

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF CATHEDRALS

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Traditions and Customs of Cathedrals by Mackenzie E. C. Walcott

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MACKENZIE E. C. WALCOTT

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CUSTOMS OF
CATHEDRALS**

Cathedrals.

By the same Author.

1. **SACRED ARCHÆOLOGY:** a Popular Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Art and Institutions, from Primitive to Modern Times: comprising Architecture, Music, Vestments, Furniture, Arrangement, Offices, Customs, Ritual, Symbolism, Ceremonial, Traditions, Religious Orders, &c. of the Church Catholic in all Ages.
2. **CATHEDRALIA:** a Constitutional History of Cathedrals of the Western Church; being an Account of the various Dignities, Offices, and Ministries of the several members.
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5. **NOTES ON CERTAIN RUBRICS FROM CANON LAW,** Judgments of the Ordinary and Earlier Liturgical Directions.

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

OF

Cathedrals.

BY

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OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD;
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SOC. DES ANTIQ. DE NORMANDIE, SOC. ROY. DES ANT. DU NORD, ETC.



'A narrative memory with circumstances of time,
persons, and places, and with names.'—LORD BACON.

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PREFACE.

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ORIGINALLY these pages were not intended to constitute an independent volume. The reasons for their issue in this form would be without interest to the reader. However, it is necessary to explain the object of the work, which is designed (however imperfectly the purpose may have been carried out) to be popular, reliable, and instructive. It resolves itself into two main divisions.

I. Historical, containing a sketch of the Cathedrals of the Old and New Foundation, with notices of the 'moving history' of ravage or injury, which make a further demand on our interest and sympathy beyond their sacred character, their national associations, their antiquity, their manifold contents, or their value as monuments of Art.

II. Partly Archæological, with details of their ancient customs, not without profit as examples for imitation or warnings of failure, interspersed

with legend and tradition ; and partly modern and practical, as indicating the various uses which have grown up, alongside with material restoration, in the celebration of Divine Service, when evidences of new life and unbroken vitality are rife on every side. Changes in the structure and furniture and services have been supplemented by the dying out of traditional lore; and designs are on foot to remodel their constitution: so that, on either ground, I hope to interest both the curious antiquary in matters of ritual, and the conscientious reformer in points of detail.

The three beautiful 'Sisters of the Vale'—the spires of Lichfield—so beautiful that old Fuller suggests that they should only be shown on great festivals; the glorious towers of Lincoln, on its sovereign hill, the delight of Southey and Wordsworth; the majestic pile of York, perhaps the most admired in modern times, although Lord Burlington could not award his preference; the massive grandeur of Durham, immortalised by Scott and Johnson; the grace of Salisbury; the unequalled front of Wells; the triple porches or gallery of Peterborough; the soaring angel steeple of Canterbury, and its more than rival at Gloucester, if lost would be irreparable. They were

the production of men who thought that to work was to pray, and laboured as those who in their daily procession spent every day as if their last, pourtraying the pilgrimage of earth. Erasmus tells us of the joy of the travellers as they heard the great bells of Canterbury booming over the country side, and saw the two towers rising as if to salute those who approached; and the church with such majesty lifting itself into the sky, that even afar off it inspired religious awe, and when near blinded the eyes with its splendour.¹ Gostling mentions that he had seen the eyes of negroes glisten as they caught their first sight of the interior, and Southey says he heard more than one American say it was worth while to cross the Atlantic in order to see a single Cathedral.

They are the history of England written in stone; the erection, not of ecclesiastics only, but of every class of the community; storehouses and treasuries of the arts, whether in glass, architecture, painting, sculpture, or carved work: there is scarcely a name of an ecclesiastic eminent in piety or literature which is not contained in their list of members; the graves of the highest and noblest are made, or their memorials erected

¹ *Peregrin. Relig. ergo*; *Op.* 1. 360.