XXVIII.—*On an unexplained Figure in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. In a Letter from JOHN THOMAS MICKLETHWAITE, Esq., F.S.A., to Henry Salusbury Milman, Esq., Director.*

Read January 18, 1883.

January 17, 1883.

DEAR MR. DIRECTOR,

When some time ago I was describing the figures in Henry the Seventh's Chapel to the Society, there was one which I was unable to explain, but which had so many distinguishing marks that I suggested that it must be the image of All Hallows which the people of South Cave, in Yorkshire, wanted in 1495. The suggestion was not then made seriously, and was not printed with the description.^a I now, however, venture to repeat it, with a few remarks intended to show that this may after all be the true explanation of the figure.

The passage connecting the parish of South Cave with the image of All Hallows is in the Minutes of an Archdeacon's Visitation, printed in the Surtees Society's *York Fabric Rolls*, p. 261. The parishioners present that "there wantts the ymage of All Halowes, our hed halow, to whom it longes we know not, praying your lordship to set the seid image to some of us, owder to the person or the vicar, or the pariche." If this had come a generation later we might have taken it for a "shrewd privy nip" of some new gospeller. But in 1495 the presentation must have been made in good faith, and we are forced to believe either that the men of South Cave were remarkably ignorant, or that there did then exist images called of All Hallows. I have hitherto held the former opinion, but find now that I owe these good folk an apology, for our Fellow, the Rev. J. T. Fowler, has called my attention to a passage in Mr. Peacock's *Church Furniture*, p. 45, which leaves no doubt at all that the latter is true. In answer to inquiries about "monuments of superstition" in Elizabeth's time, the churchwardens of Belton, in the Isle of Axholme, mention "an Idoll of All Halowes, cut in pices by Mr. Willm ffearnes a year past." And I have lately

^a *Archæologia*, vol. XLVII. p. 361.

found a third example, rather earlier than that from South Cave, in the will of William Holme, vicar of Mattersey, Notts, printed in the Surtees Society's *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. ii. p. 279. This William, in 1466, makes a bequest *ad picturam ymaginis Omnium Sanctorum ex parte sinistra summi altaris situatae*.

These three passages prove beyond doubt that a figure which in some conventional way stood as a representative of All Hallows did formerly exist, and that which relates to South Cave refers to what was almost certainly the cause of its invention. There was a strict rule that the image of the patron saint or "head hallow" of each church should be placed in the chancel, and in the many churches dedicated to All Saints there would be a question how the rule should be obeyed. It is very likely that there were several ways of doing it, but one of them was to put up an actual image, and call it that of All Hallows.

Now let us see what reason there may be for believing that we have this image in the very curious figure which occurs twice at Westminster. The image of All Hallows must of necessity have been a symbolical figure, and, as the Hallows whom it was intended to honour have been drawn from all sorts and conditions of men, there is nothing more likely than that there should be an attempt to combine in the figure itself the characteristics of as many of them as possible.

Now, our images here represent a bearded man in armour;^a over the armour are the Mass vestments, and over them again the monastic hood and scapular; with the right hand he holds the end of a stole, the other end of which is tied round the neck of a dragon at his feet, and in the larger example the left hand holds a closed book,—a truly remarkable combination, which, I think, may possibly be explained thus: The armour and the scapular, besides representing the military class and the monks, set forth in a wider sense the active and the contemplative life; the Mass vestments seem to represent the clergy of all orders; the book, doctors, and men of learning generally; and the beard is, I believe, put to include the agricultural class. Each state of life has added its contingent to the great army of the saints, every one of whom has overcome sin—the dragon—by the spiritual power here indicated by the stole.

I put forward this interpretation with some diffidence, but I think there is

^a I have formerly described the figure as having gauntlets on the hands only, but a close examination of a cast of the smaller image leaves no doubt that it was intended to represent the whole body in armour. See the drawing, *Archaeologia*, vol. XLVII. plate xii.

not anything in it which is over-fanciful, or out of keeping with the ideas of the time when the images of All Hallows were set up. And I will only add that this attribution of the Westminster figures receives some little confirmation from the position of the smaller one, which occupies the last place of all in the series of the saints, just as the feast of All Saints comes as a sort of &c. at the end of the Church's calendar.

I am, dear Mr. Director,

Yours very faithfully,

J. T. MICKLETHWAITE.