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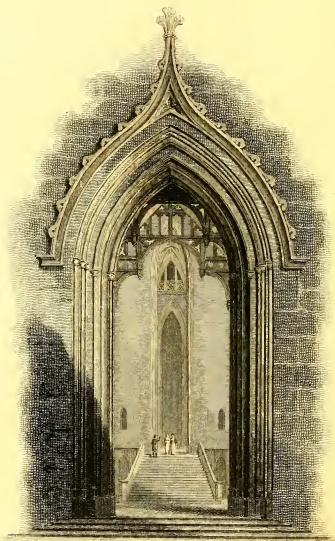


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Published by W. Clarke May 1. 1812

A

Description

OF

FONTHILL ABBEY,

WILTSHIRE.

ILLUSTRATED BY

VIEWS,

DRAWN AND ENGRAVED

BY JAMES STORER.

London :

Published by W. CLARKE, New Bond Street; J. CARPENTER, Old Bond Street;
W. MILLER, Albemarle Street; C. CHAPPEL, Pall Mall; WHITE and
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Row; BRODIE and Co. Salisbury; and J. STORER, Pentonville.

1812.

Cor, Printer, Little-carter-lane, London.

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VIEWS OF THE ABBEY

AT

FONTHILL, 174

Wiltshire:

ACCOMPANIED WITH

A PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THAT
SUPERB EDIFICE.

Printed by J. Baskin, in the Strand, London.

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1742 2 0





Published by W. Clarke May 1. 1812

Description

OF

FONTHILL ABBEY,

&c.

THE public curiosity has been much excited for several years, by the building of a lofty Tower in the conventual style of architecture, among the woody eminences of Fonthill, in the county of Wilts ; more especially, as the extraordinary mansion, of which it forms a stately feature, has never yet been open to view. Imagination, of course, had been busy ; but the conjectures of the most luxuriant fancy could scarcely conceive a scene so noble, so princely, as is exhibited in the ABBEY OF FONTHILL upon a near inspection of its component parts. This impression of grandeur is, if possible, increased in passing through the various apartments of the building, which are fitted up in an almost unequalled style of splendour

and magnificence. In attempting a regular and comprehensive description of the place, we purpose to take some previous notice of the grounds, which are happily formed by nature, and improved by art, into such a variety of mazy and deceptive paths, that it is scarcely possible to retrace the way without a guide : the circumference of the enclosure measures about seven miles, defended by a stone wall and cheveaux-de-frise.

Fonthill Abbey is distant from Salisbury about eighteen miles, and may be approached through the village of Fonthill Bishop, or by Fonthill Gifford. Immediately upon entering the gate, the road ascends through a dark wood of firs, remarkable for their lofty growth, to a path leading eastward of the mansion, up the Hard Walk, or Hinkley Hill. In grounds so varied, it is absolutely necessary to give a particular appellation to some principal points ; for without this expedient it would be impossible to direct the different workmen and others to their several designations. This path is skirted with laurel, and enclosed by matted underwood : at intervals the Abbey Tower appears on the left among the trees. After traversing the distance of about half a mile, the forest lawn crosses the way ; and turning to the left, the nut lawn presents itself, so called on account of the variety and abundance of hazels : here are likewise to be seen American and exotic oaks in high perfection. Di-



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rectly in front of this walk, at some distance, is the Beacon, a very lofty wooded height, which we shall have occasion to notice as we proceed. The way, continued about a quarter of a mile, leads to the Clerk's Walk, which on the left passes the western front of the Abbey. A narrow, mossy alley on the right, closely shaded, conducts to a path bordered with the scarlet thorn, and, extending more than a mile, presents, during spring and summer, a beautiful and fascinating display of flowers of spontaneous growth, of luxuriant shrubs, and variegated hollies.

The parts above described are on the north side of the Abbey. Inclining to the north-west, we enter another path, called *The Nine-miles-walk*, being part of a journey of twenty-two miles which may be made within the grounds without retracing our steps; on each side are broad spaces covered with flowers, which appear to be cultivated with peculiar care. Enclosed by large forest trees the way may be pursued in a winding course to the summit of the great avenue: having attained the eminence, as we turn to the east, the Abbey bursts upon the view in solemn and imposing majesty. This point is the north-western extremity of the grounds, whence a folding gate opens into the public road; crossing which, another gate leads to the terrace, a woody ridge, that extends about five miles from west to east. Continuing along the western boundary, the prospect ranges over a country extensive and delight-

fully diversified. Among the most prominent objects are Alfred's Tower, and part of the grounds at Stourhead, the seat of Sir Richard Hoare, Bart. ; which we shall have occasion to notice in describing the surrounding country as viewed from the Abbey Tower. Ascending the new terrace southward, the ground upon the right is an abrupt steep, crowned with large trees of various species ; on the left is a deep woody bottom, called Bitham Wood. Turning out of this path at an acute angle to the left, and pursuing the walk through a narrow passage in the wood, we arrive at the Beacon, one of the loftiest points in the whole sweep of hills for which this part of the country is remarkable. On the summit of this hill is a plain of about five or six acres, intended for the site of a magnificent tower ; the foundations are entirely laid, and in most parts the walls are raised to the height of nine or ten feet ; it is of considerable extent, of triangular form, having a circular bastion at each of its angles, and being overgrown with shrubs and moss in a very picturesque manner.

Declining towards the south-east, near the foot of the Beacon, a most interesting prospect is suddenly and agreeably presented. Over a long extent of ground varied by gentle undulations, and studded with clumps of trees, displaying a rich assemblage of glowing and luxuriant tints, appears the Abbey, forming a grand mass of embattled towers, sur-

mounted by the lofty octagon which composes the centre. This enchanting scenery is backed by an elevated woodland of a sombre aspect, which by contrast heightens the striking and brilliant effect of the edifice. Descending into the bottom, a fine pellucid lake reflects the surrounding beauties of the place; in some parts of unfathomable depth, and having the appearance of the crater of an ancient volcano; stretching and meandering so as to give an idea of even much greater magnitude than it possesses. The lake is plentifully supplied with wild fowl, and the woodcock has frequently chosen this sequestered valley for her nest. As shooting is not permitted within the enclosure, every animal sports undisturbed; and conscious of security, the hares will feed at the horse's feet from the hands of the rider, and frequently associate in great numbers within a few paces of the windows. Passing through a sheltered walk, bordered on one side with the hardiest English and Mediterranean heaths, the American Plantation is seen, broken into picturesque forms by the margin of the water. This plantation is principally made upon the declivity of a large knoll, and exhibits every variety of the magnolia, azalia, and rhododendron hitherto imported. Here is a pleasing view of the Abbey. In a direction south-east there is a romantic hollow, made still more interesting by the works that are here erected for supplying the Abbey with water. A wheel about twenty-four feet in diameter is put into motion

by a stream conducted from the lake through a wooden trough, several smaller watercourses assisting in the operation ; the water thus raised to a certain level in the hydraulic machine, is passed into pipes, and conveyed under ground to the house—the whole contrivance being remarkably simple, and reflecting great credit on the inventor. Approaching from this picturesque dell to the southern side of the Abbey, we arrive at a small garden, surrounded by a light iron fence, which is called the Chinese Garden, particularly appropriated to the culture of the rarest flowers. A little to the eastward is the kitchen garden, containing eight or nine acres, screened on the northern side by a wood of lofty pines. From the garden we arrive nearly at the point from which we set out, and, taking a short winding walk between the trees, come directly upon the lawn in front of

THE ABBEY.

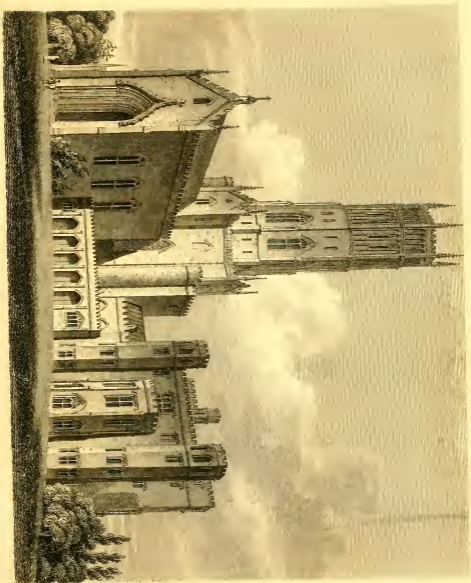
This building, which was designed by Mr. Wyatt, aided by the acknowledged taste of Mr. Beckford, consists of three grand and leading features, conjoined by the galleries and the cloister. In the centre is the great hall and principal tower ; towards the north are two large square towers, which are balanced at the other extremity, or southern end, by a group of varied edifices, with embattled parapets.

The northern part of the gallery, as seen in the



W. Clark & Co. Litho.

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Exeter Cathedral by W. Clark's. May 1. 1872

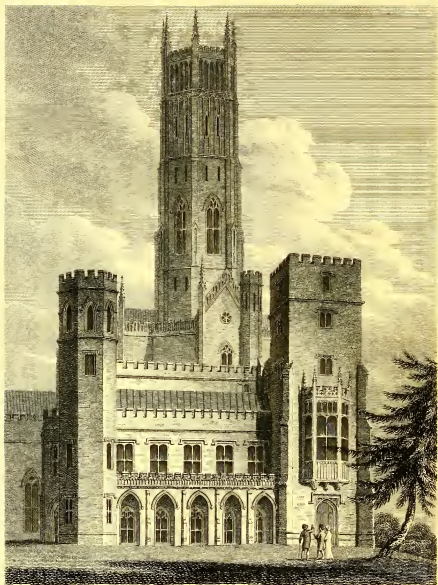
annexed View, shews part of the oratory, the windows of the gallery leading to it, the oriel of the Lancaster apartment, and the windows of the adjoining gallery. Below are the simply elegant windows of King Edward's gallery : to the right is a round tower, with a winding staircase leading to the apartments in the octagon.

The south-west view comprehends the whole building from north to south, the perspective of the hall hiding the north wing all but its extremity. The front of the hall presents a door thirty-five feet high, adorned with crockets, and a highly-wrought finial. On the top of the pediment is a niche, containing a statue of St. Anthony of Padua, surmounted by a cross-flory, the arms of William the first Lord Latimer, from whom Mr. Beckford is lineally descended. The great tower, which is two hundred and seventy-six feet in height, is seen rising between four pediments, whose projections form the two stories of apartments around the octagon, the upper ones having a catherine-wheel window upon a level with openings of the same description seen within the octagon. Directly under the tower, appears the western cloister, behind which is a square paved court, having in its centre a fountain that plays into a large marble basin. Between two octangular towers, south of the cloister, is an oriel of two stories attached to the brown Parlour below

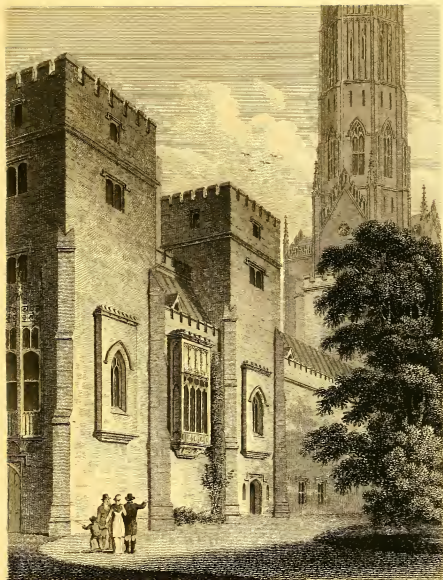
and yellow damask room above; the tower on the north side of the oriel contains various apartments; that on the south is a staircase to this part of the buildings.

The south view represents the windows of the yellow damask room and of Mr. Beckford's private library; below them is a richly-ornamented cloister of five pointed arches, their outer mouldings terminated by heads beautifully wrought: answering to each of the arches, are the parlour windows, their upper compartments filled with delicate tracery and painted glass. From the square tower towards the east projects the south oriel, forming the extremity of the long gallery, which measures three hundred and thirty feet; the upper part of this window is of stained glass, representing the Four Fathers of the Church; the lower part, like most of the windows throughout the building, is the finest plate glass, of uncommon size; below the window is a pointed door leading to the lobby of the parlour.

The south-east view shews all that is finished of the eastern side of the Abbey. Here is an oriel richly carved, containing shields with armorial bearings, and other devices; the window is ornamented with the figures of St. Columba, St. Etheldreda, Venerable Bede, and Roger Bacon, in stained glass, by Eginton.



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The principal features of the east side are three large square towers. We are told it is the intention of Mr. Beckford to build a superb chapel, directly opposite to the great hall. The offices, stables, workshops for the artificers, &c. are all on this side, closely encompassed by a wood of firs, beech, and other large trees, and so enclosed as to cause no disparagement to the view.

Having taken a general survey of this extensive mansion, we shall now proceed to describe its interior.

THE BROWN PARLOUR.

This spacious apartment, fifty-six feet in length, receives its appellation from the dark-coloured oak with which it is wainscotted. It is lighted by eight pointed windows, three of which compose the lower story of the western oriel, the other five range within the southern cloister, and command the prospect over a deep woody vale, intersected by the Lake and by pleasant lawns, beyond which rises the forest that encloses Wardour Castle. The upper tracery of the windows is enriched with painted glass by Eginton, after the drawings of the late eminent artist, R. Hamilton, R. A. representing a series of some of the most historical personages among Mr. Beckford's ancestors. The room is fitted up with splendid simplicity; two large pieces of tapestry adorn its northern

side Between them, over the chimney, is a whole-length portrait of Peter Beckford, Esq. Mr. Beckford's great grandfather. He was Lieutenant-governor and commander in chief of Jamaica, and was honoured with the presidency of the council, and most of the civil as well as military employments of that Island, where he greatly distinguished himself at the French invasion in 1693. His son, likewise named Peter, was esteemed the richest subject in Europe. He married Bathshua, daughter and coheir of Julines Hering, Esq. and was the father of William Beckford, Esq. the late celebrated senator.

The windows of the Parlour are hung with two suits of curtains; the inner one is of blue damask, bordered with the tressure of Scotland; the other suit is scarlet, which gives the light a rich and sumptuous effect. The ceiling, tessellated by a neat moulding, has at each intersection four oak-leaves entwined. Attached to this Parlour is a small drawing room with a groined roof, and an appropriate chimney-piece of purbeck marble: opposite we remarked, upon a table of curious construction, an antique vase of the purest alabaster. A closet in this little room contains specimens of an almost unequalled collection of ancient china, which is dispersed in the various apartments of the Abbey. This room leads from the Parlour, through the cloister, to the great hall. Opposite to this a winding staircase conducts

to the apartments above, and to a small gallery, at the entrance of which is a bust of Lord Nelson, placed there as a memorial of his visit to Fonthill, shortly after the glorious and decisive victory which he obtained near the mouth of the Nile. This head is esteemed a striking likeness of the much-lamented Admiral. An account of the magnificent manner in which the Hero was entertained at this place, on the 20th of December 1800, appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for April 1801.

We now proceed to the small gallery, which is above the yellow room : it contains costly tables inlaid with oriental alabaster, and many invaluable pieces of china. Opposite to the gallery, in the small octagon tower, is an apartment furnished with several curiosities worthy of attention ; among them is a rich cabinet of ebony, inlaid with lapis-lazuli, and other precious stones, designed by Bernini : over this hangs a remarkably curious old picture, representing the Burial of a Cardinal, by Van Eyck. There is likewise a fine Head by Holbein, and several Miniatures by Julio Clovio.

Adjoining this is an apartment devoted to the use of such artists as are employed in directing the works now carrying on at Fonthill ; it contains a collection of the rarest books and prints, illustrative of ancient costume. This room has a window of four

bays looking into the fountain court already mentioned; on each side of this window is a smaller one, with the armorial bearings of Mervin and Latimer, beautifully executed by Pierson. Here are two inestimable cabinets of the rarest old japan, enriched with bronzes by Vulliamy, and a portrait of the Duke d'Alençon, by Zucchero, once the property of Charles the First. Connected with this noble apartment is a small lobby and dressing room, ornamented with several pictures and drawings; the former has two views of the edifice that was burnt at Fonthill in the year 1755, and a first design for the Abbey. The dressing room is furnished with bookcases, and is hung round with drawings of the mansion lately taken down, and of the ancient manor house as it appeared about the year 1566, in the time of the Mervins, Mr. Beckford's immediate ancestors. Here is also a design for the tower once intended to be erected upon the Beacon, the foundation and progress of which have been already mentioned.

A passage now leads to Mr. Beckford's bed-chamber: this room has two closets filled with curious specimens of carvings in ivory, and other rarities. On one side of the apartment is a large glazed cabinet, in which are most exquisite pieces of japan.

This being the south-east extremity of the building, we return northward through the dressing room

to the upper library, or gallery, which is vaulted by an obtuse arch. At the north end of this gallery is a square room that looks through a tribune into the great octagon; there are two of these beautiful openings opposite each other: the room of the south tribune contains precious cabinets and valuable pictures. That on the north side will be more particularly attended to hereafter. All further progress this way being interrupted by the octagon, we return again through the lobby of the dressing room, whence a staircase conducts to the central eastern tower; here is a bed-chamber hung with the finest Brussels tapestry, an apartment over which terminates this part of the building. Descending, we enter a passage, in which stand six japan jars of uncommon size: rising again by a few steps we come into the south-east tower directly over Mr. Beckford's bed-chamber; here is a spacious apartment, and above it another, that forms the summit of this tower.

Having viewed all the principal apartments in the south wing of the building, it is necessary to return to the room directly over the parlour; the

YELLOW DAMASK ROOM.

So called on account of its splendid yellow hangings. This apartment has five windows, three of them compose the upper part of the western oriel, the other two face the south. In this room are some of

the finest cabinets of japan and Buhl work in Europe: one of the latter formerly adorned the apartments of Fontainebleau, and is remarkable for a beautiful medallion of Lewis the Fourteenth. Near the collateral windows of the oriel stand two immense china jars, not more valuable for their size than quality, presented to Mr. Beckford by the Prince of Brazil.

On the north-west side of the damask room, in the small octagon tower, is an apartment called the green cabinet room; it contains two frames, with alto-relievos in ivory, of the time of Edward the First, each divided into two compartments; one frame represents the Virgin and Child, attended by Angels, and the Offerings of the Magi; the other contains the Salutation of Mary and Elizabeth, and Christ entering Jerusalem. Here are two tables of the rarest Florentine work, imitating shells, corals, and pearls, upon grounds of lapis-lazuli and oriental alabaster. Numerous articles of japan, with a great variety of delicate gold vases, some enamelled and others enriched with gems, are arranged in cases, somewhat in the style of those ancient cabinets which were called Ambries. The roof of this apartment is composed of fan-work, with rich and elaborate tracery. From the yellow room by large folding doors we enter the

JAPAN ROOM,

which contains Mr. Beckford's most choice and rare books. The roof is ornamented with circles filled with quatrefoil ; upon the chimney-piece is a pair of massive gold candlesticks, of admirable workmanship. Passing again through a lofty folding screen, composed of the most exquisite tracery, we come to the south end of

THE GALLERY.

This is a point peculiarly impressive—the oratory faintly appears through a long perspective of vaulted roofs, at the distance of three hundred and thirty feet. Near the south oriel, which forms this end of the gallery, stands a large amber cabinet, in which is seen all the various hues of that precious material ; in some parts the palest yellow is suddenly succeeded by the richest orange ; in others the tint increases to a garnet red, and again declines to a purity almost white ; its sides are adorned with medallions likewise in amber. This rare curiosity, which is without a blemish, was once in the possession of the Queen of Bohemia, daughter of James the First ; her portrait with that of her husband appears in cameo upon one of the drawers. The cabinet stands upon a table of ebony, with torsel feet, which formerly belonged to Cardinal Wolsey.

The east side of the gallery is lighted by an oriel and two pointed windows (as seen in the south-east View of the Abbey); immediately under the oriel is placed a large japan chest, inlaid with curious devices in pearl and silver; the bordering is uncommonly rich. Under each of the pointed windows is a superb Gothic fire-place of marble, with tracery in the spandrels of the arches. The windows on the west side have their upper compartments of stained glass: this gallery with that of King Edward the Third, form the great library. The ceiling is of the richest fan-work, having for corbels angels bearing emblazoned shields: the curtains are of scarlet and blue, which give a rich effect. The carpeting, woven for the express purpose, is crimson strewed with the Hamilton cinquefoils, which Mr. Beckford quarters in right of his mother, who was an heiress of that illustrious family.

From the west side of the gallery we enter the purple bed-room; it contains a painted frieze by Cagliari, representing the Woman taken in Adultery; the Coronation of Henry the Fourth of France, by Phillip de Champagne; Two Monks, an undoubted original, by Quintin Matsys; a portrait of Catharine Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus, by Paul Veronese; and over the fire-place a Head by Holbein, remarkably pure and perfect.

Proceeding in the gallery northward, we enter

THE OCTAGON,

and have a direct view of the northern tribune, which is over King Edward the Third's gallery. Between the piers of the octagon, which are composed of clustered columns, bearing eight lofty arches, are four pointed windows of beautifully stained glass, copied from those of the celebrated monastery of Batalha, in Portugal; the other four arches that support the tower are the openings of the galleries, the entrance to the great hall, and another arch built up: this latter is reserved for the entrance to the chapel intended to be erected on the eastern side of the Abbey. The arches that have no place of egress, five in number, are hung with curtains, at least fifty feet high, which, concealing the termination of the building, give an idea of continued space: the light emitted through the painted windows of the octagon, presents a most enchanting play of colours, and the effect produced by the sombre hue of twilight, contrasted with the vivid appearance at different hours of the day, is indescribably pleasing and grand. Above the eight arches is an open gallery that communicates with the higher suit of apartments; from this springs a beautiful groining of fan-work, supporting a lanthorn, lighted by eight windows richly painted; the whole is finished by a vaulted roof, the height of which is one hundred and thirty-two feet from the

ground. Descending by a flight of twenty-eight steps, eighteen feet in width, from the octagon we enter the great hall : this is a magnificent building in the ancient baronial style ; the roof, which is of oak, is decorated with thirty-eight shields, emblazoned with Mr. Beckford's principal family quarterings. On the left side are three windows of painted glass, the borders in imitation of a very ancient specimen in Canterbury Cathedral. On the right, directly opposite to the windows, are three lofty arches ; the middle one has a deep recess, in which stands a statue of the late Mr. Beckford, habited in his official robes as mayor of London, with Magna Charta in his left hand.

The great western doors are of oak, and, as before observed, thirty-five feet high ; the hinges alone, by which they are suspended, weigh more than a ton : notwithstanding this, they are so exactly poised that the valves may be put in motion by the slightest effort. Over the door-way is a spacious music gallery ; the access is by a small staircase curiously contrived within the thickness of the wall : its front is of Gothic screen-work with a cushion of crimson extending the whole breadth of the hall. Above this in the pediment is a small window of ancient stained glass, representing the Virgin and Child. Ascending again from the hall and crossing the octagon, is a large staircase leading to the Lancaster apartments ; the northern tribune room first presents itself. This is adorned

with ebony and ivory cabinets, vases of agate and of jade, some of them enriched with precious stones. The pictures in this apartment are portraits of St. Lewis Gonzaga, by Bronzino; of Jeanne d'Arkel, of the house of Egmont, one of the finest specimens of Antonio Moro; two pictures by West from the Revelations; and figures of St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose, by Hamilton, being the original designs for the stained glass in the gallery below; these are so placed as to be visible from the floor of the octagon.

The Lancaster gallery has a vaulted roof, and is decorated with a number of scarce prints. The carpeting is purple, powdered with flower-de-luces. This leads to the dressing room, which, through large folding doors, opens into the state bed-chamber. The bed, which is of crimson damask richly fringed, belonged to Mr. Beckford's great grandfather, when Governor of Jamaica. This room is furnished in a splendid manner, and contains several valuable pictures; among them is a whole-length portrait of the Regent Murray; on one side is a picture of Michael overcoming the Dragon, and on the other a highly-finished portrait of St. Thomas-a-Becket. The ceiling is in the purest style of the sixteenth century; round the cornice is a richly carved and painted frieze, composed of portulisses and the united roses of York and Lancaster.

We now ascend the staircase that leads to the entrance of the great tower, and come to the suit of rooms that surrounds the octagon. There are two bed rooms and two dressing rooms; the dressing room towards the west contains a curious picture by Andrea Mantegna, of Christ on the Mount, his three Disciples asleep; a very ancient performance, but in excellent preservation. Under this is a Pietà by West. On the opposite side is the Madonna, surrounded by cherubs, presenting her with baskets of flowers; the figures by Van-Balen, the landscape by Brueghel. Under this is the Vision of St. Anthony of Padua, receiving into his arms the infant Christ. The opposite dressing-room is hung with a curious grotesque device, worked with velvet, in crimson and green, upon a yellow ground of satin. In this room is a sumptuous cabinet, covered with a great variety of designs in silver, beautifully chased; and two pictures from the Revelations by West. The two bed-chambers are furnished in a stately baronial style. Above is another suit of handsome apartments for attendants, each lighted by a catherine-wheel window.

A staircase now winds up to the leads of the circular tower, whence we enter the upper part of the great octagon; ascending by an inclined plane, in a circular direction, we reach the top of this lofty structure, which is two hundred and seventy-six feet in height. The view is here of vast extent, including

many counties in its circumference : among the most conspicuous objects discernible without the aid of a glass, is Lord Arundel's terrace, adjoining Wardour Castle ; this is a fine range of wood, above which rise the bold, green eminences communicating with Salisbury Plain. Westward appear the grounds at Stourhead, a distant prospect into Dorsetshire and Somersetshire, as far as Glastonbury, and the road to Shaftesbury winding between two hills. Among other picturesque objects is a line of buildings called Castle-Town, on account of the construction of the houses, which have at intervals a raised work like a tower ; the general appearance resembles Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire. These houses were built by Mr. Beckford for the convenience of the villagers which he employs ; they are situated without the grounds, at a short distance from the enclosure. Farther north is seen Bradley Knoll and Bidcomb Hill. It would be almost endless to enumerate the interesting objects that are visible from this elevation : some conception, however, may be formed, when it is known that the tower has its base upon an eminence considerably above the level of the top of Salisbury Spire ; and there is no hill in the immediate neighbourhood of sufficient consequence to bound the commanding height of its summit.

Descending through the octagon on the north-east side of the Abbey, we observe a tower, contain-

ing several apartments. The upper one is a bed-chamber, lined with hangings of blue, strewed with white mullets, the original arms of the house of Douglas, and drawn together in the form of a tent. Under this is a dressing and bed room, in both of which the furniture, entirely composed of solid ebony and the rarest woods, is remarkable for the neatness and precision of the carved work. Re-entering the octagon, King Edward the Third's gallery presents itself. This contains seven lofty windows; opposite to them are portraits of Henry the Seventh, Edward the Fourth, John of Gaunt, the Constable Montmorency, Alphonso King of Naples, and John of Montfort Duke of Brittany. Facing the centre window is a fire-place of alabaster, composed of an arch resting upon columns, with vine-leaf capitals. Above is a whole-length portrait of Edward the Third, copied by Mr. Matthew Wyatt, from a picture in the vestry of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. The windows of this gallery are hung with curtains of purple and scarlet. Upon a sculptured frieze are the achievements of seventy-eight knights of the most noble order of the garter, all persons of eminence in English and foreign history, and from whom Mr. Beckford is lineally descended. In continuation of this stately apartment is a vaulted gallery wainscotted with oak and ribbed with deep mouldings, partly gilt and partly coloured; the floor is entirely covered with a Persian carpet of the most extraordinary size and

beautiful texture. This gallery receives a glimmering light through six perforated bronze doors, modelled after those of Henry the Fifth's chantry in the Abbey of Westminster. These doors are hung with crimson curtains, which increasing the solemn gloom, aid the effect of the oratory which we are now approaching.

THE ORATORY

Is part of an octagon; the roof, which is entirely gilt, terminates at each angle with delicate fan-work,



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resting upon a slender column. From the centre of the ceiling is suspended a golden lamp, elaborately chased. The altar is adorned with a statue of St. Anthony, admirably executed in alabaster by Rossi. On each side are lofty stands, upon which are placed candelabra of massive silver richly gilt.—The effect of this solemn recess must be seen to be conceived; nor can any description convey an idea of the awful sensations it inspires.

Date Due

