at present. When I have been again there you shall hear from me. If anything concerning the matter or anything els occur to you if you send but a line or two by the post boy it shall be kindly and with thanks received by,

Sir,

Y^r very much obliged friend and servant,
HENRY GERARD.

Deal, Aug. 1^t, 1682.

No. IX. [1682.]

Alfred Mills, Curate of Ash next Sandwich, to the Archbishop's Chaplain, respecting the reconciliation to the Church of a Brownist and Anabaptist.

Reverend Sir,

There is one Valentine Dilnot living in my parish of Ash neer Sandwich who for a long time hath been a follower and a member of the sect of Brownists, whom after some considerable time and paines I have so far prevailed as to be willing to be reconciled to and received again into the Church; hee seemes to be so well satisfied with his reconciliation that he hath promised and intends to receive the holy Eucharist at Easter, and for farther security as to the truth and sincerity of it, I did oblige him on Sunday last in the said parish Church to take and subscribe the submission and declaration in such cases made and provided to be taken by the Act made in the 35 of Queen Eliz. and entitled an Act to restrain the Queenes Maties subjects in their due obedience, by which Act it is likewise provided that the minister of every parish where such submission and declaration of conformity is made, shall within ten dayes after certifie the same in writeing to the Bishop of the diocese. This, Sir, is the reason w^h makes me give you this trouble, that you would be pleased to acquaint his Grace with what hath past in the affayr. And furthermore to acquaint his Grace also that there is another Francis Holt of the same parish, aged full 28 years, who hath from his infancy been trained up in the way of Anabaptism, so that hitherto he hath continued without receiving the benefit of the holy Sacrament of Baptism, as it ought to be in the Christian Church. I have taken due care for his examination, so that he is now sufficiently instructed in the true principles of the Christian religion, and earnestly desires this so useful and necessary sacrament. I humbly desire to know of his Grace whether I shall proceed to the administration of it, or what his Grace will be pleased to determine therein, as also whether

after baptism he may be admitted to the holy communion at Easter, to which he would be most willingly admitted, and saith that it is his earnest desire; or whether he must be kept back till the next confirmation that most conveniently may be had after his baptism.

I have several others of the same sort in my parish, I wish I may have the like good success with them, in the meanwhile pray favour me with an answer to these particulars with the first convenience, and present my humble duty to his Grace.

Reverend Sir,

Y^or most humble servant,

AL. MILLS.

Sandwich, March 17, 1682.

(Endorsed in Sancroft's hand: "Mr Mills hath reduc'd a Brownist and an Anabaptist at Ash.")

No. X. [1682.]

Alfred Mills, Curate of Ash next Sandwich, to the Archbishop's Chaplain, giving an account of the escape from custody of one Samuel Pomfret, a Presbyterian.

Reverend Sir,

I here send you an account at last of the proceedings against Mr Samuel Pomfrett, who was excommunicated, which I doubt not you will peruse with delight when you shall have beheld the whole circumstances which attended them, after all his little false tricks used in Chancery by which he put us to considerable charge, we obtained the writ *de exco'cato capiendo*, but he concluding that the falsity of his suggestion which he had used there, together with the perjury of his friend who swore briskly for him, had done the business, began with his old trade of impudence and presumption not only to preach publicly but to walk about without fear, and so on Sunday last was made prisoner much about 8 o'clock at night. You may imagine he was not a little struck with such a sudden alarm, but, however, he offered no resistance to the officer, but entreated him not to take him immediately to Dover Castle (for that is the proper prison) till he spoke with some of his friends, to which he condescended carrying him to a little alehouse near his own dwelling. They had been there but a very little while when there was a very numerous convention of all the Godly brethren and holy sisters, and much concerned they were that so good a man should have thus fallen into the paw of the lyon, and after whole volleys of sighs and groans with wheels and turnings of their eyes more than usual, the richer and more substantial part of them began to proffer bail and their words and promises for a 1000 pounds for his appearance tomorrow to the officer. Many words they used, but finding all to no purpose they at last retired.

And now the night being pretty much spent, and the prisoner inclined to rest, he earnestly besought the officer to suffer him to go to bed; this he was loath to do but being prest with all the pro-

testations imaginable of his honesty and sincerity, bidding him conclude that all his preaching hitherto was false and praying vain if he did so much as attempt to escape, he at last was prevailed with, won with these good and fair words he permitted him to go to bed in a room above and stayed below at the foot of the same stairs in another room, through which he must of necessity passe. So to bed he went, there lay some houres, where he received frequent visits from the officer, but at last finding an opportunity, and not being so fond of his religion as to venture to suffer too much for it, especially when he found it was likely to be no longer useful for him, he contrived his escape, out at a little window, for having left all his cloathes scattered up and down the room he tyed his shirt to a barr of the window, and to that a little peece of rope, and thus away he went, naked as he was born. It is true indeed we somewhere read that men went out to preach the Gospel without script or purses or money, but I think nowhere that they went out without shirts before; and thus he not only altered his condition from a captive to a freeman, but his religion from a Presbyterian to an Adamite, and left his shirt behind him for a whole day brandishing at the window as a trophy of his victory or rather escape. And now I will have you to imagine how kindly he was received by the holy sisterhood when they found him in such an innocent dresse. Thus marching off and the officer quickly discovering the cheat makes immediate application to the right worshipful the Mayor for his warrant to search to recover his prisoner, but he being too much a friend to such kind of cattle refused his warrant, expressing his refusal in very coarse words; several hours after another person having occasion to speak to the Mayor seemed to prevail so far with him then as to grant a warrant, and so sending for the officer, he orders him to go and fetch his town clerk, and it should be done; accordingly he went, brought the towne clerk's man along with him, but before their return the Mayor had so secured his door that nothing under a troop of horse could gett in, nor no noyse below that of a cannon could make him hear, and thus he continued for many hours till he was sure the other was gone,

My most humble duty to his Grace, and I am,

Sir, yo^r most humble servant,

AL. MILLS.

Sandwich, July 14, 1682.

Sept^r 12th 1682.

No. XI. [1682.]

George Jones, Vicar of Sittingbourne, to S^r Ric^d Lloyd, Doctor of Lawes, at his house in Doctors' Com'ons.

Honored Sir,

I went according to yo^r direction to wait upon his Grace and told him that Sittingbourne was my first liveing, then upon my petition to his predecessor for an augmentac'on he was pleased to bestow Blackmanstone upon me, then Burmarsh fell

(being in his Ma^{ties} gift). I obtained that, and got a dispensation to hold Sittingbourne and Burmarsh, both w^h (my curate tenths and taxes paid) are worth very little hardly any more than 60^{li} p^r ann., now my Lord tells me that upon my taking of Blackmanston (w^h he will not allow to be a sine curâ, though no sign of a church or any thing like it these hundreds of years) he supposeth Sittingbourne to be lapsed, and that he would advise with lawyers about it, and give me his result when he thinks meet; as for Bapchild he is satisfied I am but curate. I have built a new house at Sittingbourne, a newe house at Burmarsh (w^h stood upon 3 shells (?) at my coming to it) before I ever received one penny tythes, and that house cost me beside the materials 55^{li}. I am person here 21 yeares this Mich'mas comeing, w^out the least article ever objected agst me (as may appear in his Grace's Court), and am sure I could have the hands of every individuall person of each parish in my behalf, if his Grace would bestow a livinge of 120^{li} p^r an'um upon me I should be very much obliged to him and quitt all those 4 w^h make so great a noise and clamor; Milton a great towne wthin half a mile of me being worth 120^{li} p^r an'um; he hath the curacy of Bobbing worth 25^{li} more. M^r Symonds the Rector of Murston worth 120^{li} p^r an'um hath the curacy of Rodmersham worth 25^{li} more. I hope his Grace then will not deprive me of the curacy of Bapchild w^h I have supplied this 21 years, and hardly worth 15^{li} p^r an'um; this I thought to signify unto yo^r wor^p being the whole truth, submitting myself wholly to his Grace's mercy, and desireing yo^r and my Lord of Peterborough's intercession wth a line p^r poast when you see convenient, my humble service to yo^r self and good Lady wth hearty thanks for all favors, I humbly take leave,

And remaine, S^r,

Y^r most obliged and devoted serv^t,

GEO. JONES.

I got to Gravesend on Munday night, and at my return found a great number of sicke, I pray God be merciful to us.

(Endorsed in Sancroft's handwriting: "M^r Jones' pluralities.")

No. XII. [Undated.]

William Barney, Vicar of St Margaret's at Cliff, to Archbishop Sancroft.

May it please yo^r Grace,

The Reverend Deane and Prebends of Canterbury in the yeare 1662 presenting me to the cure of Westcliff, it pleased his Grace the Lord Archbishop Juxon to collate me to St Margaret's att Cliffe his Grace's (now yo^r Grace's) cure, being both of them about half a mile distant one from the other, having been for threescore years past, and if I am not misinformed they have been supplied time out of mind by one and the same minister, being about 60^{li}. In further process of time another small cure called Buckland, near Dover, falling void it pleased his Grace Archbishop Sheldon (by the relac'on some persons gave of my demeanour in

those times of rebellion and usurpation and of my reading the services of the Church and the greatness of my family w^h God was pleased to afford to me) to conferre the small cure of Buckland, amounting to 20^{li} p' ann., which was but 3 miles distant from me, being pleased then to say this is but a small addition to thee for I understand you have a large family, and to gett a dispensation will undoe thee, but he was then pleased to tell me, that while he lived I should never be troubled about it. And I hope yo^r Grace that now is taking this into yo^r pious and Christian consideration (the competence being but 80^{li} in all, w^h is but eight pounds p' ann. amongst us all apiece) will be pleased to continue the same benigntie and favour without suffering any trouble or charge to fall upon him who attestes the truth of this, subscribing himself in all humilitie,

Yo^r Grace's and the Church's obedient son,

WM. BARNEY.

The Archbishop, however, was not quite satisfied with Mr Barney's figures, for at the foot of the page he adds up the values of the several livings with the following result:

III. Buckland Vic.	.	{ 20 ^{li} old endowment.
		{ 12 ^{li} augmentac'on.
II. Mary at Cliff Vic.	.	{ 40 ^{li} old endowment.
		{ 26 ^{li} augment.
I. Westeliff Vic.	.	9 ^{li} old stipend.
or		
Cur.	.	24 ^{li} augmentac'on.
		<hr/>
		131
		<hr/>

No. XIII. [1679.]

Thomas Paramore, Vicar of Guston, to Dr Robert Thompson, Secretary to the Archbishop, giving an account of the parishes of Guston and West Langdon.

. As for Guston parish the Church of it I am told was of late years rebuilt and is very convenient for pulpit, reading desk, and pews, though there is a place or two where the weather may beat in, but the parishioners being all (within 2 or 3 families) dissenters from our Church, as Anabaptists chiefly and some Quakers, there is noe pulpit cushion, noe pulpit cloth, noe surplice, noe common prayer book, the Bible out of the cover and imperfect, and I think noe table, neither have they any churchwarden or a clerk, so that my predecessor was, and I am, forced to carry our Public Liturgy in my pocket, and to give my own clerk his dinner to accompany me in the afternoon where though there be but 3 or 4 families that frequent the Church there is a good country congregation because my own parish doe unanimously follow me thither. The number of families in this parish is 16, 2 of w^h are large farms,

viz. the Mannor and the Fryth, besides w^h there are 4 or 5 small farms, the other houses being inhabited by day labourers and 2 or 3 mechanics.

What is due from the curate of this parish is from M^r Master 10^{li}, it being an augmentation, besides which there is 10^s paid for a spot of ground whence a house formerly stood and the rest is in priory tithes. The Mannor I am told pays 1^{li}, the Fryth nothing, and the lesser farms pay, one 12^s, another 8^s, another 6^s, another 3^s, soe that I really think that when M^r Master valued the privy tithes at 3 or 4^{li} per annum he did overvalue them, for having been told these be the sums payable f^r the farms I am apt to think that very little or nothing comes from the tenements, and that very unwillingly too considering of what persuasion the people are.

As for West Langdon the other parish, the Church of it is fallen down and noe use can be made of it, but the walls of it are standing both east and west, north and south, and may be serviceable again uppon occasion, the roof is quite down and the pews and whatever was within are broken and either laying under the rubbish or carried away. The number of familes in this parish are 18, viz. the great farm of the Abbey and 2 or 3 little farms. . . . The people are conformable to our constitution, and I have as many of that parish w^h come to my Church as I have of my own. What belongs to the curate from this parish is 6^{li} from the Abbey by way of composition, it being altogether free f^r tithes, 1^{li} 2^s for a large field belonging unto it but in the occupation of another, and 2^{li} for between 2 and 3 acres of ground and ye churchyard, besides w^h there are some small fields near the houses of 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 acres a peice, amounting in all to about 36 acres or at the most 40 acres w^h are titheable, and may be worth if there be no summer land and corne bear a good price 7^{li}, for our land near Dover is not so good as in other parts of Kent, add to this somewhat payable in privy tithes, but because I am told that the chiefest of these farm paid but 2^s 6^d and another 1^s 6^d, if I value the whole at 8^s or 10^s I am ready to think 'tis the most they will amount to.

Sandwich, July 16th, 79.

No. XIV. [Undated.]

Sir Thomas Culpeper of Hollingbourne to the Archbishop.

My Lord,

In order to a clear understanding with your Grace for the future I severall times whilst I was in London waited on you (had your Grace's leisure befriended me), with a kind but withall serious complaint that one who hath been (both himself and his famely) to the King so signally loyall, so entirely meriting of the Church, should receive such disfavours as I of late have done from your Grace. If you aske wherein, my Lord, I answer in your bestowing Hollingbourne Vicarage without my so much as notice.

Whereas my Lord Archbishop Sheldon being earnestly solicited for

the present disposall of a good living in my audience declared hee would at no hand conferre it without consulting a gentleman inhabitant of the parish, and employed me as from him to acquaint the party concerned, who yet had not I am sure my pretences to favour nor, I take it, principles. In your coldness to poore Mr Rondeau* now wanting imploring deserving your warmth and zeale. In your ordering on bare hearsay Mr Gregory to demand of mee, in your Grace's name 20^l† a yeare w^h I detayned f^r the Church of Hollingbourne, with arrears from its last payment as hee more than once told my wife. I have hitherto my Lord even beyond my fortune and shall ever straine to approve myselfe as the sonne of worthy parents, and should were I able both prevent and exceed whatever your Grace c^d with any clear colour either devise or wish. But the law of friendship requires that good offices be in some sort mutuall, not still expected to come all from one side. Your Grace's goodness will I doubt not absolve this true English freedom of,

My Lord,

Your most humble and obedient servant,
THO. CULPEPER.

No. XV. [1686.]

George Oxenden (Dean of Arches and Vicar-General) to the Archbishop, giving him an account of the fall of the steeple at Wye.

May it please y^r Grace,

.... I suppose y^r Grace may have heard the sad news that the steeple of ye Church of Wye fell downe ab^t ten daies ago and has beat great part of the Church downe, it standing in the middle of ye Church. The minister being at prayers with the con-

* Mons. Rondeau, a French Protestant refugee from the diocese of Chartres, received episcopal orders in England and became minister to the colony of the Marquis of Venours at Boughton Malherbe. On the breaking up of that colony, on the invitation of Sir Tho. Culpeper he removed with many of his flock to Hollingbourne. Here he at first appears to have prospered, but upon exception being taken to his officiating without a surplice, he at once conformed in this matter, but his compliancy caused many of his flock to desert him; some even going every Saturday to Canterbury "to shun a surplice at Hollingbourne," and returning on Monday. His cause was espoused by Sir Tho. Culpeper, who wrote an account of his case to Archbishop Sancroft, pointing out—

1. That he alone (of French Protestant ministers) had entirely submitted to the Rubric in wearing the surplice.
2. That he had a wife and four children.
3. That his stipend was only 12s. a week in a very dear country.
4. That he had always read the service himself, thereby saving the charge of a reader generally allowed to others.

† With regard to the £20 detained from the Vicarage of Hollingbourne, Sir Tho. Culpeper said that the money was left by his mother, who died in 1638, but that the outbreak of the Civil War had prevented his father from paying this and other legacies at the time. In 1661 his father died, aged 81, leaving his real estate "mortgaged to the Brimme," and "above 6000^l personal debts, an executorship so desperate as if it had not been his I would certainly have preferred the gallows before it."

gregac'on perceived the bell ropes to shake, there being no winde then, and immediately warned the congregation of the imminent danger, and they all ran out, and immediately the steeple fell down. I shall see it in my way to Ashford, and will give your Grace a more particular acc^t of that and all matters that occur when I shall have the happiness to see your Grace. In the meantime,

I remain,

Yo'r Grace's most dutyfull and obliged humble servant,

GEORGE OXENDEN.

Deane (near Cant^r),

April 6th (86).