Sixtus V. was thrown on the printers, and excused by hasty oversight, he says in his autobiography that he was "returning good for evil." Sixtus had damaged his reputation by putting his controversies on the "Index;" but he had saved the Pope's reputation by covering his blunders.

These specimens will suffice to show our readers the importance and interest of this remarkable volume. Other subjects treated at length in it are: Bellarmine's pseudonymous Tract against Henry IV., his Mission to France, his Memorandum on Abuses, the Pensions of Cardinals, the Conclaves of 1605, Nepotism, Paul V.'s Conflict with Venice, the Number of General Councils, the Execution of Heretics in Rome, Canonization, etc. The learned editors have added greatly to the materials for a critical biography of Bellarmine; and such a biography is a real want in modern ecclesiastical history. Perhaps the present volume is only a prelude to such a work, to be carried out by the editors themselves. Students of history can wish for nothing better.

ALFRED PLUMMER.

DURHAM, *April*, 1887.

ART. V.—THE TITHE RENT-CHARGE BILL.

THE promised Bill for facilitating the recovery and redemption of tithe rent-charge has been introduced into the House of Lords, and may be described as a modest and sensible measure. Its main features are probably already familiar to the readers of this magazine, and may be summed up in a few sentences. The landowner is required to pay the charge, and may add it to the rent where land has been let on lease under the covenant that the tenant is to pay the tithe. If the owner pays the full amount within three months of the time it becomes due, he is to be allowed a discount of 5 per cent. Distraint is abolished, and the rent-charge can be recovered from the owner as a simple debt. When the rack-rent for any year, including the rent of any dwelling-houses standing on the land subject to tithe, is less than the rent-charge, only the amount of actual profit can be collected for that year.

Redemption can be effected by the payment of twenty times the amount of rent-charge fixed by confirmed apportionment, or par value as it is commonly called. The money arising from redemption is to be invested in the names of the bishop, patron and incumbent in certain permitted securities, one of which is

to be chosen by the latter, and among these are Indian and Colonial bonds which pay from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

The above being in brief outline the main features of the Bill, it will be seen that it requires the tithe-owner to submit to a considerable diminution of income for the sake of improved security, prompt payment, and lessened friction between the incumbent and his parishioners. As tithe is now 13 per cent. below par, and is likely to fall still lower, the deduction of 5 per cent. is no light matter, and it will be clear loss in those cases where the rent-charge is now collected without difficulty. Incumbents who have had no anti-tithe agitation to contend with must, however, remember how many of their brethren have suffered from this cause, and they ought to be prepared to suffer some loss, if that loss brings with it a more than compensating gain to others. We are all members of one body, and must consider not only our own individual loss or gain, but the welfare of the Church as a whole, and that the Church would gain by the removal of a fruitful source of contention can hardly be denied.

The provision for the temporary reduction of the rent-charge in the case of land which in these days of depressed prices of agricultural produce is in danger of going out of cultivation altogether, is decidedly satisfactory, and will probably meet with general acceptance.

At first sight twenty years' purchase may seem a ruinously low value to place upon what has formerly been regarded as real property of the most stable kind; but it may be pointed out that the calculation for redemption is made upon the basis of the par value, and not on the present or prospective value of the rent-charge as calculated from the septennial averages; and proof is afforded that the terms offered are not unduly favourable to the tithe-payer by the fact that experienced authorities are of opinion that in but few instances will they tempt the owner to redeem. Redemption is, however, admitted to be the only satisfactory solution of the question, and it is to be hoped that some system may be devised by which loans can be advanced to the landowners by the Government, so as to allow of universal and compulsory redemption. In the meantime it is worthy of consideration whether it would not be well to allow the incumbent to sell his tithe rent-charge when the landowner is unwilling to redeem, under certain restrictions as to price like those enforced by Lord Cross's Bill for the Sale of Glebe. It is at present difficult to find investments which combine first-class security with more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest; and where rent-charge is well secured by an ample margin of rent, there seems no reason why purchasers should be wanting at twenty-five years' purchase of the annual value.

Such purchasers would probably much prefer collecting their dues from the owner instead of from the occupier, and it might easily happen that the one year's purchase sacrificed by the 5 per cent. discount might result in a more than compensating advantage in the terms of sale arranged.

In considering the merits of the Bill under consideration, and in deciding the important practical question as to whether it should be supported or opposed by the clergy, it would be well for the latter carefully to read the speech in which it was introduced by the Premier. The provisions of the Bill may be open to criticism; but the firm language of Lord Salisbury in first enumerating and then rejecting the current fallacies regarding tithe that prevail so widely, certainly deserves the grateful acknowledgment of those whose interests he so ably defended. Two points are especially worth notice: his refusal to unsettle the compromise regarding the commutation value arrived at in 1837, or to alter the present system of septennial averages. In answer to a demand for a re-valuation, he clearly showed that as the tithe was the tenth part of the produce, without regard to the cost of production, the landowner would in almost all cases lose if its value were re-assessed; he mentioned, only to dismiss the contention, that the rent-charge ought to bear some fixed ratio to the rent; and he clearly laid down the rule that the tithe must be paid in full as long as it did not exceed the nett profit of the land, whether any rent were left or not.

The practice of taking a septennial average to determine the value of the rent-charge each year is a matter rather of convenience than of principle, for the total amount in a series of years is the same in either case. But there is an obvious advantage to the clergy in avoiding sudden fluctuations of income such as would result from assessing the value year by year, and when the rent-charge is paid by the landlord, whose income is far less dependent upon good and bad seasons than that of the farmer, it is probable that we shall hear no more of the demand for a shorter average. The fact that in the disastrous year 1879 tithe was as high as £111 15s., though a strong argument for the payment of the charge by the owner, does not prove that a one year's average would be an improvement, for the value calculated on the prices of 1878 would have been £106 13s., and a reduction of £5 2s. per cent. would have made but small difference when the loss was reckoned rather in hundreds than in tens of pounds. It may be remarked in passing, that, when the occupier pays the tithe, the old-fashioned method of taking the tenth shock in kind is, after all, the only really satisfactory method of adjusting the tithe to

the variations of prices and seasons. The Commutation Act allowed for variations in price, but assumed an uniform production; and this is the best evidence that the only satisfactory arrangement is for the landlord to exonerate his tenant from liability to pay the rent-charge, and to allow for this exemption in adjusting the rent.

By way of summing up the foregoing remarks, the following questions may be asked of those whose incomes are affected by the Bill. Is the present position of tithe-owners satisfactory? If not, is it likely to be improved without legislation? If not, from what party or Government is there the most remote probability of tithe-owners receiving more favourable treatment than from the present Cabinet?

A. M. DEANE.

ART. VI.—A DAY WITH THE KENT ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

WHY is it that we have all been reading with such deep interest the account of the recent unrolling of the mummies of Rameses II. and his father, by Professor Maspero, at Cairo? And why have we looked with still deeper interest upon the portraits of these mummied Pharaohs which the illustrated papers have given us? Simply because it is impossible to gaze upon the very form and features of men who acted a great part in the history of the human family thirty-three centuries ago without the most profound interest. We see in each not merely the copy of a portrait, however faithful, but the *vera effigies* of the very man himself and the expression of his countenance, his very lineaments and the character reflected in them.

And it is a modified form of the same mental tendency which invests the venerable architectural remains of former ages, whether ecclesiastical or domestic, with so much interest. The ancient castles and country houses, the cathedrals and churches, which fill the land, are simply the expression in stone of the thoughts which once filled the busy brains of men who passed across the stage in years gone by, and have long since disappeared to join the great army of the dead with Rameses and all the Pharaohs. To preserve these venerable monuments by creating an intelligent interest in them is the object of the various archæological societies which exist in many of the counties of England. The practical mode in