

**REMAINS HISTORICAL & LITERARY,
CONNECTED WITH THE PALATINE
COUNTIES OF LANCASTER AND
CHESTER. VOL. LIX. A HISTORY OF THE
CHANTRIES WITHIN THE COUNTY
PALATINE OF LANCASTER, VOL. I**

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Vol. LIX. A History of the Chantries within the County Palatine of Lancaster, Vol. I by F. R.
Raines

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F. R. RAINES

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A

History of the Chantries

WITHIN THE

COUNTY PALATINE OF LANCASTER,

BRING THE

Reports of the Royal Commissioners of Henry VIII.
Edward VI. and Queen Mary.

Francis Robert BY THE
REV. F. R. RAINES, M.A., F.S.A.,
RURAL DEAN, NON. CANON OF MANCHESTER, AND
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INTRODUCTION.

IT was not until the commencement of the seventh century that the doctrine of the efficacy of prayers, in alleviating and shortening the sufferings of purgatory, was fully recognised by the Church of Rome. A school for chanters was at that time established by Gregory the Great, the Chantry being a small chapel, or enclosure, within a church, and sometimes a distinct and separate building at a distance from the church, in which an altar was erected and consecrated, and a priest appointed to chant certain prescribed services for the welfare of individuals, specified by name, whilst they were living, and also for the repose of their souls after death. The latter provision involved the doctrine of purgatory, and the belief that the sacrifice of the mass was a propitiation for sin. Obits, anniversaries, month's minds, and similar services mentioned in this volume, were only various forms of ritual and prayer for the expiation of the sins of the departed. The solemn and pompous grandeur of the Church of Rome, especially in the funeral service in honour of the illustrious dead, was in some measure imparted to these humble foundations; and those who wished to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of the

great or good had an opportunity of gratifying their feelings, not only at the time of the obsequies and on the commemoration day, but sometimes daily throughout the year. These posthumous honours were not temporary — they were designed to be enduring in the truest sense of the word; and names of celebrity were long remembered and enshrined in grateful hearts, and handed down to posterity as if written in the page of history. Sorrow was not always here a mere expression of deep feeling, but assumed a religious aspect, so that they who mourned were not dispirited; they had hope that their prayers and offerings were profitable and useful to the dead. The Church fostered the feeling, and by so doing acquired influence and dominion, but did not foresee with her usual sagacity that the time would come when every thing in religion would be judged, adopted, or rejected by its agreement with an infallible and inspired standard. The dead have always been regarded by all nations with reverential feelings, but

They are at rest.
 We may not stir the heaven of their repose
 By rude invoking name, or prayer address
 In waywardness to those
 Who in the mountain grotts of Eden lie,
 And hear the fourfold river as it murmurs by.

The era of some of the Lancashire Chantries rises as high as the thirteenth century,¹ although the greater part of them may be assigned to the later Plantagenet and early Tudor period.

¹ page 31.

These were of two kinds — the permanently endowed and the precariously endowed chantry. For creating the former the licence of the Crown, to alienate lands in mortmain for the maintenance of the priest, was required after the statutes of 7 and 13 Edward I. and 15 Richard II.: nor could founders acquire lands for this purpose, unless held by other than soccage tenure or by knight's service, without the royal permission. These were called Foundation Chantries, and the incumbents, presented by patrons, were legally instituted, and the Ordinary exercised canonical jurisdiction over them. An example of the latter is where a chapel was built and an altar dedicated, but there was no foundation. This was called a "capella indotata;" and there were many such in Lancashire, which, not being endowed, as in numerous instances they ought to have been with the tithes of the district belonging to them, but supported by the voluntary offerings of private and individual piety, could not resist the fate which so precarious an income rendered ultimately certain. After having been sustained for a time by the payment of a monied rent, and without the ancient parochial organisation, some of them became neglected and fell into decay,² the altars being disused and sometimes actually removed, thus affording a striking demonstration of the weakness of the voluntary system. These insecurely endowed altars were described as chantries,³ although the officiating priests were generally styled stipendiaries⁴ and not incumbents. Their ecclesiastical position was lower than that of the regularly bene-

² pp. 78, 236.

³ p. 201.

⁴ pp. 204, 240, 241, 250, 251.