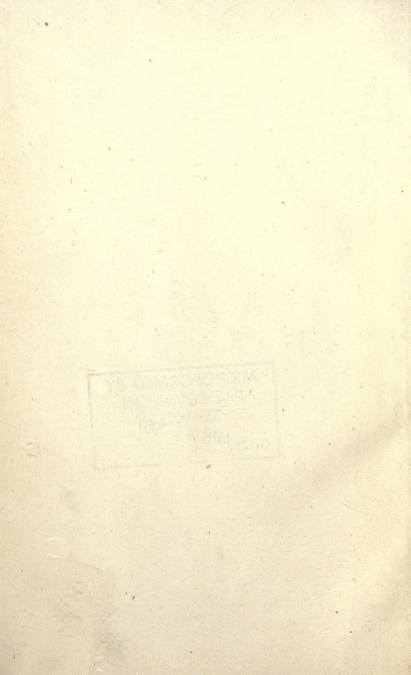
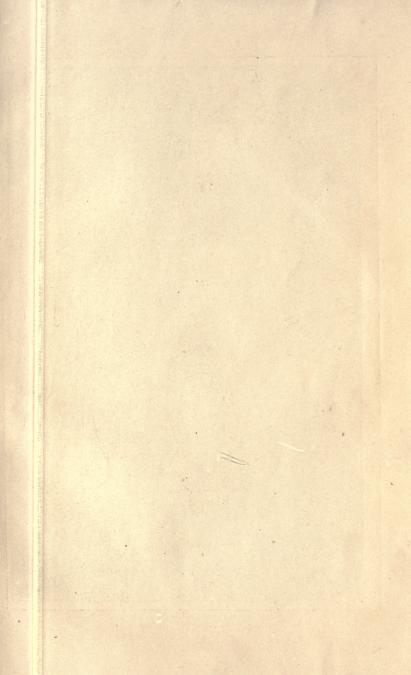
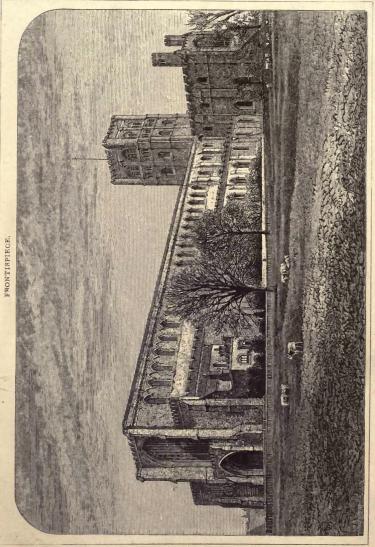


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## HANDBOOK

TO THE

# CATHEDRALS OF ENGLAND.

Southern Dibision.

ST. ALBAN'S.

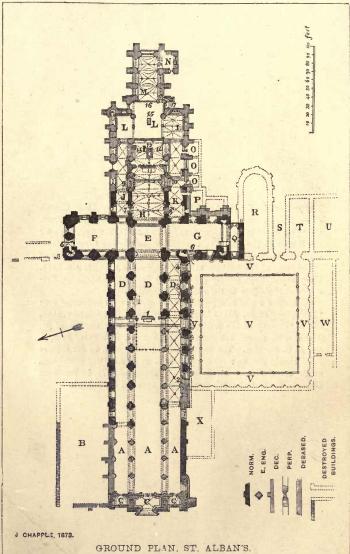
With Illustrations.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET. 1877.

113717 "LUKELE !! THE authorities for the Architectural History of the Abbey Church of St. Alban's are, besides the 'Historia Major' of Matthew Paris, the 'Chronicles of the Monastery,' edited by H. T. Riley, Esq., for the Master of the Rolls (11 volumes), especially the three volumes entitled 'Gesta Abbatum Monasterii,' which contain a history of the abbots and the fortunes of the house from A.D. 793 to A.D. 1411. These Gesta were mainly compiled by Thomas Walsingham, Precentor of the Abbey in the reign of Richard II.

Of modern works relating to the Abbey, the most important are: 'The Abbey of St. Alban,' by the Rev. H. J. B. Nicholson, D.D., and a 'History of the Architecture of the Abbey Church of St. Alban, with special reference to the Norman Structure,' by I. C. and A. C. Buckler. The Reports on the restoration by Sir Gilbert Scott should also be mentioned, as well as an excellent description of the restoration, so far as it had advanced in 1874, by Mr. John Chapple, Sir G. G. Scott's clerk of the works at St. Alban's.



#### ST. ALBAN'S.

#### REFERENCES TO GROUND PLAN.

A A A Nave and Aisles.

B Foundations of St. Andrew's Chapel.

CCC Western Porches.

D D D Choir of the Monks, and aisles

E entral Tower.

F North Transept. G South Transept.

H Presbytery.

I Retrochoir, or Saint's Chapel.

J North aisle of Presbytery.

K South aisle of Presbytery.

LLL Antechapel and aisles.

M Lady chapel.

N Chapel of the Transfiguration.

000 Foundations of chapels.

P Vestry.

Q Slype with Norman arcade.

R Foundations of chapter-house.

S Slype.

T Foundations of St. Cuthbert's Chapel.

U Day-room of Monks, Dormitory over.

V V V V Great Cloister.

W Site of Refectory.

X Locutorium or Abbot's Parlour, with small Chapel above.

- 1 Choir Screen, called St. Cuthbert's.
- 2 Entrance to Cloister and Abbot's Parlour.
- 3 Tomb of the Hermits.
- 4 Entrance from Cloister.
- 5 Portal of N. Transept, with watching place in window above it.
- 6 Window with watching place in S. Transept.
- 7. 8 Entrances to Presbytery from aisles.

- 9 Abbot Ramryge's Chantry.
- 10 Abbot Wallingford's Chantry; generally called Wheathamstead's. 11 Reredos and A'tar.
- 12 Base of Shrine of St. Alban.
- 13 Watching Chamber of Shrine.
- 14 Duke Humphry's Chantry. 15 Base of Shrine of St. Amphibalus.
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### SAINT ALBAN'S.

#### PART I.

## Pistory and Details.

RESERVING for the Second Part the history of the foundation of St. Alban's Abbey, a description of the site, and of the earlier churches which may have stood on or near it, we come at once to the existing building, and to the history of its several portions.

A church, which can have been none other than that built by Offa of Mercia in 793, was standing in 1077; when Paul of Caen, the first Norman abbot, the friend and kinsman of Lanfranc, took the place of the half-mythical Abbot Frithric. Former abbots, however, had made preparations for a great rebuilding, especially Ealdred, who, towards the close of the tenth century, destroyed the greater part of the ruins of ancient Verulamium, which had become a haunt of thieves and broken men, laying together carefully the tiles and stones from the demolished houses. These he

<sup>•</sup> It has been asserted that he was the son of Lanfranc, who may have been married before his monastic profession.

proposed to use in the construction of a new churchb. But the time became troubled, and a great famine which spread over England obliged one of the succeeding abbots, Leofric, not only to disperse the treasures which he had gathered for the building of the fabric, but to sell for the support of the poor even the precious vessels belonging to the church. Caen found ready to his hand the store of tiles gathered from Verulamium, besides timber which had been prepared and laid together; and the Roman town still provided an extensive quarry. Lanfranc assisted him liberally. The Saxon church was pulled down, and much of its material was used in the new structure, which was completed by Abbot Paul in eleven years, "the vastest and sternest structure of his age"." The "sternness" was mainly owing to the material

b "Tegulas vero integras, et lapides quos invenit, aptos ad ædificia, seponens, ad fabricam ecclesiæ reservavit. Proposuit vero, si facultates suppeterent, dirutâ veteri ecclesiâ, novam construere; propter quod terram in profunditate evertit ut lapideas structuras inveniret."—Gesta Abbatum, i. 25.

c E. A. Freeman, 'Norm. Conq.,' iv. 399.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Paulus Abbas, quum jam Abbas undecim annis extitisset, infra eosdem annos totam ecclesiam Sancti Albani, cum multis aliis ædificiis, opere construxit lateritio, Lanfranco efficaciter juvante; qui, ut dicitur, mille marcas ad fabricam contulit faciendam."— 'Gesta Abbatum,' i. 53. The new church, however much it displayed the zeal of the abbot, was in some respects a monument of conquest. In building it, Abbot Paul swept away the tombs of his predecessors, declaring that they were rude and ignorant barbarians. "Tumbas venerabilium antecessorum suorum, Abbatum nobilium, quos rudes et idiotas consuevit appellare, delevit, vel contemnendo eos, quia Anglicos, vel invidendo, quia fere omnes stirpe regali vel magnatum præclaro sanguine fuerant procreati."— G. Abbat., i. 62.

employed,—the flat, broad Roman tile from Verulamium. Similar tiles have been used elsewhere in this country in the construction of Christian churches. They are found, indeed, wherever the remains of a great Roman station or villa were near at hand for the builders; and the use of them is especially noticeable in such churches as that of St. Botulf's Priory at Colchester, or Brixworth in Northamptonshire. But they are nowhere applied so extensively, or made so completely the chief material of the structure, as at St. Alban's.

II. This Norman church was not dedicated until 1115; during the abbacy of Richard d'Aubeny, the successor of Paul. Henry I. and his Queen were present. There was a great concourse of nobles, bishops, and abbots, and the whole company remained feasting at St. Alban's "through Christmastide to the Epiphany." The ground-plan of the church was the same as at present; indeed, it is still for the most part the same church, from the west front to the central tower and the transepts, except that the west front was flanked by square towers. Each transept, however, opened eastward into two apsidal chapelsof which that adjoining the aisle of the presbytery projected farther to the east than the other. The presbytery was separated from its aisles by a solid wall, and ended in an apse, the chord of which was on a line with the three arches at the eastern end of what is now the teretory (see Plan) The terminations of the aisles ranged with this chord. They seem to have been square on the outside, but rounded within, after the fashion of the aisles in the great church of Romsey, in Hampshire.

III. The church thus finished remained unaltered until the time of Abbot John de Cella (1195-1214). Early English had then been fully developed. The plain, stern, work of his predecessor seems to have been disliked by Abbot John; who, attending little, says Matthew Paris, "to that admonition of which mention is made in the Gospel, that 'he who is about to build should compute the cost,' lest 'all begin to jest at him, saying, This man began to build and was unable to finish it," - undertook to rebuild the western front in the new and enriched style. He dreamt, it may be, of rebuilding the whole nave. But money speedily failed him; and although he employed three architects, the three western portals alone were completed—if they were really completed at the time of his death. What remains of his work is very admirable, and it was carried on by his successor, William of Trumpington (1215-1235), who rebuilt, at the western end of the nave, four piers, with their arches, on the south side, and three on the north. His work is excellent Early English, though it has not, in the words of Sir G. G. Scott, "the spiritual character which marks that of De Cellad."

IV. Whatever may have been designed, the rebuilding of the nave was not proceeded with after the death of Abbot William. Some slight changes were

d Report on St. Alban's Abbey, April, 1871,

perhaps made in the eastern arm of the church, but it was not until 1256—twenty years after Trumpington's death-that the next great work was undertaken. This was not in the nave. The comparatively short Norman presbytery and apse (the Norman choir was under the central tower, and extended for two bays into the nave) had probably been found inconvenient, and part of it seems to have shown some sign of weakness. At any rate, the convent determined to rebuild it: and the work was perhaps begun by Abbot John of Hertford (1235-1260), the successor of William of Trumpington. The plan involved a complete alteration of the Norman design. Nearly the whole of the presbytery, with its aisles, was rebuilt; but the apse was removed altagether, and the church was continued eastward for a considerable extent. The addition comprised, at least in plan, a continuation of the aisles for two bays, and a central, square-ended chapel projecting beyond them. Still farther eastward, but somewhat narrowed in width, there was added a Ladychapel of three bays, also square-ended. The work thus designed brought the ground-plan of the great church to its present outline; but it was not all carried out at once. It is evident that the new building, from the western end of the presbytery to the entrance of the Lady-chapel, ranges over a period between the years 1256, when it may have been begun, and 1290. "Its style," says Sir G. G. Scott, "carries us on apparently to the last decade of the thirteenth century." The whole work is of extreme beauty; "as

perfect in art as anything which its age produced; indeed, its window-tracery is carried to higher perfection than in any other work I know."

V. The foundations of the Lady-chapel were probably laid during this first period. It was not completed until the abbacy of Hugh of Eversden (1308-1326), and very rich and beautiful as it is, it is altogether inferior in "artistic sentiment"-(the expression is Sir Gilbert Scott's)-to the work westward of it. It is perhaps excelled by another work of Abbot Hugh's - the four piers, with their arches, and the triforium and clerestory above them, on the south side of the nave, east of those rebuilt by Abbot Trumpington. Either his alterations, or some insecure foundation, had rendered that part of the nave so weak that it fell, and was thus rebuilt under Hugh of Eversden. The apsidal chapels opening eastward from the south transept were removed in the fourteenth century to make way for a large sacristy, which has disappeared in its turn; and the corresponding chapels in the north transept were also removed, but at what period is uncertain.

These are the great architectural changes of the church. Much of the walls of the Norman nave, the great Norman arcade on the north side, with the exception of four bays; four bays on the south side; the central tower with its lofty arches, and the transepts which open from it, remain as they were built by Paul of Caen, and show us some of the earliest Norman

<sup>·</sup> Report, ut sup.

work in this country. We may be thankful that either the want of funds or the strength of the building saved thus much of it from transformation or reconstruction. The changes begun by John of Cella, and completed by Hugh of Eversden, supply us with examples of the highest beauty and value, ranging from the first development of Early English to the perfection of Decorated. But these, if not to be exceeded, may at least be paralleled elsewhere. The massive Norman work has a special interest of its own; and the material of which it is for the most part composed, carries us back through another range of centuries to the time of the Cæsars, and to that of St. Alban himself.

VI. It is not so pleasant to trace the later fortunes of the building. Changes had been wrought in it, by no means for the better, during the Perpendicular period. The walls of the nave-aisles were lowered, and their roofs flattened; so that the backs of the Norman triforia were exposed, and their openings were thus converted into windows. Perpendicular windows also were inserted in the western and in the transept fronts. At, and after, the dissolution of the abbey much of the more delicate work throughout the interior was greatly injured. The two shrines—those of St. Alban and St. Amphibalus-were removed, and their richly-sculptured bases were purposely smashed and shattered. The church itself remained in the hands of the Crown until 1553, when the main body of it was granted, for £400, to the mayor and bur-

gesses, "to be the parish church of the borough, for the inhabitants of the late parish of St. Andrew:" and they were also empowered to establish a grammar-school within the ancient Lady-chapel. this purpose the arches at the east end of the feretory, and the aisles in a line with them, were walled up; precious fragments of all sorts, and especially portions of the shrine-bases, being used for the walling. East of this wall an open passage was formed, quite through the church, so as to allow of an independent approach to the Lady-chapel, which became the school. The beautiful outer chapels, which formed a sort of retrochoir and led towards the Ladychapel, were thus opened, and speedily fell into decay. The windows were unglazed, and the boys of the grammar-school "age after age amused themselves by cutting the soft stone of the beautiful arcading with their knives." The cost of keeping the body of so vast a church in repair was necessarily great, and royal briefs were granted for collections throughout the country, "to preserve so ancient a monument and memorable witness," by James I., Charles II., William and Mary, George I., and George III. In 1832, collections were made, chiefly in the county of Hertford, for the same purpose, and some repairs and real improvements were effected under the direction of Mr. Cottingham. But most serious structural failures, which threatened the actual safety of the building, were at that time either unsuspected, or the arrest of them involved a far greater outlay than it was then possible to provide for. In 1856 a meeting was held at St. Alban's, under the presidency of the Earl of Verulam, the Lord Lieutenant of the county, "to consider the best means of restoring and upholding the Abbey Church, and of obtaining for it the dignity of a cathedral." The latter object was found, at that time, to be unattainable. Subscriptions were accordingly invited for the repair of the building, and the work was then placed in the hands of Sir (then Mr.) G. G. Scott. A plot of ground closely adjoining the north side of the church, on which it was intended to build cottages, was bought, and that desecration was prevented. The walls on that side were opened to their original level, the earth having accumulated against them to the height of nearly ten feet in places. These walls were underpinned and repaired, drains were made, and the roof of the north nave-aisle was renewed throughout. These, however, were comparatively slight matters: and repairs of a similar character were in progress when, in 1870, a pier on the north side of the presbytery showed signs of so great insecurity, that Sir Gilbert Scott was desired to make a personal inspection, and to report on the condition of the church. It was then found that the continued existence of much of the building, and especially of the great tower, had been little short of marvellous. The tower is the heaviest in the kingdom. An attempt, to all appearance, to destroy it, had been made at some period later than the dissolution; and a cave, or hole, sufficiently large for a man to

creep into, had been worked into the foundation of the south-east pier'. Other sources of serious danger were discovered. Subscriptions were raised throughout the country to meet the cost of repair, and from that time (1871) to the present (1876) a faithful and satisfactory restoration of the great Abbey Church has been in progress. The church has thus been gradually preparing itself to become the cathedral of a new diocese. The difficulties which in 1856 seemed to be insurmountable, have happily disappeared, and St. Alban's is about to become the place of a bishop's see, whose diocese will comprise the whole of Hertfordshire and a great part of Essex.

VII. The restoration which has so far been effected embraces the entire repair of the tower, which has been rendered perfectly safe: the repair and restoration of both transepts, the careful restoration of the presbytery with its aisles, and the refitting, or building together, of the fragments of the base of St. Alban's shrine, found during the progress of these great works. Some of these works, and especially those connected with the central tower, presented unusual difficulties,

f "Some decayed pieces of wood found in this hole had evidently been used as props. . . . It is recorded that this mode of rapidly destroying large buildings was in some instances resorted to, and that when the excavations had been made to the very verge of safety for the operators, the wooden props inserted were fired, and as they became consumed the whole structure collapsed from its superincumbent weight."—John Chapple: 'The Restoration of the Abbey of St. Alban,' a paper read before the St. Alban's Archit. and Archæol. Soc., January, 1874. Mr. Chapple has acted as Clerk of the Works at St. Alban's throughout the restoration; and it is mainly due to his knowledge and exertion that the base of the shrine has been recovered and built up.

and were carried through at considerable risk. They will best be described in considering the divisions of the church to which they belong.

VIII. In the meantime the Grammar School had been removed from the Lady-chapel, into a new building. It thus became possible to reunite all the eastern portion of the Abbey Church with the presbytery and feretory; and a committee of ladies, at the head of which was the Marchioness of Salisbury, was formed for the purpose of providing means for the restoration of the Lady-chapel, and the beautiful group of chapels which adjoin it. The public passage through that part of the church has been stopped, although it still remains open below the level of the pavement. The restoration is (1876) rapidly progressing; and among other interesting discoveries already made, are portions of the base of the shrine of St. Amphibalus. which stood in this retrochoir. These fragments have been built up in the same manner as those of the base in the feretory.

It only remains to add that a considerable portion of the south wall of the nave, towards the west, has given way to such an extent, that measures have been taken to secure its immediate safety; whilst it will probably be found necessary to rebuild it altogether. This mischief has been caused by a great accumulation of earth and rubbish on the site of the ancient cloisters, the level of which is 5 feet below the present surface. The consequent wet has sapped the foundations of the aisle walls.

IX. We have thus brought the history of the church to the present time, and may proceed to examine it in detail. We begin by describing the general character of the whole of the remaining work of Abbot Paul. This is so completely the same throughout, that to point out the method of construction of one part of the Norman church is to do so for all the rest.

The whole of the materials for the Norman church (except the timber) was brought, as has been said, from the ruined Roman town of Verulamium, on the opposite side of the valley. They consisted of tiles, of flint, and of masses of stone. These were all used in the new building; but the tiles greatly preponderate above the foundations. They are used in these also, but with a much larger admixture of flint. The tiles are for the most part of one size, and measure 16 inches by 12, with a thickness of an inch and a-half. Every part of the Norman church—the great piers, the arches, the staircases, the towers-was constructed of these materials, and mainly of tiles. It was the almost exclusive use of them which gave, and gives, to the building its plain and almost stern character. The workmen who were raising it had before their eyes a distinct Roman model in the walls, chambers, and vaults which were destroyed at Verulamium; and they used the material brought thence in much the same manner as the original Roman builders had used them. Thus the Roman method of forming the walls in layers of brick and flint is imitated in the main, although the system is not followed with extreme regularity. The tiles are generally laid in courses, which extend quite through the wall. The flint is for the most part arranged in thicknesses between the courses, and only now and then passes through to the inside of the wall; indeed, it is often a mere facing. Masses and courses of rough stone do occur, but rarely. The main horizontal cornices throughout the interior are formed of two courses of brick; but the imposts of all the principal arches are of stone, wrought for their situations. Stone is also occasionally employed in the small windows of the transept turrets, and in the abacus mouldings of other windows and arches. It occurs also in some of the exterior cornices. All the tile-work is built with little attention to exactness; and the joints are generally so broad that, "after comparison in various places, it has been ascertained that nearly an equal quantity of tile and of mortar enters into the composition of the walls. . . . The deep joints seem never to have been compressed by the weight of the courses which were successively added to the walls, and the probability is that the mortar set or hardened as quickly as the cement of modern days. The process of building was by no means rapid; not more than an average of 7 feet in height all round the church having been erected in the course of one years." The roughness of finish in the whole work was of the less con-

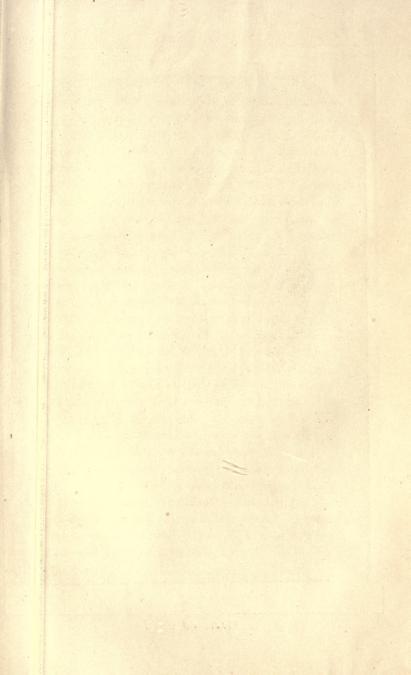
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Buckler's 'Abbey Church of St. Alban' (London, 1847), pp. 25, 26.

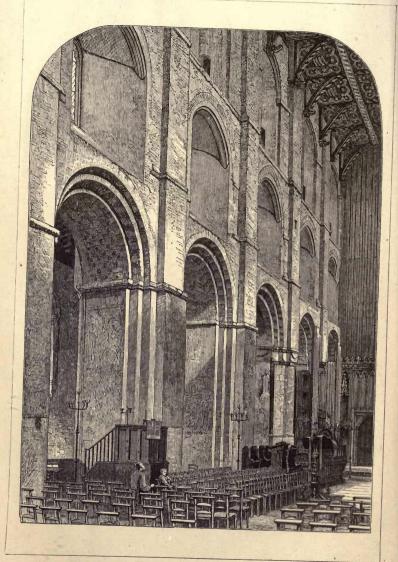
sequence, because the entire church, outside and inside, was covered with a casing of cement, prepared with gravel or sand. This is the "dealbatio" which is occasionally mentioned in the descriptions of early buildings. It may have been, in part, a Roman fashion; and Wilfrith (who brought Roman builders into Northumbria), when he restored the first Minster at York, in the year 669, is said to have "rendered its walls whiter than snowh." Thus the vast whitened church of St. Alban must have resembled a huge mountain of snow. This exterior covering has almost entirely disappeared; and the brickwork, exposed to the weather, has a certain rough appearance. Until the present restoration, the central tower received an occasional renewal of the plaster; but all trace of it has now been removed: the external tiles have been carefully trimmed; and although its present appearance is not that which was designed by the architect of Abbot Paul, the change is altogether for the better, and we are enabled to trace clearly the method in which the Roman material was used.

It may be noted that a cement of the same character as that used for covering the walls, occasionally served for the finish of abacus mouldings.

The foundations of the Norman building are carried down to unequal levels, varying from six to twelve feet. Those of the tower, where the ground was firmer, are not sunk more than four feet below the

h "Parietes quoque lavans, super nivem dealbavit."—Eddius, Vita Wilfredi, 50.





PART OF NAVE.

level of the church. They are for the most part of flint, bonded with tile. The piers of the nave arcade stand on square masses, exceeding the measure of their own area; and they are connected by foundation-walls of considerable thickness.

X. In the nave proper, extending from the western piers of the central tower to the west front, there are thirteen bays. But three of these bays were included in the choir of the monks; and the screen now known as St. Cuthbert's separates them from the rest of the nave. The central tower, the transepts, and the three bays east of this screen, included in the choir, are all Norman. In the nave, west of St. Cuthbert's screen, the main arcade of five bays alone, on the north side, remains as Abbot Paul built it; and in these bays the triforium and clerestory have undergone alterations. This, too, has been the case with the bays east of the screen, and included in the choir; but still the complete Norman design is to be readily traced [Plate I.]. The massive piers which divide the bays are squareedged, a form better suited than circular pillars for the Roman tile, of which they are built. A plain, flat, buttress-like pilaster runs to the top. The plinth consists of seven courses of tile on a layer of cement. The arches, quite plain, recede in three orders; all have impost mouldings. The triforium arches, and those of the clerestory, resembled in the main those below them; but the triforium arch was somewhat narrower, and less lofty, than that of the great arcade: and the clerestory arch, although again narrower, was

higher. These portions, however, divide the height into three nearly equal parts; and severely plain as are the forms, nothing can well be grander or more impressive. The four great arches of the tower, of which the general character is the same, are especially striking; and their unadorned dignity would have been ill exchanged for even the magnificence of such a lantern as that of Ely. The cornice at the foot of the clerestory is carried round these piers. The height from the pavement to this cornice is 43 feet 2 inches. The crown of the arch rises 12 feet 6 inches higher.

XI. The Norman work of the transepts is of the same description. But there is one feature here which calls for special attention; this is the use, in some of the eastern triforium arches of the south transept, and in one arch of the north, of those peculiar ringed and bulging baluster shafts which are generally accepted as marking very early work, and which, where they occur in the North of England, as at Jarrow and Wearmouth, are undoubtedly Saxon. The balusters here are complete in shaft, capital, and base; but Norman capitals have been added to them; and the bases are made to rest on plinths of tile. They were certainly brought from some earlier building, and there can be little or no doubt that this building was the Saxon church raised by Offa, and destroyed by Abbot Paul. These shafts, therefore, add not a little to the interest of the existing church, since they represent, and are actual portions of, that which was raised on

the same site immediately after the Invention of the Martyr's relics.

XII. We return to the nave; and may now examine in due order that, and the other divisions of the church.

At the west front, through the central porch of which we enter the nave, we are met by the changes of Abbot John de Cella (1195-1214). These were the first changes in the Norman building. The west front of Abbot Paul's church was flanked by massive square towers, opening from the last bays of the aisles, and projecting slightly beyond the wall of the front. Of the character of the actual front we have no evidence. But the towers must have given great dignity to it, and must have grouped well with the central tower, besides affording a fitting termination to the great length of the nave. John de Cella removed this front altogether, taking down the towers, and the wall, with its portals, between them i. He removed also about two feet of the Norman foundations, and planned his new work so that there might be an ascent of several steps from the first bay of the nave, within the porches, to the level of the remainder. He designed three porches of great beauty, much enriched with Purbeck shafts, some of which were set in double rows round a central pillar; one row appearing in the intervals left by the other. He intended also to rebuild the towers. If the work had been carried out, the west

i "Murum frontis ecclesiæ nostræ.... veteribus tegulis et cæmento indissolubili compactum."—Gest. Abbat.

front of St. Alban's would have been as fine as anything in this country. But, whether from the great cost, or from some unknown reason, it did not prosper. When William of Trumpington (1214—1235) succeeded Abbot John, he found the whole in a very imperfect condition; and, except in the centre, it had not been carried up to any considerable height. He proceeded to complete it (without the towers), but in a much less perfect and costly fashion; and he also rebuilt or reconstructed five bays on the south side of the nave, and four on the north.

John of Cella removed the Norman wall altogether. William of Trumpington, in reconstructing these bays of the nave, removed the clerestory and triforium stages, together with the arches of the main arcade; but he left the great piers standing, and only reduced them sufficiently to allow of their adaptation to the new design. The Norman tile-work is still visible at the bases of many of the piers. The piers themselves are cased with Tottenhoe stone. They are less bulky, and less evidently cased, than the Norman piers of Winchester Cathedral, since the tiles of which they are composed are more trustworthy than the rubble which forms the usual Norman core. The piers are octagonal, with attached shafts; and they retain something of Norman heaviness. The triforium and clerestory stages, where there was no Norman work to be dealt with, have all the gracefulness of Early English. There was here nothing to prevent the use of detached columns; and they occur accordingly, but of Tottenhoe

stone, and not of the Purbeck introduced by Abbot John. The triforium has in each bay two arches, enclosed within an outer arch, with a rich quatrefoil in the tympanum. The string below the triforium, and the mouldings between the shafts, are enriched with dogtooth. The clerestory above has two lights in each bay, with plain mouldings and capitals. The walling at the back of the triforium was introduced when the steep roofs of the aisles were removed in the Perpendicular period.

It was at first intended that this new portion of the nave should have been groined; and slender detached shafts, with foliated capitals, occur between each bay, but terminate under the string of the triforium. This plan was, however, abandoned, and the shafts were left incomplete. The clerestory thus consists of an uniform series of lights, and is not divided into bays. Besides this change in his own work, William of Trumpington abandoned the earlier design, which proposed a lower level for the westernmost bay. He filled up again the ground which had been excavated, covering in the bases of Abbot John's porches, and of the arches into the towers on either side.

XIII. Trumpington, as has been said, completed the porches of John de Cella. But there had probably been, from the beginning, a serious defect in the foundations; and the whole range of building, at some time toward the end of the fourteenth century, was found to be in so dangerous a condition, that the front of the great central porch was taken down, and

the present massive wall and arch set up as an abutment to the older work. The porches of the aisles, which were greatly dilapidated, were, either then or at a later time, closed with solid walls; and they are now only to be entered from the nave. The beautiful work which remains in them, however, should not be missed by the architectural student.

The western towers were never rebuilt. The arch, which was constructed by John de Cella as the opening from the aisle into the south tower, remains built up in the wall. The opposite wall is built up with fragments designed for a similar arch.

XIV. The aisles of the Norman church were not uniformly vaulted. The western bays had vaults, but those farther east were covered with a flat wooden roof. "On the summits of the capitals in the north and south aisles are to be seen the springers of the arches of the original brick-vaulting, hemmed in by the beautiful mouldings of a subsequent period; the Norman arches, of which these are the fragments, extended across the aisles to the wall piers, and were reduced to their present irregular shape that they might be made as little unsightly as possibleh." The aisles were vaulted by Trumpington, as far as his work extended. In the untouched Norman portion of the aisles it should be observed that the wall was never provided with pier-shafts; and the buttresses of the clerestory descend through the roof, and rest upon the impost-moulding of the arches opening to the nave

<sup>\*</sup> Buckler's 'St. Alban's,' p. 100.

and choir. "The arch which separated the vaulted portion of the Norman aisle from the timber roof eastward remains, with the dressings in stone conferred upon it at the time at which the former was altered."

The sharp manner in which Abbot William's work is made to unite itself with the Norman bays eastward of it deserves attention. There is no attempt to conceal the point of junction, "or in any respect to harmonise the figure of the supports thus brought together." On the south side the great block of the Norman pier is allowed to project between the work of Abbot William and that of Abbot Roger of Norton, which are brought up close to it on either side. The difference in the number of the bays reconstructed on the two sides of the nave is perhaps to be accounted for by the position of an important altar west of the last remaining Norman pier on the north side. Reverence for this altar may have prevented the removal of the pier.

The great western window was inserted by Abbot John of Wheathamstead (1420—1440). It is Perpendicular, of an ordinary type, and is, like the west window of Winchester Cathedral, little more than a stone grating. Trumpington's completion of John de Célla's design had two tiers of lancets, and there was a broad lancet over each of the side porches.

Before leaving this part of the nave, attention should be called to the bases of piers, which are exposed in <sup>1</sup> Buckler's 'St. Alban's,' p. 102. the lower part of the wall of the north aisle, extending throughout the four westernmost bays. These were the piers of an arcade which opened to St. Andrew's Chapel,—a parochial chapel which seems to have been destroyed at the dissolution. The foundations of it were uncovered in 1860–1; and it then became evident that the chapel had formed a long parallelogram, extending eastward for two bays beyond those in which the piers are shown. (These foundations are marked B in the Plan.) The arcade was walled up when the chapel was destroyed, and the absence of windows in this part of the aisle is thus accounted for.

XV. We come now to the reconstruction of the five easternmost bays on the south side of the nave. This was begun by Abbot Hugh of Eversden (1308—1326), toward the end of whose time, in 1323, we are told that "while the mass of the Virgin was in celebration, many men and women being present, suddenly two great columns on the south side of the church fell to the ground with a great noise and crash. In an hour after, all the roof and the beams of the south part, and nearly all the cloister fell." The restoration of this part of the church and of the cloister was completed by Abbot Michael of Mentmore (1335—1349). Although we must certainly understand by the "two great columns" two of the main piers of the nave, it

m Nicholson's 'Abbey of St. Alban,' from the Cottonian MSS., Claudius, E. 4. 'Acts of the Abbots from Willegod to Thomas de la Marc;' and Nero, D. 7. 'Catalogue of Benefactors,' &c. See 'Gesta Abbatum,' ii. 128.

would seem that the others remained firm, and that the tiles in those that fell were used again in the building of the new piers, since it is evident that, to some extent at least, the same method of construction was adopted here that had been used for Trumpington's work,-that is, the Norman core was cased with stone. At any rate, the ruin led to the rebuilding of these five bays. The Norman pier between Trumpington's work and the new construction of Abbot Hugh "retains both facing pilasters, one ascending to the roof of the nave, the other giving support to the arch which crosses the aisle." The Decorated work, very rich as it is, shows, nevertheless, that Trumpington's earlier design had somewhat influenced it. The main plan of the piers remains nearly the same. The archmouldings differ, and there are finely-sculptured heads of king, queen, bishop, and abbot at the intersections. The general design of the triforium is also the same, but open lilies are used instead of the dog-tooth, and in some of the mouldings these are made to alternate with a peculiar ball flower. It should be remarked that some of the open lilies are larger than the others, and that where the flowers are laid in between the shafts they are alternately raised and sunk. This was, no doubt, in order to give effect to the whole ornament as seen from below, which it does without unpleasantly catching the eye. The secondary arches of the triforium are foliated. The ornament in the tympanum is a trefoil. There are heads at the junctions of the outer mouldings, and sculptured shields of arms occur at the base of the triforium string-course, immediately over the junction of each bay, and above the heads already mentioned. These shields are—that assigned to Mercia (for Offa); those of England, Edward the Confessor, and the Abbey of St. Alban.

In the aisle, the work throughout these five bays is of the same character. It is clear that the aisle-wall fell in 1323 together with the cloister, and was certainly rebuilt. The windows are high in the wall, since the cloister extended below them. The small heads which terminate the string under the three recesses, into which the windows are prolonged, should be noticed. The vault, carried on clustered shafts, is quadripartite, with bosses of leafage. In the fourth bay west of St. Cuthbert's screen, is a square opening in the wall (marked 2 in the Plan), leading into a narrow passage which passed westward, by a flight of steps, into a parlour (locutorium), with the abbot's chapel above it; and eastward, by three or four steps, into the western walk of the great cloister. In the wall of the abbot's chapel was a small opening which commanded several altars in the church. In the same manner, at Canterbury, a recess in the Prior's chapel contained an opening which allowed a person, unseen himself, to assist at masses said at the altars in the north transept of the cathedral.

XVI. It is unnecessary to notice farther in this place the Norman portions of the nave, since the general description already given (§§ IX., X.) applies to them. But there remain to be described the

paintings on the great piers, and the roof. The distemper paintings on the west front of the six Norman piers were uncovered by the Rev. Dr. Nicholson, rector from 1835 to 1866. He caused the whitewash to be removed from these piers, and found that the subject represented on nearly all was the Crucifixion, with St. John and the Blessed Virgin. There may have been an altar beneath each of these representations, but this is uncertain, and there is no record of any such altars in the 'Annotationes' appended to John of Amundesham's 'Annals.' The paintings are not all of the same date. Beginning with the sixth, or westernmost pier, is the figure of our Lord, crowned, on a cross coloured green, and taking the form of a tree; the cross "raguly" of the heralds. At the sides are St. Mary and St. John; and below is the Annunciation. (In the middle of the design a small stone bracket of Perpendicular character has been inserted, which supported a figure of St. Richard of Chichester.) This is the earliest painting, and may date from the beginning of the thirteenth century. On the south side of the same pier is St. Christopher carrying our Lord. The fifth pier has the same subjects on the western face, with a similar cross. The background is sprinkled with hexafoils. This, too, belongs to the early years of the same century. On the south side is a figure of

<sup>&</sup>quot;These 'Annotationes,' which give a list of the altars, monuments, and sites of tombs in the Abbey Church, were written about 1428. The document is contained in the first volume of John of Amundesham's 'Annals,' which form a portion of the 'Chronica Monasterii S. Albani,' edited for the Master of the Rolls' series.

St. Thomas of Canterbury. On the fourth pier, with the same subjects, the cross is plain, and the work is later. There is an unknown female figure on the south side, which, from the dress, must have been painted about the year 1440. On the third pier is our Lord alone, on a plain cross. Below is the Annunciation. On the south side are the figures of William Tod and his wife, who were buried in this part of the church. He was the abbot's bailiff, and died after 1438. Tho second pier shows our Lord on the Cross, with the Coronation of the Virgin below. On the last, or easternmost pier, are the remains of a large figure representing the Saviour in glory.

XVIII. The flat wooden ceiling of the nave, as it now exists, is possibly of the Decorated period; but there can be no doubt that it represents, with slight difference of detail, the original inner covering of the Norman nave. It is not so early as the ceiling of the nave of Peterborough Cathedral; nor is the design which it bears so remarkable as is there retained. The Peterborough ceiling is clearly of the twelfth century. This is very much later; but, like that, it preserves the fashion by which, in the earlier Norman period, any wide space, nave, transept, or choir, was covered-The ceiling is painted with octagonal panels, having leaves at the cusps, and small figures of lions in the spaces between. In the centre of each panel is the monogram I. H. S. The ground is green, the lions red, and the leaf-cusping white. When examined from the clerestory it is evident that this pattern is

laid on an earlier one, in which the design was the same, but the panels were smaller.

The nave was rich in brasses and in monuments of benefactors to the abbey, and of its various officers. All these have disappeared. One memorial, against the second pier from the west, on the north side, calls for notice. It is that of Sir John Mandeville, the famous traveller, and the inscription runs as follows:—

- "Siste gradum properans, requiescit Mandevil urna Hic humili; norunt et monumenta mori."
- "Lo, in this Inn of Travellers doth lie
  One rich in nothing but in memory;
  His name was Sir John Mandeville; content,
  Having seen much, with a final continent,
  Toward which he travelled ever since his birth
  And at last pawned his body for y\* earth
  Which by a Statute must in morgage be
  Till a Redeemer come to set it free."

Mandeville was a native of St. Alban's, but, in spite of this monument, there is some doubt whether he was buried here. Weever asserts (writing in 1631) that he saw the tomb of Mandeville in the church of the Guilliamites at Liège, and that it bore the date of November 16, 1371. That church exists no longer, and nothing is now known of the tomb. The inscription at St. Alban's dates from about 1622.

Against the easternmost pier of the nave, on the south side, is an inscription for John Jones, "Wallus," "Scholæ S. Albanensis hypodidascalus literatissimus; qui dum ecclesia hæc, A°. 1684, publicis impensis instauraretur, exculpsit sibi quoque monumentum, quod

inscripsit 'Fanum Sancti Albani,' poema carmine heroico, hoc lapide, hac etiam æde, ævoque perennius omni. Obiit anno 1686." Of this 'monumentum' not a single copy appears to be in existence.

XVIII. The screen which divides the nave from the choir of the monks has become generally known as the screen or Chapel of St. Cuthbert. At what time this name was first applied to the screen is uncertain. It would seem that, at some comparatively recent period, the description of an altar dedicated to St. Cuthbert in the time of Abbot Trumpington came to be considered as referring to this screen and altar. But it is expressly said that the altar raised by that abbot was connected with the 'hostria,' or hostel, of the convent, and consequently it can have had nothing to do with the great church. In spite of this, many antiquaries have insisted on placing this altar in the nave, and have exercised much ingenuity in attempting to reconcile the ancient description with the position and character of the screen, which there is no reason whatever for connecting with the name of St. Cuthbert.

This screen is simply the pulpitum dividing the choir of the monks from that portion of the church which was designed for the general use of the people. It is a very fine work of the later Decorated period, and was probably erected at the same time as the southern piers and arches were reconstructed. In the centre is the altar of the Holy Cross, with a door on either side, opening to the choir, eastward. On the

north side is a smaller altar, which, it has been suggested, may have been an "altare animarum," at which masses were celebrated for the dead. The whole is in white clunch stone, and the tabernacle work is very rich and of great beauty. The ground is formed of minute open flowers. The whole screen (which at one time crossed the aisles, and thus completely shut off the eastern portion of the church) deserves careful attention. It possibly supported a small organ; but it is certain that it never carried the rood or the roodbeam. This crossed the church a short distance to the east of the screen, and supported the usual great crucifix, with the figures of the Virgin and St. John. It was sufficiently near to the screen for the altars in front of the latter to be described as "coram sancta cruce," and "sub cruce." The rood towered to the roof, and was visible from all parts of the nave.

XIX. We pass up the south aisle, beyond the screen, into the south transept. In the central bay of this aisle, in the south wall, is a foiled arch, marking the burial-place of two hermits, Roger and Sigar, both of whom lived during the abbacy of Geoffrey of Gorham (1119—1146)°. The door in the next bay was the abbot's entrance from the east walk of the cloister. It is very rich late Decorated work, and of great beauty. The foliation of the inner arch, the lines of leaf ornament in the hollow moulding, and the

Roger, who lived for a long time in a hermitage near Dunstable, became a monk in the Abbey of St. Alban's. Sigar was a hermit in the wood of Northaw. The lives of both hermits are given in the 'Gesta Abbatum,' vol. i.

cresting, all deserve attention. At each side is a bracket and canopied recess for a figure

The Norman work of the central tower—the transept, and the three bays of the constructional nave which were included in the monastic choir—has already (§§ X., XI.) been generally described. The simple grandeur of Abbot Paul's building is nowhere more evident than in this part of the church; although here, as in the nave, the upper divisions of the bays have undergone change, except in one instance—the bay nearest to the western arch of the tower.

Above the great arches of the tower is an arcade, with three openings on each side. Above, again, on all four sides, are two window openings. This forms the lantern. The ceiling displays the Roses of York and Lancaster. The construction of all this upper part of the tower will better be understood from above. (See § XXXI.) The view from the back of the (socalled) St. Cuthbert's screen, looking through the tower arches to the massive screen which separated the presbytery from the place of the shrine, is striking. The stalls of the monks occupied the space from the western screen to the eastern arch of the tower. A light screen of wood seems to have crossed at the eastern end of the stalls, and to have separated the choir from the presbytery. A screen, occupying a similar position, still exists in the Cathedral of St. David's. At St. Alban's, the end of the upper portion of this screen remains imbedded in the centre of the tower pier, on the south side. This was not the pulpitum or the rood-loft proper; which was distinct from this screen, and from the beam which carried the actual rood. The gallery of the rood-loft crossed the church level with the triforium; and its north end terminated in the only unmutilated Norman bay remaining. This bay still contains a large horizontal beam cut with three mortices, into which beams must have been fitted, which helped to support the gallery.

The restoration (1875), conducted by Sir G. G. Scott, has brought back all this portion of the church to a condition, not only of safety, but of great order and beauty. The ancient colouring, so far as it was possible to ascertain it, has been re-applied. The tilework of the walls and piers was originally, as has been said, covered with plaster. The whitened surface of this was marked with red lines, so as to suggest blocks of stone. The orders of the great arches are coloured in blocks of red and white alternately. The main arcade is red and yellow, with a zigzag pattern in the soffete of the arch. The roof is of late character.

The level of the tower is two steps above that of the nave west of it. The tiles which cover the space of the tower have been designed from ancient examples found in the church.

XX. The south transept is especially noticeable for the antique baluster shafts which appear in the arches of the triforium on the eastern side. These have already (§ XI.) been described, and it has been pointed out that they belonged, in all probability, to the Saxon Church of Offa. In its original condition the north transept had, in its main front, two windows below, a triforial passage, not lighted from without, and two windows in the clerestory stage above. (The original completion of the transeptal gables will be pointed out, post, § XXXIII.) The south transept resembled this, except that there were no windows in the lower stage, since the conventual buildings abutted against this front. In the fifteenth century, a large Perpendicular window was inserted in the front of each transept. These windows have been carefully restored.

A change was made in the west wall of the south transept, by Abbot William of Trumpington (1214-1235). In the principal apse which opened from the eastern wall of the transept (as that was at first constructed), was an altar of the Virgin. The light in the transept was feeble, owing to the great space of blank wall on the south side. Abbot William constructed two windows on the west side, high in the wall, so as to be above the cloister which ranged without. These windows, with their short side shafts. and arches which rise into the triforium, remain; and below, adjoining the arch which opens to the aisle, is a small window (in its present condition of later date, but at first inserted by the same abbot) which opened from a watching-chamber in which a monk was stationed so as to command the several altars in the transept. The apse on the eastern side was swept away at some later period, to provide room for a large sacristy. This again was removed, and a square

recess in the wall alone remained, in which was an altar dedicated to St. Stephen. The adjoining apse, northward, underwent similar changes; the altar there was that of St. John the Evangelist. The present cupboard-like arrangement is not more ancient than 1721.

In the north transept the eastern apses were removed at some unknown period, and no building replaced them. The altars here were those of—(in the northernmost apse) the Holy Trinity, St. Sythe or St. Osyth, and the Holy Cross of Pity. On the wall adjoining this last altar are the remains of a painting representing the Incredulity of St. Thomas. In the north front, above a small door which opened to what seems to have been a sacristy (foundations of which have been discovered), one of the round-headed Norman windows has been walled up halfway in front, and was apparently made to serve as the window of a watching-chamber for this transept. The wall and splay of the window have been ornamented with a pattern of vine-leaves and cluster of grapes.

P The restoration of the transepts was begun in March, 1872. The levels were first lowered to the original lines (the south transept had been filled up two feet all over its area, thereby giving the doorways a grotesque appearance); the vaults and floors were concreted to a great depth, in order to obtain proper solidity, and to give stability to the whole of the foundations. "The walls of both transepts were found to be much shattered. . . The rents and fissures were treated. . . . by the insertion of bond stones, run with liquid cement, and secured with iron-work; and each transept was screwed together with strong bolts in every direction thought to be necessary. The roofs and ceilings were carefully restored. . . The seventeenth-century painting of each ceiling was touched and

The roofs of both transepts are flat, and, like that of the nave, no doubt represent the Norman constructions, although of much later date. The painting of both seems to have been renewed, if it was not entirely designed, in the sixteenth century. In the centre of the ceiling of the north transept, the Martyrdom of St. Alban is represented with no great artistic skill. The arms of the Duke of Somerset occur here with an augmentation granted to the Seymours on the marriage of Henry VIII. with Lady Jane Seymour in 1536; so that this part of the painting, at least, must be of later date than that year.

A staircase in the south-west angle of the south transept leads upward to the tower. (See § XXXI.) Adjoining that transept, south, is a slype, or passage leading from the cloister eastward, of late Norman character and enriched. (See § XXXII.)

XXI. The presbytery, which occupies the space east-ward of the tower, between that and the great reredos, has undergone considerable change at different periods. As at first built by Abbot Paul, there was a solid wall on either side from the tower as far as what is now the eastern end of the retrochoir or "Saint's Chapel." That point was the chord of the eastern apse which

renewed where necessary; and the representation of the Martyrdom of St. Alban was brought to light in the ceiling of the north transept, over the spot where it is traditionally believed that the martyrdom of the saint took place. Two Norman windows, and the north door, were opened in the north transept; and in the south transept the windows of Abbot Trumpington, which had been blocked, were opened and restored."—The Restoration of the Abbey of St. Alban's, by John Chapple, Clerk of the Works.

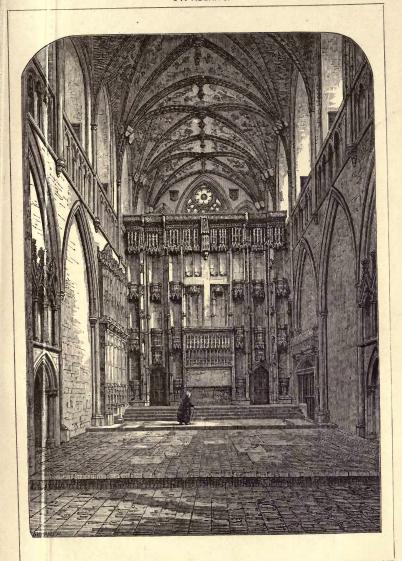
terminated the church. When Abbot John of Hertford began his alteration of all this part of the church (see § IV.), he did not entirely remove the wall. A portion of it, together with the corresponding walls of the aisles, was left standing, as far as the third bay of the presbytery on either side (the eastern sides, that is, of the chantries of Abbots Wheathamstead and Ramryge). From that point eastward the Norman walls were pulled entirely down, and the work is new from the foundations. In the bay adjoining the tower, the Norman wall was pierced on either side, so as to afford an entrance from the aisles. "Within the triforium, on either side, still appear the Norman walls as they were left at the period of the alteration of this part of the church; very irregular in point of height, and mutilated with an unsparing hand wherever space was wanted for the addition of any portion of the new work q."

This new work is of one general design as far as the eastern end of the retrochoir or Saint's chapel; but although it was certainly begun by John of Hertford, it would seem, from certain changes in the style, that the whole was in progress until at least the end of the thirteenth century (see post, § XXVIII). In the presbytery we see the beginning of the new work, and here it is pure Early English. The manner in which the central shaft of the pier dies into the archmoulding, without any capital, should be noticed. Above the piers is a triforium passage (Norman, as we

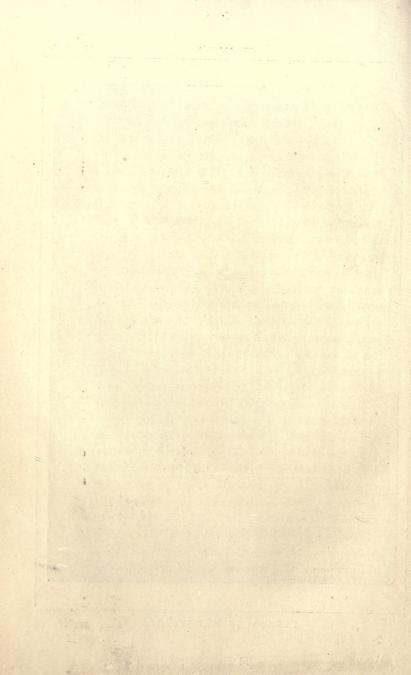
<sup>9</sup> Buckler's 'St. Alban's,' p. 59.

have seen, in the western bays), and above is a clerestory, entirely Early English; since the Norman wall was taken down to the top of the triforium. massive heaviness of the Norman work was thus made to disappear altogether in the remodelled presbytery, and an extreme grace was given to it by the beautiful portals, surmounted by tabernacle work, which were added to the Norman wall on either side. These, judging from their details, were additions of a period somewhat later than Hertford's time. Nothing of them was visible before the late (1875) restoration; but in examining the wall on the south side the fragments of the structure over the portal were found built up in the portal itself. They were carefully put together, and the whole was reconstructed, and replaced under Sir Gilbert Scott's direction. Some blocks on the north side of the presbytery indicated that a similar structure had existed there, and portions of it were found imbedded in the north screen of the Saint's chapel. These fragments were used in the portal which now opens from the north side; but the greater part of that, with the tabernacle work above it, is entirely new, and is a copy of the opposite structure. Figures probably stood in the main arches of the canopy. The portals themselves are recasings of the Norman arches, which, in the first (Abbot Paul's) design, communicated with the apsidal chapels projecting from the transepts.

The superb reredos [Plate II] which divides the presbytery from the retrocho'r was the work of Abbot



REREDOS IN PRESBYTERY.

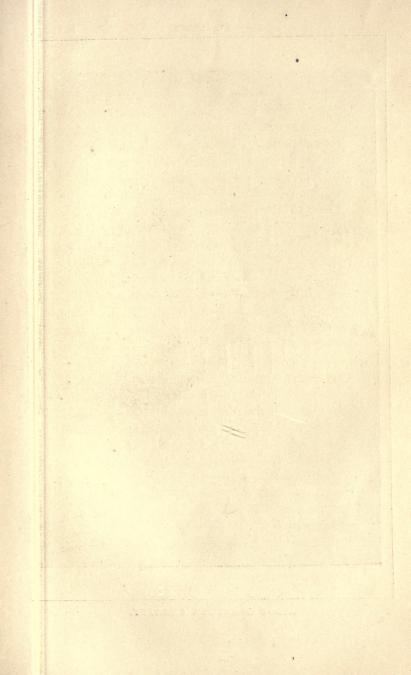


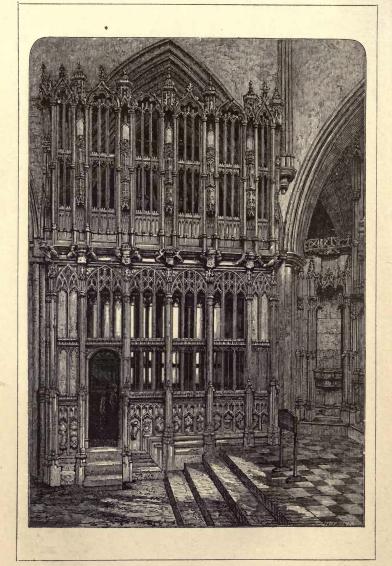
WILLIAM WALLINGFORD (1476-1484). The shield of arms of Abbot John of Wheathamstead appears over both the doors on the east side, and over the north door on the west side of the screen; but this is due in all probability to his having designed the work, which Wallingford executed. In general design this lofty reredos greatly resembles that in Winchester Cathedral, which was erected about the same time. In both screens there is a door on either side, opening to the place of the great shrine at the back. The whole is a mass of olaborate work, arranged, as at Winchester, so as to give the central outline of a large cross, to which it is possible that a movable crucifix was attached. In the thirteen central niches which form the actual reredos were probably figures of our Saviour and His Apostles. The hollow tabernacle work of the canopies and other portions has great effect. Much of this great screen has been defaced, and a "frontage of very debased character" was removed by Mr. Cottingham in 1832. No attempt has been made to restore this reredos: but the altar-pace in front of it has been laid with fragments of Purbeck marble, polished, found in different parts of the church. These fragments are of great beauty, and of a quality such as the beds do not now afford. There is an ascent of four steps to the altar-pace.

The wooden vaulting of the presbytery, extending to the end of the Saint's chapel, is the recorded work of Abbot John of Wheathamstead, whose devices, the eagle and the lamb, appear on it. These are in gold, surrounded by very rich leaf-work, alternately red and green, with golden fruit. The whole is admirable, the eagle especially bold and fine. The lines inscribed above the eastern arch of the tower refer to this work, and tell us that wherever the "Agnus et ales" are seen, the hand of John of Wheathamstead is to be recognised.

XXII. The very rich monuments on either side of the high altar are those of (probably) Abbot WILLIAM WALLINGFORD (south), and Abbot RAMRYGE (north). The southern chantry tomb has usually been assigned to Abbot John of Wheathamstead; but it is expressly recorded that Wallingford expended one hundred pounds "for the building of his chapel and tomb in the south part of the church, close to the high altar, with its most suitable iron railings, and a marble slab, having his effigy super-imposed r." It is known that Wallingford constructed the great reredos on which the wheatears, the arms of Wheathamstead, appear. These arms, and the motto "Valles habundabunt," which also belongs to Wheathamstead, occur on the tomb. But it has been suggested, in explanation, that as the reredos may have been designed by Wheathamstead, but actually built by Wallingford, so the later abbot may have so cherished the memory of his predecessor that he placed his shield and motto on his own tomb. This explanation is not without difficulty; but the passage quoted above seems to prove with tolerable certainty

This passage is contained in an Appendix to the Registrum of Abbot John of Wheathamstead.—Gesta Abbatum, i. 478.





ABBOT RAMRYGE'S CHANTRY.

that the chantry is that of Wallingford, abbot from 1476 to 1484.

Wallingford's chantry, which is a good example of the time, is considerably plainer than that opposite. For its construction, as it is pierced with an arch, a portion of the Norman wall, which had hitherto remained, was removed altogether. The effigy of the abbot, if it was ever completed, no longer rests within the chantry. In this is now placed, for the sake of protection, the very fine brass of Abbot Thomas DE LA MARE (1349-1396). This is of Flemish workmanship (as is indicated by the quadrangular shape of the plate, the diapered background, and scroll-work enrichment), and is one of the finest of its class in this country. The dimensions are 9 feet 31 inches by 4 feet 31 inches. The abbot is richly vested. The very fine canopy has, in the upper part, figures of SS. Peter, Paul, Alban; and of Offa, King of Mercia, founder of the monastery. Below them are SS. John the Evangelist, Andrew, Thomas, James the Great, Bartholomew, Philip, and others 8.

The chantry of Abbot RAMRYGE (1492—1524), on the north side [Plate III.], is a mass of the most elaborate carving, rising high toward the roof. Before the erection of this monument, the Norman wall renained here untouched. But "the beautiful open work of the

<sup>•</sup> In the church of North Mimms, Hertfordshire, is a Flemish brass, of nearly the same date, which should be compared with this of Abbot de la Mare. It commemorates a priest, perhaps William of Kesteven, rector of North Mimms in 1361; and has numerous figures of saints in the canopy.

canopy would not have appeared to the utmost advantage in front of a solid wall; the hitherto blank arch was therefore pierced by the entire removal of the wall; and, in order to secure both building and monument, a substantial inner member was added to the arch of the thirteenth century, handsomely finished with mouldings of a kind not calculated to conceal the period of the addition so cleverly executedt." Round the foundation of the chantry runs the inscription "Sancti Spiritus assit nobis gracia. Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium, et tui amoris in eis ignem accende. Amen"." The collared rams which appear on the cornices, and the rams carrying an abbot's pastoral staff, refer to the name of Ramryge. There was an altar at the east end of either chantry. tomb-slab of Abbot Ramryge had been removed, greatly injured, and laid in the south aisle of the presbytery. The grave had thus been laid bare, "giving facility for the interment of a family who had appropriated the chapel." This slab, which is of Purbeck marble, has happily been brought back to its original position (1872). It nearly covers the floor of the chantry. The arms of the abbot are still visible.

Four abbots—De la Mare, Hugh of Eversdon, Richard Wallingford, and Michael Mentmore—lie immediately in front of the altar steps. In the western bay of the presbytery are the tomb-slabs of the

Buckler's 'St. Alban's,' p. 61.

<sup>&</sup>quot; These words form the Anti-phon for the Psalms for Whitsuntide, according to the Sarum Use.

abbots John Stoke, John Marynes, John Berkhamstede, and Roger Norton. Of these, the canopied brass of Abbot Stoke (1451) displays the ruin of a fine design. The brass of a knight in plate armour, with the collar of suns and roses adopted by Edward IV. after the battle of Mortimer's Cross in 1461, represents Sir Anthony de Grey, son of Lord Grey of Ruthin, created Earl of Kent by Edward IV. There is also a brass for Robert Beauner, a monk of the abbey, died 1470, holding in his hand a heart, with the scroll, "Cor mundum in me crea Deus."

XXII. The restoration of the presbytery "required the exercise of the greatest care. The floor was concreted, and the historic monumental slabs relaid. The missing half-piers in the north and south arcades were replaced; the openings in the lower part of the tower filled up, thus materially adding resistance to the lateral thrust; and the ancient doorways in the first bays from the tower were reopened and repaired."-The canopy work of the portals was also replaced, as has been said (§ XXI.). . . . . "Great care was necessary in repairing the chantry of Abbot Ramryge, subject as it had been to such lateral pressure from the tower. Only the necessary work was done in order to make it secure; the beautiful mutilated details now tell their own tale. . . . . The walls and roof of the presbytery . . . . were strengthened and repaired where necessary; and the decorations of the latter were cleared of all modern daubs. . . . This peculiar restoration

was a work of some difficulty, arising from the delicacy of the painting "."

XXIII. The presbytery is considerably raised above its aisles, although no crypt exists, nor has at any time existed. Five steps lead from the aisles to the portals on either side. Before examining the aisles, however, it will be well to pass at once to the retrochoir or Saint's chapel, since the work there is continuous with that of the presbytery.

This chapel consists of one entire bay and half of a second, the great screen of the reredos dividing this bay into two equal parts. The main design differs from that of the presbytery in being somewhat more enriched, but on the whole is identical. The eastern end is formed by three sharply-pointed arches, which to the height of eight feet from the floor were filled in with a solid stone altar-screen, terminating towards the aisle with a moulded cornice, and leaving the recess of the arches and pillars to the interior. The manner in which the inner mouldings of these arches are finished on either side should be noticed. They are made to descend on the clustered piers in a kind of tracerywork. The vaulting-shafts at the angles entirely overhang, and their bases are supported by a remark-

x 'The Restoration of the Abbey of St. Alban;' a paper read before the St. Alban's Architectural and Archæological Society, January 19, 1874; by John Chapple, Clerk of the Works.

y Before the erection of this reredos, it would seem that the retrochoir comprised two whole bays, and that the high altar stood in front of the second bay from the east, a light screen passing behind it, between the two piers.

<sup>\*</sup> Buckler.

able arched moulding, springing from the capitals of the side arches, and ending under the bases in a trefoil.

In all this work of John of Hertford and his successors great purity and beauty of outline are to be observed, and it may well be ranked "among the finest productions of the perioda." "The mouldings are on a plan formed with more regard to depth than breadth; and the slender pillars composing the clusters stand out in high relief. The arches of the triforium are simply cusped; but the lofty windows of the clerestory are plain, lancet-shaped triplets, enclosed by recessed arches, highly finished with mouldingsb." windows are of the same date as those at the east end, above the triple arches. This eastern group consists of a large window filled with geometrical tracery, with a smaller single light on either side. The design of the central window is very excellent. Its purely geometrical character indicates that it was not inserted until after the death of Abbot John of Hertford (1260); and it is probable that the rebuilding began with the western part of the presbytery, and was continued eastward until the whole of the retrochoir was completed. aisles, which extend beyond, are again later.

The eastern point of the great reredos has a broad arched recess between the doorways, with a niche above. The upper surface of the screen is covered with panels arranged between the buttresses. Below are three niches, which may have been filled with

Sir G. G. Scott.

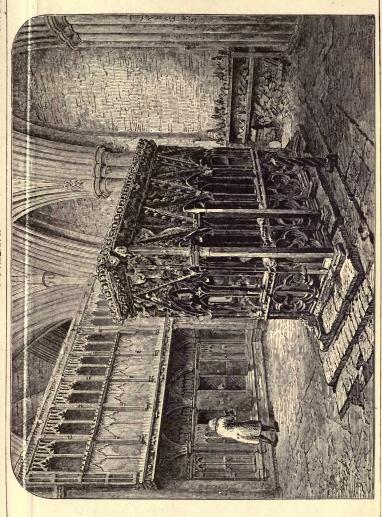
Buckler.

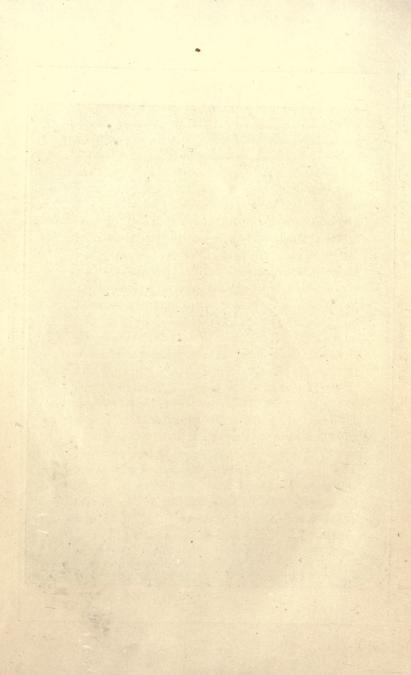
figures relating to the shrine of St. Alban, which they faced.

XXIV. This shrine occupied the centre of the chapel. A portal on either side, in the bay west of it, opened to the north and south aisles; so that, in accordance with the usual arrangement, pilgrims and worshippers could enter by one portal, pass in front of the shrine, and leave the chapel by the portal opposite. Filling the eastermost bay on the north side, is the watching-chamber, which was always provided for the safety of a wealthy shrine. This watching-chamber was allowed to remained untouched when the shrine itself was carried off, and the base on which it stood deliberately broken and ruined.

It is this base of the shrine [Plate IV.] which has been discovered during the late (1876) restoration, and of which the fragments have been built up on the spot where the whole structure formerly stood in its integrity. Some pieces of carved Purbeck had been found by the Rev. Dr. Nicholson, about the year 1848, when opening the central blocked arch, at the east end of the chapel. These he believed to be portions of the shrine, but this remained uncertain until, in 1872, during the removal of the material which had been used for walling up a Perpendicular doorway and screen in the south aisle of the presbytery, many pieces of decorated groining, worked and coloured,

<sup>°</sup> On the south side of the north doorway of the screen, Dr. Nicholson pointed out an inscription now almost defaced. "Hugh Lewis souldier in his Males Army taken prisoner at Ravensfield Northampton-scr y° . . . . day June 1645.'





were found, some of which fitted to the Purbeck discovered by Dr. Nicholson. There was every reason for supposing that both belonged to the shrine. eastern arches, which remained blocked, were accordingly opened, in the hope of further discovery. They proved to be filled with sculptured fragments; and not less than 2000 such fragments were recovered from the several places in which they had been These were built together, by the care of hidden. Mr. Chapple-Clerk of the Works under Sir Gilbert Scott-with the utmost skill and success; and we have accordingly the greater part of the base of the shrine recovered and restored, and bearing witness, in the thousand shattered fragments of which it now consists, to the deliberate manner in which it was broken to pieces after the great religious changes of the sixteenth century.

The base d is of rich early Decorated character, and may date from about the year 1308. It is oblong, and stands on two steps. The height is 8 feet 3 inches, the width 3 feet 2 inches, and it is 8 feet 7 inches in length. From the upper step rises a solid basement, 2 feet 6 inches high, having four quatrefoils in panels on either side, and one large quatrefoil at each end. On the south side, two of these quatrefoils are pierced with a lozenge-shaped opening, one of which runs

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>d</sup> The following description of the base of the shrine has been adopted from 'An Architectural and Historical Account of the Shrines of St. Alban and St. Amphibalus, in St. Alban's Abbey, by Ridgway Lloyd, M.R.C.S., 1872.' The shrines are there fully described.

through the centre of the opposite quatrefoil, while the other passes only halfway through. These may have been designed, like similar openings in the bases of other shrines, for the admission of diseased limbs, or of cloths to be applied to them, some benefit being expected from the close neighbourhood of the relics. Above this basement is a series of canopied niches, closed at the back. There are four on either side, and one at each end. The niches have straightsided, crocketed pediments, of which the sculpture is unusually fine. In the tympana are groups of leafage, one of which, representing oak-leaves with their acorns, is carved in very high relief, with an excellence and truth of nature which might have seemed hardly attainable in so hard a material as Purbeck. (The whole of the base, it should be said, is of Purbeck marble, with the exception of the groining of the canopies. This is of clunch.) Between the pediments, at the sides, were three figures; only two of which have been found, and appear to represent Offa of Mercia and St. Oswin (with a spear held upright. The shrine of St. Oswin of Northumbria was at Tynemouth, where was a cell attached to the Abbey of St. Alban). At the west end the pediment shows the beheading of St. Alban, the head of the martyr having just fallen to the ground. At the east end the scourging of the saint is represented; and the tympanum below contains the figure of a king, holding in his left hand a cruciform church. This, again, is Offa, the founder of the abbey. The finials of the pediments terminate in a rich cornice, 6 inches high, sculptured with beautiful foliage. Above, again, is a cresting 5 inches in height.

The canopied recesses may have been designed to receive the offerings of pilgrims. Resting on the second step are fourteen projecting bases, "each of which supported a slender square shaft, having two points of attachment above to the main body, one by a horizontal crested bar, running in at the spring of the arch, the other by a flying buttress dying into the cornice; the whole terminating in a crocketed finial." On the lowest step are three sockets on either side, containing the hexagonal bases of as many twisted shafts. These probably carried tapers always burning round the shrine. There was an altar of St. Alban at the east end or head of the shrine, as was usual.

This base of the shrine of St. Alban may be compared with that of the Confessor in Westminster Abbey, the most perfect portion of an English shrine which remains. The general character is the same. Both are of Purbeck marble, and both have canopied niches closed at the back. On these bases rested the actual shrine which contained the relics, and this was protected by a covering; generally, as at Durham, a richly-carved canopy of wood, suspended from the

<sup>•</sup> There are some portions of the shrine of St. Werburgh at Chester. The base of the shrine of St. David remains in his cathedral; and in Hereford Cathedral is what has always been regarded as the base of the shrine of St. Thomas Cantilupe. These are the only portions of English shrines which exist, so far as is known. The bases of the greater shrines were for the most part entirely destroyed.

ceiling. The shrine of St. Alban was double. The inner shrine, or theca, was begun in 1124 by Abbot Geoffrey of Gorham, and the work was superintended by a monk named Anketil. It was of silver, richly gilt; but its metal plates and the jewels which adorned them were removed by Abbot Ralph of Gobion (1146 -1151), in order to buy for the monastery the vill of Brantefield. His successor, Robert of Gorham (1151 -1166), reconstructed the shrine "of gold and silver and precious stones." The outer case, or true "feretrum," was made in the time of Abbot Simon (1166-1183), and was like that within, of gold and silver, richly jewelled. This double shrine required four men to carry it, and was frequently borne in procession round the church. (For the history of St. Alban see Part II.)

XXV. The watching-tower, attached to the shrine, deserves very careful attention. It is a wooden structure, filling the whole of the easternmost bay on the north side. The upper portion projects, and resembles a gallery with an open arcade, looking into the church. The lower part contains almeries or lockers, in which reliquaries and sacred vessels might be deposited; and, eastward, a steep wooden stair ascending to the upper chamber or gallery. The whole is of late date, and may possibly be assigned to Abbot John of Wheathamstead. On the upper frieze, and on the base-moulding of the gallery, are various subjects, referring for the most part to country life—such as a woman milking a cow, a sow and young ones, a pig pulled down by dogs, a

chained bear attacked by dogs, wrestlers, a reaper and corn, and figures carrying loaves in a basket. The best of these are on the north side, towards the aisle. The very boldly-carved foliage in the crockets of the panelled arcade should be noticed. The panels in the lower part of the gallery are closed, but have the same pattern as those, pierced and open, above them. The whole of this work should be compared with the much more elaborate structure in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, which served as the watching-chamber to the shrine of St. Frideswide. This is of the extreme end of the fifteenth century, and rises in three stages. No similar watching-lofts exist in England. A monk was always stationed in them, whose duty it was to keep a constant watch on the great shrine, the gold and jewels attached to which were sometimes attractive to other than discreet worshippers.

On the piers of the eastern arches in this chapel are some remains of colour, showing roses with leaves, on a red ground. On the north side is a figure of St. William of York, with his hand raised in benediction. The Archbishop of York (Walter Gray) pronounced an "oration" here in 1257, in which year a tomb was found on the site occupied by the shrine, and was pronounced to be that from which the relics of St. Alban had been raised by Offa ; and it is possible that this figure of his sainted predecessor commemorates that visit.

XXVI. Filling the bay opposite to the watching-M. Paris, 'Hist. Major' (ed. Wats), p. 942. chamber is the chantry-tomb of Humphrey Duke or Gloucester, fourth and youngest son of Henry IV., and Protector of the Kingdom during the minority of his nephew Henry VI. Duke Humphrey was arrested during the parliament held at Bury St. Edmund's in 1446, and was found, a few days afterwards, dead in his bed, murdered, as there can be little doubt, by order of Queen Margaret and Suffolk. His body was conveyed to St. Alban's, and this sumptuous monument, which had been already prepared, was raised above it by the care of his friend, Abbot John of Wheathamstead, whose device of the wheat-ears is sprinkled over its. It was this duke who detected the fraud of the pretended blind man, who declared that he had been miraculously cured at the shrine of St. Alban.

The monument of the duke was so arranged as not to interfere with the view from the aisle into the Saint's chapel. "The triple arches of its sides are without immediate supports; yet science was exerted to uphold

<sup>\*</sup> The burial-place and monument had been prepared during the life of Duke Humphrey. A 'Chronicle' (from 1377 to 1461), printed by the Camden Society, describes the bringing of the body to St. Alban's: "And there was done his Dyryge, and on the morewe his Masse: and thanne put into a feyre vout which was made for hym by his lyffe; and so closed and mured up." This "feyre vout" is, of course, the work of the chantry. It was constructed in the time of Abbot John Stoke (1440—1451). "Whilst he was alive and prosperous," we are told, "he caused to be made that stone tabernacle which is now set up over the tomb of the Lord Duke of Gloucester."—Registr. Alb. J. de Whethamstead, i. 470. Probably the work was not entirely completed in Abbot Stoke's time; for the wheaters certainly refer to Abbot John of Wheathamstead, during whose second abbacy the duke died, and was buried here.

with perfect safety the lofty stone canopy upon a groined roof and pendant arches. The opening between the side piers was sufficiently broad to admit a full prospect of the martyr's shrineh." A screen of ironwork, arranged in squares, and of very good design, was raised on the side of the aisle for protection and security. In the cornice of the monument are shields bearing the arms of Duke Humphrey-the royal arms with a border, argent. In the intervals are antelopes, the badge of the duke. The wheat-ears, as has been already said, indicate the completion of the monument by Abbot Wheathamstead; and the daisy-flowers in the sculptured coronet may possibly be regarded as the device of Queen Margaret. The figures in canopied niches may possibly represent the ancestors of Duke Humphrey--including Offa of Mercia, who holds a church, as founder. The sculpture of the whole tomb is very bold and vigorous.

The vault below the monument was opened in 1703, when the body was found entire; a crucifix was painted against the east wall. The opening of the vault remained in an unsafe condition until the late restoration, when it was closed, and all desecration of the remains was prevented.

XXVII. The very beautiful portals by which the Saint's chapel is entered from the aisles are probably the work of Abbot John of Wheathamstead. Above each portal is a canopied niche, perhaps designed for figures of St. Alban and St. Amphibalus.

The arrangement of the aisles of the presbytery, and of the eastern portion of the church, will best be understood by a reference to the ground-plan. The Norman aisles terminated in a line with the east end of the Saint's chapel. The new design of Abbot John of Hertford carried them on two bays farther eastward, and provided a central space between them, forming a sort of second retrochoir (or antechapel), in which was placed the shrine of St. Amphibalus. Beyond again extended the Lady-chapel with its vestry. "The structure thus added, though only of the height of the aisles of the church and so intimately connected with it, forms, in its design, a separate and complete building of itself, almost like a distinct church, with its own nave, aisle, chancel, and vestry i."

We are first, however, concerned with the aisles of the presbytery, so far as they retained the original plan; that is, to the eastern arches of the Saint's chapel. Proceeding eastward from the transept, two of the bays on the south side, and one on the north, retain their Norman vaulting, and were little changed at the rebuilding. The bays eastward of these were entirely pulled down, "and the foundations of all the Norman walls now uphold the graceful pointed architecture which immediately replaced the older and more ponderous style. In the execution of this alteration additional width was given to the aisles by lessening the thickness of the walls on the inside to such an extent 'Report on the Lady-chapel of St. Alban's,' by Sir G. G. Scott.

that the stone seat at its base falls short of the breadth of the original foundation, which still appears above the pavement in a rude and irregular line of brick and flint-work<sup>k</sup>."

In both aisles, in the westernmost bay, a Norman doorway opened to the apsidal chapel of the transept. In the south aisle this doorway remains, but has been contracted to a pointed arch. In the north aisle it has been filled by a Perpendicular window, inserted, probably, when the apse was destroyed. Opposite these doorways, in the enclosing wall of the presbytery, were Norman portals, which were adapted, in the early Decorated period, to the beautiful structures raised in connection with them, and already described (§ XXI.).

The vestry opening from the south aisle was built in 1846, and the wall was then pierced for the doorway to it. The stained-glass window in the aisle is a memorial of Archdeacon Watson (d. 1839), and is by Clutterbuck of Stratford. On the floor is the brass of Ralph Rowlatt (d. 1519), merchant of the staple of Calais, and his wife Jane. This Ralph Rowlatt was the lineal ancestor of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. The estates of Gorhambury and Sandridge were granted to him at the dissolution. Gorhambury passed to one daughter, whose husband sold it to the Bacons. The younger daughter, who inherited Sandridge, married Ralph Jennings, of Churchill, in Somersetshire, from whom descended the duchess.

k Buckler.

In the wall of the bay of the south aisle, which fronts the entrance to the Saint's chapel, a doorway and open screen of Perpendicular work were discovered For the insertion of this screen the Decorated arcading had been cut away; and the screen separated the aisle from a small external chapel, of which the foundations have been traced. This chapel seems to have been appropriated as the chantry of Duke Humphrey. There was no altar attached to his monument, probably because the view toward the shrine would have been intercepted by it. The chapel, which, it has been remarked, occupies much the same position with respect to the monument as the chantry of Henry IV. to his monument in Canterbury Cathedral, was thus assigned to him, although it had apparently been built by Abbot John, of Wheathamstead, for his own burial. East of this chapel, and divided from it by a solid wall, was a second chapel, also of Perpendicular date, entered by a door from the aisle. "When the chapel was laid open in 1846, a stonelined grave was also discovered, occuping the centre of the structure. No human remains were in it. The destruction of this chapel probably took place on the building becoming a parish church. . . . . The colour and gilding on the wall were at first very apparent, and even vivid in places1." (See these chapels marked in the plan, O, O, O.)

The wall of the aisles is lined with a rich early Decorated areade, cut through in places, as has been

<sup>1</sup> Nicholson's 'St. Alban's,' p. 48.

mentioned. There is a similar arcade in the north aisle, with a recess under the window in the easternmost bay. Here, also, the arcade has been cut through for the insertion of a Perpendicular doorway, opposite Abbot Ramryge's monument.

Above the vaulting arch, at the end of the Norman work in the north aisle, is painted a seated figure of Offa, with the lines—

"Quem male depictum et residentem cernitis alte Sublimem solio Mercius Offa fuit."

This decoration is no doubt part of Abbot Wheat-hamstead's work.

The window tracery in both aisles deserves attention, especially one in the south aisle, in the fourth bay from the east. This is early Decorated, and of great beauty.

XXVIII. Passing beyond the eastern end of the Saint's chapel, we come to that portion of the church which was a direct addition to the Norman building. The ground-plan of this addition may possibly have been designed by Abbot John of Hertford, or his successor, Roger Norton (1260—1290); but the details were not carried out in the manner which was at first proposed. The original design, as has been discovered from foundations still in great part remaining, embraced two ranges of pillars in the centre of the antechapel, extending eastward in a line with the piers carrying the arches at the east end of the Saint's chapel or feretory. Three central aisles would have

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been thus formed, of three bays in length. The outer aisles, which continued the aisles of the presbytery, were only two bays in length. The manner in which the aisles of the antechapel were to terminate eastward is not certain. At present a single arch opens into the long Lady-chapel. The aisles were to have been groined with wood, in the same manner as the presbytery; and springers of stone, to which the wooden groining was to be attached, were provided (and remain) on the pillars of the arches of the aisles. The whole of these aisles were to be of equal height; and the general design of this portion of the church very closely resembled the eastern portion of Winchester Cathedral, built by Bishop Godfrey de Lucy (1189-1204) at a much earlier date. De Lucy's work is among the most beautiful of his time; and this eastern end of St. Alban's, in spite of the change in the original design, and of the fact that the Lady-chapel itself was not completed until the Decorated of the thirteenth century had passed into a new phase, must, when in perfect condition, have been hardly less admirable in all its details. The change of plan undoubtedly lessened the beauty of this whole group of chapels. Instead of the triple aisles with their vaulting, the whole of the broad central space was covered with a flat ceiling of oak, in square panels. It may, perhaps, have been feared that the many columns would have too much crowded the space of the antechapel; but the intricacy and beauty of outline suffered greatly from the alteration.

The whole of this eastern work had been begun, and much of it was considerably advanced, when Hugh OF EVERSDEN became abbot in 1308. His abbacy lasted until 1326. He found, apparently, the presbytery and the Saint's chapel or feretory completed. The antechapel was far advanced, and the Lady-chapel begun. We are expressly told that he "brought to a praiseworthy completion the chapel of the Virgin, in the eastern part of the church, which had been begun many years before. . . . . Moreover, that place contiguous in the shape of a square chapel, separating the presbytery from the said chapel; with a ceiling, in the middle of which the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is figured (wherein now the shrine of St. Amphibalus is placed), he at the same time took pains to finish." It is to this abbot, therefore, that we owe, in all probability, the change of plan. There is no record of the beginning of the rebuilding or remodelling of the eastern portion of the church; not even of the presbytery. The work may, perhaps, have been begun by Abbot John of Hertford (1235-1260); but from its general character we should probably accept the suggestion of Sir Gilbert Scott, that the greater part is due to Hertford's successor, Roger Norton (1260-1290); though it may still have been in progress during the time of Abbot Berkhamstead (1291-1302). "The style," in Sir G. Scott's words, "is decidedly later in character than that of the older parts of Westminster Abbey (1245-1269); but, as it appears to me, earlier than that of the Eleanor crosses

(about 1291) m." We are thus brought to the time of Abbot Norton; and, in confirmation of his especial interest in the work, not only of the presbytery, but of the eastern aisles, we learn that his body was buried before the high altar (see ante, § XXI.), while his heart was placed before the altar of St. Mary of the four tapers, at the east end of the south aisle of the antechapel. The enclosure for the abbot's heart was found in 1875, during the work of restoration. It was a cylindrical hole sunk in a block (or two blocks) of stone. In the hole remained the cover of a wooden box, about 5 inches in diameter. This is richly painted, and is certainly oriental, "a fact which seems to connect itself with the friendly diplomatic relations which at that time existed between this country and Tartary."

But whatever be its earlier history, no portion of the vast church of St. Alban has suffered more, not merely from neglect, but from defacement and wilful destruction, than this group of eastern chapels. The Lady-chapel, as was the case in other churches, was appropriated, in 1553, to the purposes of a grammar school. The aisles of the presbytery, and the eastern arches of the Saint's chapel, were then walled up. Doors were opened in the walls of the aisles on either side, and a public passage was thus formed through what had been the antechapel, the delicate carvings of which were given over to the tender mercies of generations of schoolboys. The work in the Lady-chapel

m Sir G. G. Scott. - 'Report on the Lady-chapel,' p. 5.

itself lay not less open to destroying hands. The antechapel, at the beginning of 1875, is described in the report of Sir Gilbert Scott as "a mere ruin, excepting only that its roofs have been preserved and cared for. Its stonework, externally, is in almost the last stage of decay, and is rudely repaired with brick; while internally, in addition to this, it has suffered, wherever within reach, from deliberate mutilation. . . . . The state of the Lady-chapel proper differs little from that of the antechapel, for though it looks more neat within and without, this arises mainly from the groined ceiling within being plastered and whitened, and the floor boarded; while on examination the beautiful wall arcading is found to have been almost wholly hewn away, and the niches mutilated"." This report was made by Sir Gilbert Scott after the removal of the school had been happily accomplished (see ante, § VIII.), and when it had consequently become possible to restore all this eastern end to the church. This has accordingly been done; and the restoration of this group of chapels, as recommended by Sir G. Scott, is in progress (1876) under his superintendence.

XXIX. The aisles of the presbytery are connected with those of the antechapel by arches of great beauty. The aisle-walls were lined with a very rich arcading, which has cinquefoiled heads on the south side, and trefoiled on the north. This areading is continued in the later work of the Lady-chapel; and the same dis-

<sup>\*</sup> Report, pp. 11, 12.

tinction is preserved, even to the arches flanking the great altar. All this arcading had suffered terribly, and the foliations on the north side had almost disappeared. The windows of these aisles (which were greatly shattered before the restoration of 1875—1876) deserve special notice, from the extreme beauty and delicacy of their tracery. The window at the east end of the south aisle is, perhaps, the most remarkable. In it, the central tracery, with its cusps, is made to resemble a twisted crown of thorns. (The exterior of this window is shown in the Frontispiece.) In this, and in the forms of the piers (especially the · eastern responds), a certain advance may be traced beyond the work of the presbytery. The Decorated style had not as yet passed fully into its second phase, such as is displayed in Abbot Eversden's work in the Ladychapel; but the first, or geometrical phase, had become far more completely developed than when the presbytery was begun under Abbot Hertford.

At the east end of the south aisle, under the window just mentioned, was the altar of St. Mary of the four tapers, first established by Abbot William of Trumpington, in the south transept, but removed here on the completion of this part of the antechapel. Four tapers were lighted at this altar during the daily celebration of the mass of the Virgin; and it was in front of it that the heart of Abbot Roger Norton was entombed. On the south side was a very rich and elaborate triple piseina, beneath one comprehending arch, over which was a wide gable. A small door on the north side of

the altar opened to a passage pierced through the wall, and a second passage in the thickness of the westernmost buttress of the Lady-chapel led into that. The object for which so very unusual a passage was provided is not evident; but it seems probable that the door opening to the aisle was used as the principal means of approach to this eastern group of chapels. The areading in the wall of this south aisle is broken away in the westernmost bay; and from some fragments which have been found, it appears likely that there was here a very rich sedile or chair of state for the abbot.

The ceiling of the central space was, as we have seen, the recorded work of Abbot Eversden. There are fifteen panels, of which only the framework remained before the restoration. The panels were at first painted in various subjects, the Assumption being in the centre. This painting was obliterated by Abbot Wheathamstead, who replaced it with his favourite symbols, the eagle and the lamb. This ceiling has been restored. In the south aisle there is a vaulting of wood, with carved bosses. This is apparently of the same date as the vaulting of the presbytery. If a similar vaulting ever existed in the north aisle, it had entirely disappeared before the restoration of 1875—1876.

The altars in the antechapel and its aisles, besides that of St. Mary already mentioned, were:—that of St. Michael, at the east end of the north aisle; that of St. Edmund the King, west of the central pierbetween the north aisle and the antechapel; that of St. Benedict, similarly placed in the south aisle; and that of St. Amphibalus, west of his shrine. This shrine occupied the centre of the antechapel. Many portions of the base of it have been discovered, built up in the same walls which contained fragments of the base of St. Alban's shrine; and these have been arranged and set together in a similar manner, on the spot where the shrine anciently stood. For the story of St. Amphibalus see Part II. His relics, or certain relics which were held to be his, were discovered at Redbourne, near St. Alban's, in the days of Abbot Simon (1166-1183), and were brought in solemn procession to the church of the monastery. The shrine of St. Alban was carried to meet the relics of Amphibalus as far as the place where the church of St. Mary des Prez was afterwards built; and on this occasion it "became so light that it could be carried without difficulty by two brethren, yea, even by one, whereas at other times it could hardly be transported by four from its own place to one not far distanto." relics were placed at first near the high altar, on the north side of the shrine of St. Alban. They were removed to the antechapel by Abbot Thomas de la Mare (1349-1396); and at the same time, "by the industry of Ralph Witechurch, sacrist, the feretrum (shrine) of St. Amphibalus was more honourably set up upon a most beautiful tomb (tumba) of stone "." This is the

<sup>M. Paris, 'Hist. Major,' p. 136.
Gesta Abbatum,' iii. 384.</sup> 

base of which we now see some portion. It is in a far more fragmentary and imperfect condition than the base of St. Alban's shrine; and like that, had been deliberately broken to pieces. On a plinth 6 inches high is a basement 23 inches in height, sculptured all round with fret work. On the western face are the letters "Amphib . . . s," and a fleur-de-lys. The eastern face has not been recovered. The north and south faces have fleurs-de-lys within raised lines, forming quatrefoils; and the letters R. W., the initials of Ralph Witechurch the sacrist. West of the shrine stood the altar of the saint. The work is entirely in clunch stone, and is far less rich than that of the base of the greater shrine.

A staircase in the north-east angle of the north aisle led to the turret and roofs.

XXX. An enriched arch at the eastern end of the antechapel opens to the Lady-chapel itself. The lower part of the walls of the Lady-chapel belong, as we have seen, to the earlier work; and the arch of entrance is also earlier than the time of Abbot Eversden, who, we are told, finished the Lady-chapel. This is evident from the existence of groining springers here, which would not have been inserted by Eversden. The very rich niches on either side of the arch correspond with those in the Lady-chapel, and are proofs that although Abbot Eversden did not build this wall and arch, he made alterations in them, so as to adapt them to the rest of his work. The foliage in the tympana of the pediments which surmount these niches is very fine,

and the pediments themselves are richly crocketed. An oaken screen, part of which still remains, crossed the main arch, and separated the Lady-chapel from the antechapel.

The Lady-chapel consists of three bays; and the whole of the work above the lower part of the wall is no doubt due to Abbot Eversden (1308-1326). It differs altogether from that westward of it, not only in the greater richness of its details, but from the adoption and developement of a distinct phase of the Decorated style. The side windows, each of four lights, have their mouldings combined and enriched with figures and imagery in a very unusual manner. There are small figures in the jambs, and on the central shaft. The ball-flower runs round all. tracery varies, but in all it is more or less curvilinear. Between the windows are rich niches, which intercept the vaulting shafts. These carry stone springers, from which rises the oaken groining, with elaborate bosses, and having a greater number of ribs than the earlier groining of the presbytery. The eastern window is of five lights, declining from the centre. The tracery is singularly combined with tabernacle work, which forms a sort of pediment above each light. A ball-flower runs round the outer splay and the main jamb. There are piscinas in the east wall both north and south of the altar, and a niche in the angle on either side.

The easternmost bay on the south side is partly obscured by the vestry or sacristy, in which was the

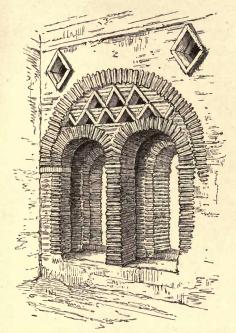
altar of the Transfiguration. But in the upper part of the bay is a very beautiful window, consisting of a richly-traceried circle placed within a curvilinear triangle. Beneath, a remarkable range of niches is set into the window; and below, again, is a range of sedilia greatly broken and shattered. Oaken stalls lined this chapel on either side, and for their reception the lower part of the walls and shafts had been cut away in places. This defacement, however, could not have been visible when the stalls were in position.

In the centre of the chapel, after the first battle of St. Alban's (May 23, 1455), were buried three great Lancastrian nobles, who fell during the fight. These were Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset; Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland; and the Lord Clifford. They were killed in the street, near St. Peter's church; and no one dared to touch their bodies until the abbot, not without great difficulty, obtained leave from the victorious Duke of York to bury them in his church. They were buried in the order of their rank, the duke lying furthest to the east.

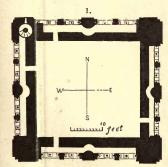
It should be noticed that the walls of both the Lady-chapel and antechapel are constructed of Roman tile, procured in part, no doubt, from the demolished apse, and thinly coated, externally, with flint-work. Tiles are more or less used in all the later building; but the flint casing occurs nowhere else.

XXXI. In the interior of the church there only remains to be noticed the upper part of the central tower, approached by staircases in the western angles

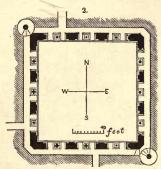
of the transepts. The tower rises, as has been said, in four stages above the arches on which it rests. "The lower stage, within, consists of a gallery in the thickness of the wall (see Plan opposite), and is recessed with three arches on each side, supported upon piers of brick" (tile), "and subdivided by columns of stone into two smaller arches, which are pierced, an arrangement productive of great lightness and beauty of effect in the interior design. . . . . The walls of this gallery are pierced on three sides with small doorways opening to the timber-work of the roofs; but towards the east there was no such aperture, on account of the vaulting of the presbytery. . . . . The middle stage above corresponds in design with the one just described; it penetrates the substance of the wall, and presents the open arcade of the gallery towards the exterior. This gallery, unquestionably one of the most singular features in the whole design of the church, . . . . forms a distinct passage 20} inches wide, and 6 feet 9 inches high, within the thickness of the wall on each side of the tower, and its arcade has always been open to the weather. the angles are solid except the north-west, containing the staircase; there are four narrow doorways opening from the galleries to the belfry, which originally included this as well as the stage over. columns, capitals, and bases are of stone." (This open gallery, immediately below the windows of the uppermost stage, is seen in Plate V. The Plan is given on the opposite page. Similar galleries occur



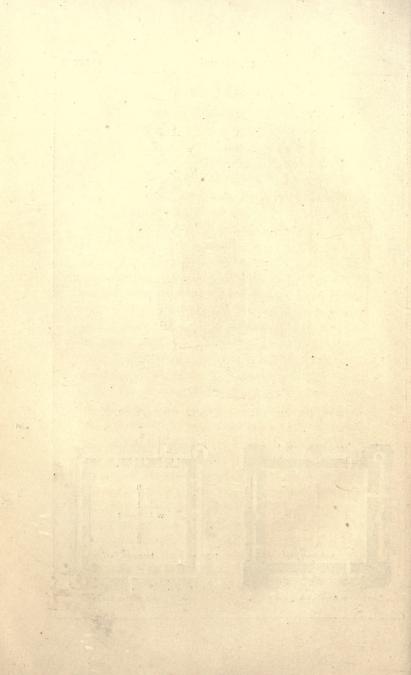
WINDOW IN BELFRY STAGE OF TOWER.



Plan of open Arcade, exterior of B-lfry.



Plan of open Areade in Lantern.



in some Romanesque churches on the Continent.) "The upper, or belfry-stage, differs remarkably in the features of its design from the rest, having circular turrets on the angles, and piercings in the windows and in the wall over, unlike any others. The walls are built perpendicularly, as is also the interior surface of those below; but the exterior of these, from their commencement to their union with the belfry-stage, slopes or contracts more rapidly between some of the divisions than others. . . . . Strength was the leading consideration in the design. The wall of every stage sets within the one immediately below. . . . In the belfry-stage, the outer arches of the windows spring from columns, but the double openings within are formed with piers having impost mouldings of brick, the space between the larger and smaller arches being distinguished by triangular piercings, and the spandrels over the lozenge-shaped apertures q."

These peculiar piercings, which were probably designed as sound-holes, are shown in the Frontispiece. The interior of the belfry [Plate V.] should, if possible, be visited. The extraordinary roughness of the tile-work can thus alone be fully understood, since it is not evident from below. This tile-work is carried in regular courses through the deep reveals of all the openings to the exterior. The stone employed in the gallery-stage under the belfry is from the Barnack

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>q</sup> Buckler's 'St. Alban's,' pp. 119-123. The description of Messrs. Buckler is so perfect and accurate, that it leaves little or nothing to be added by those who come after them.

quarries. But these were worked at a very early period, and there is every reason for believing that some of the stone piers used in the gallery may have been brought, like the tiles, from Verulamium, whilst others may have been retained from the destroyed Saxon church of Offa. The shafts have been cut in different ways to suit their present position. The rudely-formed tile-plinths and imposts deserve attention.

The present termination of the tower, above the belfry-stage, is modern; and this uppermost portion has undergone various changes. The Norman turrets and parapets which finished it in its original condition were removed by Abbot William of Trumpington (1214-1235), perhaps on account of their insecure condition. He capped the tower by an octagon, based on eight ribs, which descended to corbels fixed in the angles and between the windows. For some unknown reason all this work was removed in the fifteenth century, and the octagon was replaced by a spire of no very great height. This in turn disappeared in 1833, and the tower now appears much as in its first condition, except that the angle turrets or pinnacleswhich probably resembled those of the transeptshave not been restored. The plastering with which the whole exterior surface was anciently covered has been removed, not without some discussion as to the propriety of such an innovation. But the tile-work, which is the great feature of St. Alban's, is thus shown in its integrity, and the tower has infinitely gained in beauty of tone and colour.

The restoration of the tower, or rather the placing of so vast a mass in a condition of safety, was a work of no small labour. It was found that the great piers were gradually crumbling, and the sinking of the whole became more and more evident, even after the first supports had been inserted. The concrete used in building the piers became pulverised at a point about 18 feet from the ground, where it was apparently of a less cohesive nature than above or below. At this point, in the north-east pier, the crushing became first evident. The tower gradually leaned to the weakest corner, and eventually burst open, causing rents from the crowns of the northern and eastern arches, extending upwards through the outer arcade, the bell-chamber windows, and the parapet. In spite of arches hastily bricked up, of double shores and trusses, and of triple trusses in the arches of the presbytery aisles, the mischief was not arrested. "The tests still broke, and the ceiling of Abbot Ramryge's chantry opened farther. A cluster of heavy balks planted deep in the ground as raking shores from the northeast, bent like bows under the pressure; the north-east pier crumbled and crumbled until there was a continuous shower of dust and small particles dropping around it, a sure and certain indication of a crushing up. . . . . At length, after many days and nights' continuous labour, during the whole of which time the workmen stuck bravely to their posts, we perceived, to our great relief, that the downward progress of the tower was arrested, and that the great trusses in the northern and eastern arches were doing their work handsomely, for they had caught the shifting mass and were upholding it r."

This was in January, 1871. Not quite ten years before, the central tower of St. David's Cathedral had been similarly propped and secured under Sir Gilbert Scott's direction. In both cases the work was one of extreme danger, as is plain from the fall of the spire of Chichester, in spite of all precautions. The long continuance, indeed, of the tower at St. Alban's without repair or support can only be regarded with wonder. The mutilation of the piers and the cavern dug into one of them (see § VI.) were alone sufficient to bring down the whole mass. But, as was rarely the case with Norman towers, the actual foundations were unusually firm and good, and it is to this that the preservation of the tower may safely be attributed.

As soon as the tower had been rendered safe the necessary repairs were begun. The foundations (which had been injured by excavations for interments) were strengthened by the insertion of cement concrete; the missing members of the piers were carefully built up with hard bricks in cement. Iron ties were freely used. "Such was the crushed state of the north-east pier that at one particular place it was found neces-

r 'Restoration of the Abbey of St. Alban,' by John Chapple, Clerk of the Works. Mr. Chapple was the superintendent on the spot during the whole of this anxious time; and it is to his incessant care and watchfulness that the success of the operations must be attributed.

sary to take out the old work to a depth of 7 feet into the pier, creating a hollow which presented the appearance of a large cavern. All the old work was well saturated with water to render it adhesive to the new, and at every two layers of brickwork liquid cementgrout was used in abundance, thereby completely filling up every crevice. This method of repair was continued, wherever necessary, throughout the whole height of the tower. . . . . At four stages, viz., at the triforium, the clerestory, the ringing-floor, and the bell-chamber, a system of strong iron bolts was inserted, passing in every instance through holes specially bored through the walls. . . . . New outer stonearches and oak louvres were fixed to the lower windows, and the upper string-course was renewed in Chilmark stone—a durable material taking the place of the perishable clunch or Tottenhoe stone used originally.

"The floors of the ringing-chamber and of the bell-chamber were renewed. . . . A new bell-frame was constructed and fixed in the south-west corner, and the whole peal received an entirely new set of fittings by Warner and Son of Cripplegates." The exterior of the tower was afterwards repaired, and the Roman tiles were pointed.

XXXII. We pass to the exterior of the church; and first, through the door at the east end of the south aisle of the nave, to the space originally occupied by the great cloister. This was in the most ordinary.

"'Restoration of St. Alban's,' by John Chapple.

position, in the angle between the nave and the south transept. It extended westward for the length of seven bays of the nave, and projected toward the south for at least double the length of the transept and slype. Of this great cloister, about 150 feet square, the centre of monastic life, nothing whatever remains. The refectory was on the south side; the dormitory on the east, with probably a passage over the chapter-house, connecting it with the south transept of the church. The chapter-house intervened between the dormitory and the transept.

Against the walls of both nave and transept are portions of the inner wall-arcading of the cloister. These, as we now see them, bear evidence of two distinct periods of construction. There was, beyond doubt, a Norman cloister. This suffered, as we know, at the fall of the aisle-wall in 1323. (See ante, § XV.) It was afterwards rebuilt; but it would seem that the whole of the wall had not fallen, and that some of the Norman arcading remained in such a condition as to be adapted and remodelled for the new work. The wall-arcading along the south side of the nave shows very good Decorated tracery. But the third arch from the transept is circular, and contains within it, irregularly placed, a traceried arch resembling the others. The outer or circular arch is Norman. Whether there was an intention of completing this side with the Decorated work is uncertain. There were Norman doorways opening to the church at the angle where the present entrance exists-(the Norman

tile-work remains there)—and in the west wall of the transept. Of this there is evidence without and within.

Adjoining the south transept, and in a line with it, is a short slype or passage, now closed at either end. This is Norman, of a much later period and character than Abbot Paul's building. The walls are lined with an intersecting arcade, decorated with a peculiar ringed moulding. The shafts which descended to the floor have in most cases been removed; but the capitals remain, and are curiously carved. The vault is a plain barrel.

The chapter-house adjoined this slype on the south. From the foundations it is evident that it was a long parallelogram, with an apsidal termination. In it were buried many of the earlier abbots, including Paul of Caen, the builder of the Norman church; John of Cella; William of Trumpington; and John of Hertford; all of whom were restorers and rebuilders.

A second slype occurred south of the chapter-house; then came the small chapel of St. Cuthbert, and then the dormitory, extending far beyond the cloister. The chapel of St. Cuthbert was first built by Abbot Richard D'Aubeney (1097—1119), who had been present at Durham at the great translation of the body of St. Cuthbert, and had been there miraculously cured. William of Trumpington rebuilt this chapel, and dedicated its altar to St. Cuthbert, St. John the Baptist, and St. Agnes. It was also known as the Hostry, or Hostelry chapel; and in spite of its position in the

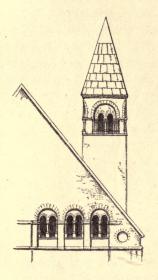
cloister, was in some manner connected with one of the guest halls of the monastery. It rose into an upper story, which was used as an adjunct of the dormitory, with which it communicated t.

XXXIII. The exterior of the south transept should here be noticed. The Norman design embraced a lofty and steep gable, running along the lower part of which was an arcade of blank arches, each arch enclosing two others, divided by a stone shaft. Of this arcade a fragment remains at the base of the circular turret. This turret rose above the staircase, and was completed by a conical top [Plate VI.]. There was but one such turret, on the western side of each transept. The second, in either case, is a later addition.

Cottages had been built against the south side of the nave, and the ground adjoining was used as a garden. The houses have been removed; but there can be no doubt that the very insecure condition of this portion of the church, which still (1876) unhappily exists, was greatly increased by these buildings.

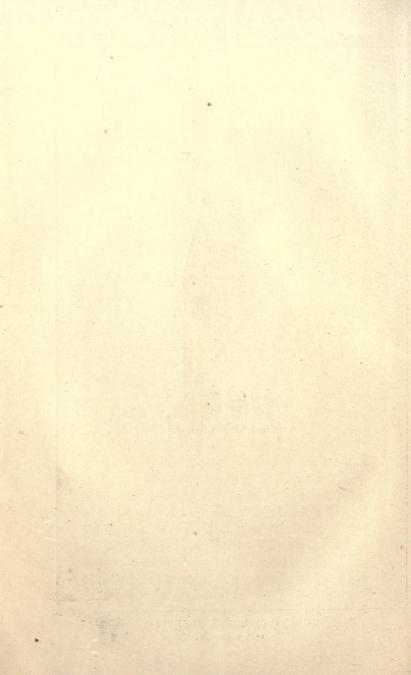
XXXIV. The west front of the church, in its present state, is altogether unworthy of so vast and stately a structure. The change by John de Cella has already (§ XII.) been described. The central porch is alone accessible from the exterior. The abutment piers of the Norman work remain, reaching nearly to the summit of the building; the tile-work being hemmed in on one side by the ashlar of Trumpington's archi-

<sup>\*</sup> This is the chapel which has been so strangely confounded with the screen at the east end of the nave. See § XVIII.



TURRET OF SOUTH TRANSEPT.

ROOF RESTORED.



tecture, and on the other by that of the exterior. In the porch itself, "all above the columns, namely, the arches and groins, must be ascribed to Trumpington, who appears to have been under the necessity of altering, if not of destroying, much of the earlier work". The pier of the clustered pillars on each side of the inner portal is a mass of wrought stone-work inserted by him; it encroaches upon the capitals, and its introduction involved the alteration of the Purbeck masonry. The clustered shafts forming the supports of the outer arch were similarly strengthened, and the addition averted for a time the mischief which eventually deprived the porch of its stately gable, and of all the characteristic ornaments of its exterior design."

The very rich doors which remain at this entrance are probably the work of Abbot John of Wheathamstead, who inserted the western window (see § XIV.).

XXXV. On the north side of the church, parallel with the west front, was the chapel of St. Andrew, of which the foundations have lately been discovered (§ XIV.). The exterior of the north transept originally resembled the south. Foundations of buildings have been found beyond it to the north, which may be those of a large sacristy.

The massive tile-work of the transept, the central

u Matthew Paris tells us that the walls of John de Cella became ruinous long before their completion, "together with their columns, bases, and capitals, and fell with their own weight, so that the wreck of images and flowers became the laughing-stock of beholders."

<sup>\*</sup> Buckler's 'St. Alban's.'

tower, and the exterior of the presbytery and Saint's chapel, are well seen from this side of the church. The presbytery has octagonal turrets at the angles, with small buttresses, rising into pinnacled caps. The mark of the ancient gabled roof of the transept is seen against the tower. The nave also has lost its steep roofs; and although this change was effected long before the dissolution of the monastery, it has injured the general outline more decidedly than any later neglect or alteration.

XXXVI. The monastic buildings have disappeared at St. Alban's more completely than arou d any other great English monastery; and little is left to tell us of the ancient life of the Benedictines, to whom the church belonged, and who served and worshipped at its altars. There were of course the usual offices: the infirmary and the infirmary cloister; the abbot's house, guest halls and chambers, fitted, according to their rank, to the numerous pilgrims and strangers who were constantly entertained in the abbey; besides all the domestic buildings, the barns, stables, and storehouses, which were assembled in the outer court. An especial set of chambers was provided for the use of the king whenever he should halt at St. Alban's z ;

' For a description of the usual arrangement of a great Benedictine monastery, see 'Canterbury Cathedral,' Part I.

<sup>\*</sup> There was also a Queen's Chamber. Abbot Geoffry of Gorham (1119-1146) built a noble guest-hall; and near it "a very handsome bedchamber, which we have been accustomed to call the Queen's bedchamber, because it was appropriated to the use of the Queen, besides whom it was not lawful for any woman to be entertained in this monastery."—Gesta Abbatum.

and after each battle of St. Alban's, Henry VI. was brought by the victors to these chambers, having first been allowed to kneel in the church before the great shrine. But of all this pile of building which covered the whole hill on the south side of the church, and stretched downward to the river, nothing whatever remains; and the positions of the several halls and cloisters can only be guessed at from the manner in which they are arranged in such monasteries as have been less entirely destroyed. The whole of the monastic buildings, with the ground lying round about the church, were granted to Sir Richard Lee in 1540. He at once proceeded to demolish them; but some portions were still remaining in 1722, when Dr. Stukeley visited St. Alban's. "They have lately," he writes, "been working hard at pulling up the old foundations of the abbey; and it is now levelled with the pasture, where, three years ago, you might make a tolerable guess at the ichnography of the place. This very year they pulled down the stone tower or gatehouse on the north side of the abbey, within a month after I had taken a sketch of ita."

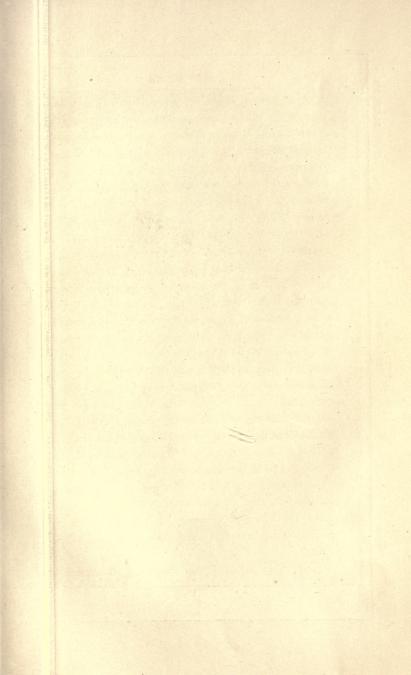
XXXVII. The great gateway, which stands somewhat below the west front of the church, is the sole remaining relic of the monastery. This opened to a quadrangle about 400 feet square, on one side of which was the church, and on others various buildings, among which were the "King's stables." The gateway itself is of unusual height and size. "An arch,

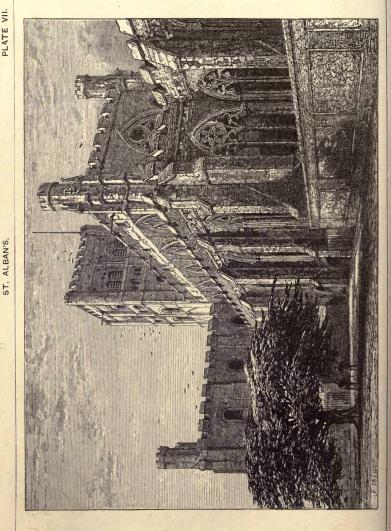
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> 'Itinerarium Curiosum.' Iter v.

with a postern, leads to the interior. The roof is groined in stone; and on the sides are doorways, which formed the approaches to the staircases and the different apartments. These are very numerous; and the principal chamber in the centre, over the archway, spacious. The ceilings have beams of oak, supported upon stone corbels; and many of the fireplaces are ancient. But the most remarkable portions of this building are its groined avenues, two on each side of the archway, incorporated with the present edifice. One of those on the west side is of the thirteenth century." The main portion of the gateway was, however, built by Abbot Thomas De la Mare (1349-1396); and it is consequently early Perpendicular in character. It served, until recently, as the prison for the Liberty of St. Alban's. It should be remarked that the great wooden doors which closed the main entrance were placed in the centre of the passage, which was open on either side of them, and thus afforded shelter and a resting-place. This is the marked distinction between a military and a monastic gateway. The doors of the former were placed at the openings of the passage, sometimes at both ends, but were never in the middle. One of the grandest remaining examples of a monastic gateway is that of the Cistercian house of Whalley, in Lancashire. In its general arrangement it nearly resembles this of St. Alban's.

XXXVIII. No good general view of the church is

b Buckler.





to be obtained near at hand. The best are on the south side, where the monastic buildings formerly rose [Plate VII.]; but even here the eastern portion is much concealed. (A very picturesque view of the south-east portion of the church, east of the transept, is shown in the Frontispiece.) The great length of the nave is, however, a marked feature in these nearer views; and it is hardly less so in the distant prospects. Of these by far the most striking, as well from the picturesque grouping as from the associations which it suggests, is the view from the site of ancient Verulamium. From this point we look, beyond a foreground of fine trees, across the narrow valley to the ridge crowned by the huge minster, with its long ranges of clerestory lights, and its massive tower of Roman bricks. This tower rises grandly, and serves as a landmark in the approach to St. Alban's from the east and south. There is one ridge on the ancient road from London where it suddenly breaks on the sight in the distance of a broad green landscape. So, for long ages, it must have greeted pilgrims and travellers as they journeyed onward through the farspreading forest of Hertfordshire.

It has been constantly asserted that the great church of St. Alban's Monastery is the longest in England, and consequently in the world, with the exception of St. Peter's at Rome, the exterior length of which is 613½ English feet. But the exterior length of St. Alban's, including the buttresses of the western porch and those of the Lady-chapel, is not more than 548 feet. This exceeds the mean external length of Ely (where the north and south walls are not exactly parallel), which is 537 feet, but is not so great as that of Winchester—555 feet 8 inches. Winchester Cathedral is therefore the longest mediæval church in the world.

# SAINT ALBAN'S.

## PART II.

# Vistory of the Abbey and See.

THE city of Verulamium, on the right bank of the little river Ver, was one of the most important in Roman Britain. It had been the chief town of the British Cassii; and after the Romans occupied and walled the site, the place was distinguished by buildings of which the traces and foundations sufficiently indicate the extent and unusual size. During the persecution of the Christians under Diocletian (A.D. 305), it is believed that a Roman, named Albanus, suffered here, and became the Protomartyr of Britain. His story, as told by Bede\*, runs as follows:—

Albanus, still a pagan, received and sheltered in his cottage (tugurium) a certain Christian priest (clericum quendam), who was hiding himself from the persecution. The sight of his constant prayers and vigils greatly struck Albanus. He sought instruction from his visitor, accepted his teaching, and speedily became himself a Christian. The place of refuge of the priest was by some means discovered: and when the soldiers appeared at his door, Albanus presented himself instead of his guest and teacher, wrapped in the priest's long cloak. He was led before the judge, who was at that moment

<sup>· &#</sup>x27;Hist. Eccles.' L. I. c. 7.

b "Mox se sanctus Albanus, pro hospite ac magistro suo, ipsius habitu, id est, caracalla, qua vestiebatur indutus, militibus exhibuit." Beda, ut supra. It should be observed that Bede gives no name to the "clericus;" and the passage is remarkable in connection with that (Amphibalus) by which later writers distinguished him. See post.

assisting at a great sacrifice. Albanus was told that because he had concealed and had procured the escape of a "sacrilegious despiser of the gods," he should take the place of the priest. and should suffer the punishment justly due to him, if it appeared that his own ancient faith had been in any way shaken. Albanus, giving his name to the judgec, professed himself a Christian, refused to sacrifice to the gods, and was then severely scourged. But nothing could shake him: and an order was given for his immediate beheading. Accordingly he was led from the city toward a hill, which rose on the opposite side of the Ver. The bridge which crossed the river was narrow. There was so great a crowd seeking to pass and to witness the execution, that Albanus, eager for martyrdom. feared that evening would come before he could reach the appointed place. But at his prayer the stream shrank away. and the host of witnesses was able to pass over dryshod. The executioner was so impressed by the miracle, that he flung away his sword, and fell at the feet of Albanus, desiring rather to die with him than to take his life. The hill was at last reached; and on its summit, Albanus, thirsting, desired water from God. Immediately a spring burst forth, which, "when its ministry had been performed," returned again into the heart of the earth. Then the Martyr's head was stricken off, and he received a crown of life. But the executioner who had taken the place of him who refused to strike the blow was not permitted to rejoice in his evil deed. His eyes fell on the earth at the same moment that the head of Albanus struck it. The other was beheaded at the same time and place, receiving a baptism of blood in the room of the Christian sacrament. The judge, continues Bede, impressed by so many miraculous signs, soon discontinued the persecution of the Christians.

e "Ait Judex, 'Nomen tuum quæro, quod sine mora mihi insinua.' Et ille,—'Albanus,' inquit, 'a parentibus vocor, et Deum verum et vivum, qui universa creavit, adoro semper et colo.'" Beda, ut sup. It is frequently asserted that Albanus was a Roman soldier. Of this there is no trace in Beda's narrative.

Of this narràtive it must be remarked that, as we now read it in Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History,'it must have been written at least four centuries after the event which it describes. The earliest notice of Albanus is to be found in the 'Life of Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre,' by his contemporary, Constantius, Germanus visited Britain in the year 429; and, according to some, the Council in which he protested against the heresy of Pelagius was held at Verulamium. The place of meeting is not named by Constantius; but we are briefly told that Germanus visited the tomb of the martyr Albanus, opened it, placed in it certain relics with great honour, and carried away with him a "massa pulveris" (a sod) from the spot of the martyrdom. The sod, we are told, was yet stained with the blood of Albanus. This visit of Germanus was made 125 years after the date assigned for the martyrdom.

We have next the testimony of Gildas, writing about A.D. 564. He mentions Albanus at Verulamium, and Aaron and Julius at Caerleon (Legionum urbis cives) among the martyrs who fell "in the time of persecution." The chief points in the story of Albanus are briefly touched on by him,-the hiding of a Christian, the change of garments, the dryingup of the river, and the conversion of the executioner<sup>d</sup>. It is possible that certain 'Acta' recording the sufferings and martyrdom of Albanus were already in existence, and that such a book was used by Gildas. Between Gildas and Bede, however (who died in 735), there is no mention of the Protomartyr. Bede's story is much fuller and more detailed than that of Gildas. His authorities may have been the work of Gildas himself, and either the same 'Acta,' or an enlarged version of them. Of the true date, or of the value, of such 'Acta,' we have no means of judging. They must, at any rate, have been compiled long after the death of Albanus. We are thus compelled to accept the conclusion of the editors of the 'Concilia;' that of the circumstances and details of the martyrdom we know nothing on which we can rely with safety. "All that seems certain is, that within 125 years after the

<sup>6 &#</sup>x27;De excidio Britonum,' § 11.

persecution under Diocletian, a belief existed at Verulamium that a martyr named Albanus lay buried near that town "."

The story was, however, fully accepted in the neighbourhood of Verulamium when Bede wrote. He tells us that a church had been built on the place of the martyrdom, worthy of the saint whom it commemorated; and that frequent miracles-healing of the sick, and other signs-took place in it'. The city of Verulamium was then known as "Verlamacaester," or "Vaetlingacaestir,"—the latter name being given to it from the fact that the great Watling-street passed through the centre of the place. Probably much of the Roman town was still standing. Whether it was still inhabited, or whether life had already passed away from it and had gathered round the church of the martyr on the opposite hill, the germ of the present town of St. Alban's, we have no means of knowing. It was on this hill that Albanus suffered; and on it the miraculous fount of water broke forth. It is described by Bede. perhaps from his own observation, but far more probably after a passage in the earlier 'Acta,' as a place of much quiet beauty, not unworthy to witness the end of a martyrs. A church, as

Haddan and Stubbs, 'Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland,' i. p. 5.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;Postea, redeunte temporum Christianorum serenitate, ecclesia est mirandi operis atque ejus martyrio condigna extructa. In quo videlicet loco usque ad hanc diem curatio infirmorum et frequentium operatio virtutum celebrari non desinit." Beda, H. E. l. i. c. 7. The passage in Gildas, § 10, does not imply, as has been asserted, that the place of martyrdom was unknown when he wrote, but only that it had fallen into the hands of Saxon conquerors. "Deus . . . persecutionis tempore . . . ne crassa atræ noctis caligine Britannia obscuraretur, clarissimas lampades sanctorum martyrum nobis accendit; quorum nunc corporum sepulturæ et passionum loca, si non lugubri divortione barbarorum, quamplurima ob scelera nostra, civibus adimerentur, non minimum intuentium mentibus ardorem divinæ caritatis incuterent."

e" Montem cum turbis reverentissimus Dei confessor ascendit; qui opportune lætus gratia decentissima, quingentis fere passibus ab arena situs est" (the "arena" was the actual place of execution),

we have seen, had been raised on it. Yet it is quite certain that before the end of the eighth century this church, if it still existed, had been reduced to ruin; and that the actual place of the interment of Albanus was unknown. This we learn from the story of the foundation of the abbey by Offa of Mercia; who, troubled in conscience for the murder of Ethelbert, King of the East Angles, determined, about the year 793, to found a monastery in honour of St. Alban at Verulamium; close to which place the kings of Mercia had a royal villa or manor-house h. But no one knew where the relics of the protomartyr lay. A vision was, however, vouchsafed to Offa at Bath, and, guided by a miraculous light, the coffin which contained the remains, and which "had long been hidden under the turf," was duly found by the king. It contained, we are told, the remains of Albanus, besides certain relics which had been laid beside them by St. German. They were placed in a reliquary, and conveyed to the small temporary church which had been prepared for them, until that of the new monastery should be built. Offa procured the canonisation of the martyr from the Pope, Adrian. monastery was at once founded. A company of Benedictines was established in it: and thus arose that great abbey of St. Alban which was distinguished by so many privileges and by such extensive donations; and which, from its foundation to

<sup>&</sup>quot;variis herbarum floribus depictus, immo usque quaque vestitus; in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum æquoris natura complanat, dignum videlicet eum, pro insita sibi specie venustatis, jam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur." H. E. I. 7. Tradition afterwards fixed the place of execution (the "arena" of Bede) on the top of this hill, within the walls of the existing church, in that part of the North Transept where the martyrdom is figured on the roof (Part I. § XX.). But the words of Bede imply that the "arena" was at the foot of the hill.

h The earthworks which enclosed this manor-house are still visible below the town of St. Alban's. The place is called Kingsbury, the King's "burh," or "strong house,"

the dissolution, was generally regarded as the principal house of the Benedictine order in England'.

Of the thirteen abbots who ruled the monastery, from the foundation by Offa to the Norman conquest, many were of royal descent,-a sufficient indication of the distinction at once assigned to the house of St. Alban. In their time the town gathered round the walls of the abbey; and Ulsi, the sixth abbot, founded, it is said, the three churches dedicated to St. Peter, St. Michael, and St. Stephen, and established a market. Ælfric, the eleventh abbot, bought the royal manor of Kingsbury, the officers of which had been troublesome and oppressive to the monks. His successor, Ealdred, began the deliberate breaking up of the buildings at Verulamium, which had become the resort of men and women of evil note, and of robbers from the neighbouring forests. Both he and Eadmer, the next abbot, laid aside the materials procured from the Roman town for the building of their new Church (see Part I., § I.). But this building, owing apparently to the troubles of the time, was not begun; and it would seem that Offa's church remained undisturbed until the first Norman abbot. Paul of Caen, pulled it down and raised the existing structure. (Part I., § I.)

There was a belief at St. Alban's, recorded by Matthew Paris in that portion of the 'Gesta Abbatum' which was compiled by him, to the effect that, in the time of Vulnoth, the fourth abbot, the Danes plundered the monastery, and carried off the relics of St. Alban to Denmark. They were recovered by Egwyn, sacrist of the abbey, sent back "in a strong box with three feet and three locks," and replaced in their own shrine. We are also told that Ealfric, the eleventh abbot, again fearing troubles from the Danes, sent to Ely, for safety, in a rich chest

¹ This position was at one time contested by Westminster, and the priority in Parliament was for some time assigned to the latter monastery. St. Alban's subsequently recovered it; and in the list of signatures attached to the 'Articles of Faith,' drawn up by Convocation in 1536, that of the Abbot of St. Alban's stands first of the Abbots.

(in capsule pretiosa) the remains of some unknown monk, intending that all should believe them to be the actual relics of the martyr. These latter he buried in his own church, near the altar of St. Nicholas. The monks of Ely afterwards sent back other relics in the same chest, thinking that by this fraud they were keeping the remains of St. Alban. But the true relics were, when the time had become safe, raised and placed in a shrine<sup>k</sup>. What amount of truth there may be in these stories is very uncertain: but they bring an additional element of confusion into the question of the authenticity of the relics preserved in the great shrine at St. Alban's <sup>1</sup>.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the lives of the twenty-seven abbots between Paul of Caen and Richard Boreman, who surrendered the house to the visitors of the Crown on the 5th of December, 1539. The works of those more immediately concerned in the building and renewing of the existing church have already been mentioned in Part I. The importance of the abbey increased after the Conquest; and its position, on the course of the Watling Street, made it a frequent resting-place for kings and great personages as they journeyed along that line of road. All who came paid their vows at the shrine of the protomartyr. This was at first a chest of painted wood. Geoffry of Gorham, the sixteenth abbot, began in the year 1124 a shrine (theca) "of marvellous design," and after some delay this shrine was completed "by the labour of a monk called Anketel." In this shrine was placed "the very ancient chest containing the relics of the martyr;" and the "Translation" was held on the 2nd of August, 1129. This ancient chest was opened, and, continues Matthew Paris, "in order to silence the claims of the monks of Denmark and those of Ely, who falsely asserted that they possessed the body of St. Alban

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;Gesta Abbatum,' vol. i. pp. 12, 29, 34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> There is much reason for believing that the hill on which the Church of St. Alban now stands was occupied by one of the cemeteries of Roman Verulamium. In that case the discovery of a coffin by Offa is readily explained.

entire or in part, therefore before all who were able to be present, all the bones of the martyr were counted and exhibited one by one, and the head being held up on high before all men in the hands of the venerable brother Ralph, at that time Archdeacon of this monastery, was found to have, hanging from the back part by a silken thread, a scroll, with this inscription, in very old letters of gold: 'Sanctus Albanus.' Now, the revered King Offa had placed a golden circlet round the head, engraven with these words, 'Hoc est caput Sancti Albani, Anglorum Protomartyris;' but it was afterwards carelessly destroyed for the sake of the metal, which was devoted, it is said, to the construction of the shrine (ad fabricam feretri). But the abbot being angry, another was made to be put in the place of the former ".'"

The shrine thus made was afterwards stripped of its silver plating by Abbot Ralph of Gobion, who desired to buy the vill of Brantefield. His successor, Robert of Gorham, restored it. This was the inner shrine. The great outer shrine, also constructed of gold and silver plates, and rich with jewels, was made in the time of Abbot Simon (1166—1183). The whole mass—the outer shrine inclosing the inner, or reliquary—required four men to carry it.

It was during the abbacy of the same Simon, or Symeon, that the relics of St. Amphibalus were discovered at Redbourn. This was effected by the help of St. Alban, who, by supernatural guidance, directed the abbot to their resting-place. Amphibalus, the Christian priest who appears in the story of Albanus, was, according to his legend, martyred, apparently during the same persecution, at Redbourn, a village about five miles from St. Alban's. Matthew Paris describes the discovery of his remains as follows:—"The blessed martyr Amphibalus was found in the middle between two friends, side by side with them, the third friend occupying a solitary position at right angles to, and over against them. Moreover, there were found near that spot six in number of the friends of the aforesaid martyrs, so that the blessed martyr Amphi-

m 'Gesta Abbatum,' i. p. 80.

balus was counted as the tenth. Amongst the relics of Amphibalus, the soldier of Christ, two great knives were found, one in the skull, and another near the heart, confirming the truth of that which is contained in the book of his Passion, written in old time at St. Alban's. And, just as the text of his Passion describes it, the others lay slain with swords, but he lay, his entrails having been first exposed, and then taken out, afterwards pierced with spears and knives, and finally shattered with stones, so that scarcely one of his bones appeared entire, whilst those of his friends remained almost uninjured. . . . All these relics were brought to St. Alban's, and the convent went forth from the town taking with them the feretrum of the protomartyr, and met the relics of St. Amphibalus and his friends at the place whereon was built soon afterwards the church of St. Mary de Pratis, or Des Prez "." For the history of the shrine in which the relics were afterwards preserved, see Part I., § XXIX.

The Scriptorium, which for so long a period gave great celebrity to the abbey, was established by the first Norman abbot, Paul of Caen. Abbot Simon (the "inventor" of the relics of Amphibalus) is described as "librorum amator specialis." He caused many books to be written, and had them placed in a painted aumbrie or book-press (in almario picto) in the church, opposite the tomb of Roger the Hermit. (For the position of this tomb see Part I., § XIX.) But there is no trace of what has been called the historical school

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> M. Paris, 'Hist. Major,' p. 136 (ed. Wats). Mr. Wright (Essays on Archæological Subjects, i. ch. 12) observes that this account seems to indicate a Saxon burial place. "Any one who has been in the habit of opening Saxon barrows will at once recognise the position of the spear-head (which might be taken for a large knife), which is invariably found by, or sometimes under, the skull, and the knife (supposed to be the seax), which is found near, or very little below, the breast." It need hardly be said that the name Amphibalus is thought to have been 'invented' from the cloak (which the word signifies), in which Albanus presented himself to the soldiers (see ante).

of St. Alban's until the reign of John. Then, the monk Roger of Wendover may claim the great merit of having begun the great work which was afterwards referred to as the 'Chronica Magna,' or 'Majora,' 'S. Albani.' Matthew Paris, also a monk here, augmented and continued the Chronicle of Wendover; and the chronicles known as the 'Flores Historiarum' of Matthew of Westminster, are, in reality, a compilation made at St. Alban's under the eve and by direction of Matthew Paris as an abridgment of his great chronicle. The 'Chronica' were continued by Thomas of Walsingham, William of Rishanger, John of Trokelowe, and others. These chronicles have all been printed. The English Historical Society published an edition of Wendover. The 'Historia Major' of Matthew Paris was edited by Wats in the seventeenth century, but a better and more correct edition is much required. The 'Historia Minor' has appeared in the series of chronicles, edited for the Master of the Rolls; and in the same series will be found eleven volumes entitled 'Chronica Monasterii S. Albani,' ranging from Walsingham downward. In this collection are included the 'Gesta Abbatum,' containing a history of the abbots and their works, from A.D. 793 to A.D. 1411.

An Act of Parliament for establishing an episcopal see at St. Alban's was passed in 1874. The new diocese will be taken from that of London and Rochester, and will embrace the whole of Hertfordshire and a great portion of Essex. The first bishop has not yet (1876) been appointed.

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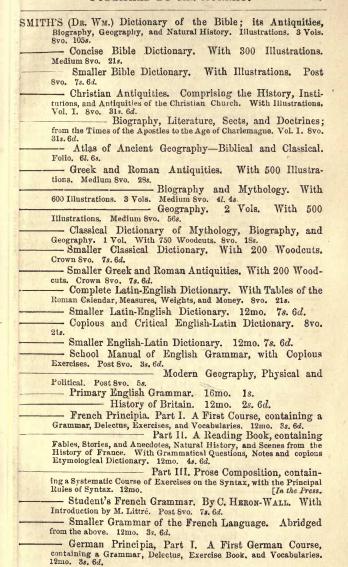
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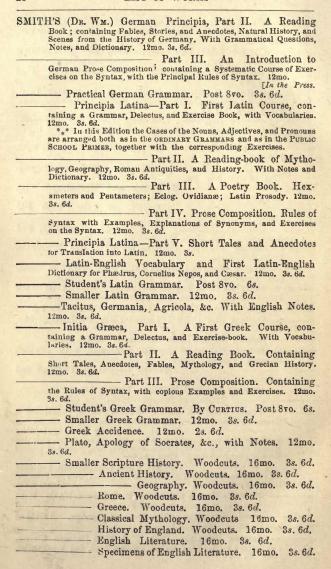
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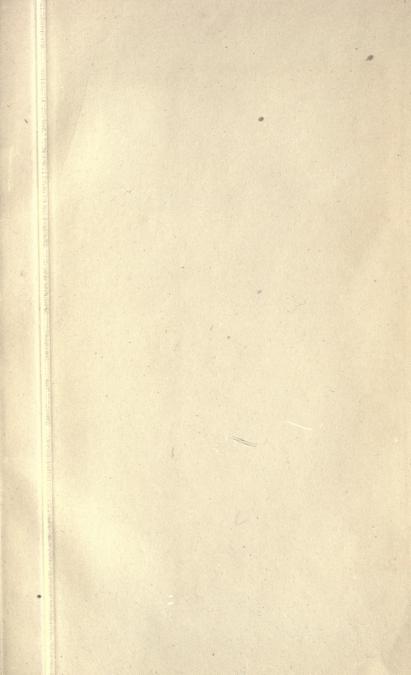
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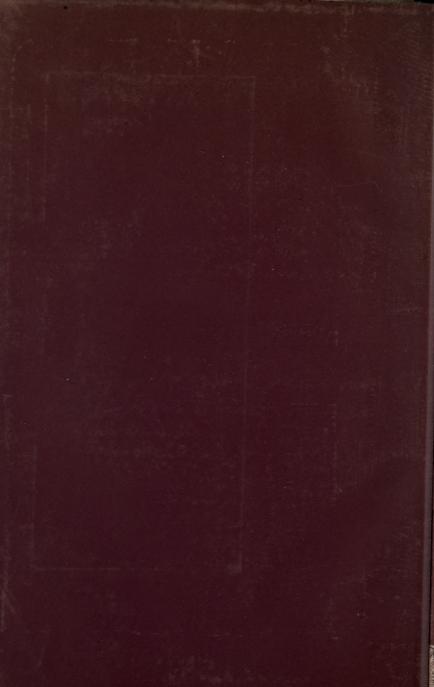
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