

ROYAL CHARITIES.

(SECOND SERIES.)

PART II.

BY HELEN FARQUHAR.

Alms at the Gate, the Daily Alms, and the Privy Alms.

IN our last volume we glanced in a general way at the various charities massed under the name of Maundy.¹ Before turning in greater detail to the yearly distribution on Holy Thursday of money gifts, presented by our Monarch after the ceremonious washing of the feet of certain selected persons, and the further gifts made on Good Friday under the name of the King's Dole, let us clear the ground of the other charities to which also the word "Maundy" has frequently been applied. We have seen that pennies were required for the Holy Thursday ceremonial; but this was not all, for in the Largesse scattered on



THREEPENCE OF CHARLES II.

Progress and distributed at Easter under the designation of the "King's Dole," we find the necessity for half-groats, and in the time of Henry VII and Henry VIII for groats also; whilst at a later period these latter, and possibly even the quarter-shillings, were required for Gate Alms.

¹ *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xvi, pp. 195-228.

Under the Tudors the money allowance of five pence per man to 13 persons must have been given in the form of a groat or two half-groats supplemented by a penny.

Of all these charities, the "Dayly Almes," or "Almes at the Gate" as the food dole was called, must take precedence, being the most general; for not only at the door of the palace, but from every Religious House, were the wants of the poor supplied. The daily charities in the form of food doles were a survival of the feasts constantly given to the indigent by our early kings, and of the custom which gradually became established of saving for the hungry the scraps which remained from the rich man's table. These food doles were in time commuted for a money payment provided by the "Dayly Almes" and given at the gate to certain selected persons; and in this substitution of money for bread and beer we find a daily need in the palace, the castle, the university or the monastic house for small moneys from the penny to the groat. These feasts are mentioned at other Courts besides our own, notably in the case of Malcolm III of Scotland and his saintly English wife, Margaret;¹ and I have had occasion to refer to those of our Angevin and Plantagenet kings in our former volumes.² But it will be well to draw attention to the fact, that it was not only the saintly, but also the politic, such as our King John, who satisfied the requirements of custom in these matters. In the accounts of Edward I³ these feasts are specified as "*de custuma antiqua*," an expression which, were it not that they come under the head of "*Elemosina*," might be interpreted as compensation for forced assistance. That such compensation was given is certain, even so late as the time of James I, the king being often obliged to impress carts, horses, provisions and even persons, to assist in transport on

¹ *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xvi, pp. 210, 211. Cp. *Life of Margaret, Queen of Scotland*, by Bishop Turgot, who died in August, 1109. The translation of this Latin MS. was published by William Forbes Leith (see 2nd ed., 1886, p. 61, containing the accounts of these ministrations).

² *Ibid.*, vol. xii, p. 57, note 3, and p. 60 *et seq.*

³ *Liber Quotidianus Contra Rotulatores Garderobæ*, 28 Ed. I, Nov., 1299-1300, edited by John Topham for the Society of Antiquaries in 1787.

journey.¹ But I think that appearing in the list of charities the "ancient custom" must be taken merely as indication that such doles were no new thing, and of this we have abundant proof.

Let us return to the accounts of John,² the earliest with which I am personally conversant. This king is not generally regarded as a philanthropist, but he feasted his poor brethren in multitudes, partly no doubt to keep well with the people and partly as expiation for minor sins. John appears to have been far from strict with reference to the fasts enjoined by the Church, with which he was more often at war than at peace. But in his fourteenth regnal year he was temporarily reconciled with the Pope and was therefore inclined to regularize his conduct. Almost every feast of the Church produced a dinner for 100 persons or more, and we read with some amusement that because the king ate flesh twice on the "Friday next after Ascension" at Lambeth, 100 poor folk were fed on bread and fish at the price of 9s. 4½d.³ Again we find 300 persons thus regaled at the cost of 28s. 4d. because of a similar offence on three Fridays, and yet again for the same seven Fridays, 700 at 65s. 7½d.⁴ John feasted the people when he went hunting or hawking, whether as a fine or thank-offering I cannot say. A successful day's hawking, when 9 crane were killed, caused him to entertain 100 guests at Limberge at the expense of 13s. 6½d.,⁵ and the contracted word "paupum," for *pauperum*, translated in his Preface⁶ by Sir Henry Cole as "paupers," shows that these were not the king's friends, but literally some "of the poor folk." It is, however, possible that the feast may have been given in compensation for damage done in hawking. On another occasion at Eiswell 350 poor persons were fed, although only 7 birds were killed, bringing up the expense to

¹ Historical Manuscripts Commission. Report V, Part I, pp. 407-808, October 15, 1605.

² "Rotulus Misæ Anni Regni Johannis Quarta Decimi," published in *Documents Illustrative of English History*, by Sir Henry Cole, in 1841.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 235 and 251.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Preface, pp. vii, viii.

29s. 11d.¹ At Northampton 500 at a cost of 113s. 7d. were regaled with flesh, bread and ale, whilst a similar number had fish and ale, and 13 others are separately set down at a charge of 20½d. for meat and bread.² This number of 13 is suggestive at first sight of Maundy, but it is, as we shall see, quite a common number for such charities, and John's Maundy observances come under a different heading. We see that John's feasts cost him roughly 1½d. per head if of bread and meat, and 1⅕d. sufficed for bread and fish, but if ale was also provided the sum reached 1¾d. or even more. John's eleemosynary accounts are not divided like those of some of the later kings, from those of the household expenses, so we cannot find any evidence that his gifts were personally bestowed; it is therefore useless to go further into the question of the cost of his feasts, the currency being in no way affected.

The charities of Edward I were administered in a more systematic manner, and his eleemosynary account opens in his twenty-eighth regnal year with the sum of £8 8s. 3d. expended in two days on feeding pensioners at the rate of 1½d. per head.³ The numbers fed vary from 10 persons in honour of St. James to 1,000 on the feast of the king's Patron Saint, St. Edward King and Martyr. The accounts of this year 1299-1300 show that he gave food to at least 666 poor persons every week, and often to many more, sometimes to 1,700 or even 2,700.⁴ During Lent the procedure was systematic, 13 of these poor being maintained "ratione jejuniij" and 13 more in honour of the Apostles.⁵ The weekly expenses range between £4 3s. 3d. and £24 15s. 9d., and the total for the year is given as £655 3s. 8d. thus spent in daily charities, but this includes 80s. 10d. for 970 persons treated for the King's Evil within the

¹ "Rotulus Misæ Anni Regni Johannis Quarta Decimi," published in *Documents Illustrative of English History*, by Sir Henry Cole, in 1841, p. 250.

² *Ibid.*, p. 248.

³ *Liber Quotidianus*, p. 16. By a misprint in transcript this is noted at 1d. quadran, but by reference to the plate used as frontispiece to the book we see that it should read ob., and with this the arithmetic tallies.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Preface, p. xxviii, and p. 20.

year, and therefore should be reckoned at £651 2s. 10d. The total charitable expenditure, including oblations, was £1,166 14s. The king, the queen and the royal children were regular in their church oblations, and whilst the offerings of their eldest son average 7s. weekly, the *Wardrobe Accounts of Edward's second son Henry* reveal that he and his sister Eleanor "gave alms varying from 2d. to 4d. every Saturday, and usually on other days as well."¹ Every Friday a sum of usually sixteen or seventeen pence, but rising on Good Friday to 2s. 8d., was assigned "in elemosinis pro pondere domine H et sororis sue." The children, according to information kindly given to me by Mr. Charles Johnson at the Record Office, from the *Wardrobe Accounts of King Edward I*, were weighed and measured each week against candles to be burned in honour of their patron saints, and this must have cost their father a considerable sum.²

As regards the custom of weighing the children in the cause of charity, we may call to mind that this was no new thing, for Stow in his *Survey of London* tells us that Henry III caused his children to be "weighed and measured, their weight and measure to be distributed for their good estates."³ Stow also says that in 1236 "Henry III caused his treasurer William de Hauerhull, upon the day of the Circumcision of Our Lord," to feed at Westminster 6,000 poor people. On the Friday next after the Epiphany, the king commanded Hugh Giffard and William Browne to "cause to be fed in the Great Hall at Windsor at a good fire all the poore and needie children that could be found."⁴

In the same way the mother of Thomas à Becket, although only the wife of a London citizen, weighed her son as a child against food

¹ Published by Miss Hilda Johnson in *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. vii, pp. 386-420. Accounts running from February, 1273, to October, 1274, when Prince Henry died, aged five.

² 500 candles were offered by Henry III in thanksgiving after the birth of Prince Edward in 1239. See *England under Henry III*, by Margaret Hennings.

³ Stow's *Survey of London*, Kingsford's edition, vol. i, p. 90.

⁴ Stow, *ibid.*, vol. i, p. 90.

and clothing which she gave to the poor.¹ The candles burnt to the honour of saints sometimes contained a further offering, and we read of three half-angels put by Princess Mary Tudor into her taper on Candlemas Day in 1536-7.² On this day the offering of a taper was almost compulsory, and it was only under Edward VI that a proclamation had ordered that none should be imprisoned for neglecting this duty.³

But we must not wander from the food doles to the many church offerings which we have fully discussed in our former volumes.⁴ I can only express my sorrow that I was not able to avail myself of Mr. Charles Johnson's very kind offer to pilot me through some of the other accounts of the Edwards, an offer consequent upon some correspondence that followed upon his interesting paper on Edward I's Wardrobe Books, which he read before the Royal Historical Society in March, 1923.⁵ He informed me that the rule of feeding at least 666 persons in the week—although the "ancient custom," and mentioned as such, as I have said in 1299-1300, and again, as he tells me, in the Wardrobe Accounts of 1305-6—was probably the outcome of personal vows, and was not so ancient as the time of John when, as we have seen, the meals were casual.

The word "putura" is used with regard to the feasts given by Edward I, and this expression, as the transcriber of the manuscript, published by the Society of Antiquaries, John Topham, explains in his glossary, here signifies "maintenance or sustenance of poor persons at the Royal expense."⁶ Mr. W. J. Andrew tells me that the more ancient meaning was "man's meat gratis," it being the right of the king to extort rations from his tenants at a fixed rate of compensation. In this compensation therefore we may see the reason

¹ *England under Angevin Kings*, by Kate Norgate, vol. i, p. 50.

² *Privy Purse Expenses of Princess Mary*, edited by F. Madden, p. 16 (1536-7).

³ *Ibid.*, notes, p. 218.

⁴ *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xii, p. 72, and pp. 81-88.

⁵ Published in Royal Historical Society's *Transactions*, Fourth Series, vol. vi, pp. 50-72.

⁶ *Liber Quotidianus, Elemosina*, p. 16 *et seq.*, and Glossary, p. 369.

why in all feasts the cost per man is set down, and this fact does not therefore indicate that money was given to the king's poor guests in lieu of victuals. In 1297, some two years before the date of the accounts above quoted, the customs due to the crown were revised, and it was decided, as Dr. Hubert Hall tells us,¹ that "the crown might take for its use only such quantity of provisions as was absolutely necessary for the royal household." In William I's reign, and "down to the time of Henry I his son," as Dr. Hall explains, when provender was accepted rather than a money tax, wheat to feed 100 men was reckoned at 1s.² In spite, therefore, of the rising price of corn, which in the reign of John's son Henry III became abnormally high according to the list of prices published by Mr. Topham,³ it appears that when John paid 1s. 8½d. to feed the 13 men on bread and meat, or 113s. 7d. for a feast to 500 persons, consisting of bread, meat and ale, he was giving, if he had impressed these provisions from the towns through which he passed, monetary compensation at full market value.

The scene depicted in facsimile at the commencement of this series of articles⁴ is the work of an eleventh-century monk, who was no doubt familiar with such food distributions in his monastery at Canterbury. To save reference it is reproduced at the beginning of this article, slightly reduced, and in monochrome. It brings before us the "Daily Alms," as this dole was later called by the Tudors, or "Gate Alms" in our modern parlance, and pictures for us a king or great personage at the gate of his residence distributing gifts to the poor.⁵

Such distribution of food does not appear to have been always

¹ *Antiquities and Curiosities of the Exchequer*, p. 215.

² *Ibid.*, p. 181.

³ *Liber Quotidianus*, in "Observations on the Wardrobe Accounts of Edward I," p. xxv.

⁴ *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xii, facing p. 39, coloured illustration of Psalm cxi in the Vulgate (or Psalm cxii according to our Psalter). *Brit. Mus. Harl. MS.*, 603.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. xii, pp. 60-3.

personal, although we read that Malcolm III of Scotland and his wife served their 300 poor guests with their own hands every day during Lent and in the 40 days preceding Christmas.¹ The queen also herself humbly waited upon 24 poor people, whom she fed "throughout the year, moving them with her Court, so that this charity might be uninterrupted;"² and she moreover attended personally to the wants of 9 orphans, whose food she actually prepared.³ But such devotion is exceptional, although historians occasionally give us a pleasing glimpse of kindly thoughtfulness in later times, as when Charles I,⁴ on his way to Scotland in 1639, confided to the authorities in York on Easter Monday the sum of £70 for each of the four wards of the City, to be distributed amongst the poor widows of the town. Also Henry V, besieging Rouen, caused the non-combatant population to be succoured. The women and children, useless persons in the eyes of the garrison, had been turned out to starve between the walls and the English lines, and, writes Holinshed, "King Henrie moued with pitie vpon Christmasse daie in honor of Christes Nativitie refreshed all the poor people with vittels."⁵ But whether dictated by pity or by policy—for we note that Holinshed concludes "to their great comfort and his high praise"—or by the exigencies of the moment, the desire to stand well with the Church, or even the force of habit in long-established custom, we find in the Middle Ages, and, indeed, well on into the sixteenth century, that just as a king or great nobleman travelling with a large train was obliged to provide for his retinue, similar responsibilities weighed upon him with regard to those who came from a distance to his house on an errand. Although therefore the *Ordinances of Charles II's Household*⁶ promulgated on the Restoration ordered the removal

¹ *Life of St. Margaret*, p. 62.

² *Ibid.*, p. 63. The special number of 24 persons will again attract our attention in the daily distribution at the gate of Whitehall under Charles II.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁴ Drake's *Eboracum*, p. 137.

⁵ Holinshed, vol. iii, p. 103, ed. 1808.

⁶ *Collection of Ordinances*, published by the Society of Antiquaries in 1790, p. 352.

from the precincts of "vagrant persons, rogues and all sorts of beggars," so that "no masterlesse men or uncivil or unclean and rude people . . . shall come within our Court," the daily distribution to the poor at the gate was not forgotten, the daily pensioners being selected persons and not "idle and loose people" to whom access was forbidden.

Let us now see the gradual development of the food dole into the "Daily Alms," in no way restricted to royalty.

In the castles of the nobility, in the King's Palaces, in every Religious House, in learned Institutions, such as the Colleges and Inns of Court, the food dole gradually took the place of the feasts. The subject of this food dole, distributed by the Almoner daily to those who came to the gate to receive it, is, of course, a matter of well-known history. But there are unfamiliar details connected with this charity which bring it within the sphere of numismatic study. In the monasteries and other large houses no less than in the King's immediate residence, all the broken food was gathered into baskets and delivered to the poor. Some have mistakenly seen in these baskets called "Maunds" the origin of the word Maundy, but as we have already explained, a more correct derivation lies in the command of Our Lord at the Cœna Domini: "Mandatum novum do vobis."¹

It will be remembered that before the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, the Religious Houses were open to all travellers and took the place of inns. So much was this the case that the very extravagance in the monasteries sometimes contributed to their dissolution. We are told,² for instance, concerning Christchurch, Aldgate, a Priory which according to Stow "kept a bountiful house of meat and drink both for rich and poor as well within the

¹ *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xvi, p. 212. See also Mr. Wheatley's note to his edition of *Pepys' Diary*, vol. vi, p. 257, note 1, where he explains that Professor Skeat has settled the question, proving that Maundy is the phonetic form of the French *mandé* for *mandatum* (see Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*).

² *The Beginning of the Dissolution*, p. 131, by Miss E. Jeffries Davis, Royal Historical Society's *Transactions*, 4th series, vol. viii, pp. 127-150.

house as at the gates to all comers according to their estates,"¹ that the Prior and Canons in February, 1531-2, made over their possessions to the king partly because their debt became too heavy for liquidation. But where hospitality was so lavish the amount of broken bread was considerable. The wayfarer might be entertained free of charge, or might give money in return for the benefits which he enjoyed, increasing thereby the resources of the house towards feeding the poor. The pious and benevolent were apt to bequeath certain endowments to those who, profiting by their generosity, were required to pray for the souls of the departed. There was scarcely a Religious Order whose history did not embrace such bequests. Mr. Fletcher, for instance, writing of the Cistercians,² tells us that some houses of this order were largely supplied with funds for this special service, and mentions that Meaux had "no fewer than 18 grants of this sort, for a free and perpetual alms to be made at the gate." Such bequests are still operative in many places, and Mr. Walter Bell, writing in 1912,³ gives us the example of St. Dunstan's where, every Sunday, 13 pennyworth of bread is handed to as many persons after service, in consequence of a Trust for a thousand years, provided in 1584 by two inhabitants of Hare House, Rams Alley, at a yearly expenditure of £2 16s. 4d.

The Cathedral of St. Albans still possesses, as we learned in 1920, near the tower within an opening leading to the Cloisters, three ancient cupboards, from which loaves of bread are distributed every Sunday to the aged poor of the parish, in accordance with a charity founded by one Richard Skelton in 1628.⁴ Hasted, the historian of Kent, writing in 1790, stated that 600 cakes, 270 loaves of bread, and 1½ lbs. of cheese were every Easter given to the poor of Biddenden in that county.⁵ The word "loaves" is subject to

¹ Stow's *Survey of London*, Kingsford's edition, vol. i, 1908, p. 141.

² *Cistercians in Yorkshire*, by J. S. Fletcher, p. 164.

³ *Fleet Street in Seven Centuries*, by Walter G. Bell, p. 296.

⁴ *Cathedral and Abbey Church of St. Albans*, by the Rev. E. H. Evans and the late D. A. H. Lawrence, p. 28.

⁵ *History of Kent*, vol. iii, p. 66.

a varied interpretation in different centuries, as is explained by the anonymous author of a book entitled *Lambeth Palace*, whilst telling us of the charity displayed by Archbishop Robert Winchelsey, who during his primacy from 1294-1313 "gave euery Friday and Sunday to euery beggar that came to his gate a lofe of bread sufficient for that day." The loaf, according to the author of this book on Lambeth Palace, was valued at "a farthing piece."¹ The size of the loaf on the other hand, if limited as it often was by a money bequest, may appear very small in these days of high prices. "The Guift of Jeremiah Bright of London," bequeathed in 1697, now takes the form of one dozen twopenny rolls at Ruislip near Mortlake, in order that "2s. worth of Bread be distributed by ye Minist^r and Churchwardens to the Poor every Sunday for ever," for otherwise the three shelves of the hanging "dole cupboard" made to contain the larger loaves could not be duly furnished.²

But we may go back further for the continuity of such doles, in that Mr. Victor Cook speaks of the "Dole Bread" from the lands at Gravellingwell, a gift inaugurated by Ralph de Warham when, in the eleventh century, he was Bishop of Winchester and high in the favour of King Henry III. This "Dole Bread" was distributed to the poor of Chichester for centuries.³

We find Nicholas West, made Bishop of Ely in 1515, daily relieving in 1532 "Two hundred poor people with warme meate besides bread and drink" at his gates.⁴ Or to turn again to the chronicler Stow, we notice his regret on the loss to the community in the death in 1572 of Edward, Earl of Derby, a man of princely charity. Stow speaks of his liberality to strangers, his "famous

¹ *Lambeth Palace*, p. 55. This book, published anonymously, was dedicated to Dr. Manners Sutton as Primate, and was from internal evidence probably published in or soon after 1805, the date of his accession to the Primacy. See also Stow's *Survey of London*, Kingsford's edition, vol. i, p. 90.

² Mr. Frederick Roe, writing on furniture in the *Connoisseur* for July, 1925, p. 148, describes and illustrates this "dole cupboard" with its shelves.

³ *The Story of Sussex*, p. 185.

⁴ *Eton College*, by Lionel Cust, p. 731.

houskeeping" and his feeding aged persons "twice every day sixtie and odde, besides all commers, thrise a weeke appointed for his dealing dayes and every Good Friday 2,700 with meate drinke and money."¹ Again Stow, referring to Henry VIII's Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord Great Chamberlain, Thomas Cromwell, describes the distributions to the poor as follows: "I, my selfe in that declining time of charity haue oft seene at the Lord Cromwel's gate in London, more than two hundred persons serued twice every day with bread, meate and drinke sufficient, for hee obserued the auncient and charitable custome, as all prelates, noble men, or men of honor and worship his predecessors had done before him."² The chronicler, however, laments towards³ the end of the sixteenth century a greater decline in the magnitude of this charity, and quotes Bede as saying that "the Prelates of his time" had on their "borde at theyre meales one Almes dish into which was carued some good portion of meate out of eury dish brought to their Table."⁴

These alms-dishes were to be found in all large households and on all noblemen's and prelate's tables, and the quantities of the provisions thus given away were prodigious; added to this, bread was specially baked for distribution. Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham in the reign of Edward III, "did weekly bestowe for the reliefe of the poor eight quarters of wheate made into bread besides his almes dish, fragments from his house, and great summes of money given to the poor when he iourneyed."⁵ The injunctions against waste of such fragments were very strict, and Archbishop Parker⁶ is insistent on this point in his *Regulations* at Lambeth Palace drawn up *circa* 1559-1575, and probably themselves founded on

¹ Stow's *Survey of London*, Kingsford's edition, vol. i, p. 88.

² Stow's *Survey of London*, vol. i, p. 89. See also *Shakespeare's England*, vol. ii, p. 487.

³ Stow published his *Survey of London* in 1598, and re-published it in 1603. He died in 1605.

⁴ Stow's *Survey of London*, p. 89.

⁵ Stow, *ibid.*, pp. 90, 91.

⁶ *Lambeth Palace*, p. 55.

yet earlier rules promulgated by Cranmer.¹ "There must be no purloining of meat left upon the tables" is one command followed by the injunction "that it be putt into the Almestubb and the tubb to be kepte sweete and cleane before it be issued from time to time."

Nevertheless we must remind our readers that a demand for perquisites was sometimes put forward and compensation had to be awarded. "In 29 Elizabeth," writes William Dugdale² under date February 6, 1586-7, "there was a charitable order made for the better relief of the poor in Gray's Inne Lane, viz., 'That the third Butler should be at the carrying forth from the Buttery and also at the distribution of Almes, thrice in the week at Greyes Inne Gate, to see that due consideration be had to the poorer sort of aged and impotent persons according as in former time he used to do.'" Nichols reports³ that by Elizabeth's direct order somewhat later, this regulation was enforced and compensation given to those who claimed the perquisites, for the learned Society of Gray's Inn was under the patronage of the Queen; but the compensation was not monetary, for thus says Dugdale: "Whereas the Pannyer man and under Cook did challenge to have a corrody⁴ of the broken Bread. It was likewise ordered that for those dayes that the Almes was given they should have each of them a cast of Bread; scil: three loaves apiece in lieu thereof; to the end the whole broken Bread and the Almes Basket might go to the Poor."

¹ I was privileged to see these regulations at Lambeth, and was told by the courteous Librarian, Professor the Rev. Dr. Claude Jenkins, that this is most likely the case.

² Dugdale's *Origines Juridiciales*, cap. lxvii, p. 286, under the heading of "Relief of the Poor."

³ Nichols' *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. i, pp. 27, 28, ed. 1788; and *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xii, p. 64.

⁴ A corrody was a sum of money or an allowance of meat, drink, or clothing, due to the king from an abbey, or other house of religion, whereof he was founder or hereditary owner of the dues, and distributed or assigned by the king towards the maintenance in an abbey of any of his servants. I understand that a "corrody" of 2s. 6d. a week is still paid at Lambeth to people who represent the "out Sisters and Brothers of the old foundation," i.e. those who lived without the wall.

Nichols, in a note dealing with the "Expenses of the Queen's Table," states that in the year 1576 the accounts of Elizabeth's Bakehouse show forth: "In broken bread delivered to the almnrs 5 qrtr. 4 bush. dim,"¹ and "The Queen's alms to 13 poor men in bread (13 loaves) and ale (2 gallons) £22."

The distribution at Court lay with the Almoner, from whom it eventually devolved upon two Grooms, and two Yeomen of the Almonry, who, says Edward Chamberlayne, writing in 1672, "have salaries of his Majesty for that Service."² The "Ordinances" made for the government of Charles II's household in the first year after the Restoration are worded much like those of Archbishop Parker, although they were framed at least a hundred years apart. "The gentlemen-ushers were commanded to take particular care herein that all the meate that is taken off the table on trencher plates be put into a basket for the poor and not undecently eated by any servant in the roome."³

We shall see that under the Tudors a money distribution had commenced which was called the "Daily Alms," and consisted almost invariably in a share of 37s. 11d. per week divided between 13 persons, or £93 11s. 8d. a year. This dole was supplementary to the food distribution, but eventually assumed larger proportions and supplanted it.

As in the monasteries, so in the palaces, the amount of broken meat must have been very large in early Tudor and Stuart times. Chamberlayne unfortunately only began to write under Charles II, and never dated his references to past events; but he, nevertheless, gave by way of contrast many side-lights on earlier history. He speaks of the great numbers of dishes served at Court "in the last King's reign before the troubles," thereby clearly pointing to the time of Charles I. But he tells us that the first Charles had already

¹ Nichols' *Progresses of Elizabeth*, vol. ii, pp. 45 and 50, "The Queen's Majesty's Dyett."

² *Angliæ Notitia, or Present State of England*, 1672, part i, p. 212.

³ *Collection of Ordinances*, p. 367.

"lessened" many of the offices and expenses," and "the King now reigning," *i.e.* Charles II, "hath yet lessened more."¹

We may, I think, be fairly certain that on the Restoration the customs of the Court, somewhat fallen into abeyance under the Lord Protector, were re-established, although not quite according to the profuse magnificence displayed before the Civil War. There were drastic reforms in the expenditure of Charles II in 1667-8,² but already, previously to this enquiry into the household accounts, the King's prodigality had received a check. It is clear that Chamberlayne was right when he wrote of the beneficence of Charles II as "lessened," for we find the accurate John Evelyn noting the same fact in his *Diary* on August 20, 1663.³ Evelyn was dining that day with the Comptroller of the Household, and remarked that "it was said it should be the last of the public diets or tables at Court, it being determined to put down the old hospitality, at which was great murmuring, considering his Ma'ty's vast revenue and the plenty of ye nation." The "Free Tables" in the times of James I were open to the public, and Chamberlayne says that even in Charles I's reign "there were daily at his Court 86 tables well furnished at every meal."⁴ The first retrenchment appears to have been made shortly after Charles I ascended the throne. Miss Mary Coate, in her *Social Life in Stuart England*, quotes a contemporary writer whose name she does not give, but who, under date of July 7, 1626, gives details of the changes.⁵ "After Sunday next," says this authority, "all the tables at Court are to be put down and the Courtiers put upon board wages, except the Chamberlain, the Master of the Horse, the Secretary that waits, and the Groom of the Stole."

¹ *Angliæ Notitia*, 1st edition, 1669, p. 296, and 1671, p. 207.

² *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xiii, p. 143, note 3. Notes from the MS. *State Papers Domestic of Charles II*, vols. 233, No. 150, and 236, No. 193. Privy Council Meeting of March 18, 1667-8, when the grant to the Privy Purse was reduced to £20,000 a year.

³ *Evelyn's Diary*, ed. 1827, vol. ii, p. 211.

⁴ *Angliæ Notitia*, or *Present State of England*, 1672, part i, p. 212.

⁵ *Social Life in Stuart England*, p. 76, by Mary Coate.

We see, therefore, that it was only in the first flush of the Restoration that the "Free Tables" kept by James I were temporarily re-opened, but that Charles II shortly followed in his father's footsteps and endeavoured to "lessen" expenses.

If we turn to the account-books in 1689 of William and Mary, who were anxious to retain a popularity which was somewhat tarnished by antagonistic politics, we shall find the usual entry "Dayly Alms at the Gate."¹ But the alms are set forth as a money payment, and we do not see gifts to the poor mentioned as of yore amongst "daily liveries of bread, beer and wyne for the several dyetts," but, in company with wages and pensions and "board wages to old servants," we notice that the sum of £219 is set aside for these "Daily Alms." It crosses our minds that this allocation of £219, larger than that of Charles II, who had almost doubled the yearly allowance for "Daily Alms" made by the Tudors, may have been so expended by William and Mary partly in compensation for the dwindling contents of the alms-tubs under the economical regulations of the semi-Dutch Court. Careful record is kept of the "manchets" or small rolls of bread and of the loaves required by the entire household.² The King, Queen and Court were obliged to content themselves with 136½ gallons of beer and 30 bottles of Lambeth ale as against 240 gallons³ which, under Charles II, had been distributed to the "poor at the Gate," and we have only the item of 1 gallon of beer and a loaf per day for the porter. But as regards the consumption of beer at Court, we must bear in mind that ale and wine were no longer the exclusive beverages in the fashionable world. The more expensive tea and chocolate, although a new importation in the reign of Charles II, had come into daily use under Mary and Anne. Chamberlayne's lists of provisions for the Palace before the Civil War are formidable, and we may quote: "For Bread 36,400 Bushels of Wheat and for Drink 600 Tun of Wine and

¹ *Collection of Ordinances*, p. 417.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 384-5.

³ *Angliæ Notitia*, 1672, part i, p. 212.

1,700 Tun of Beer.”¹ The £219, however, as quoted above is not only the allowance for the poor under William and Mary, but continues in the time of Anne. By the kindness of the late Colonel Campion, I was permitted access to some account-books at Danny of the year 1702. Under date March 25 to June 24, I noticed that the Queen allowed “To the Lord Almoner 500^{li} per Ann for Her Mat^s daily Alms” and “£219 per Ann for Poor at the Gate,” the quarter payments coming respectively to £125 for the former and £54 15s. for the latter. Here we have a distinct line drawn between the distribution of otherwise useless scraps and the money allowance provided by the “Daily Alms.”

Let us draw again upon our excellent friend Edward Chamberlayne,² and quote his description of the office of the Lord Almoner, who must not be confused with the Hereditary Grand Almoner instituted in the reign of Richard I, and whose duty it was to distribute the largesse at the Coronation. The duties of the Lord Almoner were defined under Edward I,³ but Chamberlayne tells us that apart from the King’s Offerings in Church, specially large on Collar Days and at the Epiphany, “all Deodands and Felonum de se [were] to be that way disposed.”⁴ We must remember that the “Privy Alms,” which appear to have been at the discretion of the Lord Almoner, were under Henry VII⁵ and Henry VIII⁶ stated at £10 a month, and under Edward VI⁷ had risen to £240 a year, at the rate, namely, of £20 monthly; and under Mary I, money laid aside in an estimate of the probable expenses of 1553-4 for this purpose is quoted at

¹ *Anglicæ Notitia*, ed. 1672, pp. 212-13.

² *Ibid.*, part i, p. 162.

³ Timbs’s *Curiosities of London*, p. 7.

⁴ For Collar Days, when the King’s gift was always in gold, see *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. xii, p. 86, and note 1 on that page. The Epiphany gift of a gold bezant is now, after passing through various vicissitudes, replaced by £50 in notes.

⁵ *Brit. Mus. MS.*, Addit. 21480 (1497-1505).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 21481, and Addit. 20030 (1529-32), and *Arundel MS.* 97 (1537-8, 1541), and *Stow MS.* 554 (May to September, 1542); and also at Public Record Office, *Exchequer Accounts*, various, Bundle 420, No. 11.

⁷ Public Record Office, *Exchequer Accounts*, various, Bundle 426, Nos. 5 and 6.

£1,800 for a year, apart from her Offerings through the Dean of her Chapel, which are set down at £200, and her "Daily Almes" of £75 16s. 8d.,¹ and Nichols in 1576 gives £73 as "The daylie almes by the yere" of Elizabeth, plus £22 for bread and ale.² The Daily Offerings of Edward IV amounted to but £10 3s. 8d. a year at the rate of 7d. a day. On special occasions, *i.e.* on 17 days in the year, he offered 6s. 8d., his new "noble" or a "greete plate of golde,"



GOLD BEZANT OF JAMES I.

(*Medallic Illustrations*, vol. 1, p. 187, No. 2.)

later represented by the bezant, which had to be redeemed at a price.³ The bezant under Edward VI was reckoned at from 40s. to 48s., but the gold offered by the Tudors every Sunday was never less than 6s. 8d., and often more, whilst under James I, although valued at only about £15 in gold, the cost to the king was £47 7s. in 1604 "for the gold patterns and stamps" of "a fayre bezaunt or offering

¹ *Trevelyan Papers*, part ii, vol. 84, of Camden Society's Publications, 1862, p. 36. Probably the almes through the Deane of the Chappell were for Collar Days.

² Nichols' *Progresses*, vol. ii, p. 48.

³ *Liber Niger Domus Regis Edw. IV*, p. 23.

pece" which Anthony had "made for his Matie's service,"¹ and "a besaunte," made for Anne of Denmark in 1611 cost £38. It is interesting to note that in Elias Ashmole's *Order of the Garter*,² published in 1672, the author gives a list of jewels belonging to the Order which had been melted under the Commonwealth. Amongst other things he mentions "*Two Offering Pieces* and a Sey³ of gold weighing 10 ounces and 1 quarter." It is clear from this description that the bezant was still offered until this wilful destruction.

The disposal of a very considerable sum of money, apart from the "Privy Alms" and "Daily Alms," was at the command of the Lord Almoner, and if we study some of the obligatory ways of distribution under Charles II we begin to see a need for small coins. Firstly, then, there was the gift of the "King's Dish," *i.e.* the power to present the first dish at dinner set upon the royal table, "to whatsoever man he [the Almoner] pleases, or instead thereof fourpence," which "anciently was," says Chamberlayne, "equivalent to four shillings." "Next he distributes," continues this writer, "to 24 men nominated by the Parishioners of the Parish adjacent to the king's Place of Residence, to each of them fourpence in money a Twopenny Loaf and a gallon of Beer or instead thereof 3*d.* in money to be equally divided between them every morning at 7 of the Clock at the Court Gate and every Poor Man before he received the almes is to repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer in the Presence of one of the King's Chaplains."⁴ The wording of this account is slightly ambiguous, and it is not easy to ascertain whether the recipient of the King's Dish was included in the 24 or whether there were altogether 25 men, whether also each man had fourpence, and the recipient of the King's Dish appointed by the Almoner a double gift coming to eightpence. Had each of the poor men appointed by the Parish a farthing as a share in the bread and beer, or was

¹ *State Papers Domestic*, vol. x, Nov. 4, 1604, Docquet, and *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ix, pp. 225-6, by Henry Symonds.

² *Institution of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, p. 220.

³ "Sey" is an old word for a tasting dish.

⁴ *Angliæ Notitia*, 1673, p. 217.

threepence as the substitute for the food and beer given to each man? I have not found in Charles II's accounts the exact sum delivered to the Lord Almoner that either payment would demand, but I am inclined to think that even at this period one farthing would not adequately replace the food dole mentioned. Moreover, as the king and queen are described as having besides "many poor pensioners below stairs," an arithmetical calculation is not possible.

The substitution of a money gift for one in kind was neither new nor peculiar to kings; Bishop Winchelsey, in the thirteenth century, at whose bi-weekly distribution we have already glanced, "used euery Festiuall day to giue 150 pence to so many poore people" and "in time of dearth fed five thousand persons" in the year, "but in a plentiful four thousand and never under."¹ Bede notes "a poor Prelate, wanting victuals hath caused his almes dish, being silver to be devided among the poore therewith to shift as they could til God should send them better store."² Cardinal Wolsey would after service, as his servant and admirer George Cavendish tells us, "dine in some honest house in the town, where should be distributed to the poor a great alms as well of meat and drink as of money to supply the want of sufficient meat if the number of the poor did excede the necessity."³



WOLSEY'S GROAT.

One is half inclined to wonder whether the need for small specie in lieu of provisions is a possible explanation of the abuse by the Cardinal of the power to coin in York. One of the charges brought

¹ Stow's *Survey of London*, vol. i, p. 90; *Lambeth Palace*, p. 55.

² Stow, *ibid.*, ed. 1908, vol. i, p. 89.

³ Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*, in ed. 1827, p. 327.

against him was that he overstepped his privileges in the matter, coining the groat, when the permission extended to the half-groat only.¹

Such was the magnificence of this prelate that it was not unlikely that he, like his master, gave fivepence as a food dole, although at that time the sum required by under-servants as board wages stood at $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $3d.$ apiece,² the groat being the keep for one day of the upper servants. The instances given above of the substitution of coin for bread and meat are accidental, being based on a food shortage. But so early as in the reign of Henry VII, John Stow, speaking of the king's foundation of the Hospital of the Savoy, says that Henry left £20 to be distributed "to the poore by twopence the peece to 13 poore men and three poore women . . . prouided in the same monasterie twelve pence the yeare." "Also," he continues, "a weekly obid . . . to give to 140 poore people each one penie."³

It is clear that to aid the distribution of kitchen scraps a certain money allowance was in Tudor times made to this department. The daily expenses set down in books of "Diets" under Henry VIII and Edward VI furnish such examples. The various items of expenditure at Hampton Court in 1553 are divided into kitchen, stables, scullery, etc., and each weekly account ends with "elm iiij^s" or "elmoy iiij^s," and another manuscript of 1531-2 is worded in much the same manner.⁴ This sum was possibly paid in compensation to the cooks for the food alms they were bound to distribute, and coming to 28s. must not be confused with the regular 37s. 11d. of the "Daily Alms," which, even at this period, was clearly distributed by the sub-almoner at the gate in the form of a money dole,

¹ Hawkins's *Silver Coins*, p. 279. "Of his pompous and presumptuous mind he hath enterprised to coin and imprint the Cardinal's Hat under your Arms in your coin of groats made in your City of York."

² *Privy Purse Accounts of King Henry VIII*, pp. 71, 78, 95, 123, 129, etc.

³ Abridgement of Stow's *Chronicle*, ed. 1607, p. 251.

⁴ "Diets of 23rd Henry VIII, September, 1531, to September, 1532," *Brit. Mus. MS.*, Addit. 35182, and "Books of Diets of Edward VI, 1553," *Brit. Mus. MS.*, Addit. 35184 and 9823. The loaves and ale for Elizabeth's thirteen daily pensioners cost her £22 a year. See Nichols' *Progresses*, vol. ii, p. 50.

But the development was probably gradual and dependent on circumstances, beginning with food ordered by Edward the Confessor to be given daily to a sick woman who came to seek his aid, and culminating in the daily substitution, for a "Twopenny Loaf and a gallon of Beer," of "3*d.* in money" under Charles II.

The subject is ably summed up by an early nineteenth-century writer, who, speaking of the Gatehouse at Lambeth built in the fifteenth year of Edward II, explains that the dole was "immemorially given to the poor at this gate,"¹ Publishing about 1805 or 1806, he tells us that the word dole, alas! so familiar to our modern ears, signified originally "a share," and "in former times was understood of the relief given to the indigent at the gates of great men." This writer and others carry us onward from the money distribution of



HALFPENNY OF GEORGE III.

the thirteenth century by Winchelsey, and the charity of Thomas à Becket, who daily fed a hundred of his poorer brethren in the time of Henry II, and refused to sit down to dinner unless 26 beggars had been presented with the best dishes from his table.² At Lambeth some of these charities survived at the time our author was writing. At the beginning, then, of the nineteenth century³ a large dole of beef and bread was still given, and it was supplemented by a money gift. Five shillingworth of halfpence were weekly

¹ *Lambeth Palace*, p. 54. It appears that the publication of this book cannot have been long delayed after Dr. Manners Sutton's accession to the Primacy in 1805. There is an edition at Lambeth with coloured plates bearing date 1806, but whether this or the undated edition is the first I have not been able to ascertain.

² *England under Angevin Kings*, vol. ii, p. 8.

³ *Lambeth Palace*, p. 56.

procured to be divided between 30 of the poor parishioners, 10 at a time on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, each person receiving 2*d.* besides bread and meat-broth.

The writer of an article on Lambeth in Dr. Rait's *English Episcopal Palaces*,¹ published in 1910, gives an excellent description of the various charities, and speaks of the dole as still existing in a "modified form." I learn the nature of this "modified form" by the courtesy of Professor Jenkins, the learned librarian at Lambeth, who told me that the dole is still given weekly to 30 deserving people, but neither as food nor in copper coins. In the mid-nineteenth century the dole was changed to 2*s.*, and in 1920, when he kindly supplied this information, it stood at 2*s.* 6*d.*, but not necessarily given in new coin. It is dispensed as of yore by the porter at the gate where, from the time of Edward II, it had been administered, but if the old people do not come the money is sent to them. A further dole of 2*s.* 6*d.* is given to certain persons, representing the old corrody to the outsisters and brothers.

But it is high time to enquire into the monetary source whence the food dole was paid apart from such windfalls as Deodands, namely, things or animals forfeited to the Crown, because they had caused the death of a human being; and Felonum de se—or the property of suicides. We have seen that there was a large but varying sum designated "Privy Almes." As already stated, Edward IV² gave in "Daily" offerings seven pence per diem, but the accounts of the Tudors show us definitely that the Church offerings and the "Daily Alms" are quite distinct, and later, under Henry VII and Henry VIII and Edward VI, are weekly entered at "xxxvijs xj^d."

The *State Papers Domestic* under Mary further enlighten us. "The Queen to Sir John Masone Treasurer of the Chamber. Warrant to deliver 5^s 5^d daily to Dr. Bell Chief Almoner to be by him distributed at the Court Gate."³ Still more definite is the *Harleian*

¹ "The Province of Canterbury," by Valentina Hawtrey, p. 63, in *English Episcopal Palaces*, edited by R. S. Rait.

² See *ante*, p. 150, *Liber Niger Domus Regis Edw. IV.*, p. 23.

³ *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*, 1554, p. 56.

Manuscript, 1644,¹ in the British Museum, with regard to Elizabeth's alms, for it tells us the number of daily pensioners: "xiiij pore men at her Ma'tes Gate every of them v^d p. diem." These itemised accounts kept in Elizabeth's twenty-third and twenty-fourth regnal years, namely, Michaelmas, September 29, 1581, to the same date in 1582, throw much light on this and other questions, £58 5s. 4d. being set aside for the Maundy in that year, of which the small coin amounted to £9 12s. ; and we notice £133 6s. 8d. for another Easter charity, entitled the "King's Dole," or the "Queen's Dole" in the case of Elizabeth. The grand total of Elizabeth's alms, exclusive of her Church offerings, reaches £540, considerably lower than those of her sister Mary. The "Daily Alms" are, however, the same as those of her Tudor predecessors and reach "viii^{li} vij^s xj^d" in a



MARY'S FIRST GROAT.

month "contayning xxxj dayes." "Her Highness prevye Almes" are always set down at "xx^{li}" a month, and "the Right Reverend Father in God, John Pyers, Bishop of Sarum, Her Majesty's High Almoner," received therefore for the poor for the "Privy Almes" and the "Daily Almes" together in February, £27 11s. 8d., and in a month of 30 days, £28 2s. 6d., or in one of 31 days, £28 7s. 11d. The current coin of Tudor times lent itself easily to a distribution of 5d. per man—a groat and a penny being always accessible. "The Syluer of England," writes Andrew Borde in his *Introduction to Knowledge* in 1543,² "is Grotes, halfe grotes, Pens, halfe pens and there be some Fardynges." Mary on her accession issued groats, half-groats and pennies in her first silver coinage, and we may glance at the possibility that she required these for the "Daily Alms"

¹ *Brit. Mus. Harl. MS.*, No. 1644, Anno Eliz. 23-24.

² *The Boke of Introduction to Knowledge*, 1543, by Andrew Borde, chap. 8, p. xxiii.

and that other "Largesse" with which we shall deal later under the name of the "King's Dole."

Elizabeth increased the varieties of her coinage to 19 denominations, of which 11 were in silver, and there can be little doubt that her small coins, even the three-farthing pieces, were useful, whether in royal or private hands, for charitable purposes, and it was probably because they were not easily distinguishable from coins of higher value that they were discontinued.

We have no exact evidence of the moment when the 13 pensioners of the Tudors, requiring 13 pence and 13 groats or 26 half-groats daily, were increased to the 24 "pore men nominated by the parishioners," and apparently a twenty-fifth chosen by the Almoner who, under Charles II, received fourpence each, with a further sum in lieu of a food dole. But we may recall that 24 persons were daily fed by Margaret the wife of Malcolm III, and if one were indeed added to the numbers of men, it is possible that they represented the 12 apostles in addition to the usually accepted 13. Another change occurs in the money gift at an unspecified moment. The Secretary of Queen Victoria's Almonry, writing in 1893, mentioned that 150 persons were in 1843 relieved from their daily irksome attendance, and were thenceforth given their dole at Christmas and Easter, receiving 26s. a year each to represent an allowance of 6*d.* a week as Gate Alms, whilst 1,300 persons, under the name of Common Bounty, were yearly presented with 10*s.* This latter sum might easily take its rise from a dole for bread, for I learnt from Bishop Taylor, late Bishop of Kingston, that when he was Vicar of St. Saviour's, Southwark, such a benefaction survived there from a 10*s.* grant made by Charles I.

I have found no mention of the sum of 6*d.* per week in Stuart or Tudor Royal accounts, but this allowance was probably of ancient origin, in that in the thirteenth century there is ample evidence that 6*d.* a week, or at most 8*d.*, was considered an adequate endowment for poor students by the founders of some of the Oxford Colleges.¹

¹ See *Oxford and Its Story*, pp. 119 and 128, by Cecil Headlam, on "Endowments of the year 1270 at Merton, and 1266 at Balliol."

Mr. Cecil Headlam, in his interesting books on that University, shows that bread and beer were deemed sufficient with one course of flesh or fish a day.¹ The endowment provided by Edward III in 1337 for 36 poor scholars at the King's Hall, Cambridge, was twopence a day for each,² and, according to John Stow,³ in the early fourteenth century "a fat hen or two chickens, four pigeons or 24 eggs might be bought for a penny." But so early as in the year 1465 we find Bishop Bekynton bequeathing an extra penny a week each to 10 poor scholars, not having sufficient exhibition in the University of Oxford.⁴

The manuscript building accounts of the years 1414-40, preserved at Lambeth Palace and kindly shown to me by Professor Jenkins, throw light on the subject of growing expenses, for a bricklayer's wages were 4*d.* a day, including board, or 6*d.* without it.⁵ In the seventeenth century a revised scale of charges at Oxford proves that the presence of Charles II's Parliament in 1681 caused a considerable rise in prices, for six eggs then cost two pence.⁶

We must remember that one portion of the Maundy grant included not only a provision for the "Children of the Almonry," a payment which, like some of the other grants, has been subjected to some revision, but also a subversion of a certain sum to provide two Readers in Arabic for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge,⁷ a relic no doubt of the royal foundations at several of the colleges.

¹ *The Story of Oxford*, by the same author, p. 134, being a revised and shorter edition of the above.

² *History of England under Henry IV*, by J. H. Wylie, vol. iii, p. 408. In the time of Henry IV these scholars numbered 32 only, viz. "an Inceptor in Law, 12 Masters in Philosophy, and 19 undergraduates."

³ Abridgement of Stow's *Chronicle*, ed. 1607, p. 141, under date 1314.

⁴ *The Palace of Wells*, by Eveline Woodcock, p. 303; published in *Episcopal Palaces*, edited by R. S. Rait.

⁵ Some of these items are published in *Lambeth Palace*, p. 44.

⁶ *Oxford and Its Story*, p. 341.

⁷ *The Guardian*, April 5, 1893. Mr. Bidwell in his article on "Royal Alms-giving," was able to trace this somewhat curious grant as far back as 1724, but was not sure when it was instituted, and there has been a further revision under the reign of Edward VII.

Henry VII, for instance, who sent Prince Arthur to Magdalen, endowed three scholarships there in Divinity of £10 yearly,¹ for the benefit of the Monks at Westminster. No Etonian will ever forget the debt he owes to Henry VI for his foundation of the College,² and one of the curious survivals in old customs is the presentation of three-penny pieces on February 27, of which one penny was bequeathed to each of 70 Collegers and 10 Choristers by Provost Lupton, who expired on that day in 1540,³ and the remaining two by other early benefactors.

The Provost of Eton kindly tells me that the three-penny bits are procured from the Bank, but with no reference to date, so that the fact that far fewer of these coins were issued than usual for circulation in 1924 caused no inconvenience.⁴ More interesting, in that fresh groats may be coined by special permission for the purpose with the Maundy money, if the sufficiency of four-penny bits be exhausted, is a similar custom at Magdalen College, Oxford. The bequest of two friends of £3, to be distributed in sums of 16d., 8d., 6d., 4d. and 2d., varying in proportion to rank from the President to the Choristers, takes the form, when possible, of groats. A large collection of four-penny pieces of the time of William IV was at one time fortunately secured for the purpose, and these are now supplemented by permission from the Royal Mint.⁵ We may also instance the presentation by the Lord Mayor of coins fresh from the Mint to the scholars of Christ's Hospital, founded by Edward VI

¹ *Oxford and Its Story*, pp. 232 and 235.

² *A History of Eton College*, by Lionel Cust, p. 4. The foundation of 1440 was for a Provost, 10 Fellows, 4 Clerks, 6 Choristers, a Schoolmaster and 25 indigent Scholars.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 32, and *Eton College*, by Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte, pp. 98 and 143, and information kindly supplied by Dr. M. R. James, Provost of Eton.

⁴ *Royal Mint Report for 1924*, by the Deputy-Master, Col. Robert Johnson, pp. 12 and 68. The demand in London was so much less than usual that apart from the Maundy only 88,000 were issued as against 656,000 in the previous year.

⁵ Information kindly supplied by Col. Johnson, Mr. Cecil Hallett, public lecturer at the British Museum, and at one time a scholar at Magdalen, and the Rev. H. B. Wilson, Fellow of the College.

and further endowed by Charles II. The Lord Mayor hands on St. Matthew's Day to 9 "Grecians" a guinea each; to 8 probationary "Grecians" half a guinea; to 68 Monitors half a crown; to 620 of the rank and file 1s.; and to 120 junior boys 6d. Five-and-twenty girls receive 2s. 6d. and 223 other girls 1s.

A visit of Queen Elizabeth to Westminster is said to have occasioned a distribution of prizes in the Maundy coins, a custom which survives unto the present day. "An annual grant of £2 in Maunday money was given," as was stated by Mr. John Sergeant, writing in 1898 in his *Annals of Westminster School*, "for exercises in prose or verse." "In the seventeenth century," continues this author, "the coins seem to have fallen to the composers of extemporary verses in Latin or Greek. At a later period English verses also made their claim, and the epigram was rewarded with a Maunday penny" . . . "At the present time the coins go to the boys who are at the head of their forms or sets in each month. One, too, is given to the reciter of each school epigram."¹ Queen Elizabeth was not actually the foundress of Westminster School, but she made a new foundation, giving to each of 40 scholars the yearly sum of £3 os. 10d. for commons and two marks for a gown.² These and similar grants demanding small silver coins account for the fact that, as seen in the last-mentioned Report to which I have referred, a considerably greater number of Maundy coins are still struck than are required for the old people. The "Children of the Almonry," for instance, are represented at the Maundy service by children selected for a good-conduct prize from the National schools in Westminster, and each receives a 5s. fee in Maundy money. Other fees of the same kind exist; others have lapsed and the required issue has consequently lessened of late years.

But I have dallied too long on the educational side of the Royal Charities, and must end with a quotation from Holinshed,³ who, speaking of the reign of Edward VI, tells us that the needy were

¹ *Annals of Westminster School*, pp. 25, 26.

² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³ Holinshed's *Chronicle*, ed. 1808, vol. iii, pp. 1060, 1061.

divided into three classes, namely: "The Poore by Impotence; Poor by Casualtie; Thriftlesse Poore," and that at the instigation of Bishop Ridley the King made provision for them in the sixth year of his reign, for "Christ's Hospital was then founded for poor children, Saint Thomas Hospital, Southwark, and Saint Bartholomew, Smithfield, for the sick, and Bridewell for correction."

Returning then to the numismatic side of the question, we see that it was not only for the weekly obits to poor scholars or even poor pensioners, such as those of whom I have already spoken, for whom Henry VII, at the Hospital of the Savoy, gave weekly to "140 poore people each one penie."¹ The officials and operatives at the Mint then constantly objected to the extra trouble entailed in making small coin, and the general currency was "sometimes unable to bear the strain, so that on occasions the monarch, like Elizabeth in 1572, ordered ten pounds weight of pennies at 720 to the pound to be struck in fine silver to be delivered to the Warden of the Mint "to be by him kept to our use;"² and a very large quantity of small silver for Almsgiving in times of shortage was called for several times by James I in the same manner.³ The cry for small currency meets us early and late, and the pressing need thereof caused the Scots Parliament in October, 1466, under the boy King James III of Scotland, to arrange for the issue of copper. This Act was entitled a "Statute for the use and sustentation of the Kingis lieges and almous deide to be done, to pore folk."⁴ Sir George Macdonald, in his illuminating article on the *Mint of Crosraguel Abbey*,⁵ assigned some farthings bearing the letters **MO RD PX VR**, and varieties thereof, which may be read **MONETA PAVPERVM**, to this reign, and whilst believing that the Crosraguel coins were struck at the Abbey for currency, like other better-known pieces with similar

¹ Abridgement of *Stow's Chronicle*, 1607, p. 251.

² Mr. Henry Symonds in *Numismatic Chronicle*, "The Mint of Queen Elizabeth," 4th series, vol. xvi, p. 78.

³ *MS. State Papers Domestic*, vol. clxxxv, No. 63; and *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. ix, p. 227, "Mint-Marks of the Coinage of James I," by Henry Symonds.

⁴ Cochran Patrick's *Records of the Coinage of Scotland*, vol. i, p. 32.

⁵ *Numismatic Chronicle*, 4th series, vol. xix, pp. 270-311.

legends, he still brings forward much interesting information concerning the various pleas for small currency coin, that the poor might not lack doles. Amongst others he quotes four of the eleven reasons submitted by Thomas Violet to the Mint Committee on August 10, 1651, to prove the necessity of making half-farthings either of copper or tin.¹ Three out of four of Violet's arguments might be summed up in the absolute need for change in buying and selling "small wares." The fourth runs thus: "Many aged and impotent poor, and others that would work and cannot get employment, are deprived of many alms for want of farthings and half-farthings; for many would give a farthing or half-farthing who are not disposed to give a penny or twopence, or to lose time in staying to change money, whereby they may contract a noisome smell or the disease of the poor." The humour of expecting change from a beggar did not apparently strike the memorialist, nor did he suggest the form the "change" should take if no half-farthings were issued. Sir George Macdonald also quotes a writer of the year 1566, objecting to the inconvenience of having no coin below the value of the silver penny, and making the statement that "as there was nothing smaller than a penny to give to a poor person, many were prevented from giving alms at all."² Burns, in his *Coinage of Scotland*, speaks of the Act of the Privy Council which, in February, 1554-5, ordered Lions, Hardheads, or Three-halfpenny pieces, because "the commone pepill are gretumly hurt and endommagie" because prices were higher for "vitallis sik as breid, drink, flesche, fische, beand sauld in small ar set to highar prices and gretar darth nor they wald be in caiss thair wer sufficient quantite off small money."³

But to return to England, we may bring forward the words of Briot in the reign of Charles I, who, impressing upon the King the

¹ *Numismatic Chronicle*, 4th series, vol. xix, p. 305. See also Williamson's edition of *Boyne's Trade Tokens*, vol. i, Introduction, pp. xxxviii and xxxix. Extracts from State Papers.

² *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1919, p. 306, quoting Rouyer, *Revue Numismatique*, 1849, p. 369, and Bodin, "Réponse aux paradoxes du Seigneur de Malestroict, 1566."

³ Burns's *Coinage of Scotland*, vol. ii, pp. 310-311.

necessity for making small silver money "of 4, 3, 2 and 1d" and "Brass or Copper coine in peeces of 2, 1 and half-farthings," advised the production of these coins, not to come into greate payments but only stablished by Sovereign Princes for the buying of small Ware or giving of Almes."¹

Another manuscript, badly burnt and therefore in parts illegible, but adjudged from the style of handwriting and intrinsic evidence to be of the beginning of James I's reign, advocates the issue of "a coyne of farthings and halfevence of Copper."² These coins were desired to "giue to the poore" in that "Lacke of Small money wh . . . their charitye and almes accordinge to . . . poore that th . . .th should be relieved are many tymes miserably distressed." The writer impresses on his readers the "Hyndrance of the poore, because men haue noe farthings or halfpence to give them."

All these appeals for small monies are just as much concerned with the inconvenience to the smaller purchasing public as with the requirements of almsgiving, and Nicholas Briot, in another document wherein is discussed the possibility of obtaining sixty-six instead of sixty-four shillings from the pound weight of silver, lays stress on the want of small coin "for the Commodiousness of the people and for Trade."³ Special pieces stamped with legends for the latter purpose alone "would to some extent," as Sir George Macdonald points out, "defeat the purpose of the dole, by rendering it less easy for them to be absorbed into the ordinary currency."⁴ Neither would I suggest that the various coins either of the fifteenth, sixteenth or seventeenth centuries which were struck with such legends as *MONETA PAVPERVM*, *REMEMBER THE POORE*, or words to that effect, were of a pauperizing nature and coined specially for doles.

I would rather emphasize the belief that these pieces, like the so-called Maundy money of Charles II., were not solely a special

¹ *State Papers Domestic*, Public Record Office, vol. 124, No. 68. "Coynes at Mint, 1628."

² British Museum, *Cotton MS.*, Otho E. x., No. 52.

³ *MS. State Papers Domestic, Addenda*, vol. 529, No. 97.

⁴ *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1919, p. 303.

coinage for charitable purposes but a real currency to facilitate the giving of small change. Slingsby, writing to Charles II under date June 5, 1661, strongly advised the making of farthings in copper because brass was apt to smell and tin was likely to be forged, but he was anxious to retain the silver penny and to add five-farthing, three-half-penny¹ and seven-farthing pieces to the silver currency. I would merely draw attention to the fact that the king and the people, the nobles and the great clerics, were constantly demanding small money for doles, and in conclusion would remind our readers of the Proclamation of Charles II of August 16, 1672, quoted by me



CHARLES II PATTERN FARTHING, MONTAGU 23. THE POORES RELEIFE.

in the first of this series of articles, making current the bronze coins and crying down the tradesmen's tokens. The assertion was made that "many thousands of pounds of good sterling Silver" had been "coyned into Single pence and Twopences, that so there might be good money current amongst the poorest of our Subjects and fitted for the smaller Traffic and Commerce."²

In our next volume I hope to draw attention to the "*Largesse*" and the "King's Dole," before treating of the actual Maundy Thursday benefaction in greater detail.

¹ Williamson's edition of *Boyne's Trade Tokens*, p. xxxviii.

² *Proclamations of Charles II*, in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, vol. ii, No. 187. This Proclamation was printed in full in the *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. vi, in an article by Mr. William C. Wells, "On Seventeenth-Century Tokens of Northamptonshire."