

## CHAPTER XI.

### PAROCHIAL CHARITIES.

The parochial charities of Fincham have suffered from neglect and the lapse of time. Some of them probably have become amalgamated with others, and some are quite lost, as that of Nicholas Fyncham, left for the use of the parish clerk, "so long as the world should endure." Those that are now effective are as follows :-

1. First there are the church lands, consisting of 9a. 1r. 0p., originally lying in fourteen separate pieces in the open fields, and in 1747 let for forty shillings per annum, but now inclosed and laid together, and producing a rent of £18 18s. - See Terriers 1709, 1747.

2. "There is also belonging to the said church one litle house, with yard, "containing one rood, and abutting north on the common street, in the "occupation of two poor widows, at the yearly rent of thirty-four shillings." -- Terrier 1747.

This house was taken down and rebuilt in 1806, and now produces £4 per annum. The trustees of these two charities are the minister and churchwardens, and their right appropriation is to the "repairs of the church," for which they ought to be "reserved solely." -- See the *Report of the Charity Commissioners*, 1834.

3. "On the same rood of land is lately built a neat Town House for the poor, partly by money arising from the sale of the old church materials, and partly with £23 given to the poor by some unknown donor." -- Terrier 1747.

Of the rents issuing from this property, £4 17s. is paid to the poor's rate account, and £1 3s., the interest of the said £23, is distributed to poor widows belonging to Fincham annually in January.

4. "There is also belonging to the said town the yearly sum of 9s. 4d., payable out of the estate of Mr. Thomas Bodham, as a rent for a piece of pasture land belonging to the town, lying in his inclosures near the vicarage closes, for the use of the poor." -- Terrier 1760.

This land lies in what is now called the "seven acres," and in the survey of 1636, if I am not mistaken, (for its boundaries are now lost,) it is thus described :-

"Ric. Cob, a litle narrow croft adjoining more east, 0a. 3r. 10p."

and has been left to the poor since that time. This charity is distributed with the last mentioned, and the trustees of both are the minister and parish officers.

5. The Poor's Farm consists of 54 acres, an equivalent for their common rights. It produces about £70 per annum, and is distributed in November in coals to the resident poor belonging to Fincham. The trustees are the lords of certain manors, and the rector and churchwardens for the time being.

6. With regard to *educational* charities, there are evidences of some kind of instruction having been given to the poor from very early times. In the survey of 1575 occurs this :-

"Quarantena cxxv. Villatica tenet oriente domum vocatum a *schole* house. Ecclesia sancti Martini est oriente ibidem."

The same occurs in the survey of 1636 :

“The towne hath a litle house and curtilage, at the south west corner of  
“the church yard, having formerlie been part of the tenement following,  
“and now used for a *school house*, 0a. 0r. 6p.”

After this the school was transferred to a room over the Vestry, where it was held within the memory of parishioners now living. The master was appointed, according to the Canon relating thereto, by the Bishop, and in the Bishop's Registry there is a record of two licenses to masters of this school, viz. :

“1771. December 26th, William England.”

“1784. June 19th, John Tibbenham.”

The parish books contain a “good intention” in this direction, but without any corresponding action.

“1810. Resolved to erect a new house on the parish land for a school-  
“master.”

In 1848, however, under the authority of the School Sites Acts, glebe land was conveyed, and a National School erected, for the poor of the parish, subject to Government inspection. The old vicarage barn and premises provided a small endowment in addition. These were sold in 1856, being in a very dilapidated state, and the proceeds invested in the Three-per-cent. Consols, being £162 16s. 6d. stock, now standing in the names of the official trustees of charitable funds. The dividends, amounting to £4 17s. 7d., are paid in July annually to the trustees of the school. -- See *Deed of Conveyance*, in the parish chest.

Various gifts and benefactions by will, not being permanent endowments, have at different times been



left to the poor. The Fincham family were foremost amongst these donors. Others since their time have done likewise. As a specimen the following memorandum may be quoted from one of the Registers :-

“Thomas Taylor of Runcton made his will the 22 of Maye, An. Dom. 1621, and gave unto the towne of Fincham the sume of tenn pounds, to be payde unto the churche-wardens for the tyme then being to the use of the poore, by Henry Doleman his executor.”

He also left a like sum to nine other parishes in this Deanery, “receiving everie of them tenn pounds.” -- *Fincham Register* No. 2.