

ON A MONUMENT AT BOUGHTON-UNDER-
BLEAN.

LETTER FROM SIR HENRY DRYDEN, BART.

DEAR SIR,

Many years ago, when Mr. Wright was Vicar of Boughton, I was much puzzled by the inscription on a slab in the church. I had then but little time for examination; Mr. Wright said it was the tombstone of Archbishop Simon de Meopham; but I see no evidence of that, and Dean Hook, in his *Lives of the Archbishops*, states that he was buried in the Chapel of St. Peter, at Canterbury. In 1881 I went to Boughton to carefully study it, and take rubbings and accurate drawings of it; but I am unable to make sense of the inscription, and send this notice chiefly in the hope that some one else may be able to do so. The slab is of a grey shelly material, perhaps Purbeck marble, 7ft. 0 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 2ft. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. It is much decayed. It has on it the incisions for an elaborate cross of brass with a long stem rising from steps. In the four spandrils of the cross are four circles which probably contained the symbols of the Evangelists. The sinkings have perpendicular sides and rough bottoms, and they have remains of pitch in them. Along the edges is an inscription in Lombardic letters, with a line above and below. Probably the letters and lines had brass in them, though it is possible that they

were filled with pitch only. Instances of single letters and lines of brass occur at a few places.

This inscription differs from all the common forms. Many of the words are perfectly plain; but I cannot make consecutive sense of them. The following guess is given in the hope that it may suggest a more accurate decipherment:—*SIMONE: EN: CESTE: PLACE: GIT: N-ERBI: — ENBI: NOME: ABOCTON: GRAUNT: EN: FIST: DEV: PERSONE: OLAME: PARDON ERA — — — I — LALME — —*.

The man's Christian name was Simon, and he was surnamed Abocton (Boughton), but I cannot even guess at the words before "nome," though the letters which remain are clear.

Does *persone* mean "parson," or "person," or "nobody"? I do not know, however, whether *persone* for "nobody" was used in old French. I have no doubt about "*l'alme*."

The letters in the plate are accurate as to relative position.

Yours faithfully,

HENRY DRYDEN,

CANONS ASHBY, Oct. 2, 1889.

To the Rev. Canon SCOTT ROBERTSON.

