

VANITY FAIR.

LONDON, MARCH 8, 1906.

MEN OF THE DAY.

No. MV.—THE BISHOP OF RIPON.

WILLIAM BOYD CARPENTER has been twenty-two years at Ripon—greatly to the advantage of Ripon. To commemorate his beneficent rule, they have erected in the Cathedral a dignified throne; round it there runs an inscription which contains these words: “A man right reverend and well beloved.” The epithets are equally just; equally well deserved.

A son of the parsonage, he was born and educated in Liverpool. Thence he went to Cambridge—to “Cats,” with a scholarship—and there he read hard and coxed the boat of his college; for he is a little bit of a man. He was ordained to his first curacy at Maidstone, and two years later he came to London. First at Clapham, then at Lee, and then at Holloway, he proved himself acceptable, and in 1870—six years from the date of his ordination—he became Vicar of St. James’s, Holloway.

Two years later came the canonry at Windsor, and the consequent introduction to the Queen, who became very fond of his sermons. “Do you feel nervous,” asked a friend once, “when preaching before the Queen?” “I never address the Queen” is said to have been the Bishop’s reply. “I know there will be present the Queen, the Princes, the Royal Household, and the servants, down to the scullery-maid—and I preach to the scullery-maid.”

In 1884 Boyd Carpenter was given the Bishopric of Ripon, and here he has worked hard ever since. His first great task was the cleaving of the diocese asunder, and, at the cost of £100,000, founding the new See of Wakefield. Another good work has been the education of candidates for Holy Orders, and a third the amelioration of the unhappy lot of the impoverished clergy themselves.

His happy wit, his beautiful voice, his attractive personality, his shrewd advice, and his charitable moderation have been factors in his success. At one time he was so much in request at fashionable weddings that he exclaimed to an old friend: “I’m not only a Carpenter, but a joiner too”; and when on another occasion he was laying a foundation-stone, and the architect asked him to become a sham mason for a few minutes, the Bishop replied: “I would rather remain a working Carpenter.” And a worker he has remained. When at Lancaster Gate, he raised £500 every year for the East End, and to this day he is an advocate of the practice of linking rich and poor parishes together.

Dr. Boyd Carpenter has been an intimate and valued friend of the Royal Family for twenty-five years. He knows everybody worth knowing, and with everybody worth knowing he is a favourite. In a word, he is a first-class working Bishop, who travels on ’bus and tram. He possesses the autographs of nearly all the Archbishops and Bishops of England during the last 300 years; he has published many books; he is a vigorous crusader against the childless marriage; he usually wears trousers instead of gaiters, and a turned-down collar and a white tie in preference to the proverbial stiff clerical stock. He is, in short, a Bishop without starch.

JEHU JUNIOR.