

**THE DOMINICAN ORDER AND  
CONVOCATION. A STUDY OF THE  
GROWTH OF REPRESENTATION IN  
THE CHURCH DURING THE  
THIRTEENTH CENTURY**

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The Dominican order and convocation. A study of the growth of representation in the church during the thirteenth century by Ernest Barker

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DURING THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

BY

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## PREFACE

THIS brief study would not have been written had it not been for M. Bémont, the Editor of the *Revue Historique*, and Honorary Doctor of Letters in the University of Oxford. He is unconscious of his influence: it is none the less real. He has done so much to illuminate the English history of the thirteenth century, that he must not be surprised if others try to use the light he has shed to explore new paths.

I owe a large debt of gratitude to my old pupil, Father Bede Jarrett, of the Order of Preachers. When we were once discussing together the development of representation, and I was urging the point I have urged here, that the Church supplied both the idea of representation and its rules of procedure, he suggested to me that the influence of his own Order must have been considerable within the Church, and he gave me my first knowledge of the organization of his Order. He has increased my debt of late by sending me some references which he had collected. I would refer any of my readers who may be interested in the Dominican Order to Father Jarrett's article in the *Home Counties Magazine* for June 1910 on 'Friar Confessors of English Kings', and to his pamphlet on the Dominicans published by the Catholic Truth Society.

Mr. A. G. Little has been good enough to read this study, and to save me from some errors into which I had fallen. The kindness of the author of the *Grey Friars in Oxford* is all the greater, as I have myself sought to exalt the Black Friars.

I should explain that this study was originally intended for a brief article. As I worked upon it, it outgrew the limits of my original intention, and ceasing to be a brief article almost grew into a small book. I have published it as it stands (though I would gladly have carried further some lines of inquiry which are here merely suggested), because other engagements prevent me from devoting myself to the subject for some time to come, and because I thought that such results as I had attained might possibly be of some immediate use to students of the history of institutions.

E. B.

OXFORD, *March*, 1913.



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## INTRODUCTORY

THE Church of the thirteenth century shows a marked development, on its institutional side, of the principle and practice of representation. Three great Councils of the Church are held: representatives appear in them all. The provincial synods cease to be composed of bishops and abbots only; representatives, first of cathedral clergy, and then—in England but in England only—of the diocesan clergy, enter. The great Orders of the Friars are penetrated by representation. It appears first in the Dominicans: it is copied from them by the Franciscans. In the same century representation begins to appear in the State. In Spain, indeed, it has already appeared in the last half of the twelfth century: in France it does not properly appear, except in local assemblies, until the beginning of the fourteenth. But in England, at any rate, the development of representation in the State synchronizes with the thirteenth century: a representative parliament begins to be seen in the middle of the century, and is fully grown by its end.

What was the history of the different phases of this movement, and what were their relations to one another? These are questions too large for their solution to be attempted here. Even if we confine ourselves to the Church, we have still a vast field of research. But an account of the organization of the Dominicans, who offer the most finished model of representative institutions, and a study of that development of the provincial synod in England which led to the inclusion of clerical proctors, may together serve to elucidate to some extent the institutional development which marks the thirteenth century. In the course of these inquiries we shall be led to