

Clerk, but concludes with the suggestion that the office be restored to its former functions and that the effort be made to obtain more learned and able men for the discharge of the duties, and that the office be made a sphere of training for those who wish to take holy orders.

*An interesting  
functionary  
in the  
English Church.* The Parish Clerk is an institution of the English Church existing from early Saxon times to the present, though now passing from the stage before the advance of improvements which the Church has witnessed during the past fifty years. He gave his name to Clerkenwell, a certain locality of London. He took a prominent part in the mystery plays of his day. His duties and his rights have from time to time been defined by law, ecclesiastical and civil. He was the choir leader, the representative of the people in the responsive services of the Church, often the sexton, and quite as frequently the mentor of the clergyman. He might otherwise be a useful member of the community in which he lived in the pursuit of some other calling,—as parish-school teacher, cobbler, or stone-cutter. Either he was a man of little education with a genius for mispronouncing many of the words of the Church service, or else the parish clerks of a better sort have failed to leave any impress upon the life and traditions of the English communities. He was of such importance in London in the thirteenth and subsequent centuries that a Parish Clerks' Company was duly registered at Guildhall, received subsequently a succession of royal charters, and erected a building which still exists under the name of the Parish Clerks' Hall. Altogether he has deserved much at the hands of the historian, and at last he has come to his own. The Reverend Peter H. Ditchfield, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and writer of many charming books of antiquarian lore, devotes a large octavo book to "The Parish Clerk" (Dutton), illustrating the volume with pictures from many sources, chiefly old manuscripts. He relates many entertaining stories of the vagaries of the Parish