

**SIR RALPH DE RAYNE AND
LILIAN GREY, A
LEGEND OF THE ABBEY
CHURCH, ST. ALBANS**

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Sir Ralph de Rayne and Lilian Grey, a legend of the abbey church, St. Albans by Francis Bennoch

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FRANCIS BENNOCH

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SIR RALPH DE RAYNE
AND LILIAN GREY

A Legend of the Abbey Church, St. Albans

By FRANCIS BENNOCH, F.S.A., M.R.S.L., ETC.

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1872

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TO
THE LORD HIGH PRESIDENT
AND OTHER MEMBERS
OF
THE NOVIOMAGIAN BROTHERHOOD,*

This Legend is Dedicated
AS A REMEMBRANCE OF THEIR VISIT TO

ST. ALBANS,

JULY, 1869,

BY THEIR LAUREATE.

* See Note 1.

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A LEGEND OF THE
ABBEY CHURCH, ST. ALBANS.*

THE Summer sun shone brightly down,
And burnished MARTYR ALBAN'S TOWN,^{*}
As, 'wakening from its drowsy state,
It rose for the approaching fête.

The clamorous bells in joyance rang,
The harpers harped, the minstrels sang,
Triumphal arches bared the trees,
Gay banners fluttered in the breeze,
As thronging through the narrow street
Came buoyant youths and maidens sweet,
And sprightly dames, and stolid squires,
And youngsters clad in gay attires ;
For she, the fairest of the land,
Had pledged her troth, would give her hand

* See Notes 2 and 3.

To one right worthy, loved by all,—
 SIR RALPH DE RAYNE, of VINTRY HALL :
 And now had come the nuptial-day
 Of brave SIR RALPH and LILIAN GREY.*

Bands trooped from GORHAMBURY'S towers,*
 From old St. MICHAEL'S shady bowers,*
 From ROYAL WINDSOR'S princely halls,
 And HATFIELD'S ivy-mantled walls :
 From SOPWELL'S cloisters, dark and low,*
 Came hooded nuns in movement slow,
 So prim, precise, demure, and staid,
 They bring the brighter picture shade.
 Think not they come to bless or cheer :
 No! firm in purpose, proud, austere,—
 Resolved to excommunicate
 The gentle bride as renegade ;
 For she had come beneath their ban,
 In listening to the vows of man
 Against their creed, which blazoned stood
 To guide the dreary sisterhood :
 " The pure in heart should rise above
 All passion throes of human love."

* See Notes 4, 5, and 6.