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THE
FIRST REPORT,

ETC.,

OF

The Lichfield Society,

FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF

Ecclesiastical Architecture.

M.D.CCC.XIII.



RUGELEY:

Printed for the Society, by

JOHN THOMAS WALTERS.

MDCCCXLIII.

"But though the Christians of those times spared no convenient cost in founding and adorning public places for the worship of God, yet were they careful to keep a decent mean between a sordid slovenliness, and a too curious and over-nice superstition. In the more early times, even while the fury and fierceness of their enemies kept them low and mean, yet they beautified their oratories and places of worship."—CAVE'S PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

PROCEEDINGS

AT

The First General Annual Meeting,

OF MEMBERS AND THEIR FRIENDS,

HELD JAN. 5TH, 1843, AT THE

Diocesan School Room, in Lichfield,

THE REV. PREBENDARY GRESLEY IN THE CHAIR.

THE Minutes of the last Meeting were read—and the Treasurers' accounts audited and allowed.

Eight new Members were elected, and the Officers and Members of the Committee appointed for the ensuing year.

The cordial thanks of the Society were voted to THE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY OF OXFORD, for a Copy of the Views and Details of St. Giles' Church, Oxford; and for a Copy of the Guide to the Architectural Antiquities of the neighbourhood of Oxford.

To the Rev. J. P. JONES, of Alton, for a valuable volume of Mss. Notes on the Churches in the Hundred of Totmonslow, in the county of Stafford.

To Mr. RICHARD HUTT, of Cambridge, for a Model of St. Edward's Font, in that University.

To the Rev. J. S. BUTTERWORTH, Honorary Secretary of the Bristol Architectural Society, for a Chart of Ecclesiastical Architecture.

To RICHARD GREENE, Esq., Honorary Secretary of this Society, for his design for a Union Workhouse, and for the wood blocks designed by him, and executed by Mr. O. Jewitt; from which the Members' Meeting cards and seal of the Society are printed.

To the Rev. A. BLOXAM, of Twycross, for Three Prints of Churches.

The Architectural Society of Down and Connor and Dremore was received into terms of friendly intercourse with this Society.

The Report of the Committee for the first year was read by the Honorary Secretary, R. Greene, Esq. Upon which, it was unanimously resolved upon the motion of the Hon. and Very Rev. the Dean of Lichfield;—

“That the Report now read be adopted; and that the objects of this Society, as set forth in the Second Rule, being worthy of the encouragement and support of the public, it is desirable that its efforts and operations should be sustained in its infancy; and that *Donations* be solicited to that effect.”

The Chairman delivered an Address upon the occasion of the first Annual Meeting of the Society; and an Address was also delivered by Thomas Johnson, Esq.; both of which are published herewith.

A Paper upon the Sculptures of Gothic Architecture (the Norman period) was read by the Honorary Secretary, Richard Greene, Esq.; and the proceedings of the day were concluded by a vote of thanks to the Chairman, and a resolution that his address, together with the remarks of T. Johnson, Esq., the Report of the Committee, the proceedings of the day, &c., &c., be printed for general circulation.

THE FIRST
Annual Report of the Committee

OF THE
Lichfield Architectural Society,

FOR THE YEAR 1842.

THE proceedings of this Society during the first year of its existence cannot reasonably be expected to embrace numerous or important subjects of operation, inasmuch as the object of such a Society is more to excite attention to the interesting pursuit of Ecclesiastical Architecture, and to promote a sound knowledge of the principles upon which it is based, than to engage in the actual construction or restoration of Churches; a task far exceeding the limited amount of funds which are available to its use.

But although this Society has (at present) neither erected, nor restored a church, it is by no means assuming too much to say, that it has instigated those who have been engaged in such works to a more deliberate consideration of the *modus operandi*, than has unfortunately been the case heretofore; and has thus directed the exertions of pious individuals engaged in Ecclesiastical undertakings into a better channel, and prevented the expenditure of their benefactions upon works unsuitable and derogatory to the dignity of God's House, and the character of the Christian religion. Upon this point it is desirable here to remark, that with very rare exceptions it may be admitted as a rule, that a country church may be built with legitimate

materials of wood and stone—upon correct Church principles, both as to the means and the end, for as little, if not less money, than is generally required to erect such a building in the unsuitable materials of brick, cast-iron, plaster and paint; upon principles—or rather, an inattention to principles—which, in the end, give but an imperfect, if not an irreligious idea of the purpose for which such buildings are intended.—This is a most important subject for the consideration of the Society, and one which the Committee strongly recommend to the future enquiries of its Members.

The more active proceedings of this Society, which it may be hoped shortly to enter upon, have hitherto been materially retarded by the difficulty of procuring a room for its use, as a Committee Room and Library—for as its Members have had no place of common resort for the furtherance of their object, and the communication of their ideas, each Member has hitherto been acting in his own independent way, and the progress of the Society in Ecclesiastical knowledge has consequently been but little promoted; moreover as it has not yet had any nucleus upon which to concentrate its acquisitions, it is at present without the visible means of affording information to those whom it invites to receive the advice which it is its object to impart. This difficulty, however, is removed, and your Committee have great pleasure in reporting that a room is now at the disposal of the Society, and hope that those individuals who propose to benefit the Society by gifts of Books, Drawings, &c., (some of which have already been proffered), will take an early opportunity of placing their benefactions in the room which is prepared to receive them.

There is another circumstance which at present prevents the Society from becoming very prominent in the promotion of its

object, viz., the present limited number of its Members. It is feared that the original Address was either imperfectly circulated or unfortunately misunderstood; for of upwards of 350 copies specially addressed, not more than 50 replies were received. The Committee therefore advise, that another Address, accompanied with a copy of this Report, should be carefully circulated through the Diocese amongst such of the Nobility, Clergy, and Gentry as may be known or expected to encourage a pursuit, at once so interesting historically, so important religiously, and withal, so rational and inexpensive, as to combine all the essentials which the most retired and conscientious person could expect in the form of recreation. Moreover, as the utility and efficiency of the Society is in great measure dependent upon the amount of funds at its disposal, the Committee strongly recommends that Donations be solicited in aid of its object, and that privileges be given to Members who assist the operations of the Society by this means.

The Committee having developed the present circumstances of the Society, and the causes which have hitherto operated against the more active character which it is capable of assuming, now turns with pleasure to the brief consideration of what it has *done*.

The first and most important of its acts is the participation it has had in the revision of the Rules of the Incorporated Society, by which it was invited to submit an opinion upon their former Rules, with such suggestions as to the revision of them, which their practical effect might occasion. The Secretaries accordingly considered the subject at some length, offering suggestions upon all the points under consideration, and it is highly gratifying to them to find, that having endeavoured to modify their opinions according to the best and most legitimate

examples of ancient precedent, they perceive them to have been almost literally adopted, a circumstance however, which they by no means attribute to their own judgment, but to the true and uniform principles of Christian Architecture, whereby they were no doubt enabled to coincide with other Architectural Societies whose opinions were also invited.

The Committee has also to report that it has given encouragement and support to a Work calculated to be of most important interest to this Society in particular, and to similar Societies in general.

The Work in question is the Church Architecture of the Diocese of Lichfield, and is intended to comprise every Church in the Diocese built previous to the Reformation. The Work will be published by Mr. Joseph Potter, a skilful Architect, by whom the Drawings will be made.—They will be strictly Architectural, comprising details of construction and ornament, when desirable.—The letter-press will be edited by a Committee of the Society to be appointed for that purpose.

The Committee deem it unnecessary to refer to some minor subjects which have attracted the attention of the Society; but it cannot conclude this Report without alluding in terms of respectful commiseration, to the condition of the President, who, by reason of a long and painful illness, has been withdrawn from his Diocese, and his valuable information and protection lost to the Society;—and whilst the Committee humbly beseech God, as a primary consideration, to restore him to health and his episcopal charge—it would secondarily hope that the energies of this Society may ere long be stimulated by his presence, and its proceedings marked by the information which he brings to bear upon the subject it embraces.

An Address

DELIVERED BY THE

REV. PREBENDARY GRESLEY, V. P.,

CHAIRMAN.

THIS being our first Annual Meeting, I have been requested to state, in general terms, what are the views of the Lichfield Architectural Society, and what are the advantages contemplated, and the modes by which it is to be hoped that those advantages may be secured. Other members, more competent than myself, will, I hope, lay before you some interesting details connected with Architectural subjects. It will be *my* office to invite your attention to more elementary topics, which may serve as an introduction to the proceedings of this Society.

The study of Ecclesiastical Architecture,—besides its evident connexion with the highest and holiest subjects, is one eminently calculated to improve the taste, and, at the same time, to enlarge the intellect. The facts and objects which it presents to us are not only beautiful and picturesque, but they are linked so closely with our national history, and with the moral condition of the English people, as well as with our deepest religious associations as Churchmen, that without some acquaintance with them, no one can have an accurate knowledge of the history of his Church and country, or of the feelings and manners of by-gone ages.

I might begin by directing your attention to those splendid monuments of Architectural skill, the noble cathedrals which are still main-

tained in much of their ancient magnificence, or the crumbling remains of monasteries or abbeys, which give so charming an interest to many of our English vales. But I prefer drawing my illustration of the historical associations of this study, from the facts which present themselves to any one who directs his observation to our old parish churches in almost every part of England.

Now, to one who is but moderately acquainted with the principles of Church-Architecture, there is many an old parish church which will furnish reminiscences of almost every age of English history,—at least, from the period when the Christian Church was first established in the land, and no one could claim the title of Thane, which is equivalent to that of Saxon gentleman, unless he had on his estate a parish church, with a bell turret attached to it. On entering an old church you will see, perhaps, near the door-way a venerable Font of unknown antiquity, coeval possibly (for we may allow some stretch of the imagination) with the first foundation of a church on the spot by St. Augustin, or St. Chad. Generation after generation has received Holy Baptism in that consecrated font, and many, we trust, are yet to follow in their steps. Advancing further you will observe, perhaps, a memorial of Norman times, an elaborately carved semicircular chancel arch, such, for instance, as that at Longdon church, with which most of you are acquainted, or the fine door-way of Tutbury, or, on a smaller scale, that at Kenilworth. The transept of Tamworth church furnishes some good specimens of the Norman style. These relics will serve to remind us of the days, when the Norman Barons having secured themselves in their strong holds, and established their feudal government, proceeded to turn their attention to building fit temples in which they and their dependents might worship God.

But under the Plantagenets the taste in Architecture began to improve in elegance, while it lost nothing in magnificence. And the next generation which took upon itself to improve the parish church, introduced the pointed arch, and other ornaments, which first shewed themselves in the shape of that species of Gothic which is called by architects the Early English style. You may sometimes look through the old Norman chancel arch, and see beyond it, the beautiful triple lancet window which is so peculiarly suited to the east end of the chancel,—emblematical, as no doubt it was, of the Holy Trinity. The finest specimen of this style in our neighbourhood is the old church at Stafford, which is now undergoing a thorough restoration, chiefly owing to the munificence of Mr. Watts Russel.

The earliest specimens of this style, in common with the Norman, had no mullions or divisions in the windows, which were generally extremely narrow, on account, probably, of the scarcity of glass. But when glass became more common, and the art of staining it was brought to great perfection, then the architects enlarged their windows and divided them into a number of graceful compartments; and hence, gradually were developed those later styles which are called the Decorated and the Perpendicular.

It is the easiest and most obvious plan thus to designate the various styles by the various forms of the windows. They are the parts which first meet the eye. But all the portions of the building—the shafts, the capitals, the mouldings, the buttresses, the towers and other parts, underwent simultaneous changes corresponding with the character of the varying styles. On these details, however, it is not my intention to enter; my object being principally to remark that all these different styles, or the greater part of them, are often to be found in the same edifice. In the old churches, for instance, of St. Chad's and St. Michael's, as well as in our Cathedral, every form of Gothic window may be observed. The western window of St. Chad's, is a very good specimen of the Decorated; and the east window at St. Michael's of the Perpendicular.

These styles then, the Norman, and three sorts of Gothic, bring us down to the time of the Reformation. If architecture has not advanced since that period still we are not without many reminiscences in our parish churches, both of the Reformation, and of the subsequent times. The King's arms emblazoned, as they frequently are, on the chancel arch, in the place where once the rood-loft stood, remind us of the substitution of the King's supremacy for that of the Pope. While the mutilated tombs, and statues, and battered windows, tell us fearful tales of the violence with which the Reformation was accompanied. However, it is unjust to accuse our Reformers of all the mutilation and violence which has taken place in our old churches. The deadliest enemies of Architectural ornaments, and the principal destructives of our churches, were the rebel Puritans, who put to death their king, and archbishop, and drove eight thousand of the clergy from their homes. It is to the same generation of men that we are indebted for other peculiarities which meet the eye in many of our parish churches, especially the enormous rostrum, called the Pulpit, which not unfrequently occupies the very centre of the church, to the exclusion from view of the chancel and altar.

In the next age there appears to have arisen, in many quarters, a revived zeal for the adornment of God's house, but unfortunately accompanied by a most perverted taste for the introduction of Grecian ornaments into our old Gothic buildings. Instances of this may be seen in the reredos behind the altars of St. Chad's and St. Michael's; the latter of which was considered such a wonder of art, that I am told the holyday folks at Greenhill, used to visit it as one of the most interesting sights in the neighbourhood. In accordance with this style are the Pagan monuments and equally Pagan inscriptions which deface many of our churches. Indeed the study of monumental remains, presents, on a small scale, the same series of changes, which are observable in the architecture of our churches. First, you have the simple Cross graven on the stone; then a short inscription, "Jesu mercy;" or "Orate pro anima." Then we find the mailed effigy of the warrior and his dame beside him—lying with their hands clasped in attitude of prayer—as if waiting the final resurrection. In the time of Elizabeth and James instead of the calm, motionless form of the recumbent effigy—you will find a lady in ruffs turning herself round and staring you in the face, with her head resting on her arms; and still later, the figure of the deceased shall be standing upright, or sitting in all his glory—and the monument embellished, with Time and his scythe, Fame and her trumpet, or Hercules with his club. A stranger entering St. Paul's might well inquire whether it were dedicated to a Christian or a Pagan deity; and similar instances of bad taste, though on a smaller scale, may be seen in many of our parish churches.*

In concluding our historical researches in the parish church we must not forget the more recent objects which characterise—I would I could say, the *past* generation,—indicative of modern luxury and exclusiveness, in the shape of drawing-room cielings and enormous Pews, filled with carpets and cushions and sometimes private stoves, by which the best parts of the church are monopolized by the richer classes, while the poor are pushed aside into holes and corners, or stuck up in some inconvenient and unsightly gallery.

All these things, or at least, a great many of them, you may see not unfrequently in our parish church. And what a wide and wonderful field of observation and inquiry does it present; whether to the antiquary, the historian, or the philosopher. Let us take, first, the fairest view. What an evidence and emblem does it afford of the indestructibility of

* There is an excellent article on Monuments in the British Critic of January, 1843.

the one Catholic Church, which has thus weathered the storm of so many generations. What a thought it is that possibly ancient Britons, Saxons, Danes, the conquering Normans, and succeeding generations, have all worshipped God not only in the same spot, but almost, so to say, in the same building! While the place of Druid worship is deserted, while the Roman villa or temple, the Saxon dwelling, the Norman castle are all dismantled; there still stand our parish churches, with their sacred font and altar, bearing on them indeed evidences of the various revolutions through which the country has passed—yet still maintaining their ground, and destined, as we doubt not, to maintain it to the end of time.

At the same time there are many objects in our churches which call up less encouraging thoughts. They bear, I fear, no satisfactory witness with regard to the taste, the charity, and piety of the present age. It is a fact which we cannot deny that the best Ecclesiastical structures, which grace our land, from the lofty cathedral to the humble parish church—are almost entirely the work of ages which, in comparison with our own, we are wont to hold in light esteem; ages when there were no steam engines, no railroads, comparatively little wealth, and few of the arts which conduce to modern refinement; and yet those ages had the taste to plan, the perseverance to execute, and the piety to use, those beautiful structures—which *we* can scarcely imitate, much less rival by any invention of our own. Surely those ages could not be so dark and barbarous as some suppose; the spark of religion could not be utterly extinct. Make all the allowance which you please for the impulse of superstition—and I admit much superstition existed—still it is evident that there was a spirit abroad in those ages which we have lost, and it were well if we could by any means restore. And that spirit, I believe, was *the spirit of Reverence*. We want reverence. And possibly we may not be taking a bad way to revive it by the study of Ecclesiastical Architecture.

It is, however, very important to observe that this want of reverence is not attributable to our Reformed Church. The Church, indeed, commanded the removal of images which had become objects of unholy worship; and other things which had been employed for uses of superstition or imposture, and many such there were; but it no where authorized a sacrilegious rabble to break down, with axes and hammers, the carved work, and rich ornaments of her consecrated buildings. It was not the Church that sent forth the notorious William Dowsing, whose name deserves to be had in remembrance, in the annals of mis-

chief, as the breaker of more windows, than any man before or since. It was not the Church, but the Committee of Puritans who sent forth this most zealous iconoclast. The Church does not bid her members build houses to God of stuccoed bricks, or fit them up with painted deal; nor drive the Poor into aisles and galleries, while the Rich loll in their cushioned pews. *The characteristic of the English Church is a grave and simple reverence.* It is the intrusion of a secular, covetous, irreverent spirit, *in opposition to the doctrines and discipline of our Church;* and the detrusion of the Church from her legitimate influence, which sufficiently accounts for that absence of feeling for the beautiful and holy, which has so obscured and vulgarized the mind of modern ages; but which, we trust, is at last beginning to be replaced by a purer and better spirit.

It is not, however, to the historian, or the philosopher, or to the admirer of beauty only, that the study of Church Architecture is interesting. To the philanthropist and practical man of the present age, it is also a subject of important inquiry. We find ourselves in the present generation placed under very peculiar circumstances. In ancient days our forefathers used to build places of worship, as they were required, for themselves and their dependants. Look at the more populous of our ancient cities, Bristol, York, or Coventry, and you will see always an ample number of churches, and those of the noblest structure. But recent generations, strange to say, have had little care for the most urgent of all wants, and have suffered a vast population to grow up without any adequate provision for the worship of God. The minds of men have at last been awakened to the sin and danger of this state of things; and all, or nearly all, acknowledge the necessity of remedying this portentous evil. The first and most natural feeling has been to build up, amidst our dense population, edifices which would contain the greatest number of persons;—and much has been done in many places. But then came in another consideration. An innate feeling of propriety, not to speak of religious principle, teaches us that a church ought to be constructed, not only for the accommodation of the people, but for the glory of God. We look around upon our new churches, and feel ashamed at their meagreness and poverty; especially when compared with those which were built by our ancestors. How is this, we naturally ask, that a generation, with a purer creed, and fifty times the wealth of former ages, does not build worthier houses of God, than these poor abortive attempts which we see around us? Impressed with these feelings many pious Church-builders began to lay out

considerable sums on the ornamental parts of the new edifices—but still the attempt proved a failure: and men came to acknowledge that even with the funds and the will to do what was right—they had not the necessary taste or feeling; and experience taught them that their only hope was to go back to the ancient models.

Well, now one would hope that having got so far as to acknowledge this most important principle, there would be no further obstacle to the erection of proper churches. But even yet failures were continual. One person, perhaps, would resolve to build a church in the Norman style; but when it was completed still it was nothing like the structures of our forefathers; and the disappointed church-builder would find that to put round-headed windows into a nine-inch brick wall, and a row of zig-zag ornaments round a modern door-way was not sufficient to constitute a Norman church. The characteristic of this style is massiveness and solidity of material, and unless this be given, the building must be quite unlike that, for which it is intended. It may be as well also to mention that even if the characteristics of the Norman style are preserved, it is ill-suited to a modern church, at least, for a large building: because the massive columns which divide the aisles from the nave, so much obstruct the voice and sight, that the worshippers in the aisles might almost be in another building. The old Abbey church at Malvern, or the new chapel at Leamington, are instances of this inconvenience. Our own church of St. Mary's, though not exactly a specimen of Norman Architecture, will shew the undesirableness of too massive columns. It seems now generally admitted that the Norman style is on many accounts unsuitable to modern churches; and that it is better to have recourse to the Gothic, both for the sake of beauty and convenience.

However, modern church-builders have too frequently proved equally unsuccessful in their imitation of the Gothic. A great many modern churches have been built in what was supposed the early English style: the principal feature of which is the narrow lancet window. But new edifices built on this plan have commonly a very meagre and un-churchlike appearance; the fact being that though the lancet window does not require mullions or tracery, yet that it is incomplete without a rich and deep moulding on the splays or sides. If any one wishes to know what an Early English window ought to be, let him look at the richly ornamented specimens which he will see on the left hand on entering the south door of Lichfield cathedral. In truth the Early English style if properly carried out is not at all cheaper than the

Decorated or the Perpendicular. In these last styles there have been many very questionable attempts; but, as a proof that they may be very successfully adopted, I would refer you to the elegant Decorated windows just placed in the south-aisle of St. Michael's; or the handsome Perpendicular window in the chancel of the new church at Wall.

It is now generally admitted that it is the best and safest way to imitate the ancient models, and also that in order to imitate them, it is not only necessary to take their general character and outline, but that minute attention must be paid to the exact measurement and arrangement of all the different parts. Within the last year or two many successful attempts have been made to rival the churches of ancient days. The most complete structure which I have seen is the beautiful church at Hartshill, in the neighbourhood of Stoke-upon-Trent, built at the sole expense of Mr. Herbert Minton. In this church the style adopted, with peculiar propriety, is that of the cathedral in this city, being a sort of transition from the Early English to the Decorated; which being carried out in all its parts, without limitation of expense, presents perhaps the most perfect parish church of modern times.

Besides fixing on a suitable style of Architecture, there is an important—in some respects a more important subject of inquiry to the church-builder—namely, the interior arrangement. On this subject, after many failures, several points seem to be now generally agreed on by all who have seriously turned their minds to this subject. First and foremost, it seems to be all but universally admitted (and for this we have in no slight degree to thank our Reverend Secretary) that the modern system of Pews ought to be at once abolished. That a few Rich people should monopolize great square compartments in churches, and drive the Poor into holes and corners, and obstruct the public worship, seems, contrary, not only to right feeling and justice, but to the express Word of God Himself. It should, however, be understood, that by the abolition of pews it is not meant that the parishioners who attend divine service should not have their appropriate places, where they may worship with their family around them. It is not meant that the church should be filled with narrow, inconvenient benches, where the people can neither kneel, nor sit, nor stand;—such as those commonly designated free sittings, and that the congregation are to scramble for them, so that he who first comes shall be first served;—but, as I understand the advocates of this arrangement, it is meant that rich and poor alike should have decent, ample, and commodious places where they may all kneel to worship, and sit to hear God's Word, and stand to sing His

praises ; and that those who regularly attend should have certain places assigned them for the occupation of themselves and their families. Almost all the new churches which I have seen, those, at least, which have been built within the last year or two, are fitted up in this way, with open sittings, facing eastward and ornamented with carved finials ; and no one who has seen a church thus arranged, would be contented with the re-introduction of the modern square unsightly pews.

Another axiom in church-building, (at least, I trust, it is now acknowledged so,) is that *there should be no galleries*. I would not go so far as to assert, as some one has, that it is impossible to say one's prayers in a gallery ; still, it is not too much to say, that all the associations of sitting in a gallery are that you are there to hear and not to take a part. Some, no doubt, will say that a great deal of "church accommodation" is lost if you have no galleries. To this I make the following answer. It is considered that a church ought to accommodate, at least, one-third of the inhabitants of the district or parish to which it is appropriated. If then you build a church crammed with galleries, and so arranged as to hold two thousand persons, you suppose a district of six thousand. It is possible that you might find a preacher with sufficient strength of lungs to perform the service for a year or two in such a church ; most men would be incapacitated at the end of a few months. Still, even if he could perform the Public service in the church, he would be utterly unable to accomplish the Parochial duties. The people would still be sheep without a shepherd. And they who thought that they had provided for their religious wants would only be deceiving themselves.

Instead of this mode of proceeding, I would say—form a district in which a Priest, with an assistant Deacon, might profitably exercise his parochial functions ; a district not containing more than two thousand souls ; then build a church for seven or eight hundred. Such a number might easily be accommodated on the ground plan, and no gallery would be needed. Another collateral advantage would be that for this number so arranged, there would be no difficulty about the pulpit—which might be placed close to one of the pillars of the chancel arch, and all would be able to hear with ease.

There are other points in the internal arrangement of churches which demand a careful inquiry ; and which it is very important should be rightly determined. The size and depth of the chancel is not the question of least difficulty : some very excellent writers who have done eminent service to Church Architecture, contending that the chancel

ought to be deep and screened off, as in the Middle Ages, others, maintaining that in the primitive times the Altar was brought nearer to the people, and that our own Church expressly orders that the consecration of the elements should take place in the presence of the congregation.

Then as regards the place from which the prayers are read—commonly called the desk—the right principle seems to be that the lesson and exhortation should be read by the Minister with his face towards the people; and then when he addresses prayers to Almighty God—he should turn away from them. Also with respect to the singers, the usual, but not the best plan is to place them in a gallery at the western end. I have seen a much better effect produced by placing them in the middle of the church amongst the rest; so that the voice of thanksgiving appears to arise, not from a select body of singers, but from the whole congregation, who are by those means encouraged to join. A very fitting place, also, seems to be to range them on opposite sides between the chancel arch and the altar rail.

All these things are very far from being unimportant. We should lay it down as a maxim that “*nothing is little in God’s service:*” nothing which can contribute to the more decent, and orderly, and reverential performance of Divine worship ought to be neglected. At the same time, these things have been so long unthought of, and people have been accustomed in many places to such different modes—that much charity and mutual forbearance must be exercised, by those who desire to restore a fitter state of things.

In church-building, as in other things, but in church-building especially, our rule should be “that all things should be done to the glory of God.” No one will dispute that the more we can throw ourselves into the spirit of the ancient models, the more beautiful, and, therefore, the more worthy of their object will be our churches. But while we imitate the beautiful Architecture of the Middle Ages, it does not follow that we are servilely to copy them in their plans and arrangements. Our modern worship differs in some respects from that of the English Church of the mediæval times—our population is much greater—we have many arts and inventions, also, which might be profitably and rightly applied to increase the beauty and convenience of churches.

It is in the promotion of these objects, by inquiry and information, that this Society hopes to do good service. We have already entered into friendly relations with the Cambridge Camden Society; the Oxford, Exeter, Bristol, Durham, and Down and Connor and Dromore Societies; which have been recently instituted for the same

objects. It is our intention to form a collection of plans, books, drawings, and models, to which the church-builder may refer; we propose to perpetuate, by engravings, the most beautiful edifices in the Diocese; so that if unhappily they fall to ruin, the memory of them may not be lost. We shall have pleasure in receiving plans and elevations which may be forwarded to us for inspection, and expressing our opinion upon them. We hope, if our funds admit, to contribute to the preservation or restoration of any beautiful remains which may be in danger of perishing. In short, we hope to be of very great use, and to accomplish a great deal, in the way of Architectural improvement, from the measuring the height of a shaft, or the indentions of a moulding—to the restoration of the west front, or even the whole of Lichfield Cathedral; if only the Dean and Chapter will accept our services, and the Diocese will place twenty or thirty thousand Pounds at our disposal. Who can say what may not be accomplished by perseverance? Meanwhile the object of the Institution will not be missed, if only by promoting inquiry into these very important matters, we contribute to call attention to the beautiful memorials of times past, and to render the new churches of this Diocese, in any degree, more seemly and reverential,—more fitted for Christian worship,—and more worthy of Him to Whom they are consecrated.

Remarks

DELIVERED BY T. JOHNSON, ESQ.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

AS a Member of this Architectural Society, and an Architect living in the City of Lichfield, I should reproach myself exceedingly, however reluctant I may feel in addressing this meeting, if I were not to express a hearty concurrence in the object for which this Society is formed, and an ardent hope that it may be instrumental in cultivating a genuine taste and spirit for Ecclesiastical Architecture.

After your very able and interesting address, it would appear ostentatious in me to enter into any lengthened detail of the rise, progress, and I may say, decay of Gothic Architecture in this country; nor is it necessary for me to argue whether Gothic Architecture (as it is termed) has any claim to originality with us. It is enough to say under any circumstances it is now Anglicised, and is a style the best adapted for our National Church.

The few observations I intend to make will bear more on the practical working of this Society than on the theory of Architecture itself, for unless theory and practice be in combination we cannot expect satisfactory results.

In looking at the Rules of this Society we find first, it is instituted under the title of "The Lichfield Society for the encouragement of Ecclesiastical Architecture;" and secondly, "That the objects of this Society shall be, generally, to promote the study of Ecclesiastical Architecture, and to collect and diffuse information upon this important subject; and specially to encourage the restoration of decayed and mutilated Ecclesiastical Buildings, and Sepulchral Monuments of the Middle Ages: with which view the operations of the Society shall be directed to the formation of a collection of Books, Prints, Drawings,

Models, Carvings and Casts of Architectural details, as far as the funds of the Society will admit."

Now, Sir, it appears to me that unless you can connect this Society with the Diocesan Church Building Society its means of usefulness will be extremely limited; for this Society should not only encourage the study of Ecclesiastical Architecture, but it should possess the power of examining designs, and of preventing those from being carried into effect that are not worthy to be classed with those ancient examples we are now anxious to follow. And again, in restorations, that it should be able to assist the Architect in removing parts, or I may say, excrescences, from the original, which subsequent periods have produced, so that the restoration, when done, may be a perfect model of the original. I will state a case where this Society might have been useful. I do not intend to cast any reflection on the Architect employed, because I believe, in the case in question, he is the mere agent to take down and rebuild good, bad, and indifferent. In the church at Bakewell, which is now undergoing extensive renovations, the South Transept was a very beautiful model of Early English, (indeed I do not know a more beautiful model) with the pointed gable, as the Tower denotes, and a groined stone roof, or an open oak roof; but in the early part of the sixteenth century the high pitched roof was removed: the external walls raised, and the flat timber roof and parapet substituted. Now, Sir, if this Society had been consulted it would have recommended the original form, namely, the pointed gable; first, because it was part of the original design; secondly, because, in a picturesque point of view, it was more beautiful: and thirdly, as a question of expense, more economical. In looking at these restorations we must have the eye of an architect, and not that of an antiquary. The antiquary, no doubt, prefers the admixture of style, so long as he can satisfactorily trace its origin, but if you remodel it he will no longer recognize it as a piece of antiquity.

This Society in the course of its usefulness must be prepared to combat strong prejudices, both with Clergymen and Architects, in matters of taste and expense. First, as to taste. Many of the Clergy, particularly the young Clergy, will all at once become architects. I say this with the most profound respect: they will study the Glossary of Architecture (a work which certainly conveys a great deal of information), Britton, Pugin, and others; and their productions will be sent forth, but without their essential parts; I mean detail and construction, which belong only to the experienced architect. Architects, too, who present plans, will maintain their own taste in opposition to any

suggestion that might come from this Society, however valuable it might be.

Now, Sir, in looking at our duties, I apprehend we shall not quarrel with architects as to the style of design, we care not whether it be Norman, Early English, Decorated, or Perpendicular, or a combination to obtain picturesque effect, and which I, myself, advocate; but I trust, Sir, we shall bestir ourselves in matters of detail: the proportion of parts, the form and depth of mouldings, the extent and application of its decoration, both to the exterior and interior, the material to be employed, and the general construction of the whole. I trust this will be its legitimate course, and unless this Society is qualified to perform the task we shall fail in the object we seek.

Now, as to the expense of a good substantial church worthy to be classed with our ancient examples. In these days everything appears to be done by the Rule of Three. If my friend in Cheshire built a church to contain five hundred persons for £1000, what will your friend in Staffordshire build a church for, to contain one thousand persons? Why, Sir, the answer would be, £2000, or £2 per sitting.—Diocesan Church Building Societies make their grants (if I mistake not) on this principle. In the course of my practice I have been taunted in this particular, though I have never yet seen a church completed at that rate per sitting. It has generally happened, either from the ignorance of the architect, or the cunning of the builder, these cheap churches, meagre as they are in design, have seldom been completed for less than £3 per sitting; and unless the price of material and labour is reduced to a much greater extent than I expect, we must go on a more liberal scale—say £4 per sitting, and if a tower £5 per sitting: this is the minimum of calculation in the most favourable locality.

This position may be somewhat startling, yet I think it may be met with advantage in another way. I would ask, did our ancestors complete their churches as we now see them at any one period? Certainly not. An analysis of parts shews clearly that centuries have rolled on from the commencement to the completion. I will give one example, St. Michael's Church, Lichfield, which I am now restoring, under the auspices of Mr. Greene, and although he is present I will say, one of the most valuable Members of this Society, and to whom (going a little out of the path) a debt of gratitude is due from every sound Churchman in that parish, for the very spirited manner in which he is carrying out his taste and feeling in the restoration of that church, and at a great expense from his private purse.

The original church consisted of a nave and chancel in Early English,

the lancet window still exists in the chancel, and one also at the West end of the nave, which end now forms one side of the tower; there were also buttresses at the West end of the nave corresponding with those in the chancel: subsequently a South aisle was added, in the decorated style, the succeeding style to the Early English, and this was followed by a North aisle in the perpendicular style, the succeeding style to the decorated, and at this period the nave was taken down and rebuilt with a clerestory and a tower and spire added, so that it began in the early part of the thirteenth century, and was finished about the middle of the fifteenth. Now, Sir, why should we not follow our ancestors in this respect? If our funds are limited why attempt to complete the whole? why not leave our successors a share to perform in the great work before us. Take a district wholly destitute of church accommodation, and which, from its population, requires a church to hold one thousand persons. Now, I should provide a church to hold seven hundred, for depend upon it, however great the zeal of the clergyman, he will find a strong predilection for that dissent which has existed in the absence of a church, and which will require, probably, years of labour to remove. In many cases an aisle might be omitted, or a western gallery, or both, according to circumstances; also the tower, if we have not the means of building what a tower should be: we need not be distressed about the bells, a neat campanile in these days will be quite sufficient for them. Look at the many large churches which have been built under the control of the Church Commissioners, to hold two thousand with comfortable sitting room, to say nothing of hearing and seeing, and with a congregation generally not exceeding one half of that number. I cannot but think this has been a great error. Where is the clergyman who can be distinctly heard in such a church? I am of opinion, one thousand five hundred ought to be the maximum of numbers. Having designed some of these churches, I may be permitted to say, I think we have been in error in respect to the Architectural decoration of them: the exterior has generally some pretension, nay, some of them are profuse in ornament; but when we come to the interior we find them in a state of nudity, bare walls and barn-like; I do not mean the old Tithe barn, for some of them were beautiful in design and good in execution. Would it not be more in accordance with the spirit of our religion if we were to concentrate our decoration, if it be limited, to the interior of our churches: a quiet exterior, bold in its outline, of fair proportion, built of rubble stone with wrought masonry of simple detail to the windows, and other prominent parts could never offend the most scrutinizing eye.

I hope we shall not be content in the nineteenth century with the frigid style of the Puritans; every man of taste must regret that work of demolition in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What exquisite designs! What models of sculpture and painting would now have been before us as examples of art! It is argued that form and ceremony have nothing to do with Christianity; I agree, as far as the fundamental principle is concerned, but should there not be something like grave dignity when we assemble together in the House of God? I hope to see ere long the interior of our churches cased with stone, with clustered columns and foliated capitals, groined stone roof, or the oaken arched roof, with its sculptured corbels; I hope to see the gracefully formed elbow with its poppy head to the seats, in place of the high aristocratic pew of the seventeenth century; the elaborately carved stone pulpit placed, as you have pointed out, against the columns of the nave, and the oak enriched lettern opposite, in place of the bulky desk and pulpit, with its geometrical staircase in the middle aisle obstructing the most imposing part of the fabric,—I mean the chancel. I hope to see the deep chancel with its stone screen, sedilia, tessellated pavement and painted glass windows, in place of that poverty which we too often see in our modern churches.

It is argued that the general introduction of stone is out of the question, from the great additional expense that would be incurred, and particularly in reference to carving and sculpture. I am of opinion there is a body of masons now rising up that, with a very little practice, would execute the foliage of capitals and other enrichments with as much sharpness and relief as the examples we are anxious to follow, and at as little expense as the plasterer of the present day, who has first to model his enrichment in clay, then to take a cast in wax, then to cast it, then to trim it, and afterwards to stick it up. I earnestly hope this Society will reject the introduction of such material as Plaster, Roman cement and Terra cotta: if it does not it will be worse than useless.

I thank you, Sir, for the attention you have given me, and you Ladies and Gentlemen, for the great forbearance you have shewn in listening to the few remarks I have thought it my duty to make in furtherance of the object of this Society. I trust that our efforts may be crowned with success: that the churches of the nineteenth century (save and except some of those already built) will be deserving models to future generations, and that the Church itself, with the blessing of God, will ride triumphant to the end of time.

Rules.

I. **T**HAT the Society be instituted under the title of "The Lichfield Society for the encouragement of Ecclesiastical Architecture."

Title

II. That the Objects of this Society shall be generally to promote the study of Ecclesiastical Architecture, and to collect and diffuse information upon this important subject; and especially to encourage the restoration of decayed and mutilated Ecclesiastical buildings, and Sepulchral monuments of the Middle Ages; with which view the operations of the Society shall be directed to the formation of a collection of Books, Prints, Drawings, Models, Carvings and Casts of Architectural details, as far as the funds of the Society will admit.

Objects

III. The Society shall have a President, and Vice-presidents. The Bishop of Lichfield for the time being shall be invited to become President, and the Deans and Canons of Lichfield, together with the Archdeacon of Stafford, shall be invited to become Vice-presidents; and the Archdeacons of Salop and Derby (being Members of the Society) shall be also invited to become Vice-presidents.

Constitution

IV. The affairs of the Society shall be conducted by a Committee, to consist of the President, Vice-presidents, Secretaries, Treasurer, and eight other Members; of which Committee the President, Vice-presidents, Secretaries and Treasurer, shall be Members ex-officio.

Management

V. Four Members of the Committee shall constitute a Quorum; and, in case of the absence of the President and Vice-presidents, shall choose a Chairman to conduct the business of the Meeting.

Management

VI. The Committee shall appoint the times and place of ordinary Meetings of the Society, and shall have the power to make Bye-Laws.

VII. An Annual Meeting of the Members of the Society shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the President, at which Meeting the Committee, the Secretaries and Treasurer for the year ensuing shall be appointed, the Report of the Committee of the past year read, and the accounts of the Treasurer audited.

VIII. An Annual Subscription of One Guinea (to be payable on the 1st of January in each year) shall constitute an Annual Member, and a Donation of Ten Guineas shall constitute a Life Member. A Gentleman wishing to connect himself with the Society shall become duly qualified, upon being nominated by a Member, subscribing the Rules of the Society, in the Secretaries' Book, and paying his Subscription for the current year, or his Donation as a Life Member.

IX. Members may introduce visitors at the Meetings of the Society upon notifying the name and address of the party to the Secretary.

X. The Secretaries shall have charge of the Records of the Society, and shall keep a minute Book containing Reports of the proceedings of the Meetings, and particulars relative to all matters of interest to the Society.

XI. No motion or communication shall be brought before the Society until it has been approved by the Committee.

XII. Any alteration or addition to the foregoing Rules shall be made at the Annual Meeting of the Society, notice thereof being given at the previous ordinary Meeting; and Gentlemen becoming Members of the Society shall signify their intention to conform to the Rules thereof, by subscribing the same in the Secretaries' Book.

Note—The Society invites its Members to examine every Church in their power, to furnish Reports and Drawings thereof to the Secretaries; to contribute original Papers on any subject connected with the design of the Society; and to augment its Library by Donations. And the Society trusts that its Members, whilst pursuing their antiquarian enquiries, will never forget the Sacred character of the edifices which they visit.

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APPOINTED FOR THE YEAR 1843.

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