

**THE MONASTIC  
CHRONICLER AND THE  
EARLY SCHOOL OF  
ST. ALBANS. A LECTURE**

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The Monastic Chronicler and the Early School of St. Albans. A Lecture by Claude Jenkins

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THE  
MONASTIC CHRONICLER  
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OF ST. ALBANS

*A LECTURE*

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## The Monastic Chronicler and the Early School of St. Albans

### I

Six hundred years ago, in the second decade of the fourteenth century, the great Italian poet whose fame the world has just been celebrating anew, saw in that Paradise of elect souls of every age and clime which is described in the last section of the *Divina Commedia*,<sup>1</sup> the radiant spirit of a great Englishman who was also perhaps the most famous of monastic historians. The six centuries that separated Dante himself from the time of the Venerable Bede were charged even beyond bearing with those happenings in national and local life which are the materials of history. It is these which the annalist records and the chronicler describes and illustrates with reflexions and stories grave or gay, a comedy of manners if sometimes, it must be added, of errors too. But while many moralized there were few who could add to the student's discipline of patient research in the establishment of facts, the historian's insight into causes, his appraisal of values, his sense of a just perspective. Nor

<sup>1</sup> *Paradiso*, x. 130-31.

