

LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1868.

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## Notes.

## PARISH REGISTERS.

Perhaps it would be well if readers of "N. & Q." would examine all old registers which may come in their way, and give the result in these pages. We should then know what registers are now actually in existence, their condition, and the peculiarities of each. As a humble attempt to illustrate my meaning, I give the result of an examination of the parish register of Luddenham, near Faversham.

It consists of two volumes now bound together. The first gives the births, marriages, and burials from 1547 to 1654; the second from 1654 to 1772, with certain intervals to be mentioned hereafter. From 1547 to 1598 the entries are copied from an older register, as may be seen by the first entry in the book, which runs as follows:—

"Luddenham.—The Register following is truly copied out of the old Register Booke of Luddenham and conferred together, nothing added or left out that concerneth the Record of Baptyssings, buryalls, marriages or other thing pertaining to the church or parish.

"By me Peter Jackson, Clerke, Rect. Eccle. Lud. 1598."

Immediately following is this entry:—

"The names and surnames of certaine, found by George Bassett, Clerke, Parson of Luddenham, then in certain old papers, which by him are gathered and registered now, as many as could by any means by him be learned (?), of such as were christened, married and buried sythen the 30 day of October, 1547."

This entry requires two remarks.—1. This George Bassett died in 1590-1. Under date 1590, *after* two entries in July, there is this: "Buryed the 28 of February Mr. George Bassett preacher of y<sup>e</sup> wood & parson of Luddenham." 2. "Since the 30 day of October, 1547," is not quite correct, as two entries in February and one in March precede the entry under date of October 30. Probably these were discovered after the book was commenced.

The gaps in the register may be briefly mentioned. After May 12, 1553, this entry occurs:

"From this present year untill 1560 can be found nothing remembered nor written."

The next registered christening bears date July 22, 1560. From March 8, 1561, to Aug. 5, 1563, there is also a hiatus duly noted by Peter Jackson. There is also a blank from 1661 to 1666.

In this copied part of the register the dates are not entered in their proper order, regard having been had to the year only. Thus, in 1560 the months run July, October, April, January.

The book is singularly free from any allusions to events of any kind other than baptisms, marriages, and burials of the people. A few visitations are mentioned; now and then a new rector's induction is noted, but the only reference to a public event occurs on the last page of the first volume. The entry immediately follows one giving date of presentation and induction of Nathanael Newburgh (1644 and 1645). It is in his handwriting—

"Bello plusquam ciuili inter Regios et Parliamentarios per plurimam partem Angliæ horribiliter grassante, Bene Vixi, quia bene satis.

Domino Exercitum, Deo Forti,  
Deo Liberatori, Deo Seruatori,  
Deo Pacifico, Gratias."

I may also note that marriages celebrated elsewhere—*e. g.* at Canterbury—are several times entered in this register. The first entry of date of birth, in addition to that of baptism, occurs in 1651. This practice was introduced by Nathanael Newburgh (who re-wrote the register from 1644 to 1654 inclusive. His copy is found in the second volume).

The cover of the second volume contains "Declarations of matrimonial Bannes or Intended Mariages in the parish." The first entry is in 1654. Then follow eight in 1655, when the practice was discontinued.

The following entry occurs on folio 55:—

"This was scene and allowed by us:

"R. CRAWFORD.  
"HEN. PARKER.  
"April 28<sup>th</sup> 1691."

It is the only entry of the kind in the book. What does it mean?

Each of the earlier folios is signed at the bottom by the rector and the churchwarden. The church-