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Miss Rusher

From W. L. L. L. L.
with best wishes.

Dec 24 - 1916

HISTORIC TOWNS.

EDITED BY

EDWARD A. FREEMAN, D.C.L.

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AND THE

Rev. WILLIAM HUNT, M.A. of Trinity College, Oxford.

Crown 8vo. price 3s. 6d. each.

THE towns to be treated in these volumes will, as far as possible, be selected with reference to the special part each played in the general history of the kingdom. There are for instance the old Roman cities, restored in some cases after a period of ruin, and the old head-towns of shires, some the same as the Roman cities, others different. There are towns, like Bristol in one age and Hull in another, which, without being heads of shires, rose to importance through commerce. There are again towns which gathered round a castle, an abbey, or a bishop's see, as Windsor and Pontefract, St. Edmundsbury and Evesham, Wells and Lichfield. There are lastly towns which, from small importance in earlier times, have risen to greatness within the last two centuries, and have outstripped all the rest, with the single exception of London itself. And within these several classes, each of the greater towns has its special place in English history, derived from some distinctive character of its own. York, once imperial, then royal, has kept more than any other city the character of a local capital on to our own day. Exeter is the city which, as not becoming English till Christian times, has lived the most uninterrupted life, Roman, British, and English, while it has largely shared with York the character of an abiding local capital. Winchester is pre-eminently the city of both English and Norman royalty. Carlisle is pre-eminently the abiding bulwark against the Scot, as Shrewsbury is against the Briton. Lincoln is the city of the Danish patriciate, for a long time the chief seat of intercourse with Northern Europe. The Cinque Ports, as a kind of armed confederation, connect the commercial and the naval history of England, and represent intercourse with France and the neighbouring lands. Oxford, standing on the borders of two ancient kingdoms, naturally became a favourite meeting-place for the kingdom into which the two were merged, and was, for the same reason, the fitting seat of an University. Coventry is remarkable as the only

one among the towns clustering round castles and churches which rose to much importance in other days. Among those towns whose importance is more modern, and which have outstripped their elders, there is a difference of character between Birmingham, whose greatness is wholly modern, Liverpool, which has a long municipal and parliamentary history, and Manchester, which though rising to first-rate importance only in later days, has a history which goes back to the very earliest times. The object of this series, in dealing with such towns and groups of towns as may be chosen for illustration, will be mainly to bring out the general historic position of each. The purely local history of each place, municipal and ecclesiastical, while not neglected, will be dealt with chiefly as it throws light on its general position. It is hoped that the series may in this way serve at once to clothe local objects and events with greater and more intelligent interest, by showing their connexion with the general history of the country, and on the other hand to throw light on the general history of the country itself which is so largely made up of the history of its several towns and districts.

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Historic Towns

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