

## MEN OF THE DAY. No. 321.

---

THE VERY REV. EDWARD BICKERSTETH, D.D., DEAN OF LICHFIELD.

---

A VERY great man in the Church is the Dean of Lichfield, and one of the most useful ecclesiastics in England. He was born seventy years ago, gained a respectable class in mathematics at Cambridge, and obtained a large number of those youthful honours which to Churchmen signify so much and to others so little. Before he had been seventeen years in orders he was appointed Archdeacon of Buckingham and Vicar of Aylesbury, and he became the devoted servant and sincere imitator of his Diocesan, the late Bishop Wilberforce. He was never an orator, but he showed himself so polished and so pleasing in the pulpit that he was appointed a Select Preacher at both the Universities, and was called upon to discourse on a good many important occasions in and out of his own diocese.

As Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury he showed genius. No Speaker who ever sat behind the Mace was more gentle, impartial, and inflexible than Dr. Bickersteth. The restoration of full synodical action to the Established Church was the dream of his life; and though he was not the first Prolocutor of Convocation on its revival after over a century of merely formal existence, he did more by his skilful rule—at an anxious epoch in its modern history—towards making the Parsons' Parliament a real power, than any other divine of the day. When he declined to accept office after ten years' service and repeated re-election, the prayer of the clergy to the Crown was earnest that some mark of Royal favour might reward the President who had proved so politic a pilot; and in the Deanery of Lichfield he found a congenial retirement, while the Church of England lost a possible Bishop of unusual administrative ability.

Dean Bickersteth, in spite of his years, is as young as ever. He has never made an enemy or lost a friend; and although as a moderate High Churchman he has been abreast of every ecclesiastical reform of his day, he has never been extreme. He has written a large number of theological works. He married at eight-and-sixty.