

exceedingly large, both in the absolute and in the relative sense of the word. There it stands, however, and its very size may lead to interesting reflexions, which, however, it would be beside the purpose to develop on this occasion.

PAUL VINOGRADOFF.

### *The Exchequer at Westminster.*

IN the two editions of the *Dialogus de Scaccario* published in the eighteenth century the following passage occurs:—

In termino eodem pro incausto totius anni ad utrumque scaccarium duo solidi debentur, quos sibi de antiquo iure vindicat sacrista maioris ecclesie Westmonasterii.<sup>1</sup>

In the recent edition of the same treatise by Messrs. Hughes, Crump, and Johnson,<sup>2</sup> the word *Wintonie* has been substituted for *Westmonasterii*. This is an emendation which ought not to be accepted without careful consideration. The new edition is based on three texts, the 'Red Book of the Exchequer,' the 'Black Book of the Exchequer,' and a manuscript<sup>3</sup> in the Cotton collection at the British Museum. In two of these copies the word *Westmonasterii* occurs in the above passage; in the third, the 'Black Book,' *Westmonasterium* has been written in defiance of grammar. The editors infer that the manuscript from which the 'Black Book' text was copied had not the word in full, but probably read *W*. But the mistake is, in any event, a careless one, and it is quite impossible to say what gave rise to it. Moreover it would be unusual for the name of a place to be represented by a single letter in a manuscript of a treatise such as the *Dialogus*. Nor is the inference of the editors one which receives any support from their history of the text. In their view the texts in the 'Red Book' and the 'Black Book' were copied from a common original. Yet the 'Red Book' has *Westmonasterii*, and this makes it very improbable that the word was represented in the common original only by an initial. *Westmonasterii* is also the reading of their third text from the Cotton manuscript. But we are expressly told that the common original of the 'Red Book' and the 'Black Book' texts was not the original of the Cotton text. Thus in the latter we have an admittedly independent authority in support of the old reading, *Westmonasterii*.

Two justifications are put forward for the emendation.<sup>4</sup> The first is that Westminster Abbey was not a *maior ecclesia* in the sense of either mother or cathedral church, and that the author

<sup>1</sup> T. Madox, *History of the Antiquities of the Exchequer*, 2nd edition, ii. 357.

<sup>2</sup> *De necessariis Observantiis Scaccarii Dialogus*, p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> Cotton MS., Cleopatra, A, 16.

<sup>4</sup> *De necessariis Observantiis*, p. 170.

shows that he was aware of this technical sense in another passage where he uses the term correctly.

Sunt tamen quedam foreste de quibus decime constitutorum censuum ecclesiis maioribus, solvuntur, sicut de Wiltescira et de Hantescira ecclesie Saresberiensis; de Norhantescira vero Lincolnensi.<sup>5</sup>

At the date of the *Dialogus*, however, there were two churches and two churches only, Salisbury and Lincoln, which were receiving tithes of the fixed rents of forests,<sup>6</sup> so that the fact that its author applies the words *maiores ecclesie* to these two cathedrals is not sufficient to show that he always used them in the sense of a cathedral or mother church. It may also be doubted, having regard to the context, whether the words *ecclesiis maioribus* are not used rather of the class of churches to whom such tithes were paid than of the particular churches to whom they were payable at the date of the *Dialogus*. If they were used of the class, then they include the church of Tewkesbury, which, like that of Westminster, was a Benedictine abbey; for the monks of Tewkesbury a few years earlier had received tithes from the fixed rents of the forest of Malvern. But indeed there is no evidence that the words *maior ecclesia* in the twelfth century necessarily bore the sense of a cathedral or mother church in such a way as to exclude Westminster Abbey. William Fitzstephen says in his *Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury*—

Sunt etiam quod ad Christiane fidei cultum pertinet tum in Lundonia tum in suburbio tredecim maiores ecclesie conventuum preter minores parochianas centum viginti sex.<sup>7</sup>

If William Fitzstephen could speak of thirteen *maiores ecclesie conventuum* in contrast with one hundred and twenty-six *minores parochiane*, there could be no objection to the author of the *Dialogus* describing Westminster Abbey as a *maior ecclesia*.

The second alleged justification for the substitution in the new edition of the word *Wintonie* for *Westmonasterii* is that the two shillings for ink are stated to have been claimed by the sacrist as of ancient right, and that, as before the date of the *Dialogus* the exchequer usually sat at Winchester, the claim could only have been made by the sacrist of that church. But the words *de antiquo iure* are of vague significance, and a claim which is based on ancient right often finds its true origin in somewhat modern user. Nor can it be regarded as an established historical fact that in the reign of Henry II the exchequer usually sat at Winchester. There were, in any case, sessions at Westminster early in that reign, and a few such sessions would be quite sufficient for the person who at first provided the ink by arrangement to claim to provide it as of

<sup>5</sup> *De necessariis Observantiis*, p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 228.

<sup>7</sup> C. J. Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket* (Rolls Series), iii. 2.

right at subsequent sessions. We seek, therefore, to ascertain the facts relating to the supply of ink for the exchequer in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Unfortunately, with the exception of the Pipe Rolls and Chancellors' Rolls, the records of the exchequer of the reign of Henry III are in such a state of confusion, and so greatly need rearrangement, that it is impossible to draw from them as much information as might have been hoped. The records now known as Exchequer Liberate Rolls show that in that reign a sum of forty pence was paid half-yearly for ink, but the name of the person to whom it was paid is not mentioned. Madox has printed in his *History of the Exchequer*<sup>8</sup> an entry from a record, from which we learn that the payment was made as early as the year 9 Henry III. The Issue Rolls of 4 Edward I discover that it was the sacrist of Westminster who then received this half-yearly sum of forty pence for ink used in the exchequer. A few years later, however, it was the precentor who received it, and he was still receiving it in the year 18 Edward III,<sup>9</sup> but in 25 Edward III again we find the sacrist resuming his privilege.<sup>10</sup> Towards the end of the reign of Edward III the sacrist provided the ink not only for the two exchequers, but also for the office of privy seal.<sup>11</sup> His remuneration nevertheless remained unchanged.

The facts which I have recited seem to me to justify the retention of the old reading *Westmonasterii*. The change from the sacrist to the precentor and from the precentor to the sacrist again need occasion no surprise. It was a matter which concerned the monastery and not the exchequer. Both the sacrist and the precentor required ink, the former for writing his accounts, the latter for preparing his service books. There were various arrangements in different monasteries with respect to such small matters; but it may be noticed that in the abbey of Evesham it was the duty of the precentor to find the ink for all the writers of the monastery.<sup>12</sup> The history of the internal government of Westminster Abbey remains to be written.

G. J. TURNER.

### *The Date of Composition of William of Newburgh's History.*

In the preface to the first volume of his edition of William of Newburgh's *Historia Rerum Anglicarum* Mr. R. Howlett gave nine reasons from which he drew the following conclusion:—

These circumstances, taken in connexion, seem to indicate that the

<sup>8</sup> Vol. ii. p. 311.

<sup>9</sup> Issue Roll, Pells, no. 198 (Easter, 18 Ed. III), memb. 19.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* no. 205 (Easter, 25 Ed. III, July, 'Liveries').

<sup>11</sup> F. Devon, *Issue Roll of Thomas de Brantingham*, pp. 209, 470.

<sup>12</sup> W. D. Macray, *Chronicon Abbatiae de Evesham* (Rolls Series), p. 210.