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Symeon of Durham Edited by Thomas Arnold

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### Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia

Little is known about the life of Symeon of Durham (*fl.* c.1090–c.1128), other than that he was one of the monks present at the translation of the remains of Saint Cuthbert in 1104. His eyewitness account of the opening of Cuthbert's coffin is just one of his writings included in this first volume of his complete works, published for the Rolls Series in 1882. The main Latin text here is his history of the church of Durham up to the year 1096, which draws on Northumbrian annals and provides much valuable information not found elsewhere. Supplemental to this are chapters relating to the see of Durham and the miracles of Cuthbert. The appendices comprise a poem by Adelwulf on the abbots of his monastery, and the lives of Bartholomew the Anchorite and Saint Oswald. Thomas Arnold (1823–1900) provides an extensive introduction as well as English side-notes to the Latin texts.

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# Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia

VOLUME 1:  
HISTORIAE ECCLESIAE DUNHELMENSIS

SYMEON OF DURHAM  
EDITED BY THOMAS ARNOLD



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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI  
SCRIPTORFS,  
OR  
CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND  
DURING  
THE MIDDLE AGES.

Q 3662. Wt. 12545.

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**THE CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS**  
OF  
**GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND**  
DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY, UNDER  
THE DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

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ON the 26th of January 1857, the Master of the Rolls submitted to the Treasury a proposal for the publication of materials for the History of this Country from the Invasion of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII.

The Master of the Rolls suggested that these materials should be selected for publication under competent editors without reference to periodical or chronological arrangement, without mutilation or abridgment, preference being given, in the first instance, to such materials as were most scarce and valuable.

He proposed that each chronicle or historical document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best MSS.

To render the work more generally useful, the Master of the Rolls suggested that the editor should give an account of the MSS. employed by him, of their age and their peculiarities; that he should add to the work a brief account of the life and times of the author, and any remarks necessary to explain the chronology; but no other note or comment was to be allowed, except what might be necessary to establish the correctness of the text.

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The works to be published in octavo, separately, as they were finished; the whole responsibility of the task resting upon the editors, who were to be chosen by the Master of the Rolls with the sanction of the Treasury.

The Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, after a careful consideration of the subject, expressed their opinion in a Treasury Minute, dated February 9, 1857, that the plan recommended by the Master of the Rolls "was well calculated for the accomplishment of this important national object, in an effectual and satisfactory manner, within a reasonable time, and provided proper attention be paid to economy, in making the detailed arrangements, without unnecessary expense."

They expressed their approbation of the proposal that each Chronicle and historical document should be edited in such a manner as to represent with all possible correctness the text of each writer, derived from a collation of the best MSS., and that no notes should be added, except such as were illustrative of the various readings. They suggested, however, that the preface to each work should contain, in addition to the particulars proposed by the Master of the Rolls, a biographical account of the author, so far as authentic materials existed for that purpose, and an estimate of his historical credibility and value.

*Rolls House,  
December 1857.*

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HISTORIA ECCLESIAE DUNHELMENSIS.

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# SYMEONIS MONACHI OPERA OMNIA.

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## HISTORIA ECCLESIAE DUNHELMENSIS.

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EADEM HISTORIA DEDUCTA, INCERTO AUCTORE,  
 USQUE AD A.D. MCXLIV.  
 SEQUUNTUR VARIIS TRACTATUS, IN QUIBUS DE  
 SANCTO CUTHBERTO ET DUNELMO AGITUR.  
 EPISTOLA SYMEONIS DE ARCHIEPISCOPIS EBORACI.

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CARMEN ÆDELWULFI.  
 VITA S. BARTHOLOMÆI.  
 VITA S. OSWALDI REGIS ET MARTYRIS.

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VOL. I.

EDIDIT

THOMAS ARNOLD, M.A.

EX COLL. UNIV. OXON.

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# INTRODUCTION.

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE present volume requires no very elaborate or lengthened statement by way of introduction.

§ 1. Of the two important works usually—and, I believe, rightly—attributed to Symeon, viz. the *Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesie* and the *Historia Regum*,<sup>1</sup> the former appears in this volume, accompanied by the various pieces appended to it in Twysden's *Decem Scriptores*, by the two narratives first printed in Bedford's volume of 1732, (whereof one relates the invasion of the see by William Cumin in 1141, the other describes the harsh treatment of bishop William by William Rufus in 1087,) and by some chapters on the miracles and translations of St. Cuthbert. In the Appendix are printed; 1. The poem by Æðelwulf on the abbots of his cell, of which the only existing printed version is that in Mabillon's *Acta SS. Benedictinorum*; 2. A life of Bartholomew the anchorite of Farne, printed by the Bollandists under June 24 from a MS. imperfect at the end; 3. Portions of the life of St. Oswald the Northumbrian king, by Reginald a monk of Durham; this has never been printed.

§ 2. Before proceeding with the description of these various pieces, and the reasons why some of them appear here, it will be convenient to state all that is

<sup>1</sup> First published by Twysden in the *Decem Scriptores* (1652), again, in part, in the *Monum. Hist. Britan.*, and more recently in a carefully

edited volume printed by the Surtees Society (1868); of all these editions mention will be made in the Introduction to Vol. II.

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known of the writer of the first and principal work in the collection. This amounts to very little. No one has recorded the year either of Symeon's birth, or of his death. That he was at Jarrow during some part of the period of nine years (1074–1083) passed there by the monastic community formed by Aldwin of Winchcomb, before its removal to Durham, we know from his own statement.<sup>1</sup> "We remember," he says in the *Historia Regum*, under 1121, "when Wulmar<sup>2</sup> a monk " of our congregation, and other brothers in their turns " crossed over thither [to Tynemouth] from Jarrow, " to celebrate the divine worship there. Our brothers " also brought over whenever they pleased the bones " of St. Oswin to their house at Jarrow, and took them " back again when they thought fit to their former " resting-place. Lastly, when Albri had received the " honor of the earldom, he also granted to us, after " our removal to Durham, the same place." He also says that he had often heard the descendants of the old followers of St. Cuthbert sing in the church of Durham in their peculiar style in the days of bishop Walcher.<sup>3</sup> It seems likely, from the manner in which Symeon dwells on the motives of the fervent disciples,

Probably a  
native of  
some

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Thomas Rud at p. xxxi. of Bedford's *Symeon*.

<sup>2</sup> Wulmar's is the fifth name on the list of monks professed at Durham; see p. 4; he must therefore have been much senior to Symeon, who is thirty-eighth.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 57. It is unnecessary to infer from this passage with Mr. Hinde (Surtees ed. of *Symeon*, p. v.) that Symeon was a "resident at Durham" before the removal of the monastery from Jarrow. The distance from the two places is only fifteen or sixteen miles; it is certain that any Jarrow monk visit-

ing Durham would have been treated as a welcome and favoured guest by the bishop; moreover, the charter quoted below in § 5 shows that as far back as 1075 preparations were being made, in which the bishop was seconded by all the great lay lords of the Patrimony of St. Cuthbert, for removing Aldwin and his monks as soon as possible to Durham. There is therefore no difficulty in supposing that Symeon, though living at Jarrow, might have often heard the singing at Durham.

## INTRODUCTION.

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chiefly from the southern counties, who came and, <sup>southern</sup> placed themselves under Aldwin at Jarrow, after 1074, <sup>county.</sup> to be trained in monastic virtue, that he was himself one of them. After describing the life of hardship and poverty which Aldwin and his two companions from Evesham had begun to lead among the ruins of Jarrow, he says (p. 109)—“Meantime many, fired by their  
 “ example, renouncing the world, received from them  
 “ the monk’s habit, and learned under the training of  
 “ regular discipline to be Christ’s soldiers. A few of  
 “ these belonged to Northumbria, but a larger number  
 “ were from the southern parts of England, men who,  
 “ going forth after the example of Abraham from their  
 “ country, and from their kindred, and from their  
 “ fathers’ house, desired to enter the land of promise,  
 “ that is, their country on high, having Aldwin as their  
 “ master in the religious life.” A character of Aldwin, which seems to breathe the loving admiration and loyalty of a former disciple, follows.

§ 3. There is a corresponding passage, entering into fuller detail with regard to external events and acts, but saying little as to actuating motives, in the *Historia Regum*.<sup>1</sup> “Many,” he there writes, after describing the settlement at Jarrow, “leaving the secular life, engaged  
 “ themselves along with the three in the monastic warfare. But few of these belonged to the province; the  
 “ greater number, attracted by their reputation from  
 “ remote districts of England, joined themselves to them  
 “ with one accord.” Yet although Symeon may probably be regarded as one of these fervent neophytes from the south, and although he certainly was at Jarrow for some time before the removal to Durham in 1083, <sup>Date of his</sup> it would seem that he was not a professed monk till <sup>profession.</sup> some time after that event. For the total number of

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<sup>1</sup> An. 1074.

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monks who came in from Jarrow and Wearmouth to Durham was only twenty-three (p. 122); and these may be supposed to correspond to the twenty-three first names on the list of monks (p. 4); but Symeon's name stands thirty-eighth. The only explanation that occurs to me is, that, during his stay at Jarrow, Symeon was, either from his own desire, or because Aldwin wished to test his vocation more thoroughly, a "clericus inter monachos degens," as Turgot (p. 111) had been before him, and that he was not regularly professed till two or three years after the establishment of the monastery at Durham,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* till 1085 or 1086. If we suppose him to have been about twenty-five years old at the time of his profession, his birth will fall towards the year 1060; this is also Mr. Rud's opinion.

He is present at the translation of 1104.

§ 4. In 1104 Symeon was one of the nine monks appointed by the convent, in anticipation of the solemn translation of the relics, to open the coffin and examine the state of the body of St. Cuthbert. Perhaps his literary gift had something to do with his selection, for among those present it would be desirable that there should be some one capable of describing in Latin, fluently and clearly, all that they saw. For the resulting narrative, which may well have been written by him, though we cannot prove it, *see* p. 247. Reginald, who, writing his "Libellus" on St. Cuthbert about

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hinde (p. vi) thinks that the first thirty-eight names, down to Symeon's inclusive, represent the total number of monks professed, whether at Jarrow or Wearmouth, since Aldwin's arrival in Northumbria in 1074, and that deaths or departures may have reduced the number to twenty-three, of whom Symeon was one. But the words which precede the list on p. 4, "nomina monachorum in hac ec-

clesia ad incorrupti corporis sanctissimi Cuthberti presentiam jam professorum," make it impossible, I think, to accept this explanation. Besides, it is certain that the name of Reinfrid (p. 111.) would, if Mr. Hinde's view were correct, have appeared on the list; and also that of Eadred, who is mentioned as a monk at Jarrow in the passage from the *Historia Regum* cited above.

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sixty years later, had made diligent enquiry about all the circumstances of the translation from monks who had known the original nine, says that, "when the holy body was placed on the carpets and cloths, Symeon, who held a wax candle with a candlestick, with streaming tears kept ever imprinting kisses on those holy feet." This one glimpse of the individual man, Symeon, who is otherwise so shadowy to us, seemed too characteristic and interesting to be omitted.

§ 5. There can be no doubt that from the time of his joining the community Symeon was thoroughly devoted, not only to the cause of religion, as by it represented and sustained, but also to the territorial and political interests of the brotherhood. It has been seen above with what minuteness he can recall, when writing his general history more than 40 years afterwards, the circumstances proving the original grant of St. Mary's Tynemouth to the monks of Jarrow, and the free exercise by them during several years, and in various forms, of the rights of ownership. A passage at p. 124 seems to show that he considered the monastery, in spite of bishop William's benefactions, to be insufficiently endowed. His political shrewdness is illustrated by an erasure in the Durham MS., the meaning of which was not at first apparent to me. With reference to the grant of this same Tynemouth church, he uses the words—according to the present text of D.—"donantibus Northymbriæ comitibus," by the donation of earls of Northumbria.<sup>1</sup> The words "donantibus" and "comitibus" show signs of erasure, and a word has been erased after "comitibus." Now we know, both from a statement to that effect in the *Historia Regum* under 1121, and from a charter (No. IX.) published in the Surtees volume *Hist. Dunelm. Scriptores Tres*, that the donor of St. Mary's Tynemouth to the Jarrow monks was earl Waltheof the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 124.

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son of Siward. There can be little doubt that Symeon wrote at first "donante Northumbriæ comite Waltefo," and that "Waltefo" is the erased word. The Saxon Waltheof was implicated in the treason of the Norman earls de Guader and FitzOsbern, and was executed in 1076. On revising his work, it probably occurred to Symeon, or was suggested to him, that a gift coming from such a man was not, in the eyes of a Norman Government and a Norman judiciary, a very safe foundation on which to rest a title to property. Hence he resolved to suppress the name of Waltheof, and altered what he had written to "donantibus Northymbriæ comitibus."<sup>1</sup>

He writes a  
history of  
the church  
of Durham,

§ 6. Between 1104 and 1108—the date cannot be fixed more nearly—Symeon was engaged at the command of superiors, by whom Turgot, the prior, and Algar, the sub-prior, are probably meant, in composing the History of the Church of Durham. He brought it down to the death of William of St. Carilef (1096) and there stopped; prudently abstaining from entangling himself in the history of the episcopate of the rapacious Ranulf le Flam-bard, who held the see while he was writing, and till 1128 or 1129.

and a  
general  
history.

Many years afterwards—incited, probably, by the examples of Florence of Worcester and William of Malmesbury—Symeon undertook to write a chronicle of Northumbrian affairs from the point where Beda stops, A.D. 731. In the earlier portion he made use of some work written probably at Chester-le-Street, by a Cuth-

<sup>1</sup> The Cotton MS. (Faustina A. 5.) which is a copy of D., has here "donante Walchero episcopo cum comitatum regeret." The motive of this reading is the same, namely, to suppress the connexion of Waltheof with the grant of Tynemouth; and it is so far justified by fact, that in the charter above mentioned

the name of Walcher appears as the confirmer of the grant, though not as the donor. But how this reading found its way into the Cotton MS. it is impossible to say; considerations of space show that it was not copied from the Durham MS.

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bertine monk of the tenth century; he also transcribed freely from Asser's *Life of Alfred*, and finding as the work proceeded that his materials were scanty, he seems to have thought it the best plan to make Florence's recent work the basis and staple of his own, adding to it notices of Northumbrian affairs, and a few other matters. But these, as well as the question whether he really brought his history down to 1129 or only to 1121, are points of which the discussion must be reserved to the next volume.

§ 7. Besides these two histories, and the tracts on the <sup>Other</sup> Siege of Durham and the Archbishops of York, Bale attributes to Symeon a book of Letters to one Elmer, an ecclesiastic of Christ Church Canterbury. This work does not appear to be now extant. The Elmer meant is probably the prior of Christ Church of that name, who, according to Gervase of Canterbury, died in 1137. <sup>works.</sup>

Nothing else is known of Symeon, who must have been an old man by the time he finished the *Historia Regum*, and probably died about 1130.

§ 8. A list of the MSS. of the *Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesiae* will be found at p. 77 of the second volume of Sir T. D. Hardy's Catalogue. To these must be added Fairfax VI. in the Bodleian Library. The Durham MS. (D. in this edition) which, by the kind permission of the trustees of Bishop Cosin's Library, I was allowed to have in my possession for several months, is probably the authentic and original text of the work. Mr. Rud believes it to have been written, if not by Symeon himself, under his immediate direction. The original hand stops at "agebatur," at the end of Symeon's fourth book. The next hand, if I am not mistaken, stops at "restituta" (p. 141), that is, at the end of the episcopate of Ralph the Flambard. A third hand continues the narrative to "susceptus est" (p. 160), *i.e.* to the installation of bishop William of St. Barbara in 1144. <sup>Manu-  
scripts.</sup> <sup>The Durham  
MS.</sup>

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The Cottonian MS.

The Cambridge MS.

The Bodleian MSS.

Fairfax VI.

The large history "De Gestis episcoporum."

Of the Cottonian MS. Faustina A. 5., and that in the Cambridge University Library (F. and C. in this edition), little need be said. F. is a very early copy of the Durham MS. retaining a few passages which have been erased in the latter; see pages 70, 92, 111, 122. It ends at the termination of the fourth book.<sup>1</sup> The Cambridge MS., written in a late twelfth century hand, contains, besides the *Hist. Dun.*, all that Twysden printed in connexion with it, and also the poem of Æðelwulf, printed in the present volume. On these two MSS. Twysden, not being aware of the existence of the valuable text at Durham, founded his edition.

§ 9. Among MSS. of the *Historia Dunelmensis* Sir T. D. Hardy reckons Bod. 521; but this, as explained in the Introduction to Henry of Huntingdon, § 36, (Rolls edition), is a text of what I have there called "the Marianist Chronicle," and whatever of Symeon it contains is from the *Historia Regum*, not the *Historia Dunelmensis*. On the other hand, the catalogue does not mention a complete text of the last named work in the important MS., Fairfax VI.<sup>2</sup> This is, for the most part, a Durham compilation of the fourteenth century. Nearly half the volume consists of a work "De gestis episcoporum Dunelmensium" in one hundred and eighty-four chapters, compiled and arranged, probably, by Robert de Grey-stanes, in 1336; together with a continuation by an unknown hand in twenty seven chapters, bringing down the work to the time of Cuthbert Tunstall. The first ninety-six chapters consist of the *Historia Dunelmensis* of Symeon, with this difference only, that in the places where Symeon refers to another authority, namely to the work on Miracles and Translations, for a fuller account of what he is writing of, this fuller account is bor-

<sup>1</sup> This MS. formerly belonged to Fountains Abbey, to which it was

given by William de Coutton, prior of Durham between 1332 and 1341.  
<sup>2</sup> Fx. in this edition.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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rowed from that work and inserted in full in the work of Greystanes. Thus chapters I. IV. V. VII. XII. of the *Liber Translationum*, as printed in the Surtees volume, are here inserted in II. 10 and 13, III. 11 and 24, and IV. 4 of Symeon's history. Chapters 97–107 are the continuation of Symeon to 1144; see below, pp. 135–160. Chapters 108–131 are the historical work of Geoffrey the Sacrist, of Coldingham, on the church of Durham, from 1144 to 1213. This Geoffrey, who was probably identical with the author of the life of Bartholomew the hermit (p. 295), may be presumed to have died about the time at which his work terminates. The thread of the narrative was taken up by Robert de Greystanes, who composed chapters 132–184, and stops in 1336. William Chambre<sup>1</sup> added a long supplemental passage on the episcopate of the great scholar Richard de Bury (1335–1345), which comes in as a sort of continuation of ch. 184. Two hundred years later, some Durham ecclesiastic, probably one of the canons ejected for refusing the oath of supremacy, after the accession of Elizabeth, continued the narrative in twenty-seven additional chapters, in the form of brief notices of the bishops and priors, from the priorate of William Coutton or Cowton, to the death of Thomas Sparke, Tunstall's suffragan bishop, in 1571.

Laud 700, a transcript apparently of Fairfax VI., made <sup>Laud 700.</sup> in the time of Bishop Fordham (1382–1388), has the history in 184 chapters, arranged exactly as in that MS., except that, like the Durham MS., it inserts the tract *De Injusta Vexatione* in the middle of Symeon's last chapter, whereas the Fairfax MS. gives it separately. The additional twenty-seven chapters are also in Laud 700.

§ 10. Another copy of the same extended history (not A York MS. mentioned in Hardy's catalogue) is in the York Chapter

<sup>1</sup> Flourished in 1365; see p. xiv. of the *Hist. Dun. Scriptores Tres*.

Library (XVI. 1. 12). From this MS. the late Dr. Raine edited the histories of Geoffrey and Robert de Greystones, the chapter by William Chambre, and all the concluding portion down to 1571, for the Surtees Society, under the title "Historiæ Dunelmensis Scriptorum Tres." These portions had been already printed, but with culpable inaccuracy, in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*. Like everything edited by Dr. Raine, the volume just mentioned, which has a large Appendix of valuable documents connected with Durham, is a work of great research, accuracy, and usefulness.

Titus A. II. Titus A. II. (T. in this edition) contains a copy of Symeon's history made in the time of bishop Antony de Bek (1283-1311), followed by the continuation to 1144, and the history of Geoffrey of Coldingham; all these are in the same hand. Then comes, in a much later hand, the history of Robert de Graystones, and Chambre's supplemental chapter; but this MS. does not contain the later additions carrying on the work into the sixteenth century.

Harl. 1924. Harl. 1924 is a small volume, in a hand of the twelfth century, containing, besides an imperfect copy of Beda's prose life of St. Cuthbert, those seven chapters on the Miracles and Translations which are printed below, p. 229. After these, in a hand about a century later, occurs the account of a miracle which happened to two clerks from Norway. Fairfax VI. has a copy of all the twenty-one chapters on Miracles, &c., as printed in the Surtees volume. Hence some of these occur twice over in the MS.; for, as already mentioned, chapters I, IV, V, VII, and XII are worked into the 184 chapters of the extended History.

Bodl. 163. § 11. Bodl. 163, a text of the tenth century, contains (along with a copy of Beda's *Ecclesiastical History*) the curious Latin poem by Æðelwulf printed at p. 265. It is full of blunders, but gives on the whole a better text than the Cambridge MS. (C.), a transcript of which was printed

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by Mabillon in the *Acta SS. Benedictinorum*. Moreover, on carefully comparing the two together, each enables us to eliminate many of the errors of the other. The version in C. is of later date by about two centuries than that in the Bodleian MS.

In the earlier portion of the Fairfax MS. occur the Life of Bartholomew (p. 295), and that of St. Oswald, king and martyr (p. 324). Of both of these, and of nearly everything else that the Fairfax volume contains, except the extended Durham history, we have a curious transcript (Harl. 4853) made by a Durham monk, John Tode or Toode, early in the sixteenth century. Near the end of the volume is a sermon by Tode on death, with the date 1528.

So far respecting the more important MSS. used for the present volume. Of the various pieces which it contains some account must now be given.

§ 12. I. *Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesiae*. This history must have been written between the date of the translation of the relics (1104), of which the writer (p. 34) speaks as an eye witness, and 1109. For in the passage at p. 111, erased from D., but found in F., Turgot is spoken of as still prior; but in 1109 he became bishop of St. Andrew's. The materials used are—Beda's Ecclesiastical History and prose Life of St. Cuthbert; "alia opuscula," such as the collection of Miracles on which the writer so frequently draws; the "seniorum traditio" (p. 19); the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (p. 72); and the "antiquorum dicta" (p. 51), by which appear to be meant the old Northumbrian annals extending from the death of Beda to the time of Charlemagne. The style is good and clear, giving the impression that the writer was a man of sincere and elevated character. For the history of events in the north of England during the thirty years following the Danish invasion of 875, on which the Saxon Chronicles tells us almost nothing,

The history  
of the church  
of Durham.

Symeon in this work supplies much valuable information not to be found elsewhere.

Selden's attempt to prove Turgot to be the writer.

§ 13. It would be unnecessary to advert to the futile attempt made by Selden (in his critical introduction to Twysden's *Decem Scriptores*) to claim for Prior Turgot the authorship of the History of the Church of Durham, after the complete exposure and refutation which it received at the hands of Mr. Rud in 1732, were it not that in a popular and in many respects meritorious work—“English Writers, from the Conquest to Chaucer,” 1866—Professor Henry Morley, ignorant apparently of the existence of Rud's treatise, has revived and endorsed Selden's absurd and injurious theory. “Turgot,” he says, . . . . . “wrote a clear history of the “Monastery of Durham, to which Simeon of Durham put his own name fifty years afterwards.” “John Selden,” he adds, “began [his introduction] by proving Turgot to be in fact the author of the work to which Simeon prefixed an Apology and Preface, and . . . . . made also some inconsiderable changes.” If Mr. Morley read what Selden wrote, and then believed him to have made good his case, I can only say that his notion of what constitutes “proof” is very different from mine. If he did not read it, but took Selden's word for the conclusions at which he arrives, he cannot be acquitted of undue precipitancy in propagating without examination as unfounded a calumny as was ever brought against a literary man.

The matter is very simple, and may be disposed of by showing (1) what grounds Selden had for assigning the authorship to Turgot, (2) what grounds he had for imputing deceit and plagiarism to Symeon, (3) what is the nature of the evidence in favour of Symeon's authorship.

His reasons examined.

1. To the first point it must be answered that Selden produces no reason for calling Turgot the author that will stand a moment's examination. He finds the work

ascribed to him in certain MSS.<sup>1</sup> But by whom? by Sir Robert Cotton, and perhaps another, writing in the seventeenth century, more than five hundred years after Turgot's time. They had no more means of ascertaining the authorship of a work of the twelfth century than we have; indeed they were in a less good position, owing to the publication of numberless works in later times throwing side lights on all such questions. Another reason for regarding Turgot as the author is, in Selden's view, the absence of all laudatory expressions when his name is mentioned. A contemporary monk, he thinks, could not have so written of so excellent a man; in the good prior himself this modesty was to be expected. It is hardly necessary to reply to such an argument as this; if the writer was another than Turgot, he may have had many motives for speaking in a measured way of his prior of which it is impossible that we can know anything. As Mr. Rud says, Symeon—if the writer was Symeon—compiling the history under the orders of his superiors, may have known that anything like flattery or direct praise of the prior would be offensive to him rather than acceptable.

2. Selden attributes deceit to Symeon, in that he declares him to have omitted, when he resolved to annex and re-edit Turgot's history, an important sentence, the retention of which would have convicted him of appropriating another man's work. This sentence may be seen at p. 111, note *a*. It merely shows that the author wrote before 1109, but there is nothing in it tending to fix the authorship on Turgot or Symeon, or any one else. But, says Selden, it could not have been written by Symeon, who was of much later date. But this is Selden's mistake, the origin of which we shall explain presently. Symeon was not of later date. He

His mistaken opinion about Symeon's age.

<sup>1</sup> The Cottonian MSS. Faustina A. 5., Titus A. II., and Vespasian A. VI.

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was one of the nine monks who, with Turgot the prior, were present at the examination of the relics of St. Cuthbert in 1104. That the writer of the history (p. 34) distinctly states this fact of himself, is indeed alleged by Selden as a proof that it could not have been Symeon. But it happens that we have independent testimony to the statement that Symeon was at the translation. For Reginald ("Libellus," &c., ch. 40) gives the names of the nine monks who attended Turgot on that occasion, and among them is the name of Symeon.<sup>1</sup> Selden thought it impossible that Symeon could have been present, for this one reason and no other, that he put faith in Bale's words, "Claruit [Symeon] anno 1164, in quo historiam finiebat, sub Henrico rege Anglorum secundo." A man who flourished in 1164 could hardly have taken part in an important ceremony in 1104. But like so many other statements in Bale, this date is erroneous; and Selden ought to have tested it before founding upon it a charge against Symeon. The source of the error was pointed out by Sir T. Duffus Hardy.<sup>2</sup> The initial rubric of the Corpus MS. of the *Historia Regum* states that the history extends from the death of Beda to that of Henry I., "that is, four hundred and twenty-nine years and four months." Beda died in 735; adding 429 years, we get the date 1164. Bale must have seen this MS. and made this calculation, but did not observe that, as Henry I. died in 1135, the period between his death and Beda's was only 400, not 429 years! Probably the copyist of the MS. (which is unique) inserted his own date, the time at which he was writing, for the true one. Such, and no more, is the foundation for the assertion that Symeon "flourished in 1164." If he

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<sup>1</sup> There is only one Symeon in the list of professed monks at Durham (p. 4), which covers the period between 1083 and 1170, or thereabouts.

<sup>2</sup> *Descriptive Catal.* II., 177.