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PREACHERS AND TEACHERS OF THE WEST.

LXIV.

PREB. HINGESTON-RANDOLPH.

The Rector of Ringmore, South Devon, is a well-known figure in the clerical life of the West—a man of active habits and manifold energies; an earnest parish priest and a ripe scholar; a staunch Churchman, yet a man of wide sympathies; a skilful and dangerous antagonist, a warm and sincere friend.

The Rev. Prebendary F. C. Hingeston-Randolph is a native of Truro, where he was born in 1833, while his father, Mr. Francis Hingeston, held the then important post of Controller of Customs. Mr. Hingeston the elder was himself born at St. Ives, so that the Prebendary is of thorough Cornish descent. He was a man of no little culture and poetic ability, and one of the earliest literary works of the son was the editing and publishing a volume of the father's poems. The old-fashioned way of spelling the family name—Hingeston instead of Hington—was restored by the Prebendary directly he attained his majority; and on his marriage with the only child and heiress of the Rev. Herbert Randolph, he took the family name of his wife in addition to his own. Hence it is that the Francis Charles Hingeston of his early days has become the Francis Charles Hingeston-Randolph of the present time. Touching the Hingeston, we may add that his liking for antique orthography is seen also in his use of the final k in such words as publick and domestick and Bishoprick.

Mr. Hingeston-Randolph distinguished himself at Exeter College, Oxford, where he was Elliot Exhibitioner from the Truro Grammar School, by taking his degree in double honours; but long before then he had given proof of his quality, and of his fondness for archaeological studies for which he has been so widely known, by publishing a series of illustrations of ancient Cornish crosses, fonts, and the like—a very clear and remarkable book for a youth of seventeen, but only the precursor of a long line of papers in the "Ecclesi-

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ologist," "Building News," and other journals and transactions, dealing with various phases of architectural history and style and progress, not only in connection with Cornwall, but generally. He is, however, very much more than an architectural critic, and the churches that have been designed and restored by him as architect show that he would have had a successful career had he chosen to adopt architecture as his profession in-

... few more remote and at the same time more picturesque parishes in South Devon than that of Ringmore, which lies next to Bigbury on the shore of Bigbury Bay. It takes name in all probability from the Celtic title of the great promontorial district of the Bolt, of which it forms part—Rhyu Mawr, the "great headland," but is neither great nor important in the present day. For it is one of our decaying parishes, with a dwindling population, fallen at the last census to 219—not at all the spot calculated to absorb all the energies of such an active worker as the present rector, for more than a quarter of a century. Nor indeed has it done so. The claims of his parish first discharged, for no clergyman has been more zealous in making the Church of England within his limits the church of the whole community, Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph has thrown himself most actively into all manner of Church and specially diocesan work. To him the prebendal office has been no mere title or sinecure. A skilled canonist and a recognised authority on abstruse points of ecclesiastical law, he has ever striven to make the chapter to which he belongs a living body, and has found himself as a result involved in more than one sharp controversy, the issue of which has always left him equally feared and respected. For he is no man of compromises. He sees a thing singly and clearly or not at all. He is a priest of the Church of England, and will bide no jot of the responsibilities which in his view attach to that office. The duties cast upon him he will do, come what may. But there has never been a time when he has failed to distinguish between opinions which to him are obnoxious and those who hold them; and hence it comes that not a few of those who differ from him most widely are among his sincerest personal friends. While his kindness and courtesy to those who are engaged in kindred pursuits to those most dear to him—of which more anon—and who seek his aid and counsel, are ever ready and never failing.

To judge of Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph's parish work, we must go to Ringmore itself. He is a zealous worker among his flock, a ready sympathiser, a devout reader of the services, and a clear and scholarly preacher. There is no mistaking his meaning, whether he is standing in the pulpit of his little church at Ringmore or doing prebendal duty in the Cathedral. He thinks clearly, writes clearly, and speaks clearly and cogently; and his fine intellectual presence lends weight to his words. He feels a lively interest, too, in the personal affairs and prosperity of his people. This was well seen some years since in the course of a discussion on the tithes question. As Rector of Ringmore the bulk of his clerical income comes from the great tithes of the parish, and he has suffered from falling income quite as severely—to say the least—as most of his fellows. But in addition to the tithes there are 100 acres of glebe, a very serious matter for a clergyman to have to handle in times like these. Yet the Prebendary stoutly and staunchly declared that in his view it was only right the clergy should cast in their lot thoroughly with the laity, and that, with this object, he preferred endowment should be as largely in land as possible. Then what affected the one affected the other, not as a matter of ratio, but precisely in the same way. We see the same hearty good feeling in regard to the labourer, in the manner in which he worked with and aided his parish friendly society, as to which he has published some experiences.

It is, however, by his contributions to literature that Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph will be best known to the general public; and by which his name will mostly live—for live it will with all who value hard, conscientious, skilled drudgery. What that phrase means we will explain as we proceed. His manifold activities in matters antiquarian and archaeological have been already hinted. But they are only the fringe of his labours. While he held his earlier curacies he was working hard in the elucidation of some of the least attractive and toughest national records; and we owe to him editions and translations of Capgrave's "Chronicle," the same writer's "Book of the Illustrious Henries," and a series of royal and historical letters during the reign of Henry IV.

12/10/93. Extract for reprint of Rev. Rookby Howe

# Ringmore Rector's Jubilee.

## INTERESTING PRESENTATION.

Rev. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph has been rector of Ringmore for fifty years. He was appointed on June 15th, 1860, and Thursday, the 16th, was observed as a general holiday in the village. At a celebration of the Holy Communion the Rector was the celebrant, assisted by his son, Rev. Herbert C. Hingeston-Randolph. The village band headed a procession, which proceeded to the rectory lawn. Here many presentations were made.

On behalf of the Church, Mr. K. E. Peck handed the rector an address, containing the names of nearly ninety subscribers, together with three frontals, a small rod frontal for the Lady Chapel, and a white dosset. A brass plate is to be erected in commemoration of the jubilee.—Miss Potter, for the Sunday-school, presented the rector with an oak cross for the altar of the Lady Chapel.—Rev. Herbert C. Hingeston-Randolph, on behalf of the family, gave his father an oak cross for the use of the church.—The Rector, in acknowledging the gifts, said he had received handsome brass flower vases from Miss Carrie Ash and Miss Giles.—After tea a service was held in the church, the preacher being Rev. T. F. Boulbee, vicar of South-tawton, formerly rural dean of Woodleigh. The organist was Rev. C. H. Hingeston-Randolph.

The Rector feelingly acknowledged the presentations. He could not tell them, he said, how gratified and how greatly touched he was by all their kindness. They had won his affections and they had always kept them. If he might say so without any charge of boasting being brought against him, he had always done the best he could for the people of the parish. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Peck knew, perhaps better than anyone else, how eager he had always been during the time he was there to help and benefit them in many ways—how eager he had always been to promote the interests of the people of the parish. He need not say that the illuminated address would be of the greatest value to him. He would keep it where he could often see it, and he would treasure it as it deserved to be treasured. It came to him from the hands of an old friend whose departure from the work in that place had been a personal grief to him. But they saw Mr. Peck manifested his goodwill towards them by coming all the way from Plymouth to meet them and to take a conspicuous part in what he could not help calling a very interesting occasion. (Hear, hear.) The illuminated address contained the names of those who had gladly and cheerfully contributed to the presents which had been made—he had been going to say to him—and in one sense that would be true. But the presents had really been made to the Church of God, whose minister he was in that village, and had so long been. He could not himself accept, however well meant, any mere personal gift. This was not a mere personal gift, and yet in a sense it was, for he was still the parson of the parish—still the parson of the parish on behalf of God's Church. Gifts of that sort was personal in that sense, and to a very real degree. He thanked them all, and said he owed Mr. Peck a deep debt of gratitude. The Rector also announced that he had, received for the use of the church two very handsome brass flower vases from Miss Carrie Ash and Miss Giles.

At the conclusion of the proceedings the Rector said a large part of the work of his life had been the restoration and care of their parish church, which he was sure they might be proud with a holy pride to show to anyone. In a spirit of all humility, and yet in a very real sense, might he be permitted to say: "Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and blot not out my good deeds which I have done for the house of my God and for the offices thereof. Remember me, O my God, for good."

Hearty cheers were raised for "Our dear old rector," "His family," and also for Mr. Peck and Mr. Savery, the churchwarden, and Mrs. Savery, who had personally interested themselves in the movement that led to the presentation of the gifts.

A substantial tea was provided for parishioners in

picture

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